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# Disaster Risk Reduction

## UN system-wide response to climate change

Under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, the Chief Executives Board (CEB) brings together 29 UN system organizations to jointly support Member States in meeting global challenges.

In 2007, the CEB adopted the **Climate Change Actions Framework**, a joint action-oriented approach in line with the decisions of the UNFCCC Parties. The UN system supports Member States in implementing their commitments and in responding to the emerging challenges.

At COP 17 / CMP 7, the UN system is presenting its ongoing work and practical solutions and tools at side events, exhibits and by sharing a joint package with thematic information.

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The Hyogo Framework for Action is a ten-year plan that was adopted by 168 countries in 2005. It calls upon international organizations to undertake work to reduce the disaster risk associated with multiple hazards, including extreme climate events.

Reducing climate-related disaster risks is a crucial part of climate change adaptation. The Cancun Adaptation Framework underscores the important role of disaster risk reduction within adaptation, and it urges Governments to consider the Hyogo Framework for Action in particular. Changing patterns of hydro-meteorological hazards associated with climate change are posing challenges with longer-term strategic planning and investment decisions as history is no longer a good reflection of the future. Thus, climate analysis tools for assessing changes in severity, frequency, and occurrences of hydro-meteorological hazards at seasonal, inter-annual, decadal, and longer climate change time scales need to become available operationally and applied for risk assessment within the economic sectors to support decision-making at various levels and time scales.

United Nations funds, programmes, and specialized agencies have taken action and helped reduce climate-related risks at regional, national and even local levels. This progress is captured in the *2011 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report, "Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX)," was launched in November 2011.

Disaster risk reduction is one of the four priority sectors of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), a joint UN System initiative led by the World Meteorological Organization which was adopted at the Sixteenth World Meteorological Congress (Geneva, May-June 2011).

## United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

### Climate Change Action Framework

Focus (left) and Cross-Cutting Areas (right) have been identified in pursuance of the broader mandates and capacities in the UN system (with corresponding convening agencies) to ensure better coordination and cooperation for concrete deliverables:

Adaptation  
 Technology transfer  
 Forestry and Agriculture  
 Financing mitigation and adaptation action  
 Capacity-building

Climate knowledge; science, assessment, monitoring and early warning  
 Supporting global, regional and national action  
 Public awareness-raising  
 Social Dimensions of Climate Change

# Disaster Risk Reduction

## Objective

To build the resilience of communities and nations to disasters through implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action as a critical contribution to climate adaptation.

## Activities

United Nations funds, programmes, and specialized agencies have helped countries implement adaptation projects and access adaptation financing from the Kyoto Protocol's Adaptation Fund. As of autumn 2011, 22 projects have been approved or had their concept approved—all 22 being disaster risk reduction projects.

The UN system has worked with Governments to build and maintain national disaster loss databases, which now exist in 40 countries. More than 95 percent of the databases' recorded disaster losses resulted from climate-related hazards such as storms, floods, droughts and landslides. These nationally-owned disaster loss databases could be used to create a baseline against which future climate change impacts are compared, essential to the work programme on loss and damage.

Early warning systems (EWS) have been demonstrated to save lives.

Investments in effective early warning systems have served as the foundation for investment priorities of the governments. UN agencies have developed guidelines and knowledge products based on good practices. UN Agencies have also been strengthening disaster preparedness measures in more than 50 countries and have carried out inter-agency exercises to strengthen governmental capacities in pre-disaster recovery planning as well as post disaster response and recovery. National capacities for health emergency management have been strengthened as well.

Significant efforts are underway to mainstream disaster risk reduction in development planning. Together with partners, UN agencies have integrated disaster risk reduction into school curricula and safety programmes.

## Benefits

Disaster risk remains an obstacle to sustainable development. Addressing disaster losses requires the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction and adaptation into development investments.

In some countries, economic analyses using disaster loss databases have helped integrate risk reduction into development planning.

However, with the threat of rising disasters linked to climate change, and human settlement in high risk zones, there is a need for strengthened commitment and cooperation to incorporate latest scientific advancements in the field of climate for informed development decision-making.

## Moving Forward

The UN system is scaling up coordinated implementation of regional and national actions plans that deliver results at country and local levels. It will continue to promote innovative policies and practices and accelerate efforts to implement adaptation at all levels.

