find better conditions in the United States. In response, as Ross discusses, Arizona passed the United States' most restrictive anti-illegal immigration bill in its history: the Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act, Senate Bill 1070. A federal judge struck down parts of the bill, but, Ross writes, "its underlying spirit proved popular elsewhere, even in states that did not share a border with Mexico. Shrinking public resources should be reserved, it was widely argued, for *bona fide* citizens."

Ross and deBuys both sketch abundant lessons of history. The artefacts of ancient, abandoned cities and farming communities lie scattered around the Southwest, offering plenty of warning for what could happen to the current infrastructure. Phoenix is barely older than 150 years, after all. It sprang up during a favourable period for water supplies, and now that period is ending. Ross tells the parable of the Hohokam indigenous population, who around 1450 abandoned their canal-irrigated farming villages in the nearby Salt and Gila river valleys — both of these rivers are dry most of the year today. The city archaeologist, Todd Bostwick, told Ross: "My own personal position is that I think that the Hohokam exceeded the carrying capacity of the technology that they had. They were so good at living in the desert that they perhaps did not recognize there is a point where you cannot add more people into the valley if you want to have a sustainable lifestyle."

For his historic example of civilization collapse, deBuys chooses the short-lived city of Sand Canyon Pueblo in Colorado, near the Utah border. People abandoned the city around 1300, possibly in response to drought, but also because of an increase in population, which ratcheted up the tension over diminishing water. Much earlier communities survived before the year 800, deBuys says, until a cooling of temperatures sent people to lower altitudes. "For as far back as one can look, the vagaries of climate have shaped the ebb and flow of human occupation of the Southwest," deBuys writes. People have dealt with constant short-term variations, such as droughts, he says. "But the long-term variations are something else. No one sees them coming. When they do, human cultures undergo a wrenching change."

Repeated warning

Ross and deBuys' books could be subtitled 'everything the Southwest has known for a quarter of a century'. During the 1990s and 2000s the Southwest's population and new building stock grew steadily while a long-term drought parched the land and resources even more. The consumption patterns here join with climate change to predict a gloomy future.

I fully expected that both authors' last pages would exhort the Southwest to take drastic steps — perhaps even to do what the Pueblo population of Mesa Verde did in 1300 or the Hohokam did in 1450: leave the land they were farming and relocate. But the authors resist recrimination, even though both of them sketch scenes that presage at least a partial exodus in the next generation. I think they are too polite. They are repeating — with more horrible facts than ever to back them up — warnings the Southwest has heard for a long time. How refreshing it would be for these two careful researchers and respected writers to take on some of the passion of the writer Jonathan Waterman, whose 2010 book *Running Dry: A Journey from Source to Sea Down the Colorado River* channels outrage through his grim bushwhack at the dried-up mouth of the river in Mexico.

Instead, both writers end with a plea that the Southwest start doing what it should have been doing for years: managing water, forests and immigration better. People should be kinder, they say. DeBuys says: "There is only the age-old duty to extend kindness to other beings, to work together and with discipline on common challenges, and to learn to live in the marvellous arid lands without further spoiling them. It is an old calling and a great one. We have already had a lot of practice. We should be better at it." In this, he seems to contradict the grim facts he's laid out in previous pages.

Ross, too, turns to social justice in his conclusion. Citing the Gila River Indian community gaining back its water rights as an example, he says that Phoenix must "take directions from the needs and claims of today's most vulnerable and affected populations". This is perhaps the greatest understatement of his 250 pages. He's shown that Phoenix remains devoted to traditional growth, fuelled by fossil fuels and a dislike of outsiders. The Southwest has a long way to go. ❒

REVIEWED BY CHRISTINE WOODSIDE

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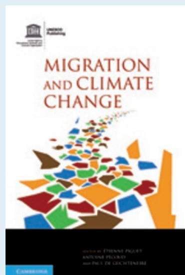
ON OUR BOOKSHELF

Uncertain Futures: Adapting Development to a Changing Climate

by Jonathan Ensor

PRACTICAL ACTION PRESS: 2011. 128 PP. £14.95

Supporting development amid the uncertainties of climate change requires boosting the adaptation capacity of communities, to enable them to respond to changing weather patterns, while improving their lives and livelihoods. *Uncertain Futures,* by adaptation and development researcher Jonathan Ensor, asks what makes a community better able to adapt to climate change, and details practical interventions that help support vulnerable communities.



Migration and Climate Change

edited by Étienne Piguet, Antoine Pécoud and Paul de Guchteneire

CAMBRIDGE UNIV. PRESS: 2011. 464 PP. £19.99

Human migration is among the most talked about, but misunderstood, consequences of climate change. This book brings together experts from a range of disciplines, including anthropology, demography, law and political science, to provide an authoritative introduction to the topic. Empirical evidence, methodological challenges, conceptual gaps, policy responses and normative issues are all discussed and illustrated with case studies from around the world.

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