



KOBE REPORT draft

Regional Meeting: Small Island Development States (SIDS)

1. Summary of the Panel / Meeting's presentations and discussions

The panelists of this sessions were Niue's **Pemier Mr. Young Vivian**, **Mr. Howie Prince** (National Disaster Coordinator, St. Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice Minister of Environment of the Maldives **Mr. Abdulahi Majeed** and **Mr. Jeremy Collymore** (CDERA). The session was chaired by **Mr. Jagdish Koonjul**, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations.

The objective of the session was to reach a conclusion on the strategies and activities for improving disaster risk reduction in SIDS and provide language for the WCDR Program Outcome Document.

SIDS' uniqueness results from the frequency and intensity of natural and environmental disasters and their increasing impact, due to which they face disproportionately high economic, social and environmental consequences. While vulnerability is increasing, resilience of SIDS has not kept pace. Some of the root problems that SIDS are faced with are the following: dependency on international trade, limited employment and livelihood possibilities, costly infrastructure and administration, limited institutional capacity and natural resources, poverty, high freight costs, geographical isolation, risk of extinction of parts of biodiversity, not sufficient alternatives for evacuation as communities on mainland, increased shipping and tourism (risk of pollution), etc. Because of this, the exposure to natural hazards is growing along with the inability to respond to them.

2. Primary issues

- Need to define approaches of national intra- and inter-regional collaboration in implementing the Kobe outcomes
- Systematically merge common goals and collective commitments in the Barbados Program of Action, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals with the outcome of the Kobe WCDR.
- Need to assist SIDS with and engage them into disaster reduction activities in a more systematic way
- More initiatives regarding public awareness, partnerships and mainstreaming disaster reduction into disaster risk management must be undertaken.
- Danger of rich biodiversity to become extinct → reason to claim international support
- The request to include the notion of 'resource mobilization' and the establishment of specialized regional collaborative supporting centers into the Program Outcome Document was discarded as these concepts are already reflected in the Mauritius Strategy (paragraph 81, 82, 85).
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3. Lessons Learned, Good Practice, Institutionalized Experience

- SIDS have preserved their traditional coping and community mechanisms. SIDS must continue to rely on their localized economy, local resources as well as community cooperation, collaboration and support.

- Relevant cornerstone documents (BpoA, MDGs, Jpol) are still relevant. The SIDS do therefore not want to invent a new plan but hope that the Kobe WCDR will assist to implement the existing plans.
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4. Suggested indicators to measure accomplishments

- It is important to ensure that important recommendations of Mauritius Strategy are included into Kobe Program Outcome Document.
- Issues on draughts, flooding and the establishment of national and sub-national disaster funds should be incorporated into the final Program Outcome Document
- A certain lack of regional mechanisms was remarked. It is therefore necessary to establish new regional centers and strengthen the existing ones.
- Mauritius strategy for implementation must be put in front of international community for support
- Resilience and coping mechanisms must be tailored to SIDS' needs
- Keeping in mind socio-political realities, a comprehensive strategy needs to be adopted. (best practice, a dialogue of support and cooperation, outcome of thematic sessions should be used as guidelines for action)

5. Existing indicators with reference

see Barbados Program of Action and Mauritius Strategy

6. Partnerships

Representatives of both Australia and New Zealand voiced their continued commitment to support SIDS regarding disaster reduction.
JICA has assisted SIDS regions in the process of flood hazard mitigation.

7. Additional sources of information

Homepage of the Small Islands Development States Network <http://www.sidsnet.org/index.html>
Barbados Program of Action
<http://www.sidsnet.org/docshare/other/BPOA.pdf>
Mauritius Strategy
http://www.un.org/smallislands2005/pdf/sids_strategy.pdf

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