

A. UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2006

COP-12, COP/MOP-2

The twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC and the second Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Kyoto Protocol will be held in Nairobi from 6-17 November 2006. Among many other agenda items, Parties will discuss the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) programme of work on adaptation and funds for adaptation and vulnerability reduction.

MORE: Visit the UNFCCC website at:
http://unfccc.int/meetings/cop_12/items/3754.php

COP-12 Side Events Related to Climate Change and Disaster Risk

(i) Livelihood Adaptation: How to Include Local Coping Strategies in Reducing Climate Impacts? (7 Nov)

This event, run by Intercooperation will present results from a systematic analysis in selected livelihoods in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nicaragua, Tanzania and Mali using the CRISTAL tool on climate risks and discussing current and future impacts and coping strategies with participation of local communities.

(ii) Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction in Practice: Country Studies and New Initiatives (8 Nov)

This event will be presented by the ISDR secretariat, Red Cross Climate Centre, UNDP and IDS, who will outline initiatives linking adaptation and disaster risk reduction, African initiatives to reduce drought and present the VARG studies from Kenya, Mexico and Vietnam.

(iii) Introducing Climate Change Adaptation in Africa: A New Program of Research and Capacity Development (8 Nov)

This event will present the IDRC-DFID Climate Change Adaptation in Africa programme's aims and approaches to enhancing research and building capacity for adaptation.

(iv) Community-Based Adaptation - How and Why it Works and Ways to Mainstream (9 Nov):

Tearfund and Practical Action and their partners will present experiences with community-based adaptation to climate change.

(v) Adaptation Action: GEF-Financed Adaptation Activities in Africa (9 Nov)

Project managers from African countries will present the first results of integrating adaptation into development activities on the ground.

(vi) Adaptation as a Strategic Issue in the Climate Negotiations: What Way Forward? (11 Nov)

This event presents a report with key messages and policy recommendations from a study and high-level seminar organised under the auspices of the European Climate Platform.

(vii) Assessment on Adaptability of Different Economic Stages and Brief Introduction of Chinese Activities (11 Nov)

There could be significant difference of adaptabilities to climate change in different economic stages both for countries and regions. This side event organised by the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST) will focus on the adaptability issue and provide an overview of Chinese efforts in adaptation currently.

(viii) Adaptation, Mechanisms and Technology: Recent Work from the Annex I Expert Group (13 Nov)

This event organised by the OECD compares Annex I & non-Annex I policy frameworks for adaptation in the water sector.

(ix) Mainstreaming Adaptation into Development (13 Nov)

The joint UNDP-UNEP side event will feature best practices and lessons learnt from implementing activities in different regions and present recommendations for innovative interventions to mainstreaming adaptation into development.

(x) Enhancing Understanding of Vulnerability and Implementation of Adaptation to Climate Change (15 Nov)

Highlighting UNEP's activities in early warning and assessment; climate and development; poverty, environment and vulnerability; and policy and law including a panel discussion on how to build on UNEP's strengths to define its future direction in this area.

(xi) SSN, a Global Network doing Mitigation and Adaptation Projects from within Southern Africa (15 Nov)

SouthSouthNorth will present mitigation and adaptation projects from within Southern Africa (South Africa, Tanzania and Mozambique).

(xii) Adaptation Strategies: Multidisciplinary Approaches (17 Nov)

Ouranos, the Canadian consortium on regional climatology and adaptation to climate change will presents its latest results on impacts assessment and adaptation strategies.

Side events will take place in rooms in the World Agroforestry Center (ICRAF) which will be accessed through the conference facilities at Gigiri, the United Nations campus in Nairobi. The walk from Plenary to the side event rooms is about 10 minutes.

MORE: For more information on all side events of COP 12 visit their website at:

http://regserver.unfccc.int/seors/reports/events_list.html

Development and Adaptation Days at COP-12

For the fourth time, the Development and Adaptation Days will be held in conjunction with the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, this time in Nairobi from 11-12 November 2006. The Days will focus on links between development, disasters and climate change adaptation.

MORE: For more information see:

<http://www.iied.org/CC/documents/AnnouncementDADaysCOP12.pdf> or contact Jo-Ellen Parry, IISD: <mailto:jparry@iisd.ca>; Saleemul Huq, IIED: <mailto:saleemul.huq@iied.org> or Hannah Reid, IIED <mailto:hannah.reid@iied.org>

Conference on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change - Resource Policies: Effectiveness, Efficiency and Equity

The meeting will be held in Berlin, Germany from 17-18 November 2006, addressing issues such as the effectiveness of governments, of the public and of the private sectors around the world in addressing these problems and what strategies are adopted in developing countries to safeguard use of natural resources.

MORE: Contact Henrik Vagt, Environmental Policy Research Centre, Freie Universität Berlin, or email: <mailto:bc2006@zedat.fu-berlin.de>, or see the web site at: <http://web.fu-berlin.de/ffu/akumwelt/bc2006/>

International Workshop on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change

The Workshop will be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 11-16 January 2007. The workshop offers two days field visits to see community-based adaptation activities and three days of interactive discussions on different thematic areas to share latest developments in adaptation programmes and discuss priorities and solutions.

MORE: Contact the workshop secretariat, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, by fax: + 880 -2 -885 1417, email: ccadaptation.workshop@bcas.net, or see the web site at: <http://www.bcas.net/>

B. RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Books

Weathering Risk in Rural Mexico: Climatic, Institutional and Economic Change

In *Weathering Risk in Rural Mexico*, Hallie Eakin draws on ethnographic data collected in three agricultural communities in rural Mexico to show how economic and climatic change are not only linked in cause and effect at the planetary scale but also interact in unpredictable and complex ways in the context of regional political and trade relationships, national economic and social programs, and the decision making of institutions, enterprises and individuals. Eakin argues that in order to develop policies that effectively address rural poverty and agricultural development, we need an improved understanding

of how households cope simultaneously with various sources of uncertainty and adjust their livelihoods to accommodate newly evolving environmental, political and economic realities.

MORE: The book is not published yet but an abstract could be downloaded at:

<http://www.uapress.arizona.edu/BOOKS/bid1730.htm>

Reports, Papers & Initiatives

Managing Climate Risk: Integrating Adaptation into World Bank Group Operations

This report looks at how the World Bank has attempted to integrate adaptation to climate change into its projects.

MORE: To download the report, visit:

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/GLOBALENVIRONMENTFACILITYGEFOPERATIONS/Resources/Publications-Presentations/GEFAdaptationAug06.pdf>

On Better Terms: A Glance at Key Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Concepts

This booklet has been produced by IATF Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. It looks at key definitions of the following concepts: vulnerability; risk and disaster risk reduction; risk assessment; mitigation; adaptation, adaptive capacity and coping capacity.

MORE: The booklet will be launched at COP 12 in Nairobi, Kenya on 8 November. To download the booklet, visit the ISDR website at: <http://www.unisdr.org/>

Whatever the Weather: Media Attitudes to Reporting Climate Change

This report, published by the Panos Institute, looks at media interpretations of climate change risks in various countries. It acknowledges the important role played by media in raising awareness of climate change and risk.

MORE: To download the report, visit:

<http://www.panos.org.uk/resources/reportdetails.asp?id=1078>

Up in smoke? Latin America and the Caribbean: The Threat from Climate Change to the Environment and Human Development

This report is the third from the Working Group on Climate Change and Development, a coalition of 20 major environment and development groups. The report catalogues the impact of climate change and environmental degradation ranging from drought in the Amazon to floods in Haiti and elsewhere; vanishing glaciers in Colombia to extreme cold in the Andes; and hurricanes, not only in Central America and the Caribbean, but also in southern Brazil.

MORE: To download the report, visit:

<http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/uploads/15erpvfzxbipu552pn001f128082006213002.pdf>

Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery

On 29 September 2006 the World Bank has launched a Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) - a partnership for mainstreaming disaster reduction in poverty reduction strategies to support national capacity building to deal with the risks of natural disasters and to enhance speed and efficiency of international assistance for disaster recovery operations.

The World Bank will work with the ISDR to promote global and regional advocacy to increase the demand and fiscal space for investment in risk reduction at country level.

MORE: For more information visit the GFDRR website at: <http://www.worldbank.org/hazards/gfdr hazard risk>

Climate Change: Adapt or Bust

The first series of the Lloyd's 360 Risk Project is about catastrophe trends to generate discussion and debate on how to manage risk in today's environment and to understand more about catastrophe trends and what the insurance industry and the wider business world and society can do to cope with catastrophes.

MORE: To download the report, visit: <http://www.lloyds.com/NR/rdonlyres/38782611-5ED3-4FDC-85A4-5DEAA88A2DA0/0/FINAL360climatechangereport.pdf>

A Plan of Action to Support Climate Change Adaptation through Scientific Capacity, Knowledge and Research

Assessments of Impacts and Adaptations to Climate Change (AIACC) publishes Working Papers, written by researchers participating in the AIACC project to circulate results and descriptions of methodologies from the AIACC project and elicit feedback to the authors. This working paper considers the priorities and principles for supporting climate change adaptation through scientific capacity, knowledge and inquiry.

MORE: To download the paper, visit: http://www.aiaccproject.org/working_papers/Working_Papers/AIACC_WP23_Leary.pdf

Strengthening Linkages Between the Climate Change and Development Communities

This report by Saleemul Huq, Hannah Reid and Laurel A. Murray is published by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED). It describes the independent evolution of climate change and development discourses and the recent initiatives to strengthen links between the climate change and development communities, which are of particular importance, as climate change impacts will significantly affect national development.

MORE: To download the report, visit: <http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/14516IIED.pdf>

Issues in Risk Science 5: Dangerous Climate Change: Rising Sea-Levels and Ocean Circulation Changes

Professor Bill McGuire from the Benfield Hazard Research Centre at the University College of London highlights the different aspects of dangerous impacts of climate change, such as threats related to rapidly rising sea-levels and the shutting down of the Atlantic Thermohaline Circulation.

MORE: To download the paper, visit: <http://www.benfieldhrc.org/activities/issues5/dcc.htm>

C. RECENT MEETINGS

Innovations in Coping with Water and Climate Related Risks

The International Water Association in cooperation with the Netherlands Association on Water Management and Aquatech 2006 organised this conference in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, from 25-27 September 2006.

MORE: For more information visit their website at: <http://www.moorga.com/Climate Change/Announcement.htm>

Climate Resilient Development Strategies

The meeting of climate experts and development practitioners was held in Copenhagen on 26 September 2006, and was organised by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department for Environment and Sustainable Development.

MORE: For more information on the meeting visit: <http://www.uneprisoe.org/Strategies/index.htm>

Integrated Development and Climate Policies: How to Realise Benefits at National and International Level?

This workshop took place from 20-22 September 2006 in Paris and was organised by the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, in collaboration with UNEP Risø Centre on Energy, Climate and Sustainable Development, PRI-University of Wageningen, IDDRI-France, IGES-Japan and ERC-University of Capetown, South Africa. The session covered disaster prevention and management, poverty reduction, energy security and transport.

Among the conclusions were: (i) the development benefits of adaptation and of reduced CO₂ emissions need to be made clearer; (ii) there is a need to scale-up activities, from piecemeal approaches to global strategies; (iii) there is great potential for mutual benefits between development, climate adaptation and disaster reduction; (iv) the separation/linkage between development funding and climate adaptation funding remains to be resolved; (v) there is a need to strengthen adaptation in the UNFCCC, as well as to make better use of other policy instruments/processes such as the HFA, UNCCD, WTO etc; and (vi) there is a need for more in-depth analysis of barriers to and opportunities for climate-safe development.

Follow-up activities to the workshop will include a side event at COP-12 (on 13 November 2006, at 13:15-14:45, in room Gigiri 2), a special issue of Climate Policy and a policy brief.

UNFCCC African Regional Adaptation Workshop

This workshop, one of four mandated by UNFCCC decision 1/CP.10, was held in Accra, Ghana from 19-21 September 2006. The workshop aimed at highlighting African concerns related to climate change adaptation and vulnerability reduction, with a view to identifying specific adaptation needs to be considered under the UNFCCC. The UN/ISDR made a presentation on ongoing activities to reduce climate-related risk in Africa.

MORE: Visit the UNFCCC secretariat page on the workshop: http://unfccc.int/adaptation/adverse_effects_and_response_measures_art_48/items/3743.php or read the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary of the workshop: <http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/adaptationaccra/>

International Disaster Reduction Conference

This conference was held from 27 August to 1 September 2006 in Davos, Switzerland. The conference discussed a number of topics, based on the WCDR action areas, including climate variability and climate change; natural hazards; technology, modeling and tools for risk reduction and emergency management; risk and demographics: gender, indigenous people, special needs and poverty; and risk and resources management.

On Monday 30 August, UNEP and the ISDR Working Group on Environment and Disaster Reduction organised a session on environment and disaster management, focusing on climate change and environmental management for disaster risk reduction. Keynote speakers Anders Wijkman, Member of European Parliament and Basher Reid (UN/ISDR secretariat) as well as Janos J Bogardi (UNU-EHS), Wolfgang Grabs (WMO), Madeleen Helmer (Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre), Jeff McNeely (IUCN), Pasi Rinne (UNEP/Disaster Management Branch) and Veronika Stöckli (Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research, Davos) presented issues on environmental vulnerability.

The session concluded that:

- Environmental degradation, whether creeping change or acute emergencies, poses grave risks to human communities. Protection of vital ecosystem services is fundamental to reducing vulnerability to disasters and strengthening community resilience.
- To recognise ecosystem services management as an integral part of disaster risk management. These need to be part of cost-effectiveness estimation.
- To recognise that some disaster reduction and recovery efforts can have adverse environmental consequences that could be avoided.
- Ecosystem services based management, environmental engineering solutions, mitigation of greenhouse gases and climate change adaptation, integrated water resource and catchment area management – all support the goals of disaster risk reduction.

MORE: To view the conference programme, order the proceedings or download papers and presentations, visit: <http://www.davos2006.ch/>

CGE Hands-on Training Workshops: On Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessments for Latin America and the Caribbean Region

The workshop was held from 14 -18 August 2006 in Asuncion, Paraguay. The objective of the workshop was to familiarise experts from Latin America and the Caribbean region with the UNFCCC guidelines for reporting of vulnerability and adaptation assessments and with tools for conducting and integrating sectoral assessments.

Eight trainers covered the following topics: (i) overview of various frameworks used in vulnerability and adaptation; (ii) integration of vulnerability and adaptation assessments, climate change and socio-economic scenarios and impacts; and (iii) vulnerability and adaptation assessments (coastal zones, water resources, agriculture and human health). Tools used by the trainers to elaborate the different topics of the workshop included models such as PRECIS (Providing Regional Climates for Impacts Studies), DIVA (Dynamic Interactive Vulnerability Assessment), WEAP (Water Evaluation and Planning) System and DSSAT (Decision Support System for Agrotechnology Transfer).

UN/ISDR and the Red Cross/Red Crescent made presentations on vulnerability and capacity assessment.

The participants recommended to conduct more focused training workshop for the Caribbean region particularly on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for coastal zones; to establish a mechanism to follow-up the progress made by trainees in using the tools/methodologies introduced at the workshop and to determine their additional technical needs; to provide more regional examples and actual statistics; and to develop more tools and training in climate risk assessments.

MORE: For more information on the training workshop visit: http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/meetings/items/3756.php

Living with Climate

The conference *“Living with Climate Variability and Change: Understanding the Uncertainties and Managing the Risks”* was held in Espoo, Finland, from 17-21 July 2006. Outcomes include an ‘Espoo Statement’, which includes a list of recommendations for how to develop effective climate-related risk management. In the session on disaster risks, Reid Basher (ISDR) gave a presentation on “Early warning and disaster risk reduction - building on the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Global Survey of Early Warning Systems.” The meeting was organised by WMO and co-hosted by the Finnish Meteorological Institute and International Research Institute for Climate and Society.

MORE: For more information on the conference visit: <http://www.livingwithclimate.fi/>

Linking Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management for Sustainable Poverty Reduction:

Reflections on the VARG workshop held at UN-ISDR, Geneva, 2-4 October 2006.

The **Vulnerability and Adaptation Resource Group (VARG)** was formed as an informal network of bi- and multilateral institutions. The mission of VARG is to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation in the development process through the sharing, assessment, synthesis, and dissemination of existing knowledge and experience.

Background

Building on three case studies conducted in Vietnam, Kenya and Mexico, the recent workshop hosted by UN-ISDR on behalf of the inter-agency Vulnerability and Adaptation Resource Group (VARG) explored the linkages between disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change. The goal of the discussions was to identify opportunities and barriers to managing current and future climate risks as well as entry points for action.

More than 50 participants from bi- and multi-lateral agencies, representatives from Kenya, Mexico and Vietnam, the private sector, NGOs and regional disaster risk management and climate change experts, and academics attended the workshop, which was supported by DFID, DGIS, GTZ, OECD and SIDA. The country studies were funded by the EC on behalf of VARG.

Discussions & Conclusions

Anchored on the case studies and supplemental presentations from donor agencies, the workshop specifically addressed issues related to (i) data and information, (ii) collaboration and capacity building and (iii) costing and financing climate risk management and role of the private sector.

Workshop participants considered *when* and *at what level* a link between disaster risk management and adaptation to climate change is necessary to reduce vulnerabilities that threaten the sustainability of development processes. The discussions highlighted the need to connect decision processes at various scales with local-level needs and ensure an appropriate feedback process.

Data and Information Needs

The lack of climate data is often considered a major bottleneck to strengthen the adaptive capacity of developing countries. While the discussions at the workshop certainly underlined the continued need to maintain and improve the spatial and temporal data coverage in developing countries, participants emphasised that a major constraint is that existing data sources are not fully utilised and data access is often difficult. In particular, there is a need to create opportunities for better integrating physical and socioeconomic information to improve the understanding of the links between exposure to hazards, social, economic and environmental vulnerability factors and awareness of trends that affect vulnerability over time.

Aside from raw data, it was recognised that appropriate information formats for decision-making processes at various levels are lacking. This gap needs to be recognised by strengthening services that can package and translate scientific data into information that guides practical measures. It was suggested that emphasis should be placed on educating professionals to function as 'translators', in order to enable them to relate information on disaster risk, climate change and vulnerability to the needs of various economic sectors.

Coordination and Capacity Building

Strengthening the capacity to address current and future risks involves a broad range of stakeholders. The time horizon that needs to be considered for climate-proofing development activities will differ by the characteristics of the sector and activity under consideration. At the local level, addressing existing deficits to cope with climate variability usually will take priority over long-term considerations for adaptation. However, it is crucial that policy planning processes and incentive systems addressing existing vulnerabilities also take the long-term implications into account to avoid maladaptive development paths.

The country studies demonstrate that the number of multi-sectoral committees and initiatives is increasing. While this is a promising development, these initiatives often still suffer from lack of influence on budgeting processes, which limits the ability to build long-term and sustainable risk reduction efforts. Furthermore, there is often still a lack of coordination between initiatives addressing disaster risks and climate change.

While solutions will differ by country and cultural setting, it is important to put in place the institutional arrangements that will enable networks addressing disaster and climate risks to work together. This also implies improved recognition in planning and budgeting processes to allow for a more continuous approach to reducing vulnerabilities. At the same time, such networks should be characterised by a flexible structure that allows the engagement of different expertise depending on the sector and type of disaster risk that is being addressed. In this context, country participants stress the importance of strengthening existing institutions and networks when possible, rather than creating new ones.

Given that development assistance is increasingly channelled through programmes rather than individual projects, the role of donor agencies in the dialogue on climate risk management has to be considered. High-level policy dialogue can complement bottom-up approaches within countries, giving greater visibility to in-country expertise.

Costing & Financing/Private Sector Engagement

There are a variety of public financing sources for adaptation to climate change, including the funds of the UNFCCC, as well as trust funds of donor agencies. In addition there is an increasing emphasis on financial incentives for disaster risk reduction as a complement to emergency relief. This includes in-country activities as well as multilateral resources.

However, it has to be recognised that public sector financing will not suffice to reduce vulnerability to disaster and climate risks. Foreign direct investments often dwarf official development assistance and it is important to explore how the private sector can engage in creating incentives and standards for risk management. In this context, insurance products, especially weather index insurance systems, can play a viable role if tied to efforts aimed at vulnerability reduction.

Selected Elements for Strengthening Disaster Risk Management in a Changing Climate

Local Level

The first step for adaptation is to focus on reducing the adaptation deficit, i.e. the lack of coping and adaptive capacity to current climate risks. Relevant activities may include:

- Strengthen extension systems for early warning information.
- Natural resource management training.
- Evaluation and improvement of market viability of climate resilient practices.

Monitoring

This should be coupled to a monitoring process (ideally longer term), and include:

- Monitor monetary and non-monetary assets over time (before and during interventions). Given a similar hazard exposure, interventions should help households to improve their asset base over time which could be taken as indicator of reduced vulnerability to shocks.

Governance and Institutional Level

It is important that measures aimed at reducing vulnerabilities to climate risks do not promote development paths that are maladaptive in the medium to long-term.

Hence, the integration of knowledge of climate change impacts and associated vulnerabilities are important for creating the right policy framework and incentives.

Activities may include

- Support and strengthen the dialogue between institutions managing disaster risk and addressing climate change to ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach that recognises current and future climate risks to development processes.
- Assist institutions in budgeting approaches that account for climate risk not only in a relief modus, but also in a preventive fashion.
- Strengthen the feedback process between different levels of governance.
- Improve and strengthen institutional structures for information exchange on climate risks, environmental and socio-economic dimensions of vulnerability.

Private Sector

Concerning the engagement of the private sector, the viability of index insurance schemes should be considered (e.g. data availability, institutional structures, etc.). It is important that such efforts be linked to incentives for risk reduction by the insurance taker.

Frank Sperling, VARG Secretariat, fsperling@worldbank.org. The messages in the above feature section represent a reflection of the author on the discussions at the VARG workshop and should not be attributed to any organizations. It is hoped that the view points outlined here contribute to a constructive debate on how current and future climate risk can be addressed within the broader development context.

D. SUPPORTERS

IATF Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

DR+CC Infolink is a product of the IATF/DR Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. The IATF/DR is the principal body for the development of disaster reduction policy within the United Nations system, which includes UN, international, regional and civil society organizations. At its ninth session, the IATF/DR established the Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Reduction toward the goal of greater integration between approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

DR+CC Infolink is produced in collaboration with the VARG, an informal network of bi- and multilateral institutions, which aims to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation in the development process through the sharing, assessment, synthesis, and dissemination of existing knowledge and experience. This issue is led by VARG.

Thank you to this issue's contributors

The DR+CC team would like to particularly thank Frank Sperling (VARG/World Bank) and Lisa Schipper.

To contribute to next issue of DR+CC Infolink, please send brief updates and information to DRCCinfolink@un.org.

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The information and opinions expressed in DR+CC Infolink do not necessarily reflect the policies of the IATF Working Group on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction