The agenda will cover all relevant phases, namely:

- **Preparedness** before displacement occurs;
- **Protection and Assistance** during displacement; and
- **Transition to Solutions** in the aftermath of the disaster.

While the Nansen Initiative focuses on the needs of persons displaced across borders, it also addresses related issues such as disaster risk reduction, internal displacement, or the management of migration as an adaptation measure.

**The Challenge**

Every year around the world, millions of people are forcibly displaced by floods, wind-storms, earthquakes, droughts and other disasters. Many find refuge within their own country but some have to go abroad. In the context of climate change, such movements are likely to increase. National and international responses to this challenge are insufficient and protection for affected people remains inadequate.

While people displaced within their own countries are covered by national laws, international human rights law, the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and a few regional instruments, a serious legal gap exists with regard to cross-border movements in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change. These people are in most cases not refugees under international refugee law, and human rights law does not address critical issues such as their admission, stay and basic rights. Criteria to distinguish between forced and voluntary movements in the context of disasters have not yet been elaborated.

The situation is exacerbated by operational and institutional shortcomings, such as a lack of coherent institutional responses and effective inter-state as well as (sub-)regional cooperation.

**The Response**

In view of this protection gap, there is a need for an inter-governmental process to address the challenges of cross-border displacement in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change.

With the adoption of paragraph 14 (f) of the Cancun Outcome Agreement in December 2010 (COP16), states recognized climate change-induced migration, displacement and relocation as an adaptation challenge, and agreed to enhance their understanding and cooperation in this respect. Based on the outcome of the Nansen Conference on Climate Change and Displacement in Oslo (June 2011), Norway and Switzerland pledged at the UNHCR Ministerial Conference in December 2011 to address the need for a more coherent approach to the protection of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and the effects of climate change. The pledge was welcomed by several states and provides the basis of the Nansen Initiative.
The Nansen Initiative is a bottom-up, state-led consultative process with multi-stakeholder involvement. To feed the Nansen Initiative process with good practices and build a sound knowledge base, inter-governmental regional consultations and civil society meetings already took place in the Pacific (Cook Islands and Fiji), Central America (Costa Rica and Guatemala), the Horn of Africa (Kenya), South-East Asia (Thailand) and will take place next in South Asia (Philippines) and South-East Asia over the course of 2014.

The results of the regional consultations and civil society meetings will be consolidated and discussed at a global inter-governmental consultation in 2015. The Nansen Initiative does not seek to develop new legal standards, but rather to build consensus among states on the elements of a protection agenda, which may include standards of treatment. Its outcomes may be taken up at domestic, regional and global levels and lead to new laws, soft law instruments or binding agreements.

A follow-up process shall ensure wide dissemination and facilitate implementation of recommendations.

**THE APPROACH**

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

With States as primary stakeholders, the Nansen Initiative is managed by a Steering Group, a Consultative Committee, an Envoy and a small Secretariat.

Nine states with balanced representation from the Global South and North form a **Steering Group** that initiates, hosts, overviews and steers the process. The Steering Group is chaired by Switzerland and Norway and includes the following countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Germany, Kenya, Mexico and the Philippines. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) are Standing Invitees to the Steering Group.

States from affected sub-regions together with states receiving displaced people represent important stakeholders for the Initiative. International organizations as well as academic experts, civil society and the affected people are also actively participating in the process.

A **Consultative Committee** made up of representatives from international organizations dealing with displacement and migration issues, climate change and development, researchers, think tanks and non-governmental organizations are informing and supporting the process through the experience of its members.

A **Group of Friends of the Nansen Initiative** comprising interested states who would like to be associated with the Initiative contribute to the work of the Initiative with comments and proposals.

Professor Walter Kälin acts as **Envoy of the Chairmanship** of the Nansen Initiative, representing it throughout the process and providing strategic guidance and input.

Finally, the process is supported by a small **Nansen Initiative Secretariat** based in Geneva, Switzerland.