



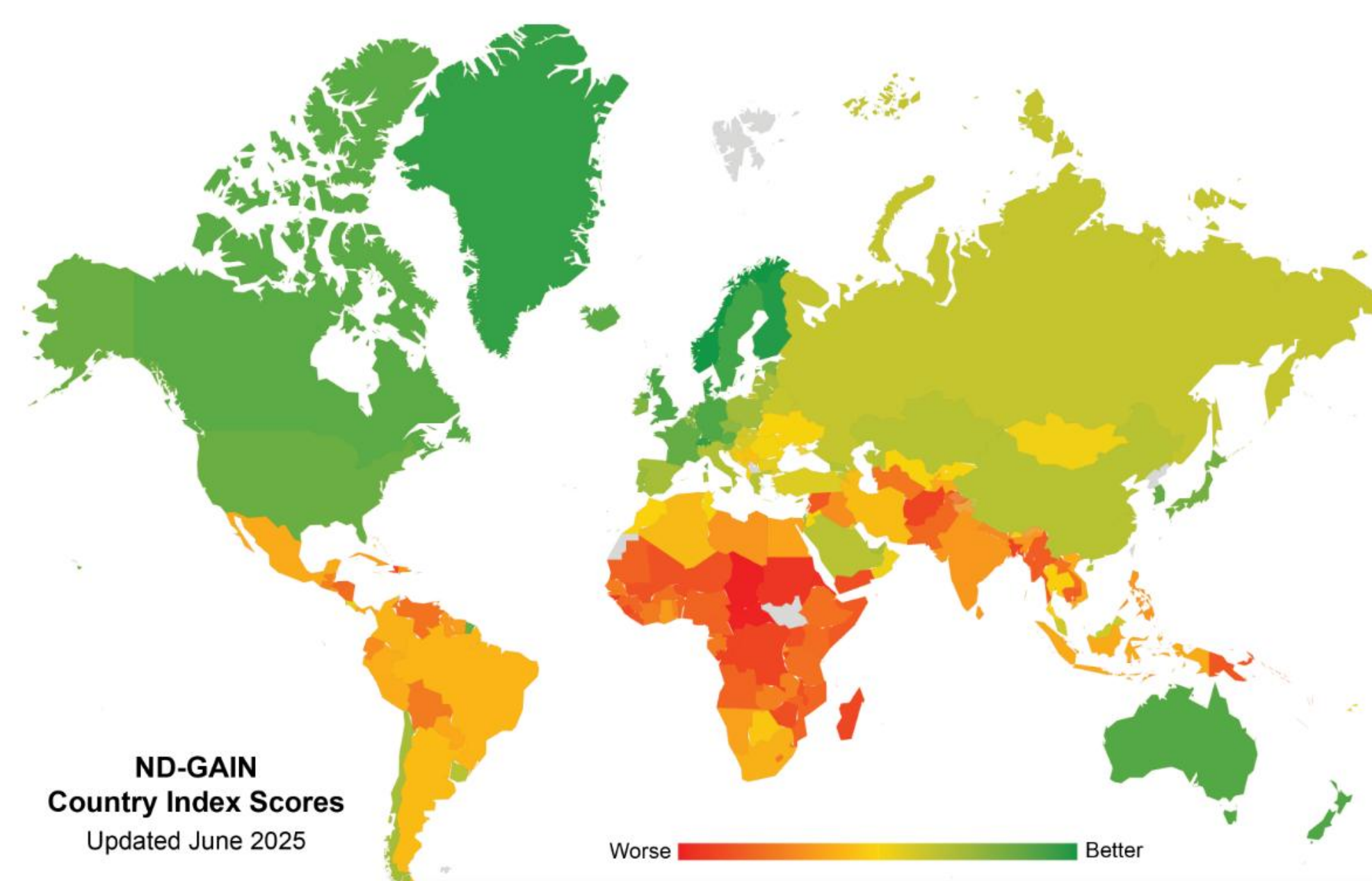
# Climate Migration: An Analysis of the Discourse within the European Union and the Economic Community of West African States

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## Background

- Climate migration, driven by the damaging physical and economic effects of climate change, requires political systems to act.
- The European Union (EU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) are organizations uniquely positioned to address the impacts of climate migration as they are affected by the climate crisis and have a shared history of significant interregional migration.
- The EU applies a securitization frame while taking little action directly related to the connection of climate change and migration.
- ECOWAS stresses the importance of climate justice but falls short of implementing adequate, all-encompassing policies.
- Analyzed using a modified version of the migration gravity model, the data supports the claim that there is a relationship between climate vulnerability and migration, emphasizing the need for comprehensive policy.



Map of World by Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) Index from the University of Notre Dame

## The European Union (EU)

- The EU has had a limited response, due in part to resource constraints, political division, and unequal impact on Member States.
- Despite being a global leader, the EU has not created official terminology to extend protection to migrants moving due to the climate.
- Discourse in the EU frames climate migration as a security threat to social stability, contributing to limited action.



## The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

- The organization suffers from political internal instability due to domestic uncertainty within some Member States.
- Climate vulnerability is shown to impact this region significantly, compounding existing vulnerabilities.
- ECOWAS frames climate migration as a climate justice issue due to the unequal global response.
- The organization is a proponent of free movement as based on the 1979 Free Movement Protocol.



## Econometric Method

- The climate and migration can both be seen as “common goods” that suffer from the tragedy of the commons.
- Climate Vulnerability Index from Notre Dame shows the aspects determining climate vulnerability considering there is a lack of data available related to the subject.
- Analysis starts with a panel data regression of EU and ECOWAS countries and then moves to a gravity model.

## Results

### The Gravity Model

VARIABLES	(1) All Controls	(2) Interaction
ClimateVulnerability	15.05*** (5.146)	16.66*** (5.872)
Distance	-0.000929 (0.000778)	-0.000929 (0.000778)
Unemployment	-0.00681 (0.0426)	-0.0133 (0.0445)
Inflation	-0.0114 (0.0124)	-0.0122 (0.0122)
PoliticalStability	-0.201 (0.151)	-1.199 (2.091)
GDPGrowth	-0.0171 (0.0153)	-0.0163 (0.0159)
ClimateVulnerability x PoliticalStability		1.801 (3.635)
Constant	3.585 (5.098)	2.702 (5.542)

*Robust standard errors in parentheses*

*\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1*

- There are high levels of statistical significance for the coefficient on climate vulnerability, suggesting a strong relationship between climate vulnerability and net migration.
- There is no statistical significance on the coefficient of the interaction term between Climate Vulnerability and Political Stability, suggesting that Climate Vulnerability impacts migration regardless of a country’s political stability.

## Discussion

- In digesting the discourse on this topic, the framing provided by each organization provides important insights into the stage of management on the issue and also provides useful context in predicting future action, or lack thereof.
- Both organizations recognize climate migration in some form but stop short of meaningful action.
- The lack of terminology and official protection is a major downfall and challenge in the future of this topic.
- This issue highlights global inequality and also presents questions on the strength of International Governmental Organizations.
- Limitations from the structure and power of these organizations is a limiting factor in successful initiatives.
- The consequences of inaction are far reaching.

## Future Work

- These two organizations present a unique perspective and this study can be replicated in other regions.
- Future studies can examine and suggest actionable policy proposals.
- Other studies can add in other controls or work to better use data as a proxy for climate migration.