

During this century, it appears that people generally have not emigrated because of environmental degradation. Political and social oppression, as well as militarily induced movements, clearly have played a role in emigration. But the principal motivator appears to be the prospect of increased material well-being elsewhere, with "pull" factors predominating over "push" factors. People emigrate because they want and expect to attain a higher level of personal consumption. In the future, there is no denying that acute environmental degradation could cause substantial, environmentally motivated population movements. Beyond concerns over land degradation, there is a fear that global warming will cause a rise in sea levels and that this would force millions to flee coastal cities and low-lying agricultural land. But the extreme degree of degradation required to spark such massive shifts, the assumption that countries would be willing and able to take action to mitigate pressures for emigration at the source, and the potential recipient countries' unwillingness to accept immigrants on such an explosive scale, do not make large population movements inevitable or even likely, except on a limited regional basis. The conclusion that environmental stress will result in emigrants from the developing countries that could overwhelm the developed countries is at this time an unfounded assertion. This, however, should not detract from the importance of understanding the implications of the declining habitability of certain regions or perhaps the world as a whole.

7. Policy Implications

At its greatest level of aggregation, the policy implication for decision-makers is that they should take into account the links between environmental stress and national security to enhance policy decisions. But it must also be recognized that our understanding of the issue is severely limited. Public policy involves making choices. It is apparent, by the number of issues touched upon in this Paper and identified in the conceptual framework, that to address effectively environmental stress-national security linkages a high degree of policy integration will be required. This implication applies whether national security is considered in its "broad" or less encompassing "environmentally enhanced" definition. The scope and types of linkages will, however, vary as decision-makers revise their understanding of what constitutes national security.

The environmental stress-national security linkage is one dimension of a larger trend in global change. The two fundamental parameters of global change are that the world is organized politically into states; and that these same states are becoming increasingly interdependent. Interdependence is most readily seen in terms of increasing economic integration. But, as this Paper discusses, environmental