

ISDR *Highlights*

ISSUE 1, 2003

NEWS FROM THE INTER-AGENCY SECRETARIAT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION



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UN/ISDR wishes all readers a most successful and prosperous new year!



www.unisdr.org

ISDR Highlights is published every two months by the Inter-Agency Secretariat for the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR).

We welcome your input, ideas and suggestions for future issues, including contributions for the feature article. Please direct all correspondence to:

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Recognising that natural hazards can threaten any one of us, the ISDR builds on partnerships and takes a global approach to disaster reduction, seeking to involve every individual and every community towards the goals of reducing the loss of lives, the socio-economic setbacks and the environmental damages caused by natural hazards. In order to achieve these goals, the ISDR promotes four objectives as tools towards reaching disaster reduction for all:

- Increase public awareness to understand risk, vulnerability and disaster reduction globally
- Obtain commitment from public authorities to implement disaster reduction policies and actions
- Stimulate interdisciplinary and intersectoral partnerships, including the expansion of risk reduction networks
- Improve scientific knowledge about disaster reduction

The International Year of Freshwater and ISDR

At any time throughout the world a river somewhere is in flood and its waters are threatening communities, their properties and even their lives. At the other end of this extreme water overload are droughts that have been and are still occurring around the world at the same time.



Today, hydrometeorological hazards are having a greater impact due to human activities that increase vulnerability and change the natural balance of ecosystems, interfering more than ever with the natural surroundings that make our world a liveable home. In addition to this worrying trend, water related disasters are predicted to increase both in frequency and intensity due to climate change, environmental degradation, and phenomena such as the El Niño Southern Oscillation, affecting the patterns and intensity of natural hazards including floods, droughts, tropical cyclones, hurricanes and typhoons.

This is precisely the reason why sustainable development, along with the international strategies and instruments aiming at poverty reduction and environmental protection, must take into account the risk of natural hazards and their impacts. Sustainable development is not possible without addressing vulnerability to natural hazards; it is in fact a crosscutting concern related to the social, economic, environmental and humanitarian sectors. Water related

disasters have major impacts on the well being of countries in all of these sectors, and appropriate policies for the assessment of risk and vulnerability, strategies to reduce and share risk, as well as strengthened preparedness, early warning and response measures are essential for the successful incorporation of disaster reduction into sustainable development. Such policies need to be effectively integrated into environment management, water management, land use planning and climate change procedures.

ISDR aims at building disaster resilient communities by promoting increased awareness of the importance of disaster reduction as an integral component of sustainable development. Disaster reduction includes the activities taken to assess and reduce both vulnerable conditions and, when possible, the impact of the hazard – especially when addressing droughts, floods and landslides.

In accordance with the International Year of Freshwater, the 2003 World Disaster Reduction

Campaign organised by UN/ISDR will review the numerous issues associated with water related disasters. The World Disaster Reduction Campaign culminates on the International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction, which falls on 8 October 2003. Its aim is to increase public awareness of, and participation in measures that can be taken to reduce the risk and vulnerabilities of communities to the negative impacts of natural hazards. ■

UN/ISDR invites you to contribute research, success stories, personal experiences and other information related to the theme of *Living with Risk - Flood Protection and Drought Management/Water, Climate & Extreme Events* for possible inclusion in the 2003 World Disaster Reduction Campaign information kit. For further details about the Campaign and information material, please email rencoret@un.org.



In getting water management right, we can develop a strategic agenda that covers much more than freshwater, including girls' education, climate change and drought.

Mr. Nitin Desai, Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations and Secretary-General of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)

The availability of clean, freshwater is one of the most important issues facing humanity today - and will be increasingly critical for the future, as growing demands outstrip supplies and pollution continues to contaminate rivers, lakes and streams. Water scarcity is also a critical issue for future development. Water use has been growing at more than twice the rate of population during the 20th century.

To raise awareness and galvanize action, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 2003 as the International Year of Freshwater (WaterYear2003). The main objectives of the Year concern raising awareness of the essential importance of freshwater resources for satisfying basic human needs, for health and food production and the preservation of ecosystems, as well as for overall economic and social development. The activities for the Year are being coordinated by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

*For information on WaterYear 2003 and its related activities, please refer to:
<http://www.wateryear2003.org>.*

ISDR African outreach update

The African continent is prone to a wide variety of disasters, particularly large-scale floods, drought, tropical storms and volcanic eruptions. Widespread poverty and high HIV/AIDS prevalence leave large numbers of Africans all the more vulnerable to disasters. To protect lives and livelihoods from the threat of disasters, African authorities have established some disaster management mechanisms, but with limited results.

With 43 of the total 53 African countries heavily in foreign debt, disaster reduction rates relatively low in priority for decision and policy makers across the continent. Yet to attract official recognition and political commitment, disaster reduction is still dealt with in isolation to the overall socio-economic development process, and often pales in significance alongside the presence of other pressing issues such as poverty and HIV/AIDs.

UN/ISDR Africa opened in the second half of 2002, with financial support of the Government of Germany and in cooperation with the UN Environment Programme in Nairobi. The outreach programme's overall objective is to contribute to saving lives and assets through improved risk management and the building of a culture of prevention, and emphasizes the strengthening of public awareness and accessibility to disaster information through joint initiatives with international and regional organizations, governments and other groups in the Africa region.

To date, UN/ISDR Africa has succeeded in the following activities:

- Development of project proposals, projects and other initiatives in collaboration with the Southern Africa Development Community's Drought Monitoring Centre (SADC-DMC), Southern Africa Regional Research and Documentation Centre (SARDC), African Development Bank, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), UN Development Programme Djibouti and other organizations
- Initiate a reference database for organizations, experts and other individuals involved in disaster reduction within the region
- Planning for regional workshops and educational programmes to take place in the near future
- The preliminary stages of the construction of the UN/ISDR Africa website (www.unisdrafrika.org)

- Initial joint planning with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) for common activities in the region

UN/ISDR Africa will continue to consolidate its work in the region, maintaining the current momentum to accelerate the process of disaster reduction in Africa through outreaching, networking and collaborating with major national and international stakeholders in disaster reduction and related areas such as sustainable development. ■

For more detailed information concerning UN/ISDR Africa and its activities, please email kanf@un.org.

ISDR Latin America and Caribbean outreach update The ISDR Informs magazine No. 6 is now available!



The latest issue of the ISDR Informs Magazine for Latin America and the Caribbean is now available on-line at www.eird.org. ■

For a hard copy please contact:
margarita.villalobos@eird.org

ECLAC organizes disaster impact assessment workshop in El Salvador

From 7-11 October 2002, the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) organized a regional workshop in El Salvador on its methodology for assessing the socioeconomic, and environmental impact of disasters. The workshop was co-sponsored by Sistema de Integración Centroamericana (SICA), with the support of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Nutrition Institute of Central America (INCAP), and Central America Agricultural and Livestock Council (SCAC/CORECA-IICA). The UN/ISDR participated in this event, which attracted over 50 representatives of central and local governments and civil society organizations throughout the Isthmus. ■

For further information, please contact:
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Caribbean risk management network



A Meeting of the Caribbean Risk Management Initiative was held in Cuba on December 9-10, 2002, hosted by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Cuba, with the support of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR). This initiative was launched in 2001 following two meetings held in Havana in February and May, with both regional and national organizations from the insular Caribbean, Belize and Guyana. In 2001, UNDP began Preparatory Assistance activities aimed at further defining and consolidating the Initiative. The main objectives of the meeting was to present results of the preparatory activities undertaken over the last year, as well as share an update on the plans and programs of participating institutions. UN/ISDR attended this event, which attracted the participation of about 30 representatives from the region. ■

For further information, please visit:
www.onu.org/cu/havanarisk.

Opening of the International Research Center on the El Niño phenomenon (CIIFEN) 9-10 January 2003, Guayaquil, Ecuador

More than 110 participants from 28 countries and 18 international and regional organizations participated in the First Meeting of Stakeholders and in the official opening ceremony of the International Center for Research on the El Niño Phenomenon (Centro Internacional de Investigación sobre el Fenómeno El Niño, CIIFEN), in Guayaquil, Ecuador on 9-10 January 2003. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Ecuador and organized in collaboration with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and UN/ISDR.

During the meeting, scientific and technical introductory presentations were made in relation to climate change and the El



From left to right: Mr. Juan Salazaar, Director of INECI and Director of the CIIFEN initiative in Ecuador, Prof. Godwin Obesi, Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization, Mr. Heinz Moeller of the Foreign Ministry of Ecuador and Mr. Sálvamo Briceño, Director, UN/ISDR

Niño phenomenon, followed by discussions to explain the concept and development of the CIIFEN as well as its proposed structure and preliminary activities. A series of presentations on potential models of cooperation by several institutions interested in collaborating with CIIFEN took place, including UN/ISDR, the UN Development Programme, Pan American Health Organization, Andean Development Bank, CAF-PREANDINO Program, Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS), International Research Institute for Climate Prediction (IRI), and Drought Monitoring Centre (DMC) located in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting provided an important platform to share information related to El Niño as well as the opportunity to bring together different actors and institutions interested in collaborating with CIIFEN. ■

For more information, please contact Dr. Jose Luis Santos, Director (i) CIIFEN jlsantos@goliat.espol.edu.ec.

Disaster reduction in Asia

The Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2003 was hosted by the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre (ADRC) and held in the city of Kobe, located in the Hyogo Prefecture in Japan on 15-17 January 2003. Policy representatives, experts in disaster and risk management (from 24 countries, mainly throughout Asia) as well as representatives of 26 international and regional organizations attended the Conference. Holding the event in Kobe held great symbolic significance, in remembrance of one of the most devastating earthquakes in history that occurred on 17 January eight years ago.

Following their experience and lessons learned from this and other natural disasters occurring in their country, the Japanese are very interested in sharing their knowledge and exchanging information with other countries facing the threat of similar hazards. High-

level representatives of the Japanese Government as well as of the Hyogo Prefecture affirmed this political commitment to these issues at the Conference in Kobe.

The aims of the Conference included the discussion of the achievements and challenges in disaster reduction in Asia; regional and international cooperation to build disaster reduction capacity; and the proposal of guidelines for improvement in the Asia region. Each of these aims made a valuable contribution to the development and implementation of disaster reduction initiatives since the adoption of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action for a Safer World in 1994.



Mr. Yoshitada Konoike, Minister of State for Disaster Management, Mr. Toshizo Ido, Governor, Hyogo Prefectural Government, Mr. Sálvamo Briceño, Director, UN/ISDR and Prof. Shigeru Itoh, Chairman, ADRC.

The Conference included panel presentations of case studies and exchange on water-related risks and the increasing challenges of extreme climate fluctuations and change; urban risk and vulnerability; the need for enhancement of information management capacities; and further discussions took place on the paradigm shift towards total risk management within the Asia region.



Ms. Helena Molin Valdés, Senior Policy Officer, UN/ISDR

International and regional organizations (such as the Asian Development Bank, Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre; Earthquake Disaster Mitigation Research Center, UN Development Programme, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UN Human Settlements Programme, UN University) presented their views on major achievements towards disaster reduction, remaining challenges and gaps as well as ideas on how to bring further

implementation of ISDR objectives in the region. Among many of the proposals were the need to set specific targets for local and national levels and elaborate an international action plan to coincide with the 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals and the World Summit on Sustainable Development. ■

The results of the meeting can be found at the ADRC website: www.adrc.org.jp.

ISDR European outreach update Building alliances for disaster reduction in Europe

The European continent and the countries of the Mediterranean basin constitute a geographical region combining a large variety of socio-political and economic systems and prone to the entire range of natural and technological hazards. From powerful and deadly earthquakes to recurrent and costly floorings, Europe has to face more often than not the forces of nature and factor disaster reduction into national and regional planning.

In this respect, the role of national platforms for disaster reduction established under the aegis of the ISDR programme was discussed in a recent meeting of these platforms from countries of the EU plus Switzerland. The meeting was hosted in Bonn on 22-23 January 2003 by the German platform (DKKV) and the Government of Germany. Several points were touched upon, including the expansion of the network of European platforms to include candidate countries and the ensemble of Eastern European countries as well as Mediterranean countries. It was also a good opportunity for interaction with some key parts of the European Commission such as ECHO, DG Environment and DG Research.

The meeting was also an additional step in a long-term process initiated in 1996, when a meeting of experts forms the entire Euro-Mediterranean area convened in Italy. In a subsequent meeting held in 1998 in Spain (IDNDR Regional Conference for the Mediterranean, Valencia), additional strategic recommendations were made. Other events followed in 2001 and 2002, indicated a clear need to integrate diverse initiatives under a shared vision. The recent resolution on ISDR adopted by the Ministerial session of the EUR-OPA Major Risks Agreement (Council of Europe) is a milestone in the building of political commitment for disaster reduction in the region. In an attempt to implement recommendations formulated in this resolution while offering a platform for unifying sub-regional disaster reduction approaches, the ISDR and EUR-OPA in collaboration with the Government of Spain are already working at the preparation of a

Euro-Mediterranean Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in Madrid on 6-8 October 2003.

Once the key European stakeholders in disaster reduction come together around the principles of the ISDR, the potential for intra-regional cooperation in Europe will become a driving force for international cooperation with non-European countries, be it in the framework of established cooperation mechanisms, or through innovative forms adapted to the specific requirements of disaster reduction. To achieve these results UN/ISDR is seeking to provide an umbrella for the development of the EU process, the collaboration between the European Commission and EUR-OPA and the integration of European and Mediterranean endeavours. ■

More information on the Madrid Conference will be available shortly on the Internet (address to be advised later on). For more information or feedback on the ISDR initiatives for the Euro-Mediterranean region please email pisanof@un.org.

Enhancing global data-collection on disaster impact: CRED and ISDR collaboration

As a planning tool, the usefulness of quantifiable and consistent data on disasters has become increasingly evident to many governments and UN agencies engaged in disaster relief, mitigation, and prevention programmes. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) has recognized this and established a working group (WG3), convened by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), to focus on this issue.

Furthermore, UN/ISDR, as a part of its mandate, is working with the World Health Organization's Collaborating Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) to enhance their global database on disasters (EM-DAT). The aim is to make EM-DAT both more representative of locally collected information and more useful at the national, regional and international levels. Many international, regional and national organizations use the data contained in EM-DAT to prepare trend analyses. For example, the International Federation for Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) uses data from EM-DAT in its annual World Disaster Report, and UN/ISDR used EM-DAT for trend analysis in *Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives*.

The information held in the EM-DAT database is compiled and collected by CRED from various sources, including UN agencies, non-governmental organizations, insurances companies,

research institutes and press agencies (see www.cred.be for more information on this database).

UN/ISDR is in the process of disseminating country specific EM-DAT datasets, along with several basic questions, to national authorities with the aim of enhancing future collaboration in this area with relevant partners. The results will contribute to improvements in the quality of globally accessible data, and further stimulate interest and collaboration in improving data collection on disaster impact. ■

For more information please email molinvaldes@isdr.org or see www.cred.be.

Improving disaster impact data and analysis

One of the focus areas of WG3 of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR) aims to improve consistency, coverage and accuracy of disaster impact data for risk management practice. In this context the group commissioned a study to compare some national databases (DesInventar) with the most comprehensive global database available (EM-DAT). The first phase of this study involves a comparison for a sample of countries between the entries in EM-DAT and DesInventar in order to document and analyse their similarities and differences. This analysis recommends an approach for virtually interlinking the local/national and global scopes into a complementary source that allows for a better and more comprehensive record of damages related to hazard events in countries where both systems are operating. Additional objectives are: standardization of methods and practices for estimating economic losses and relief costs, and the regular reporting of such data; and incorporation of relief costs as part of the overall recording of economic losses. The report, "Comparative Analysis of Disaster Databases" is available on-line in both English and Spanish at <http://www.unisdr.org/unisdr/WG3tasks.htm>. The WG3 will meet 10-11 March in Geneva to discuss this issue further on "Improving quality, coverage and accuracy of disaster data" (led by IRI-Columbia University), as well as the other focus areas for the group, "Indicator models and dataset for risk and vulnerability indexing" (led by UNDP/BCPR) and "Tools and best practices for risk for risk and vulnerability analysis at the local and urban levels" (led by UN-Habitat). ■

Developments towards the final version of *Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives* (UN/ISDR, 2003)

In early August 2002, UN/ISDR launched the preliminary version of the unprecedented global review of disaster reduction initiatives entitled *Living with Risk: A global review of disaster reduction initiatives*. The publication was developed with support from many institutions, countries and experts, and special financial support from Japan. *Living with Risk* comprehensively



reviews the numerous activities, projects and programmes in disaster reduction (traditionally referred to as prevention, mitigation, and preparedness measures) taking place at the global, regional and local levels, as well as highlighting present and future challenges in the field.

Living with Risk has been widely disseminated among ISDR partners and supporters worldwide, with close to 2,000 hard copies and 1,500 CD-ROMS being distributed to date, and complemented by the electronic version on the website, which has recorded thousands of hits. In consultation with its readers, UN/ISDR has further developed and improved the preliminary version reflecting this feedback, with the intention of publishing the final version in mid 2003. This process has been developed in close collaboration with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) jointly with the upcoming World Vulnerability Report. A subsequent step will be to develop, in a participatory manner, a monitoring and assessment framework on disaster reduction, which would be useful for the development and measurement of programmes at local, national and international levels.

The consultation launched through the release of the preliminary version of *Living with Risk* has mobilised great interest and hundreds of feedbacks, comments and additional information has been received by UN/ISDR. Over one-quarter of the feedback has come from the academic and scientific communities, with thirteen universities and training centres worldwide adopting the publication for their courses' curricula. An overwhelming response was received by people working in the field alongside communities faced with the threat of a natural hazard(s), demonstrating the usefulness of *Living with Risk* for those policy makers and practitioners actually bringing disaster reduction initiatives to the people.

To date, requests for translation have been received from China, France and Latin America, with selected parts already translated and published in Japanese. Once published in its final version, *Living with Risk* will be available for sale through UN Sales Publications. ■

We continue to welcome your feedback on the preliminary version, accessible on-line at www.unisdr.org – please email your comments to GRisdr@un.org

ISDR Fellowship programme for training in disaster management

The United Nations Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) recently handed over the administration to UN/ISDR for the Fellowship Programme for Training in Disaster Management. It is expected to be operational from March 2003.

The Fellowship Programme offers training to persons already entrusted with or about to assume responsibility for their country's disaster management programmes (policy elaboration as well as execution). Its overall aim is to strengthen national capacities in the area of disaster management by offering fellowships to well-qualified candidates from developing countries, enabling them to participate in training courses (of a duration of three months) offered by national or international institutions. ■

Further information (including application details) will appear in the next issue of ISDR Highlights, and will also be available on the ISDR website shortly at www.unisdr.org.

ProVention Consortium moves to IFRC, Geneva

The ProVention Consortium is a global coalition of governments, international organizations, academic institutions, the private sector, and civil society organizations aimed at reducing disaster impacts in developing countries. The Consortium functions as a network to share knowledge and to connect and leverage resources to reduce disaster risk. It focuses on synergy and coordination so that efforts, and benefits, are shared.

The World Bank's Disaster Management Facility (DMF) has hosted the Secretariat of the ProVention Consortium since its launch in early 2000. The first two years of ProVention were a very active period with substantial progress made on the goals of integrating disaster risk management into development efforts and reducing disaster impacts in developing countries. In late 2002, the Secretariat of ProVention was transferred to the International

Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in Geneva, where it will be hosted for the next two to three years. ■

ProVention Consortium's program for Applied Grants for Disaster Risk Reduction

The ProVention Consortium is sponsoring a competitive forum to support innovative **disaster risk management projects** and encourage competent professionals in developing countries dedicated to reducing disaster risk. Students and young professionals from developing countries are invited to propose creative projects and ideas. These proposals may include research projects, professional internships or professional development programs. Applications will be screened by a jury consisting of ProVention Consortium partners. Awards will be made to proposals with the potential of making a significant contribution to the field. The selected projects will be awarded with of maximum grant of US \$5,000 and must be completed within six months of award under the guidance of a faculty advisor or a mentor who is a disaster professional. ■

For complete details, please see the ProVention Consortium's Web site at http://www.proventionconsortium.org/projects/appliedres_application.htm.

Urban populations at risk

By 2050, the world population is expected to grow by three billion people. Almost all of this growth will take place in developing countries, with cities and towns more than doubling their urban populations. Large numbers of people will be concentrated in mega cities and fragile lands, making the reduction of vulnerability to disasters in metropolitan areas one of the critical challenges facing development.

On 4-6 December 2002, urban and disaster risk experts from around the world came together in Washington for a conference entitled "Future of Disaster Risk - Building Safer Cities." The Conference was organized by the World Bank's Disaster Management Facility under the umbrella of the ProVention Consortium, and explored a range of issues related to disaster vulnerability to identify priorities for development activities to ensure safer cities in the future. Discussions focused on threats faced by urban areas in terms of:

- Economic impacts and globalization
- Adaptation to climate extremes and climate change
- Preventive strategies to reduce disaster risk
- Social infrastructure and the vulnerability of the poor
- Social perception of risk

- The impacts of disasters on critical infrastructure linkages
- Threats to megacities from new types of hazards.

One thing around which there is already clear consensus is that urgent action has to be taken sooner rather than later. We cannot afford to wait until this huge population growth takes place before we face the challenge. We need to devote 110 percent of our energies and resources to it now. . .

John W. Flora,
 Director for Transport and Urban
 Development at the World Bank

Whether it is an earthquake in Afghanistan, a cyclone in Sri Lanka, or floods in Prague or any other urban centre, disasters deal a particularly devastating blow to urban populations. However, despite industrialised countries' higher record of disaster losses, they are generally better equipped to deal with disasters and avoid or minimize loss of life, with costs of damage usually covered by insurance and similar compensative mechanisms. In contrast, disasters cause major setbacks to the economic and social development of developing countries, often inflicting massive casualties and diverting funding aimed at development goals to the delivery of relief and humanitarian assistance. Urban areas are particularly vulnerable to disruptions from extreme events, especially in poor countries where the combination of structural poverty, decaying and substandard infrastructure, high population densities, centralized economic assets, and commercial and industrial activities magnify the problem. ■

For more information and full papers, please email akreimer@worldbank.org or see: www.proventionconsortium.org and www.worldbank.org/dmf/knowledge/publications.htm

Early Warning Conference II: Integrating early warning in public policy

Germany will be hosting the second international conference on early warning (EWCII), in Bonn from 15 to 19 October 2003. The conference will focus on the challenges of integrating early warning into public policy processes. The EWCII is a contribution to the review of the 1994 Yokohama World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

The first Early Warning Conference of 1998 held in Potsdam, Germany was the first event of its kind and magnitude to bring together a broad coalition of experts whose specific focus was early warning. With support from its principal co-sponsor, the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR),

the Conference introduced the Guiding Principles for Early Warning, based on the recognition that risk assessment provides the basis for an effective warning system at all levels of responsibility. The proceedings of the first Early Warning Conference are now available online at <http://www.gfz-potsdam.de/ewc98>.

EWCI will build upon four regional workshops (Africa, Asia/Pacific, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean), with the first announcement and call for papers to be circulated shortly. Inputs are invited in the three following themes:

- 1) *Emerging Issues*: Identification of current, emerging and future trends in early warning in natural and social sciences, engineering, technology, and public policy.
- 2) *Early Warning & Sustainable Development*: Identification and discussion of examples where knowledge and experience have been applied to implement early warning schemes and programs in the context of disaster reduction and sustainable development.
- 3) *Sustaining the Early Warning Dialogue*: Identification of needs (local, national, regional and international) to ensure sustainability of the research and applied programs for early warning. ■

For more information on the EWCI, please email harding@un.org.

Disaster Reduction and Climate Change

UN/ISDR is in the process of putting together a multi-stakeholder project that links disaster reduction and adaptation to climate change. It aims at bridging the gap between both communities through enhanced exchange of information, knowledge and ideas, coordination of policy actions as well as the building of partnerships to develop policies and implement activities serving common interests.

The project will look to strengthen two areas of linkage. In the area of knowledge and information, it will identify the relevant areas and networks of the two communities that would benefit from each other's expertise and data through the strengthening of linkages with the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), as well as exploring ways to provide information, in a sustainable manner, on climate change activities to the disaster reduction constituencies and vice versa.

Secondly, with regard to policy, the project will focus on areas from which the disaster reduction and climate change frameworks would benefit via closer interaction. The project will encourage the development of win-win structures to ensure that climate change adaptation does not overlap on already existing disaster reduction mechanisms dealing with extreme events and the vulnerability to such hazards. ■

For further information concerning climate change and related issues, please email harding@un.org.

The Third World Water Forum

The Third World Water Forum (WWF3), to be held on 16-23 March 2003 in Kyoto, Shiga and Osaka, Japan will bring together the water management community to seek solutions to the deteriorating world water crisis.

WWF3 will present an opportunity to consider the integration of issues such as risk reduction and vulnerability into water policies and initiatives. Sustainable initiatives such as Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) have important implications for flood and drought management, which on a watershed scale advocates an intersectoral approach to decision making, integrating policies, improving institutional frameworks and promoting participatory and transparent governance in water management and therefore reduces communities' vulnerability to disasters.

Many sessions at the WWF3 will focus on risk and disasters, under the themes of climate, poverty, health, floods, and urban issues. The Ministerial Session on 22 and 23 March will examine disaster mitigation and risk management. UN/ISDR is organising a session jointly with the Asian Disaster Reduction Center on 19 March in Kyoto, under the theme of 'water and poverty' coordinated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The session will build on recommendations resulting from the previously mentioned Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2003 held 16-17 January in Kobe, Japan. ■

For further information please email harding@un.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event	Venue	For Further Information
2 February	World Wetlands Day	Worldwide	http://www.ramsar.org/wwd2003_index.htm
10-21 February	Leaders 2003: International Course on Development and Disasters	St. Ann, Jamaica	www.disaster.info.desastres.net/LIDERES/
17 February	Meeting of Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS)	Vienna, Austria	www.oosa.unvienna.org
17-28 February	Meeting of Office of Outer Space Affairs (OOSA) Action Team Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee	Vienna, Austria	www.oosa.unvienna.org
3, 14 March	International Disaster Risk Management Course (IDRMC)	Makati City, Philippines	www.idrmhome.org
3-6 March	International Conference on Advances in Flood Forecasting in Europe	Rotterdam, The Netherlands	www.wldelft.nl
3-7 March	17 th Session of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Committee on International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE)	Paris, France	www.iode.org
4-6 March	ProVention Consortium Steering Committee Meeting	Geneva, Switzerland	www.proventionconsortium.org
10-14 March	8 th Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-8) of the Convention on Biological Diversity	Montreal, Canada	www.biodiv.org
16-23 March	3 rd World Water Forum	Kyoto, Japan	http://www.worldwaterforum.org/
17-19 March	Open-Ended Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010 (MYPOW)	Montreal, Canada	www.biodiv.org
17-21 March	Symposium on Climate and Extreme Events in the Asia-Pacific: Enhancing Resilience and Improving Decision-Making	Bangkok, Thailand	www.EastWestCenter.org
22 March	World Water Day	Worldwide	http://www.worldwaterday.org/
22 March	Launch of the World Water Development Report	Kyoto, Japan	http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr/index.shtml
23 March	World Meteorological Day	Worldwide	www.wmo.ch
10-11 April	7 th Meeting of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction (IATF/DR)	Geneva, Switzerland	pisanof@un.org
15-19 April	ECE/FAO International Conference on Forest Fire Management and International Cooperation in Fire Emergencies in the Eastern Mediterranean, Balkans and Adjoining Regions on the Near East and Central Asia	Antalya, Turkey	www.fire.uni-freiburg.de
23-27 April	3 rd International Workshop on Seismic Risk in North Africa	Mansoura, Egypt	http://www.ungiwg.org/cgi-bin/mailman/listinfo/unoosa-stdm
28 April-9 May	11 th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development	New York, USA	http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd11/csd11_2003.htm

Please email news (providing dates, venues, organizer contact information) concerning upcoming events to be included in future issues of ISDR Highlights to rencoret@un.org.

NATURAL DISASTERS REVIEW

For detailed up-to-date information on recent natural disasters, please refer to www.reliefweb.int.

Indonesia: Landslides - Jan 2003

Brazil: Floods - Jan 2003

Solomon Islands: Cyclone Beni - Jan 2003

Peru: Floods - Jan 2003

Turkey: Earthquake - Jan 2003

Tunisia: Floods - Jan 2003

Madagascar: Floods - Jan 2003

Mexico: Earthquake - Jan 2003

Malawi: Floods - Jan 2003

Papua New Guinea: Drought and Frost - Jan 2003

Fiji: Cyclone Ami - Jan 2003

India: Cold Wave - Jan 2003

Mozambique: Floods - Jan 2003

Bolivia: Floods - Jan 2003

Vanuatu: Hail - Landslides - Flooding - Jan 2003

Bangladesh: Cold Wave - Jan 2003