

Climate-induced mobilities: Discourses and policies in Canada

Abstract

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This article is part of my dissertation project that addresses the following paradox: the mounting evidence of climate change impacts and climate-induced *mobilities* (CM) and the puzzling lack of responses by governments around the world and here in Canada. The effects of CM have the potential to fundamentally change Canadian society. Yet scholarly and policy communities primarily frame CM as an issue of *global governance, international security, or of vulnerabilities and adaptation in the Global South*. This means that CM within (due to wildfires, floods, and storms) and beyond Canada and their impacts on Canadian society have been largely overlooked in CM debates. My research is specifically concerned with the interplay of CM *within* and *to* Canada and the narratives framing Canadian discourse and responses (or lack thereof) at multiple levels of governance (local, provincial, federal). My project addresses the gaps in literature and policies concerning (*sub*)national responses and seeks to understand anticipated challenges and potential opportunities related to CM for countries in the Global North, with a particular focus on Canada.

This paper explores the questions: **how are climate mobilities' discourses and policies framed in Canada and what are the implications of these frames?** To answer the first question of *how*, I will collect data through qualitative document analysis of texts, policy decisions, speeches, public statements and reports, research papers, social media, news releases and media from prominent Canadian news sources addressing CM. I am currently conducting key informant interviews with public/private/non-profit policy officials at working at multiple scales of governance. I will use critical discourse analysis, comparing my data to existing typologies in CM literature (scientific, capitalist, humanitarian, radical) to determine the applicability of such typologies to the Canadian contexts and to identify other dominant frames. To explore the implications of these framings, I will analyze the narratives in relation to the lack of CM policies or to understand how Canada, at various levels, frames related (but tangential) policies. I will draw on Carol Bacchi's (2009) approach to examine how representations of "problems" privilege or silence particular policy options.

I anticipate that the scientific and humanitarian frames will be most dominant in Canada, but that different levels of policy will adopt different frames. For example, I expect that local and internal climate mobilities will be understood as displacement and through climate science frames of adaptation, vulnerability, and community resilience. I expect that international mobilities and Canada's related discourses will draw on humanitarian frames.

Biographical Note

I am beginning the fifth year of my PhD in Political Science at the University of Victoria. I recently received a SSHRC Doctoral Fellowship for my final year (2020-2021), I am currently a Pacific Institute for Climate Solutions (PICS) Student Fellow (2020), and I will be a Centre for Global Studies (CFGs) Graduate Student Fellow in September (2020-2021). My PhD research is supported by several faculty members in UVic's Political Science Department and the School of Public Administration; my supervisor is a leading migration scholar, Dr. Oliver Schmidtke. During my PhD, I have served as a teaching assistant for several political science courses and have also taught two courses. In spring 2020, I team-taught a second-year course on global development; and in summer 2019, I designed and taught a new 3rd year course on climate change and migration. In addition to my teaching experience, throughout my PhD I worked full-time (except for periodic leaves for candidacy exams), managing and conducting research for the SSHRC Partnership Grant, *Borders in Globalization (BIG)* which explores the evolving nature of borders in the 21st century (2013-

2021). I have several publications from this position and I am currently co-editing a book for the University of Ottawa Press comparing border regions across Canada. From 2008-2012, I worked on research programs straddling the interface of research and policy, briefing and advising Canadian and international officials on issues such as climate change, international development, and global governance reforms. Prior to 2008, I worked abroad in international development, including for a year in UNHCR camps in western Tanzania (2005-2006).

I completed an undergraduate degree at the University of Memphis in History and Chemistry (2000) and my MA in International Development at the Norman Paterson School of international Affairs at Carleton University (2005).