



## Development Research Seminar

12<sup>th</sup> September 2022, 11:00 - 12:00 at BBG – 077

Title:

# The obscure causal link between climate extremes and forced migrations in developing countries

## Abstract:

There is a growing scientific concern that extreme climate events can trigger social disruptions, such as forced and abrupt migrations followed by civil conflicts, particularly in developing countries. However, the link between climate extreme events, social disruptions, and underlying dynamics remains obscure. In my talk, I will theorize that extreme climate events may exacerbate existing social-ecological problems through self-reinforcing positive feedback, solutions for which may exceed existing institutional capacities.

Using this theoretical lens, I analyzed previously indicated drought-triggered

civil conflict and migration events in Darfur and Syria. I identified self-reinforcing social-ecological dynamics in both regions, where the dependence on water-intensive crops, agriculture methods, and competition inherently exacerbates the water crisis. The drought events themselves, as well as combined with preceding non-climatic social shocks, exacerbated the water crisis further through inputs to self-reinforcing feedback loops. The onset of civil conflicts and consequent forced migration corresponded strongly with institutional shifts and modernization, vacuums, and inadequacy in the face of multiple shocks. These findings strongly urge qualitative studies to include interactions between climate extreme events and social surprises in disruption mechanisms, while quantitative studies to cautiously infer coincidences between climate extreme and disruption events, including multi-variance effects.



**Bio:** Avit is an Environmental Scientist and Climate Solutionist. He is the Research Director of Centre for Sustainable Societal Transformation at Karlstad University, Sweden. For the last 8 years, Avit has advanced research on rapid climate action and climatically triggered social disruptions. He played a key role in several reports released in the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP), Global Climate Action Summits and High-Level Political Forums outlining pathways to exponentially and abruptly transform societies to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Agreement. Avit advises municipalities and national and international scale industries and NGOs in strategising climate action.

**Courtesy:**

**CLIMO - Climate-Induced Immobility**

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