

Water, water not quite everywhere

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Are environmental changes in the Mediterranean region influencing human mobility in the West Asia and North Africa (WANA) region? That is the question that Bruno Venditto of the Institute of Studies on Mediterranean Societies, at the Italian National Council of Research, in Naples, Italy, sets out to answer in the International Journal of Migration

and Residential Mobility.

He points out that for this region, mobility has been an important aspect of humanity for millennia. However, in today's environment of climate change marginalizing those who live on the fringes of the habitable zones of the world, there are growing issues of broader security and geopolitical challenges to face too, including [water scarcity](#). While other observers have warned of mass migrations that might arise because of [climate change](#) and the problems it brings in this region, their predictions often ignore the rich heritage of [human mobility](#) in this region as well as not necessarily taking into account the adaptability of the people of this and neighbouring regions.

"Human mobility is a prominent feature of the geographic area of the WANA countries, 'pull' factors (such as the presence of rich countries, the commonality of language and culture, etc.) and 'push' factors (represented by persistent poverty, political and social instability leading to conflicts, environmental calamities, just to mention a few) have made the movements between and within the states, a phenomenon typical of the region," explains Venditto. He adds that migrants moving from Sub-Saharan Africa towards the Western European countries often stop in the nearer countries along the journey, creating what is now known as transit migration. This does lead to potential instability and conflicts in and among the countries affected.

Venditto concludes that ultimately, we must consider both environmental and climate effects with a broader perspective on how they might influence migration. This will require a multidisciplinary approach that can grasp the complexities and variables that drive or slow migration.

More information: Bruno Venditto. Water, migration and environment in a Mediterranean perspective, *International Journal of Migration and Residential Mobility* (2018). [DOI:](#)

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