

## Climate change to affect migration: Study

Many skilled Indonesians living in urban areas like Jakarta are likely to move abroad, temporarily or permanently, in order to avoid the impact of climate change, a study says. A study by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) titled “Climate Change and Migration in Asia and the Pacific” found that moving on a temporary or permanent basis due to environmental disasters such as flooding had a long history in Indonesia, and would continue to affect the country.

“Climate change is likely to exacerbate existing trends,” the study, made available to *The Jakarta Post* on Saturday, said. “Permanent international migration is likely to increase marginally [in Indonesia], but this will be mainly skilled people and their families.”

The report did not specify the predicted amount of people forced to move because of climate change. “Environmental factors are an increasingly important migration driver,” the study said. The report was based on analysis by an international team including Graeme Hugo from the University of Adelaide.

The study said the potential destinations of skilled people in Southeast Asia would likely be to members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), like Australia, the United States and the Netherlands.

Urban areas such as Jakarta would experience multiple effects from climate change, the study said.

“Migrants could move toward built-up areas elsewhere in the country less likely to experience the impact of climate change,” the study said.

It said areas in the outer islands could become destinations for those displaced from areas likely to experience great changes because of the climate. The massive growth of megacities in coastal areas like Jakarta will significantly increase a site’s exposure to climate change impacts.

The report said the frequency of extreme events, especially floods, were likely to increase significantly in coastal megacities. In 2000, over 60 percent of the country’s population lived in areas prone to water crises, with 26 percent at risk of coastal flooding.

The study said as many as 201 million urban residents in Indonesia would be at risk from multiple hazards due to climate change in 2050, an increase of 148 percent from 2000. Asia, home to 4 billion people representing 60 percent of the world’s population, will be one of the regions most affected by climate change, including significant temperature increases, changing rainfall patterns, greater monsoon variability, sea-level rises, floods and more intense tropical cyclones.

The ADB report said Asia was particularly vulnerable because of its high degree of exposure to environmental risks and high population density. One-third of Southeast Asians live in areas considered at risk. “As a result, it could experience population displacements of unprecedented scale in the coming decades,” the study said.

The dominant mode of movement in Southeast Asia is temporary and largely involves unskilled workers.

Conflict has also periodically caused population movements within Asia, the study said.