

First Announcement

International Workshop

WATER AND DISASTERS

Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction
Faculty of Engineering, The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

December 13 - 14, 2004

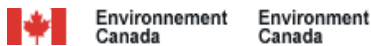
IN COOPERATION WITH:



International Hydrological Programme



Canadian Society for Civil Engineering



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Introduction

Between 1991 and 2000, the number of people affected by natural disasters rose from 147 million per year to 211 million per year. In the same period, more than 665,000 people died in 2,557 natural disasters, of which 90 percent were water-related. Of these water-related disasters, floods represented about 50 percent, water-borne diseases about 28 percent, and droughts 11 percent. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said the damage done by water-related disasters thwarts sustainable development and perpetuates poverty.

With climate change and increasing variability ensuring that water-related hazards will not abate any time soon, disaster risk reduction will be called on more and more to build up our capacity to cope. Reducing the risk of water-related hazards means, on the one hand, developing our capacity to monitor their magnitude, duration, timing and location, and on the other, assessing and reducing our vulnerability to them.

More than 2000 water-related disasters on all scales occurred during the last decade. Asia and Africa were the most affected continents, with floods accounting for half of these disasters and water-borne and vector-disease outbreaks accounted for a significant fraction of remaining disasters. In terms of lives claimed, floods accounted for 15% of all deaths related to natural disasters. The economic cost of water-related natural disasters, especially of developing countries, is considerable. Asia accounts for one-third of economic losses caused by water-related disasters.

Recorded economic losses from natural catastrophes have grown from US\$30 billion in 1990 to US\$70 billion in 1999. These figures understate the true scale of loss, which is believed to be double or more than the recorded figures. This indicates a trend of increasing natural disasters that disproportionately affect lower-income countries. Some 97 percent of all natural disaster deaths occurred in developing countries. The number of water-related disasters (floods and droughts) has more than doubled since 1996. The very poor, the elderly, women and children are worst affected. As more and more people live on marginal land, there is increasingly greater risk from flooding or drought.

Worldwide, there is a shortage of effective disaster preparedness and mitigation methods, due to the fact that risk reduction is not an integral part of water resource management, as it has mainly been viewed as a technical problem, unrelated to the factors that force people to live in risky areas. Lack of political will has also been a factor. However, appropriate risk-mitigation investment, and the redirection of resources into prevention, offers significant economic benefits, as well as reduction in loss of life, improvements in welfare and social stability. There is a link between water resources, variability and risk. Investment is needed to mitigate the risks and affect the large opportunity costs of countries adapting to the effects of water-induced shocks on their economies.

Objective

Workshop will provide an interdisciplinary environment to discuss a variety of international, national and local initiatives aimed at minimizing the negative impacts of water-related disasters. Four half-day sessions will in independent format promote the major objectives of organizations involved.

Location and Venue

The workshop is being held at the Spencer Conference Centre, London, Ontario, Canada. It is located within walking distance of The University of Western Ontario campus. This modern facility provides accommodation, conference rooms, meeting technology support and full dining support. (<http://www.spencerconferencecentre.dolce.com>)

A limited number of rooms are available at Spencer Conference Centre. The room cost is \$109 plus 12% tax (CDN), which includes breakfast.

London International Airport and the VIA train station are minutes away from the conference centre. London is a vibrant and growing city of over 350,000 people, situated in South Western Ontario, midway between Toronto and Detroit-Windsor. It hosts many large corporations, internationally known educational institutions, and state of the art research facilities.

Outcomes

The main outcome of the workshop will be an expert document to be submitted as one of the contributions to the world conference on disaster reduction (Kobe - Japan, January 18-22, 2005). In addition, the workshop will produce an analytic report to address: (a) workshop presentations; (b) workshop discussions; (c) conclusions relevant to the international and Canadian context; and (d) recommendations as to what actions should be taken internationally and in Canada.

Workshop documents will be provided to all workshop participants on a CD after the workshop.

Audience

The target audience for this workshop includes experts from different disciplines of engineering, natural, health and social sciences, and management. The workshop will offer an opportunity for policy and decision-makers to meet with the research community and practitioners. The workshop objective offers a unique opportunity for representatives of different disciplines to meet and discuss: (a) ways how to enhance interdisciplinary approach to management of water-related disasters; (b) improve training and education; and (c) develop research networks that will be able to address water problems crossing traditional disciplinary boundaries.



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AGENDA

Monday December 13

Registration and Refreshments: North Wing-Upper Level

Welcome and Morning Session: Amphitheatre A

Integrated Flood Management From Knowledge to Action

Session organized by the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)

Lunch

Afternoon Session: Amphitheatre A

Living with risks: How to measure vulnerability and coping capacity

Session organized by United Nations University Institute for Environment

and Human Security (UNU/EHS) and the International Hydrology Programme (UNESCO-IHP)

Evening Reception

Tuesday December 14

Refreshments: North Wing-Upper Level

Morning Session: Amphitheatre A

International Flood Network and Global Flood Alert System

Session organized by the International Flood Network (IFNet)

Lunch

Afternoon Session: Amphitheatre A

Flood Research Partnership: Promoting Stakeholders' Participation in Sustainable Floodplain Management in the Red River Basin, Canada

Session organized by the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR)

Banquet

**JOIN US TO MAKE THE WORLD
SAFER FROM WATER-RELATED
DISASTERS**



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Registration

WATER AND DISASTERS Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction December 13 - 14, 2004

The registration fee is \$250 (CDN) and includes attendance to all sessions, meals and coffee breaks during the workshop. Please keep in mind that attendance to the workshop is limited.

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____
Department _____
Organization _____
Address _____
City _____
Postal Code _____ E-mail _____
Phone (____) _____ Fax (____) _____

Payment Options:

To pay electronically, go to our E-Commerce website

<https://weed2.its.uwo.ca/engineeringStorefront/registrationForm.asp>. Please complete the online form and choose "ICLR workshop" from the drop-down list. For "Department" field please select "Civil & Environmental". You also have the option of filling in your credit card information below or sending a cheque.

Cheque Visa MasterCard American Express

Number _____ Expiry Date _____

Signature _____

Return the registration form by **June 1, 2004** to:

Sandra Doyle

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Phone: (519) 661-3234 Fax: (519) 661-4273 Email: ssdoyle@uwo.ca

Please note: If your registration is received after June 1, space will not be guaranteed.

Workshop Organization

Workshop Chair: Slobodan P. Simonovic, Professor and Research Chair

Workshop Assistant: Mrs. Sandra Doyle



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