



United Nations  
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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action will help reduce the risk of disasters and climate change**

Following the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction urges Governments to accelerate the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action to reduce the impact of weather-related disasters.

The Hyogo Framework for Action is a ten-year plan adopted by 168 governments in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, in 2005 to build the resilience of nations and communities against disasters caused by natural hazards, such as floods, droughts, storms and temperature extremes.

The IPCC report confirmed that our atmosphere is warming, a trend that will have an enormous impact on the frequency and severity of hazards. The increase of temperature by 1.8 to 4 degrees Celsius this century will make hot extremes, heat waves and heavy precipitation events, more frequent. Similarly there will be more precipitation at high latitudes and less precipitation in most subtropical land regions and it is likely that tropical cyclones (typhoons and hurricanes) will become more intense.

“Action is needed to reduce people’s vulnerability to climate-related hazards and the Hyogo Framework provides a blueprint for taking such action now,” says Sálvano Briceño, director of the UN/ISDR secretariat in Geneva. “Society’s vulnerability is only increasing as a result of rapid urbanization, population pressure, and other factors. Climate change will aggravate existing vulnerabilities, increase drought, flood and storm risk for millions of people and bring these risks to parts of the world that haven’t felt them before. The need for action is urgent.”

Much is being done around the world to reduce climate-related risk already. Governments are implementing legislation, designating institutions to reduce and manage disasters, developing early warning systems, as well as creating social safety nets and insurance programmes. But much more needs to be done. “The lessons learned from Vietnam, Bangladesh and the Caribbean for surviving floods and tropical storms need to be shared with the rest of the world. We need to build our houses, schools and hospitals away from landslide-prone locations, using flood-resistant materials. We need to educate people to reduce their own risk, preserve ground cover to avoid erosion, adjust

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agricultural practices to avoid losing crops to flood or drought, and protect our coasts” Mr. Briceño explains.

The next part of the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report on climate change impacts, adaptation and vulnerability will be released on 6 April. A third component of the report on potential ways to mitigate the problem will be released on 3 May. Mr. Briceño concludes, “Those reports will stress even more the need to take action. We face a serious challenge but if we utilize what we know already we have a greater chance to reduce disasters and avoid the worst-case scenario.”