



*A roundtable discussion featuring new Mainers
from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Zambia*

The Earth's changing climate is contributing to droughts, floods, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events around the world. In some nations, water and food shortages are fueling political instability and forced migration. Some of Maine's recent immigrants have left their homelands because of such instability. Hearing their perspectives helps us better recognize the impacts of climate change, as environmental and humanitarian crises unfold.



Charles Rugerinyage, New Mainer from Burundi

Charles was Executive Director of the [Association Burundaise pour la protection de la Nature](#) (ABN), a Birdlife Partner in Burundi. He was also a member of the Burundi Climate Change Delegation at COP 17 in Durban, South Africa, and at COP 21 in Paris. Charles has implemented various projects related to climate change and biodiversity conservation. Charles came to Maine in 2017.



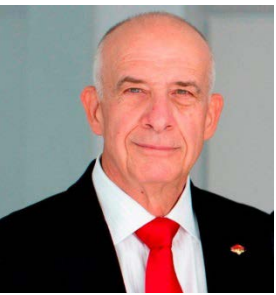
Christophe Mbuyi, New Mainer from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

Christophe was a Human Rights Activist Researcher, advocating for minorities and action to address climate change, at the African Development Agriculture Environment Project Analysis Network Forum (ADAEPANF) in South Africa. Christophe also worked at a South African environmental consulting company with international expertise. Christophe earned his Masters of Law at the University of South Africa, where he focused on Southern African Development Community's legal framework in light of climate treaties such as the Kyoto Protocol and UNFCCC. He is currently working on a Doctor of Laws (PhD) dissertation on Building Climate Change Mitigation in Forestry: Case of the Pygmies' Participation in the DRC. Christophe came to Maine in 2017.



Maxwell Chikuta, New Mainer from Katanga (DRC) and Zambia

Maxwell came to Maine in 2002 and became a U.S. citizen in 2012. In addition to owning his own business here in Maine and in Zambia, he was the lead HVAC technician at Maine Medical Center. He earned his master's degree in Public Policy and Management from USM's Muskie School and a PhD in Public Policy and Administration from Walden University (2018). Maxwell is very involved in the Portland community, volunteering at many organizations including as a board member of Friends of Portland Adult Education and the Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project.



Lt. General John Castellaw, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.)

During his 36-year career, he led Marines around the world while flying more than two dozen different aircraft. General Castellaw, a recognized national security expert, served with the UN during the Siege of Sarajevo, commanded the American forces in the multinational security and stability operation in East Timor, and was the chief of staff for the U.S. Central Command at the height of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. His last tours were in the Pentagon as head of Marine Aviation and then overseeing the Marine Corps budget.



Moderated by: Esther Babson, Climate Security Manager, American Security Project

Esther has a Masters in Global Security Studies from Johns Hopkins University with a focus on the impact of climate change on security in South Asia. Esther received her Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies from Dickinson College. While attending Dickinson College, Esther attended the UN COP 17 in Durban, South Africa, where she interviewed delegates and climate change and security experts in order to create a database of interviews on the subject of the Kyoto Protocol.