

Preface

It is widely recognized that changes in environmental events and conditions can influence migration patterns and behaviour. However, not all people experience environmental change in the same way. The nature of that experience is shaped by social inequalities that vary between (and within) regions, countries, communities, and households. As is shown in the chapters that follow, social inequality can be both a cause and an outcome of environmental migration. The aim of this book is to showcase recent developments in research into the complex relationship between social inequality, environmental change, and migration and to highlight opportunities for future research.

This book is the product of a conference held at Bielefeld University in December, 2012, as part of a biennial series of conferences on the theme, “Environmental Degradation, Conflict and Forced Migration”. The conference series began in 2010 as a partnership project of the European Science Foundation (ESF), Bielefeld University, and its Center for Interdisciplinary Research, with the purpose of exploring the causal relationship between environmental change and forced migration, and the subsequent consequences. The 2012 conference focused on the role of social inequalities in environmentally induced migration and the mechanism of its reproduction. It was carried out with financial support from the government of France-funded research project “Exils Climatiques: Gérer les déplacements des populations dues aux phénomènes climatiques extrêmes (GICC-EXCLIM)” (<http://www.reseau-terra.eu/exclim/>), the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action IS1101 on Migration and Climate Change (<http://www.climatemigration.eu/>), and Bielefeld University’s Center for Interdisciplinary Research (ZiF) and Collaborative Research Centre “From Heterogeneities to Inequalities” (CRC 882). The organizers of the conference were Jeanette Schade, Thomas Faist, Chloé Vlassopoulos, Andrew Baldwin, and François Gemenne. The conference sponsors, organizers, and participants are warmly thanked for creating the conditions that made this book possible.

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Most of all, we would like to recognize and thank the authors who contributed to this volume. We are sure you, the reader, will enjoy the chapters that now follow.

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