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The international legal protection of environmental refugees: a human rights-based, security and state responsibility approach

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PART I

Conceptualizing environmentally forced migration

As the term environmental refugee is not a legal term and because there is also no generally accepted definition, the objective of this part is to clarify the concept of the environmental refugee and to adopt a working definition (§ 2.1). As the environmental refugee covers a broad and diffuse group of people forcibly displaced due to environmental degradation, the concept is further clarified based on a typology of the phenomenon of environmentally forced migration (§ 2.2). This typology allows for a more in depth analyses. Finally, this chapter explores different approaches that can be adopted to deal with environmentally forced displacement (§ 2.3). These approaches lay the basis for the analysis of the international law framework in part II.