

natural disasters.

2. **Human-induced.** Two types of human-induced environmental change may be associated with population movements. These are: i) a single catastrophic incident and; ii) long-term environmental degradation. Examples of the first type are the Chernobyl nuclear accident and the Bhopal toxic chemical accident. These disasters are, arguably by some, unforeseen and the environmental abuse occurs quickly. The environmental effect, however, may last for a considerable length of time.

The same cannot be said of the second type of environmental degradation. Long-term environmental degradation can be characterized as pollution or ecological stress. While there are uncertainties associated with long-term environmental degradation, the processes at work, such as the loss of biodiversity and soil erosion, are well known to the global community. While the most potentially devastating environmental problems are global in nature (e.g., ozone depletion, climate change), it is not clear that this set of issues is the most important with respect to potential population movements over the next decade or two. The most likely candidates for pressuring populations to move are water shortages and local land degradation. Moreover, all changes in ecosystems are not negative ones. It must also be recognized that many human-induced environmental changes are socially desirable, at least by some groups, and that value judgements are made in assessing whether a given environmental change is positive or negative for the human condition.

3. **Military-political Upheavals.** Military-political upheavals refer to the conscious and systematic destruction of the environment as an instrument of war, or the destruction of the environment as a genocidal policy. The destruction of the Tigris marshes in Iraq are part of a genocide policy to eradicate the Marsh Arabs. An example of environmental destruction as a military strategy was the US deforestation policy during the Vietnam war. Military-political upheavals are distinct from the human-induced category above because the intent of the policy is to destroy the environment and impose hardship upon others. Many people subjected to military-political upheavals would meet the international criteria for refugees irrespective of the environmental factors.

4. **Social-economic.** This category recognizes that environmental factors must enter conventional analysis of political and social instability. It includes the idea of repressive socio-economic systems where a scarcity of renewable resources, such as food, stems not from an absolute shortage but from the manner of distribution that