

The Greater Caribbean Climate Mobility Report Agenda for Action

Guided by the three core tenets — Adapt Locally, Protect Rights & Act Together — the Greater Caribbean Climate Mobility Initiative recommends an Agenda for Action with seven key Actions to prepare for climate mobility in the Greater Caribbean



Global Centre for
Climate Mobility



Greater Caribbean
Climate Mobility Initiative
Enabling People Positive Adaptation Journeys



United Nations
Climate Change



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The Greater Caribbean Climate Mobility Initiative, led by the Global Centre for Climate Mobility and the Association of Caribbean States in close collaboration with UN partners and the World Bank, aims to build a shared evidence base on climate mobility and to chart a common course of action.

The Great Caribbean Shifts report presents current climate mobility realities and future trends through 2050, combining data from 14 communities across six countries with advanced modeling projections, using a spatial general economic equilibrium model.

The Initiative proposes an Agenda for Action—shaped by dialogue with over 1,200 regional stakeholders—offering seven core recommendations for governments and partners to address the challenges and harness the potential of climate mobility, ensuring positive community transitions toward resilience and shared prosperity.

Anchored in regional precedents, including the Escazú Agreement,¹ the Cartagena Declaration,² and guidance by the Inter-American Court of, and Commission on, Human Rights, the Agenda directs climate mobility responses in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.³

1 Ensure Access to Climate Risk Information

Recognize climate literacy and the availability and accessibility of relevant climate risk information as fundamental to protecting people's rights and agency in the context of the climate crisis, including for their individual and collective adaptation and mobility decisions.

Risk Anticipation

- Strengthen **regional climate risk and impact monitoring**, assessments and forecasting,

including insights about projected future climate-related population shifts that can be integrated into National Adaptation Plans, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development policies.

- Expand **multi-hazard early-warning systems** to cover all countries in the region.
- Support **Indigenous and local governance and public information systems** for adaptation, disaster response, risk reduction, and recovery.

Inclusive Knowledge

- Leverage **Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and local knowledge** in combination with scientific data to co-develop bottom-up adaptation and disaster risk reduction practices.
- Bolster **data collection on the gendered impacts of climate change** and the disproportionate climate risk faced by women and girls, including to their physical safety, security and well-being.

Access to Information

- Ensure that data about macro-level changes in weather patterns or climate disturbances is translated into **actionable information on local impacts**, and communicated in ways that are conducive to non-expert understanding and sensitive to local culture, language, and communication processes.
- Reduce barriers to information access by selecting communication channels, messaging and languages to **reach vulnerable communities and population groups**, including rural and remote areas and Indigenous people, women, the elderly, children and young people, migrants, refugees, and displaced populations, slum dwellers, and people with disabilities.
- Raise **public awareness** about the relationship between climate change and human mobility beyond the sudden-onset disaster context.

1 Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean. (2018). United Nations Treaty Series, vol. 3388C.N.195.2018.TREATIES-XXVII.18 of 9 April 2018 (Opening for signature) and C.N.196.2018.

2 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees. (1984). Adopted by the Colloquium on the International Protection of Refugees in Central America, Mexico and Panama. Cartagena de Indias, Colombia.

3 Paris Agreement to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. (2015).

2 Enable Positive Adaptation Journeys

Support frontline communities in protecting their homes from climate hazards and strengthen their adaptive capacities and agency in decisions to move by scaling up participatory planning, institutional capacities, and investments for climate adaptation, taking account of differences in local exposure and vulnerability to climate hazards.

Resources & Livelihoods

- Resource the right to stay of voluntarily immobile communities through support for **locally-led adaptation and livelihood diversification strategies** that prioritize the development of culturally sensitive and locally controlled economic activities, including the adaptive management of natural resources such as forests, soils, crops, fish and livestock.
- Ensure **equal opportunities for men and women** in education, job training and financing for livelihood diversification and in emerging green sectors, such as renewable energy and ecotourism.
- Promote the wider adoption of **climate risk insurance** mechanisms and share experiences and lessons learned across the region.

Urban Planning & Housing

- Promote **urban planning** and disaster recovery that is well-informed by data about future climate risks and population shifts, through strategies such as adaptive land use, and sustainable, nature-based, and equitable infrastructure and housing solutions.

- Include **internally displaced people, refugees, and migrants** in urban climate risk mitigation and adaptation strategies, with a particular focus on improving their physical safety through sustainable and affordable housing solutions.

Ocean & Marine Resources

- Institute a joint observatory to **monitor the localized manifestations and impacts of sea-level rise** in the region in order to develop a coordinated action plan for coastal protection & adaptation.
- Reinforce efforts to protect and **preserve marine and coastal ecosystems** as a basis for sustainable livelihoods and to reduce disaster risk and increase resilience through nature-based solutions in coastal communities.

Circular Migration & Mobility

- Expand **labour migration pathways**, in consultation with key constituencies such as employers' and workers' organizations, to mitigate the livelihood impacts of climate change and ensure the protection of migrant workers' rights and their ability to return.
- Facilitate **diaspora contributions** to development and climate adaptation through skills transfer and financial infrastructure that enables faster, safer and cheaper transfer of remittances, especially in anticipation of and following disasters.
- Promote gender-responsive **financial literacy** in origin communities to support sustainable and strategic remittance use and investment.





3 Protect the 'Right to Stay' & Support Relocation in Dignity

Address the threat that climate change poses to people's attachment to place, their land rights, and potentially to the habitability of entire regions and countries by creating legal protections and predictable procedures to define State responsibilities and guide their conduct in situations where people's right to stay is threatened.

Continued Statehood, Sovereignty and Citizenship

- Support and advocate for the **Principle of Continuity of Statehood** amidst climate change related sea-level rise as a principle of international law to ensure that the rights, prerogatives and privileges of affected countries are never challenged, doubted or diminished and that their people are guaranteed continued nationality, citizenship and self-determination.

Land & Due Process Rights

- Protect the **Rights of Indigenous peoples**, including Indigenous and local land rights,

to uphold their right to stay and ability to return, and seek the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous peoples before implementing climate adaptation, economic development, or relocation actions, ensuring their ability to mitigate and adapt to climate impacts with dignity.

Planned Relocation

- Remove barriers to movement for involuntarily immobile, or "trapped," populations through gender-responsive financial support and **participatory planned relocation** that considers the vulnerabilities of relocated persons and the integration capacity of the destination community.
- Protect the right to self-determination and non-discriminatory integration of Indigenous peoples in destination contexts, with a particular focus on preserving cultural identity, language use, and social structures in resettlement communities.
- Adopt legal and policy frameworks to clarify rights and responsibilities in the context of planned relocations and consider installing an **Ombudsperson** at a national or regional level to provide guidance for policy development and monitor policy implementation.

4 Advance Rights-based Climate Mobility Responses

Establish a rights-based response to climate mobility, anchored in people's right to stay, and the protection of those who are forced to move due to climate impacts, whether internally or across borders, individually or as a community, to uphold their human rights and promote positive outcomes, especially for vulnerable groups.

Internal Displacement

- Monitor people's **outcomes in the context of evacuations**, including the duration of their displacement and their ability to find sustainable solutions, and treat evacuations as a form of internal displacement that requires a long-term response.
- Recognize environmental and climate factors as drivers of internal displacement and codify and protect the **rights of internally displaced persons (IDPs)** under regional frameworks and national laws that support return and reconstruction, as well as durable solutions where return is not possible.

Humanitarian Protection

- Incorporate the expanded refugee definition recommended in the 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees into domestic legal frameworks and recognize that the **effects of climate change and disasters** interact with different elements of this expanded refugee definition, particularly under the grounds of massive violation of human rights or circumstances that seriously disturb public order, thereby qualifying some climate-displaced individuals for refugee protection.
- Advance the implementation of the Chile Declaration and Plan of Action (2024–2034)⁴ coming out of the **Cartagena+40 process**, in particular its provisions related to climate and disaster displacement.
- Create and implement clear guidance for officers conducting asylum or international protection screenings and adjudications on considering climate factors in the determination process, recognizing the **importance of gender and other intersectional vulnerabilities** for assessing protection needs.

Climate Mobility in Dignity

- Establish complementary pathways under national immigration law and policy such as humanitarian visas, temporary protection programs, family reunification, and labor mobility, tailored to the **needs of climate-displaced individuals**, ensuring these pathways are provided in addition to access to asylum, offer a durable solution, and preserve fundamental human rights.
- Establish dedicated frameworks and agreements that anticipate and enable the movement and **permanent resettlement of people** and the protection of their rights in the context of slow-onset and irreversible climate impacts where permanent return is not an option.

Local Inclusion

- Support destination communities so they can provide safe and non-discriminatory access to basic services to all residents, including migrants and displaced persons, and **implement economic and social integration strategies** that respect the rights and cultural identity of Indigenous peoples and combat racism, xenophobia, and other forms of discrimination.



⁴ Chile Declaration and Plan of Action. (2024). Chile Declaration and Plan of Action 2024–2034. ACNUR. https://www.acnur.org/sites/default/files/2024-12/Chile_Declaration_and_Plan_of_Action_ENG.pdf

5 Respond Collectively to Loss and Damage

Document, assess, and respond to all forms of loss and damage while elevating the visibility of non-economic loss and damage, particularly for Greater Caribbean countries and communities to whom climate change poses an existential threat, such as Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Indigenous peoples.

Document Loss & Damage

- Develop and implement a regional approach for disaggregated data collection, funding needs tracking, and **quantification of loss and damage** from climate change and climate mobility in the Greater Caribbean.
- Undertake concerted efforts to **document, measure and address non-economic losses and damages**, such as damages to people's health and well-being, biodiversity and ecosystem services loss and their link with the loss of Indigenous knowledge and culture, forced displacement and loss of sense of place, and the loss of heritage, historic and cultural, and sacred sites.

Mitigate Loss & Damage

- Pursue international partnerships to expand and **strengthen the capacities and skills of health systems** to respond to escalating climate change impacts on people's mental and physical health and prevent a shortage of critical vaccines, medications, and health workers.
- Assess the scope of loss and damage to key economic sectors, such as agriculture, tourism, real estate and transportation in consultation with affected businesses and **pool public and private resources** for mitigation strategies.
- Facilitate effective and inclusive engagement with frontline communities in order to **prevent loss and damage from governments' actions** for climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction and development, and ensure accountability for the affected people.
- Pursue **strategic litigation** to hold polluters accountable for loss and damage and mobilize resources for the remediation of harm.

6 Integrate Climate Mobility into Regional Development Strategies

Build a regional ecosystem that plans for, builds capacities, and addresses climate mobility in the Greater Caribbean by developing common approaches across existing regional cooperation and integration mechanisms, pursuing a division of labor and pooling of resources, and by building public-private partnerships, and embracing the leadership of cities across the region.

Institutional Resources

- Forge a coalition of member states working to **strengthen synergies and complementarity across regional cooperation mechanisms** like the OAS, ACS, SICA, CARICOM, OECS etc. to effectively address the impacts of the climate crisis in the Greater Caribbean region.
- Ensure the **representation of climate vulnerable groups** and populations in regional forums, including Indigenous people, cities & local governments, and migrants, refugees and displaced persons.

Human Resources & Mobility

- Assess businesses' skills needs, existing skills development efforts, and the aspirations of young people in the region with a view to increasing the **provision of training, skills development and mentorship** that would allow more businesses to fill jobs and more young people to access opportunities closer to home.
- Harness Free Movement Agreements in the region to **facilitate mobility in the context of slow and sudden-onset climate hazards** and exercise continued solidarity with countries undergoing disasters, including by allowing for the entry and temporary stay of evacuees.

Connectivity

- Expand the region's digital infrastructure to ensure connectivity as a backbone for continued public service delivery, entrepreneurship, and job creation in the context of climate calamities.
- Build a partnership for cities in the region, connecting large urban hubs with smaller regional cities and partners to strengthen capacities for urban adaptation planning and migrant reception and to support the development of a pipeline of projects for inclusive urban climate adaptation.

7 Strengthen International Solidarity with the Region

Scale up international support for countries of the Greater Caribbean that have historically contributed little to climate change but find themselves on the frontlines of its impacts, resourcing their capacities to adapt and address loss and damage, and enabling people from the region to use mobility to pursue opportunities and strengthen their resilience.

Emissions Mitigation

- **Phase out fossil fuels** causing greenhouse gas emissions to prevent further rise in global temperatures leading to more loss of human life and irreversible loss and damage to Greater Caribbean ecosystems, communities, and economies.

Climate Mobility Pathways

- Expand **legal migration pathways** between Greater Caribbean countries and destination countries outside the region to protect the human rights of all migrants in the context of climate change and to ensure the dignified resettlement of those who are forced to move due to climate hazards.

Financial Support

- Work with countries in the region to **prevent the accumulation of further unsustainable debt** in the context of disaster risk reduction, recovery and climate adaptation, including by promoting innovative approaches, such as debt-for-nature and adaptation swaps and sharing experiences and technical know-how in this regard across the region.
- Address the shortcomings of the current climate finance architecture, including by **increasing funding for adaptation and loss and damage**, simplifying and accelerating procedures, and prioritizing a greater proportion of grants and highly concessional finance for low-income countries, SIDS, and community-led climate action.

Technical Support & Technology Transfer

- Strengthen and localize technical support and **technology transfer to support climate adaptation priorities** in the region and for addressing loss & damage, including solutions for urban resilience, displaced people, and the preservation of culture and heritage.

