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Diplomatic Strategies in Addressing Climate-Induced Migration: A Critical Review of South Asian Nations

MD Shiyan Sadik
North South University, Bangladesh
Email: Shiyan.sadik@northsouth.edu

Sakif Al Ehsan Khan
University of Edinburgh, UK
Email: S.A.E.Khan@sms.ed.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

Climate diplomacy's responsibility is to assure the successful and timely development of several complex international regimes, as well as its operation and monitoring to handle emerging difficulties. Climate diplomacy bridges the fundamental gap between regional interest disputes and cross-border cooperation. This review article is based on a secondary literature review where the climate diplomacy practices of the South Asian Nations have been critically evaluated based on treaties regarding climate issues and level of engagement in global climate forums, the impact of climate migration-related consequences, and the political responses and impact of regional geo-political practices. The historical occurrence of political and economic instability in South Asian countries has consistently resulted in the phenomenon of migration. Due to climate change, the rates of negative migration have further escalated. The primary focus of the essay is to illustrate the similarities and differences in various practices throughout South Asian countries, with each country's part being assessed individually based on the aforementioned elements. Furthermore, the objective of this essay is to assess the extent of potential collaboration initiatives in the future between these neighboring nations, taking into account geopolitical considerations.

Keywords: Climate Diplomacy, South Asia, Global Climate Forums, Climate Migration, Climate Treaties

Introduction

One of the worst climate change disasters on record is occurring on Earth, setting the stage for a significantly warmer planet. Greenhouse gas emissions threaten people's livelihoods and way of life in addition to raising global temperatures, dehydrating water sources, and raising sea levels. Environmental changes are also making the effects more severe, affecting everything from political instability to bad health, livelihood, and economic growth. Numerous groups are being impacted, including individuals, families, communities, different ethnic groups, biological species,

and local and federal governments (Khagram, Clark, & Raad, 2003). There are significant linkages and importance between water shortage, energy security, and climate change. There is widespread recognition of the link between violent conflicts and environmental changes (Khagram, Clark, & Raad, 2003). A global approach towards combating such phenomena is much required, where the conceptualization of climate diplomacy plays a key role.

Climate diplomacy is the practice, procedures, and response actions aimed at establishing and maintaining the international climate change regime. It is a logical outcome of long-standing environmental concerns (Purdy, 2010). Based on the current state of the ecosystem, a more common and consistent approach is brought to the table by climate diplomacy (Lance, Folke, & Janssen, 2005). The role is not only confined to nations; rather, this diplomacy takes on more of a "whole of society" approach. Subnational players are assisting nation-states to make up for lost ground and passed-up possibilities. These actors include cities, provinces, public sector organizations, and private businesses (Hsu, Moffat, Weinfurtur, & Schwartz, 2015). Identifying a problem from multiple angles makes it easier to mandate foreign policy solutions that are suited to the unique requirements of various industries and localities. Such formulations make it easier for the relevant diplomatic networks to continue their participation in climate change. The discourse on climate diplomacy needs to be incorporated into tangible actions, going beyond mere appeals for cash or emergency aid, in order to effectively tackle the issues posed by climate change.

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are among the numerous sovereign entities that make up South Asia. This is a geopolitically significant region with the potential to determine the aftermath of different climate diplomacy practices. In addition to the sharp rise in demand for resources, the region is home to transition economies that are vulnerable to resource exploitation, water scarcity, energy crises, and climate change. Further, conflicts related to water and energy security are preventing commerce, development, and environmental security due to causes such as rising demand, economic development, resource mismanagement, a lack of regional collaboration, insufficient legislation, and environmental problems (Hassan, Afridi, & Khan, 2017). To address the collaboration, the present practices of climate diplomacy need to be critically evaluated. This article focuses on climate diplomacy practices in South Asian countries, based on the level of engagement in global climate forums and treaties, the effects of climate migration, political responses to climate change concerns, and the impact of regional geopolitical practices. The objective of the article is to find out the scope of further collaborative movements among these neighboring countries.

Analytical Framework

Dependent Variable	Independent Variable
Climate Migration Diplomacy practices	1) Treaties regarding climate issues and level of engagement in global climate forums 2) The impact of climate migration-related consequences 3) Political responses and impact of regional geo-political practices

Engagement in Global Climate Forums and Treaties

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol have been major components of the global climate change regime throughout the past decades, serving as the backdrop for subsequent attempts to promote international climate change. The narrative of "common concern" has been fostered to solve the global climate issues collectively, rather than focusing on one single stakeholder. It all started from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, which propelled the initiative of the first Conference of the Parties (COP) in 1995. Based on the impact factor, the Kyoto Protocol from COP3, The Global Climate Fund from COP16, and the infamous Paris Agreement from COP21 represent remarkable contributions to effort to combat global warming and CO2 emissions.

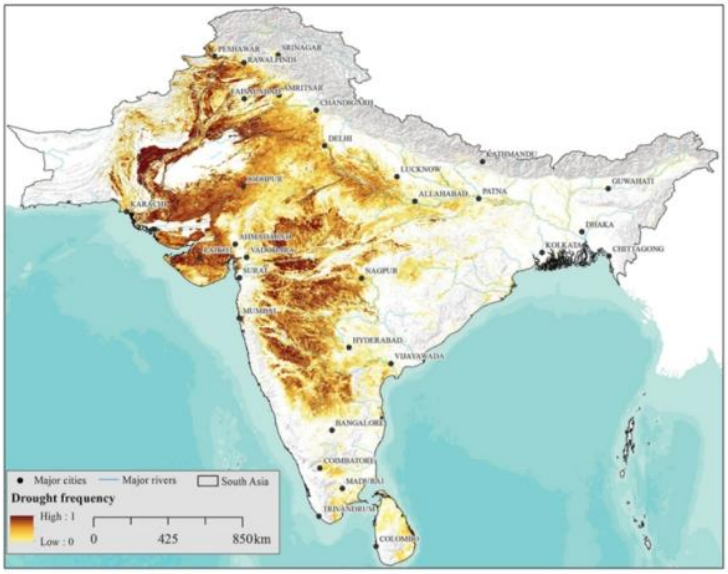

Figure 1: Mapping risk and estimating impacts on South Asian region

Policymakers and negotiators have looked for a better course of action because the Kyoto Protocol failed to achieve its mitigation aims. It was considered crucial in the 2007 Bali meeting that for any new deal on carbon reduction to be successful, unlike the previous Kyoto agreement, the

developing countries must play a major role. Because of their size and rate of development, China and India stand out among these nations (Barrett, 2007).

Scientific facts about India's internal climate change vulnerabilities and the disadvantageous effects on the nation's environment and economy have largely predisposed the country's engagement in the global climate discourse. India has become a global leader in climate action over the last three decades of climate change discussions, by striking a balance between its pressing need to fulfill its climate change commitments and its aspirations for national growth. Recently, there has been a change in its negotiation stances, which now reflect a delicate balance between its previous strategy focused on limitations and the new approach driven by aspirations that is supported by many political entities on a worldwide scale. (Atteridge, Shrivastava, Pahuja, & Upaddhay, 2012). India has decided for a more sophisticated multi-level governance approach entitled with subnational dimensions to focus on a more specific narrative on the global podiums (Atteridge, Shrivastava, Pahuja, & Upaddhay, 2012). India's foreign climate policy changed significantly between 2007 and 2011, moving from defensive, strictly distributive measures to mixed strategies that included several "value-creating" elements. India's international climate policy also grew more dynamic and flexible during this time. A risk mapping can be observed in South Asia (Figure 1)[1].

Several factors may have influenced India's shift in approach, including political changes, where the minister in charge and delegation leader are crucial, public awareness of India's vulnerability to climate change, growing domestic energy constraints, direct economic benefits from Kyoto Protocol market mechanisms, and responses to international pressure from other delegators. (Michaelowa & Michaelowa, 2012). The existing literature share the common narrative that India has not done enough, neither in terms of internal climate-induced [i]problems (mostly migration) nor in playing a vital role in regional co-operation of climate solidarity.

Bangladesh has been a climate-vulnerable country for a longer time because of its geographic position, while the aftermath of climate change has exponentially affected the regional and national border. Nearly 200 disaster events, including cyclones, storm surges, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, droughts, and other calamities, have struck the nation since its independence in 1971. These occurrences have claimed the lives of over 500,000 people and severely damaged the economy, way of life, and livelihoods (Islam, 2018). A plethora of reformation of policies is on the way, and it has already (in its 15th Constitutional amendment) prioritized the environment and climate protection (Nomani & Tuhin, 2022). Even though Bangladesh has taken a strong stand in climate diplomacy, there is a difference between what Bangladesh does and what it expects in return, for most of the UN-led initiatives. This narrative

[1] https://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/2017/06/south-asias-climate-hazard-hotspots/

was initially observed when Bangladesh did not take on any active participation in the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, which was expedited through the decisions of different blocs.

The failure of the Kyoto Protocol was arguably due to the lack of understanding between the developed and developing countries regarding the burden sharing of CO2 emissions. Bangladesh had a promising outcome for the GCF, as the government initiated the Economic Research Division under the Ministry of Finance as the Nationally Designated Authority (NDA) and GCF focal point (Masud, 2022). Bangladesh undertook six projects, particularly on adaptation and mitigation (GCF, 2022). A joint collaborative workshop was also organized to have a proper knowledge-sharing platform for the utilization of the GCF mechanism. In terms of the Paris Agreement, Bangladesh successfully integrated the G77 and Climate Vulnerable Forum and played the active role of chair of CVF for two years (Masud, 2022).

Internal migration remains a significant means for the people of Bangladesh to enhance their economic status and have better access to public services such as healthcare, education, and transportation. The escalation of this particular form of internal mobility is clearly apparent. Between the years 1984 and 1998, the net migration rate in urban areas of Bangladesh had a significant increase, rising from 1.2 percent to 16.4 percent. According to the 2015 and 2018 Bangladesh Sample Vital Statistic Surveys, the rate of people moving into urban areas was 90.1 and 115.2 per 1000 population, respectively. Based on the 2013 Bangladesh Urban Health Survey, over 66% of the urban slum population consisted of internal migrants. These individuals relocated primarily due to economic reasons and the risk of natural disasters. Major push causes include riverbank erosion, river floods in mainland locations, tidal flooding, cyclones, and storms in coastal places. As climate change continues, the movement of people within the country is expected to grow in response to rising sea levels in the next few decades (Akhter et al., 2021).

Pakistan is among the nations that come under the category of water-stressed states, already experiencing the negative consequences of climate change and problems with water insecurity. Being a signatory to the Paris Agreement offers Pakistan a fantastic opportunity to ask for international assistance to address its environmental concerns more effectively. Pakistan's economy is based on agriculture, just like Bangladesh; hence, any significant environmental changes will have a negative effect on the country's economy (Salik, 2017). It is expected that Pakistan can profit by requesting financial and technological support from the international community to stop additional environmental deterioration in the nation.

Apart from initiating the Paris Agreement and being a Sustainable Development Goals signatory, Pakistan’s participation in The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) intends to construct dams and coal-fired power plants, resulting in an approximate US$35 billion investment in the energy industry. Apart from the global forum, Pakistan is well known for 25 multilateral agreements where seven agreements clearly address the water scarcity issue of the country. The list of agreements for Pakistan includes the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 1992, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015- 2030, the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification 1994, the Indus Water Treaty 1960, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance 1971, and the Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972 (Iqbal & Khan, 2018). However, the internal political turmoil of Pakistan is affecting its global political relations.

Afghanistan is quite susceptible to climate change's consequences, including increased extreme weather events, altering precipitation patterns, and rising temperatures. The Taliban's assumption of power in August 2021 has greatly exacerbated food and livelihood insecurity and added to the already dire humanitarian situation (Rosvold, Funnemark, Grand, Tarif, & Smith, 2021). It also has serious water problems, just like Pakistan. Moreover, similar to Pakistan, Afghanistan signed the UNFCCC in 1992, endorsed the Kyoto Protocol in 2013, and approved the Paris Agreement in 2017. Afghanistan can benefit as a member of the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol, and Paris Agreement, whereas Bangladesh did not opt for the Kyoto Protocol. However, the overall failure of the Kyoto Protocol did not let Afghanistan fully take advantage of it. The internal political instability was also a major barrier. Afghanistan has arranged and put into effect a variety of climate change-related legislation, rules, programs, etc. Environmental protection policies, mining laws, water laws, energy laws, oil and gas laws, forest affairs laws, environmental impact assessment laws, air pollution reduction and prevention laws, and renewable energy policies are a few examples (Zaki, 2023).

Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, and Maldives have been playing the role of supporting players in terms of achieving climate negotiations in global climate forums. According to climate change projections, South Asia, including Nepal, would see continued increases in temperature, which will cause glaciers to retreat significantly, rivers to overflow for a while, and a progressive lack of clean water sources. Nepal has a minimal share in terms of greenhouse gas emissions compared to the world’s share. Since the UNDFCCC's founding, Nepal has participated in international climate change negotiations by submitting its Initial National Communication in 2004. The second national communication was submitted in 2014, and 2019 saw the submission of the third (GoN, 2011). Nepal also submitted the first Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement in 2016, the second one submitted in 2020. Another important alignment of Nepal is with G77. Nepal is caught between China and India, two of the world's fastest-growing economies, in the context of climate change negotiations and other intricate geopolitical realities (Pandey & Dahal, 2022).

Sri Lanka was initially focused on national border policies. The National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), National Environment Policy (NEP), and Capacity Assessment and Action Plan for Developing Capacity for Compliance with Global Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change, and Land Degradation are just a few of the twelve important climate change policy documents that the Sri Lankan government released between 1992 and 2017 (Hewawasam & Matsui, 2019). As a UNFCCC party, Sri Lanka started the process of creating its intended nationally determined contributions, or INDCs, and turned them into effect by October 2015. The

reduction of greenhouse gas emissions as mitigation, the strengthening of vulnerable communities, regions, and industries to withstand the negative effects of climate change as adaptation, the identification of the need for resource mobilization to implement adaptation and mitigation actions as means of implementation (finance, technology development, and transfer, capacity building), and the reduction of the risk and effects of climate-induced disasters as loss and damage comprise Sri Lanka's INDCs. Following Sri Lanka's acceptance of the Paris Agreement, His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka launched the country's NEXT-Blue Green Era program on January 6, 2016, to put the INDCs submitted to the Paris Agreement into action (Jayathunga & Gunarathne, 2015). The program's goal is to ensure that the country's economic development follows a low-carbon development pathway in order to meet the target for sustainable development (Jayathunga & Gunarathne, 2015).

Bhutan has been a silent player in climate diplomacy, although it has climate issues similar to India. A collaboration between India and Bhutan can be an effective bargaining tool for the international podium. The acceptance of the Kyoto Protocol in August 2002 and the UNFCCC in August 1995 marked the beginning of Bhutan's involvement in international affairs. November 2000 saw the submission of the first national communication to the UNFCCC, with the submission of the second occurring in November 2011. Although Bhutan has been focusing on adaption strategies, an evaluation of its reaction shows that mitigation has become its main advantage recently (Bisht, 2013).

Apart from being the most visited tourist spot in South Asia, Maldives has been a pioneer in terms of collaborating with the components of climate diplomacy and the blue economy. The leadership of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) draws attention to how national and international security frameworks are affected by climate change. The Maldives, which has served as the head of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) for four years, seeks to address the issues posed by climate change by putting in place national and international strategies, targets, and policies relating to the issue. In order to advance the shared interests of SIDS in UN climate negotiations, the Alliance of Small Island Nations (AOSIS) was established in 1990 by about 39 UN member nations, led by the Maldives, Vanuatu, and Trinidad and Tobago. The alliance was founded on a shared understanding of the threats posed by climate change, the vulnerabilities of islands, and the necessity of international action to assist the needs of SIDS (Betzold, Castro, & Weiler, 2012). Since the 1980s, the SIDS have participated in UN climate negotiations, demonstrating their commitment to a climate agenda and their specific needs about the kinds of solutions they want from the global policy community (Rasheed, 2019).

The story of South Asian countries being the least responsible for greenhouse gas emissions worldwide has been clear from the situation of not developing a proper voice power in international fora. These countries mostly do not get to advocate their needs on the global platform due to the geopolitical power paradigm of the developed nations. The decision-making process always fails due to some alleged withdrawals of different economically and politically powerful blocs. As a result, the global forums and their several initiatives did not add that much to countries from South

Asia. In South Asia, the idea of "common but differentiated responsibilities" is frequently emphasized. As these countries are not emitting greenhouse gases to a significant level, there is a debate among the policymakers on whether these countries should be considered accountable to that level. This discourse is still not settled, and several stakeholders have exploited this discourse as they consider the responsibilities to be settled by the developed nations.

South Asian nations take part in global climate negotiations, including the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). They frequently bargain for their particular circumstances, but the impact has not reached the ground level. A formulated speech or chairing a conference had been considered a milestone action for most of the countries except India. India's collaboration with China has been the most impactful among the signatories of climate diplomacy. As a result, India has been somewhat successful combating the issues of climate diplomacy. They have levelled up from regional and national boundaries to the international arena. Most of the other South Asian nations have been confined to developing national and regional policies. Countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan with less geopolitical importance also fail to nurture their need in the global platform. Another important discourse is that it can be difficult politically to strike a balance between global obligations to cut greenhouse gas emissions and national development and poverty alleviation aspirations. These nations are developing countries combating several political, economic, and social issues, including poverty, inflation, corruption, inequality, etc. It has been argued that reducing poverty and promoting economic growth should come first, which may cause conflicts of interest in international climate talks. In a nutshell, as a region, South Asia fails to create an impact on the global podium of climate diplomacy.

The Impact of Climate Migration-related Consequences

The issue of climate migration has emerged as a significant problem within the realm of climate diplomacy. Climate migration in the South Asian region primarily occurs within the country, often resulting in an influx of migrants into major cities. This influx places an overwhelming strain on the city dwellers and poses challenges for the government in terms of policy decisions and related matters. The phenomenon of migration resulting from environmental factors is gaining recognition as a significant reality, posing a prominent challenge in the 21st century. Addressing this issue is crucial in order to promote sustainable development. The shift in perspective can be attributed to the evolving nature of environmental deterioration. The earth's ecosystems are increasingly being subjected to several global environmental concerns, such as climate change, biodiversity loss, contamination of rivers and oceans, land degradation, drought, and deforestation of rainforests. Among the array of challenges, climate change emerges as a preeminent peril. Climate change in and of itself does not directly precipitate human migration, but it does give rise to detrimental environmental consequences and exacerbates existing vulnerabilities.

The scarcity of data pertaining to the impact of climate change events on migration might be attributed to the inherent challenge of disentangling environmental influences from other variables. The act of moving from demanding environmental conditions has played a significant role as a means of survival throughout the course of human history (McLeman, 2014). In the present era of a dynamic global climate, there is a pressing demand for enhanced comprehension of the environmental factors that drive migration. Undoubtedly, the subject matter carries significant importance in the realm of policy, as evidenced by the research conducted by Black et al. (2011). Additionally, it garners considerable attention from the general public. There is currently no universally recognized classification for individuals who migrate due to environmental factors. Consequently, these individuals lack a legal framework and official status that would impose obligations on nations. Indeed, individuals compelled to relocate as a result of environmental circumstances do not neatly fit inside the existing classifications outlined by the present international legal framework. This serves to highlight the limitations of the current paradigm that predominantly governs migration. According to the International Organization for Migration, individuals or collectives referred to as environmental migrants are those who, due to significant alterations in their environment that have a detrimental impact on their lives or living circumstances, are compelled or opt to depart from their customary residences. This relocation may be temporary or permanent, and it can occur either within their own country or across international borders.

Disaster displacement pertains to instances in which individuals are compelled to vacate their residences or habitual dwellings due to the occurrence of a disaster or as a precautionary measure to evade the consequences of imminent and predictable natural danger. The displacement occurs as a consequence of individuals being exposed to a natural hazard in circumstances where they possess a high level of vulnerability and a lack of resilience to effectively endure the consequences of said hazard.

Afghanistan is a landlocked country located in South Asia, bordered by Pakistan to the east. The primary factor contributing to climate change in Afghanistan is predominantly attributed to increases in temperature. The country of Afghanistan has observed a notable increase in temperature, surpassing the global average, with a recorded rise of 1.8 □ for the period spanning from 1951 to 2010. The projected duration of the temperature increases spans from 2006 to 2050, with an estimated rise of 1.7–2.3 □. Subsequently, it is expected to further increase by 2.7–6.4 □ until 2099 across the entirety of the country. Multiple instances of severe droughts have been documented, indicating a growing trend in the frequency of drought cycles. Notable examples include the periods of 1963-1964, 1966-1967, 1970-1972, and 1998-2006. The time span from 1998 to 2006 is often regarded as the most prolonged and severe drought in the climatic records of Afghanistan.

As of 8 July 2019, the drought's impact has significantly affected population mobility within Afghanistan, resulting in the displacement of around 287,000 individuals. This displacement is mostly observed in the north-western and western parts of the country. The rapid

influx of more than 250,000 individuals within the confines of Herat, a provincial metropolis, within a condensed timeframe, has resulted in the emergence of 19 substantial and extensive informal settlements. Based on projections, it has been determined that a significant population of 13.5 million individuals is currently experiencing extreme food insecurity, hence necessitating immediate emergency help. Under these circumstances, households that have been displaced and are currently residing in temporary and inadequately fortified shelters are encountering the potential dangers associated with harsh winter conditions and an elevated susceptibility to flooding, particularly for those individuals residing in areas adjacent to dry riverbeds. movement patterns in Afghanistan have been characterized by both internal displacement and movement, as well as significant emigration and refugee outflows, which have been observed since the 1970s.

The protracted conflict in Afghanistan, which commenced with the Soviet invasion in 1979, is often regarded as the primary catalyst for migration from the region. The initial significant migration took place in 1979 subsequent to the Soviet invasion, during which the populace predominantly relocated to Iran and Pakistan. Following the exit of the Soviet Union, a portion of the refugee population chose to return to their homeland. However, in the year 1990, the Mujahedeen, a group of warlords, assumed control, leading to the eruption of a civil conflict. This event subsequently triggered a significant wave of migration. The Taliban assumed control from 1995 to 2001. It is important to acknowledge that Afghanistan experienced a significant drought during this particular period. This drought exhibited characteristics of increased severity, duration, and devastation in comparison to previous droughts that had affected the region. In the year 2021. The Taliban has once again assumed control in Afghanistan. The South Asian nation has been grappling with a migration issue since its history has been marked by a legacy of violent conflicts. The climate migration-related challenges are further aggravated by the political, social, and geopolitical circumstances.

Before the withdrawal, there was a notable lack of practical focus on policies addressing climate and other environmental changes. This oversight is particularly significant in a nation where approximately 70 percent of the populace resides in rural regions, and where 80 percent of livelihoods are directly or indirectly reliant on agriculture. Historically, national finances have predominantly prioritized addressing security concerns, resulting in Afghanistan being among the nations with limited capacity to effectively manage the consequences of climate change. According to the most recent analysis by the Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index, which assesses and evaluates nations' susceptibility to extreme weather occurrences, Afghanistan was identified as the sixth-most impacted country in the year 2019. In a recent report analyzing the combined impacts of conflict and climate shocks, the International Committee of the Red Cross cautioned that the convergence of these two factors exacerbates food and economic insecurity, health disparities, and hampers access to vital services. Moreover, it undermines the ability of governments, institutions,

and societies to provide necessary support[2].

Migration linked to slow-onset impacts of sea-level rise, water stress, crop yield reductions, ecosystem loss, and drought					
	2020	2030		2050	
Country	Mean of Temp. range (≤2.2°C &	Paris Agreement (≤2.2°C)	Pledges & Targets (3.2°C)	Paris Agreement (≤2.2°C)	Pledges & Targets (3.2°C)
Bangladesh	455,491	900,452	2,025,159	1,496,207	3,301,205
India	14,047,875	17,283,213	27,485,098	26,069,365	45,487,710
Nepal	345,018	314,573	470,551	341,538	550,171
Pakistan	682,132	631,752	1,275,718	915,507	1,967,857
Sri Lanka	2,849,936	3,414,329	3,414,329	34,425,981	11,594,722
Total: India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka & Pakistan	**18,380,451**	**22,544,318**	**37,419,007**	**34,425,981**	**62,901,664**

Figure 2: Thorough migration data table of the South Asian Countries

Bangladesh is a country located in South Asia. The phenomenon of climate-induced migration is prevalent in Bangladesh. The country experiences annual occurrences of river erosion, flooding, and cyclones, which persist throughout the year. Consequently, a significant number of migrants are drawn to the country's two primary urban centers, with particular emphasis on the capital city, Dhaka. In the context of Bangladesh, it is observed that individuals who possess favourable financial circumstances, such as ample cash capital, and possess resources such as land and adequate housing facilities, tend to engage in planned migration. Conversely, individuals who are economically disadvantaged, particularly women, children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities, face limited opportunities for both voluntary and involuntary migration. According to Mallick and Vogt (2014), the phenomenon of complete migration has significant socioeconomic and cultural consequences for society, affecting both the place of origin and the destination of the displaced individuals. The incorporation of climate change-induced migration and unregulated urbanization has posed significant challenges for planning systems in developing nations such as Bangladesh (Ahsan et al., 2011).

Approximately 10% of the land in Bangladesh is situated at an elevation of merely one meter above the average sea level, while approximately one-third of the country is subject to the influence of tidal fluctuations. Currently, the number of individuals impacted by disaster occurrences every five years exceeds 50 million. The nation's extensive coastal region experiences

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https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/south-asia-could-see-40-million-climate-migrants-by-2030/

around one cyclone every three years. Each year, over 25% of the nation experiences flooding. However, the flood in 1998 affected up to 61% of the country, resulting in the displacement of 45 million individuals (Alam et al., 2011). Individuals residing in coastal regions are notably susceptible. The gradual emergence of calamities, such as the escalating salinity of soil and water in coastal regions as a consequence of rising sea levels, is impacting previously unaffected regions. The frequency and intensity of sudden onset disasters, such as cyclones, tidal water intrusion, and riverbank erosion, in low-lying coastal regions, have been observed to be increasing (WaterAid in Bangladesh, 2012). Individuals are currently witnessing alterations in the temporal extent of catastrophic occurrences, as well as the emergence of novel categories of calamities.

In the majority of instances, migrants experience a complete loss of their assets as a result of diverse forms of natural calamities, hence leading to a consequential disruption of the socio-ecological equilibrium. Furthermore, this phenomenon imposes an additional strain on the urban populace, particularly in major cities that are already characterized by inadequate planning and a lack of essential resources necessary for an improved standard of living. Nevertheless, in the majority of instances, climate-induced migrants experience a complete loss of their possessions, hence exacerbating their susceptibility to extreme vulnerability.

Bhutan is a landlocked country located in the Eastern Himalayas, bordered by China. The economy of Bhutan is predominantly reliant on the agricultural sector. The Bhutanese population continues to adhere to its longstanding cultural customs. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of climate change has significantly altered the agricultural landscape in the given region. Furthermore, Bhutan is situated in the eastern region of the Himalayas, an area that is known to experience significant repercussions from the phenomenon of global warming. Over the past few decades, the nation has experienced a series of severe weather phenomena, including hailstorms, windstorms, cyclones, droughts, and localized instances of intense and unpredictable rainfall.

Drawing upon experiences from various nations and utilizing local observations, it is imperative for Bhutan to gather and analyze all relevant information pertaining to the adverse impacts of extreme weather events. This data will serve as a foundation for scenario-building exercises and potential extrapolations aimed at developing sustainable farming systems. The purpose of this study is to provide reliable and evidence-based information that can aid in the efficient management of scarce resources and assist in the identification of appropriate methods for climate change adaptation. Due to the unfavorable circumstances associated with climate change, a significant number of young individuals perceive the adoption of agricultural practises as unsustainable in the foreseeable future. These circumstances have resulted in a certain degree of compelled migration. Nevertheless, the nation has yet to encounter a substantial influx of climate-induced migrants in its metropolitan areas in comparison to other countries in South Asia.

India is a country located in South Asia. There is a significant influence on the rates of interstate bilateral migration, even after accounting for migration costs, features of the origin state, and variables that attract individuals to the destination state. The migration rate between two states

is found to increase by an average of 1.5% for each additional month of drought experienced in the origin state over the five years leading up to the migration year. This effect is observed across all states, but agricultural states show a slightly higher increase of 1.7%. The impact of drought is particularly significant in agricultural states. The findings remain consistent when accounting for the size of irrigated land in the state and incorporating controls for all fixed factors that are constant over time and specific to each bilateral relationship.

The impact of climate variability is rather minor in comparison to the magnitude of migration costs, as quantified by the obstacles associated with inter-state mobility. The concept that adverse environmental conditions contribute to the rise of international migration was initially introduced in the literature on "environmental refugees" by Myers (1997). However, other scholars such as Piguet (2010) and Gemenne (2011) have offered alternative interpretations and nuanced perspectives on this phenomenon. Numerous scholarly investigations employ comprehensive microeconomic data to examine the variables that establish a connection between migration and environmental circumstances.

Being a nation characterized by diverse geographical features, India, exhibits a multitude of complex migration patterns. Climate-induced migration occurs at the intra-state level; but, when examining inter-state migration, other factors take precedence. State governments play a pivotal role in circumstances where there exists a certain degree of inter-state economic competition within the Indian political landscape.

The Maldives is a South Asian country located in the Indian Ocean. Climate change presents a significant existential peril to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), as they are particularly vulnerable to its consequences, including land loss, beach erosion, disruptions to livelihoods, and water scarcity. In the absence of prompt intervention, climate change represents a significant risk to the progress and stability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and presents a regional security concern. The Maldives is a nation consisting of a collection of about 1,190 islands, which are arranged into 26 atolls that have a ring-like shape. These atolls are distributed throughout an area of around 90,000 square kilometers in the Indian Ocean. A total of 187 islands is currently occupied. The current population residing on these islands is approximately 533,941 individuals. In addition to the islands that are inhabited, there are around 400 islands that serve as resorts or are utilized for non-administrative reasons. The nation has been undergoing internal migration, with individuals relocating from the atolls to the capital city and other prominent urban areas. About 33% of the populace resides in the urban center of Male.

The significant population density has resulted in a substantial need for real estate. However, due to limited land availability, rental prices in areas like Male frequently surpass the average household income. This transition mostly comprises those who are actively pursuing improved health, education, career opportunities, and enhanced access to essential services. The discernible influence of climate change on migration patterns in the Maldives is not immediately apparent among the several elements that serve as motivators for communities and individuals..

The findings of this study revealed a consensus among the households regarding the anticipated repercussions of climate change on their means of subsistence, particularly in relation to fishing and tourism. Consequently, these communities are expected to face limitations in their daily activities as a result of these impacts. Nevertheless, none of the individuals referenced these issues as a primary cause for their decision to migrate.

Regarding the matter of compelled departure from the nation, research indicates that those residing in a particular country perceive emigration to be the "final recourse," only considered once all alternative tactics and techniques have proven ineffective. Despite the implementation of various successful climate change policies and actions by different governments, the current policy frameworks lack provisions addressing migration. The majority of climate change strategies fail to adequately address migration, while the majority of migration policies neglect to prioritize the consequences of climate change or environmental degradation. The implementation of adaptation measures on every island in the Maldives would pose significant financial and logistical challenges, rendering it both costly and impractical for the government. It is worth noting that, presently, climate-induced migration is not a primary focus of policy considerations. However, it is anticipated that the effects of climate change on conventional livelihood practices will compel individuals to relocate in pursuit of improved economic prospects in the future. The Maldives is confronted with this risk.

Nepal is a landlocked country located in South Asia. The absence of a consensus about the impact of the environment on migration might be attributed to the limited availability of reliable data pertaining to this topic. Castles (2002) highlights a discrepancy in the work of Myers and Kent (1995) about the quantification of environmental displacement. While Myers and Kent identify millions of individuals who are susceptible to such displacement, they fail to provide an enumeration of those who have actually relocated due to environmental factors. However, it is worth noting that certain case studies have indicated a connection between population growth, environmental degradation, and political violence as drivers of migration (Henry et al., 2004; Homer-Dixon, 1991, 1994). Lee (2001) has referred to this combination of factors as the "environment-security nexus." Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that these studies also demonstrate that environmental conditions are just one element within a complex network of interconnected variables. The causal relationships among these variables cannot be fully disentangled through qualitative analyses alone (Adamo and Crews-Meyer, 2006; Castles, 2002; Wood, 2001).

The environment of Nepal has a wide range of characteristics, mirroring the diversity found among its inhabitants. It is recognized as possessing one of the most diverse ecologies globally. However, it is also acknowledged as being particularly vulnerable and fragile (Chaudhary, 1998; Shrestha, 1993). The current state of the Himalayan environment is characterized by a significant decline in forest cover and an alarming rate of soil erosion. These environmental challenges pose a serious threat to the indigenous plant and animal species, thereby compromising the local biodiversity and pushing several regions towards the precipice of severe environmental

degradation (Blaike et al., 1980; Blaikie and Brookffield, 1987; Eckholm, 1976; Ives and Messerli, 1989).

Pakistan is a country located in South Asia. Pakistan is a nation with a population of 188 million individuals, classified as a low-middle-income country. It has a low level of human development, characterized by significant gaps in poverty, income, and development infrastructure between rural and urban areas. The nation is predominantly characterized by a semi-arid climate, and the agricultural industry serves as the primary source of employment, officially employing 44% of the labor force (68% in rural regions) (Government of Pakistan, 2014). The agricultural productivity in rural areas is influenced by fluctuations in climate factors, including average temperature and precipitation. Qin et al. (2014) have demonstrated that heat stress has a discernible impact on the agricultural production of winter crops. For instance, Sultana et al. (2009) suggested that the cultivation of wheat, which serves as a primary dietary source for a majority of the Pakistani population, might potentially see a reduction ranging from 5% to 25% due to the impacts of climate change. Majid and Zahir (2014) found comparable outcomes in their examination of the effects of climate change on agricultural productivity and socioeconomic vulnerabilities in the regions of Punjab and Sindh. According to their analysis, drought emerges as the foremost climate phenomenon, exerting a substantial influence on the agricultural productivity of wheat, rice, cotton, and sugar cane. The adverse consequences of reduced agricultural yields have a detrimental effect on tenant farmers, prompting them to pursue alternative means of livelihood and, in some cases, relocate to metropolitan areas (Majid & Zahir, 2014).

This study posits that climate change, in conjunction with many socioeconomic factors, contributes to the phenomenon of migration, aligning with the prevailing discourse on climate-induced migration. The underdevelopment observed in the semi-arid rural regions of Pakistan is accompanied by disparities in investments made in urban areas, particularly in terms of service supply and infrastructure. These disparities serve as an incentive for individuals to migrate towards urban settlements. Nevertheless, the fluctuation in meteorological patterns, including climate shocks like heatwaves, also exerts an influence on the migration patterns. Climate shocks and gradual changes have a significant impact on the ecological conditions in rural areas, leading to changes in agricultural production. As a result, the incomes of poor and marginalised farmers are negatively affected. Therefore, individuals may make migratory choices as a means to mitigate the negative impact of declining rural incomes, which can be further exacerbated by climate pressures.

Based on the findings of the Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020 (GRID 2020) by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), the number of individuals who experienced displacement in South Asia as a result of catastrophes in 2019 exceeded 9.5 million, marking the highest recorded total since 2012. In 2019, South Asia emerged as a significant region of concern due to its high incidence of disasters, resulting in a substantial proportion of global displacements, specifically accounting for 38.3 percent of the total. The paper highlights that a significant proportion of the displacements resulting from disasters in South Asia can be attributed

to the occurrence of monsoon rains, floods, and tropical storms. Furthermore, it has been projected that the number of climate refugees could range from 100 to 200 million by the year 2050.

Sri Lanka, officially known as the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, is an island country located in South Asia. According to the World Bank paper, it is projected that by the year 2050, over 19 million individuals residing in the country may find themselves inhabiting regions classified as moderate or severe hotspots. Despite being classified as a middle-income country, Sri Lanka is currently grappling with the adverse consequences of climate change. According to the Centre for Poverty Analysis in Sri Lanka (2008), agriculture plays a significant role in ensuring domestic food availability, accounting for 83% of the total. Additionally, a substantial portion of the population, approximately 25-30%, remains highly reliant on agriculture. It is worth noting that smallholder farmers, who constitute a significant proportion of the agricultural sector, contribute more than 60% to the overall agricultural production. The subsequent sections of the research will illustrate that the nation must not disregard the ramifications of climate change and must undertake measures to anticipate and allocate resources for substantial adaptations in order to safeguard its populace and economic stability.

In the context of South Asian nations, climate-related disasters have significant adverse effects on fundamental aspects of human existence, such as limited access to education, healthcare, nutrition, and income, hence resulting in increased rural-to-urban migration. Sri Lanka, being a delta located in the Indian Ocean that is prone to disasters, is not distinct in this particular scenario.

Political responses and impact of regional geo-political practices

The notion of South Asian unity is sometimes regarded as a fantasy, due to the absence of cohesive strategies, resulting in a lack of proactive policies addressing the challenges posed by climate-induced complications. The emergence of global environmental awareness and governance is attributed to the reevaluation of global politics in the late twentieth century. In light of increasing recognition of ecological interdependence and a sense of urgency. The field of global environmental governance studies has revealed that contemporary multilateral rule systems transcend traditional boundaries of state-based jurisdictions and public-private divisions. As a result, these systems establish connections between actors and locations that challenge conventional understandings of international relations (Biermann, 2014; Bulkeley et al., 2014).

Despite the relatively recent emergence of the notion of global environmental governance, many of the components encompassed by this phrase may be traced back to earlier initiatives, including those pertaining to international environmental cooperation during the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. The study program on international environmental regimes conducted throughout the 1980s and 1990s is considered the most pertinent forerunner to the ongoing debate. At that time, the pivotal inquiries revolved around the establishment, sustenance, and ultimate efficacy of environmental regimes. Previous studies have examined intergovernmental environmental organizations and nonstate environmental

organizations, both of which have garnered renewed interest in contemporary discussions on global governance.

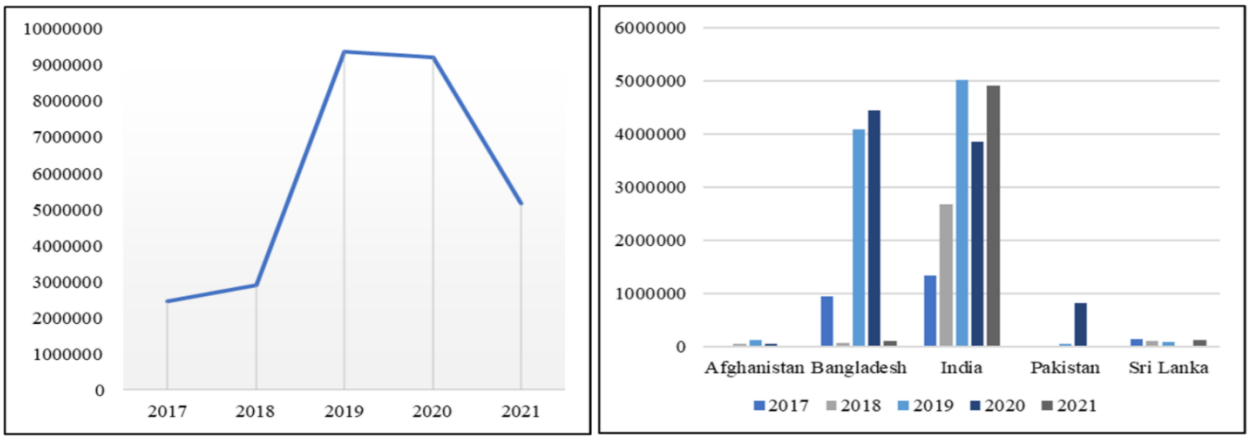

Figure 3: Internal displacement of the South Asian countries due to weather related problems

The comprehension of global governance originates from an observation of the insufficiency of political reactions to the phenomenon of globalization. From this standpoint, global governance is primarily regarded as a political initiative aimed at restoring the essential ability to address effectively challenges in the contemporary era. The authors in this field advocate for the establishment of novel "global governance architectures" as a means to mitigate the adverse effects of economic and ecological globalization. Frequently, there is a tendency to foster and advance novel establishments, such as multilateral agreements and conventions, enhanced international organizations, and innovative financial methods. This is done to address the reliance of existing international systems on the benevolence of sovereign nations. The UN Commission on Global Governance, for instance, presented a wide range of reform suggestions aimed at addressing the challenges posed by globalization. Global governance is perceived in this context as a viable remedy, serving as a mechanism that policymakers must cultivate and utilize to address the challenges arising from globalization.

In contrast, the South Asian bloc has consistently exhibited a departure from principles of effective government. The historical conflicts and ongoing disputes between India and Pakistan, including the Kashmir valley issue, the negotiation of water rights in the Indus valley, and the lack of response from India and Bangladesh towards the preservation of the Sundarbans, as well as the bilateral political tensions between India and Sri Lanka, which have been influenced by changes in regime, and the fluctuating political relationship between India and Maldives, along with the inefficient handling of India's relations with Nepal and Bhutan under their respective monarchies, all have collectively contributed to a lack of attention towards addressing global governance challenges. It is evident that climate-related challenges persist as a significant concern, while nations are consistently confronted with the occurrence of natural disasters on an annual basis. The

[3] https://www.asiapathways-adbi.org/2022/06/protecting-victims-of-climate-induced-migration-and-displacement-in-south-asia/

Disaster Management Centre of the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) exhibits deficiencies in its ability to provide comprehensive and inclusive decision-making processes and execute successful strategies.

Global environmental governance refers to the dynamics of international politics that extend beyond the traditional boundaries of nation-states, since it involves the growing involvement of actors that have operated primarily at the subnational level. This form of governance encompasses several actors, including private entities such as expert networks, environmentalists, and multinational enterprises, as well as governmental entities such as intergovernmental organizations and international tribunals that have been newly established. The concept of novelty encompasses more than mere numerical growth; it also involves the capacity of nonstate actors to participate actively in shaping the political system. In the literature we have examined, agency refers to the capacity of both individuals and groups to exert influence and alter the trajectory of events or the results of various processes. This capacity is now being observed more frequently in locations that extend beyond the purview of the state and intergovernmental organizations.

Numerous crucial establishments within the realm of global environmental governance currently incorporate, and in some cases, are propelled by, nonstate actors. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have collaborated with governments to implement effectively international conventions. This collaboration is shown by their role as quasi-implementing agency in development assistance programs run by entities such as the World Bank or bilateral agencies. Private entities, including both profit-driven and non-profit organizations, actively engage in global institutions to tackle environmental challenges, independent of any coercion, persuasion, or financial support from governments and other public entities. This is particularly evident in the realm of forest and fisheries governance. The concept of "agency beyond the state" distinguishes global environmental governance from conventional international environmental politics. The South Asian situation also fails to meet these parameters due to a lack of a comprehensive approach among certain countries, which is seemingly pushed by both the United States and China in the region.

Conclusion

Climate diplomacy had been evident in South Asia in a much more subtle form. Recent practices have paved the way of depicting the implications of such narratives to a broader level including multiple stakeholders. Because of the wealthy countries' geopolitical power paradigm, these countries rarely have the opportunity to speak for their concerns on a global scale. The decision-making process is always derailed by reported departures of various economically and politically significant blocs. Followed by the scenario in global platforms, climate migration has arisen as a key issue in the area of climate diplomacy. Climate migration in South Asia largely happens within the country, frequently resulting in a flood of migrants into major cities. This inflow puts an

enormous burden on city people and presents challenges for the government in terms of policy decisions and other related issues.

As a global goal, climate diplomacy depends on the geopolitical relations of the stakeholders. This review article specifically identifies the practices among South Asian countries to highlight the required understanding in terms of formulating necessary policy guidelines. Also, this critical analysis recognizes the similarities and contrasts and focuses on the major issues that need to be addressed to function as proper climate diplomacy. A collaborative method integrating all the stakeholders from multiple perspectives is needed to propel the practices in South Asia.

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