



# HACL R

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### ‘Not a Pressing Issue’: Climate Change and the Policies of Procrastination

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The time for procrastination is over. By the end of this century, millions of people across the globe will become climate refugees. This is a fact; a scientific one, which nowadays, unfortunately, is not legally acknowledged. Yet, ‘by the end of the century’ is not merely a reference but an imminent necessity to act, to prevent, to protect. This summer, the world – often inapprehensible – saw the fatal effects of procrastination policies whereupon doing something is better than nothing and too much is, politically at most, impractical. Still, after 2,105 casualties, more than 41 million people affected, 300 US billion dollars of economic impact, and 24 major climatic events in just 10 weeks across the planet, including devastating hurricanes in the Caribbean, severe drought in Africa, increasing sea rising levels in the South Pacific, unprecedented extension of wildfires in Alberta, British Columbia and California, and deadly flood in South Asia and Europe, the international-public-law system (1951 UN Convention) and institutions (UNHRC) remain at best reticent to recognize the legal status of climate refugees as the governments facing major internal displacements continue to entertain the delusion that climate change is ‘not a pressing issue.’

As massive displacements of populations become more frequent and IDPs gradually turn into climate refugees, hope for those fleeing the ignorance and indifference of our time remains in the exclusive realm of political will. The law is just not there. Hence, this Article explores the dichotomies arising out of international human rights, refugee law, and humanitarian law when such systems are placed at the heart of the fatal intersection between science and politics. The Article then focuses on the legal intricacies governments are increasingly facing to protect populations fleeing ‘the persecution of nature’ and the ‘indifference of mankind.’ Here, I analyze the legal and political contentions that precede the UNHRC’s current position vis-à-vis the inevitable transition from IDPs to climate refugees. Here, further, I tackle the quintessential reflection of time; time to legislate; time to protect; time to react; time to prevent. Here, finally, I introduce a policy model to redress the legal effects of procrastination.

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