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# Pacific News Minute: Exodus of Pacific Climate Migrants Already Underway

By NEAL CONAN • DEC 3, 2015

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In Paris earlier this week, President Obama warned of tens of millions of climate migrants from the Asia Pacific if the nations of the world fail to reach agreement at the UN climate change conference. Now, a new report finds that the migration is already underway. Details from Neal Conan in Paris with today's Pacific News Minute.



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In many ways, this new UN report tells us what we already know...the droughts, rising tides and more violent storms generated by climate change have forced thousands of people from low lying islands to move. What's new, are hard numbers from a comprehensive survey conducted in Tuvalu, Nauru and Kiribati. Over the last ten years, 15% of Tuvalu's population emigrated overseas, 10% of Nauru's, and just over 1% of the much larger population of Kiribati. Many others wanted to move, but didn't have the money.

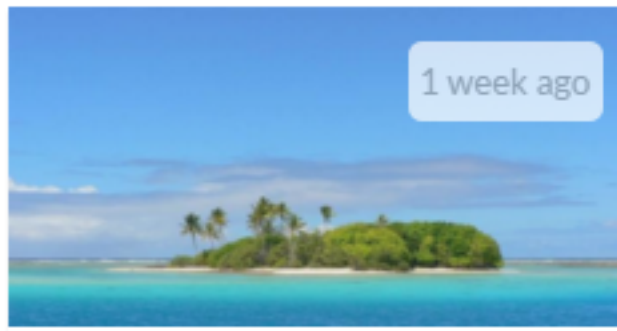
Researchers then projected what those numbers might look like in 50 years - under a moderate climate change scenario - temperatures up 1.8 degrees Celsius, sea level 12 and a half inches higher - migration would be up 35% in Kiribati, and 100% in Tuvalu.

But where those people will go is unclear. The Geneva Convention makes no provision for climate refugees - earlier this year, New Zealand's Supreme Court rejected the claim of a man from Kiribati and ordered him and his family back home.

Doctor Koko Warner, the author of the UN report, said that without the protection of the Geneva Convention, "These people have no human rights, yet human mobility is their only option for survival." She also noted, "The rich countries of the world are dangerously unprepared for the tide of environmental refugees that will be arriving."

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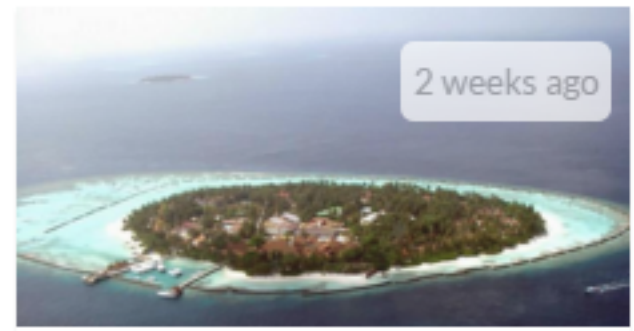
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