



KOBE REPORT draft
Report of Session 3.8, Thematic Cluster 3

**New International Initiatives for Research and Risk Mitigation of Floods (IFI)
and Landslides (IPL)**

1. Summary of Session Presentations

The objectives of the session were:

1. to launch an international flood initiative as an interagency effort, which originally started as the Joint UNESCO/WMO Flood Initiative (JUWFI). The initiative aims at promoting research, training and capacity building, information networking and technical assistance against flood-related disasters;
2. to develop the International Programme on Landslides (IPL) which was founded with the support of UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UN/ISDR, and MEXT in 2002. IPL aims at promoting research, capacity building, awareness raising, information networking and technical assistance against landslide-related disasters and;
3. to strengthen within the framework of the ISDR research cooperation for Earth system risk analysis and sustainable disaster management by discussing a new Memorandum of Understanding as additional international platforms to improve the collaboration between United Nations, national and international entities or organizations to this end.

The session was chaired by Prof. Dr. Hans van Ginkel, UN Under-Secretary General, Rector of the UNU. Opening addresses were presented by Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO and by Michel Jarraud, Secretary General of WMO. The opening of the session provided the appropriate framework to formally launch the International Flood Initiative (IFI) conceived to follow up the resolutions of the WSSD, Johannesburg 2002, and the 3rd World Water Forum, Kyoto 2003. IFI, initiated by UNESCO and WMO in 2002, has evolved to a multi-agency endeavour involving UNU, FAO, ISDR, but also other partners like MEXT, PWRI, Kyoto University of Japan, and IAHS.

Impressive statistics have underlined the urgency for a comprehensive flood initiative aiming to promote:

an integrated approach to flood risk management in order to reduce fatalities, property losses, environmental effects and other hardships that result from floods and at the same time consider the long-term benefits from floods and the use of flood plains.

The initiative will be substantially strengthened by the emerging International Center for Water Hazard and Risk Management (CHARM), established under the auspices of UNESCO and hosted by PWRI in Tsukuba, Japan. Objective and scope of this center and its contributions to international, integrated flood management efforts were presented by T. Sakamoto, Director General of PWRI and Mr. A. Terakawa.

Next to and related to floods and excess precipitation, landslides have been identified as another major hazard threatening both human security and cultural and natural heritage sites. The joint engagement of DPRI and the Kyoto University in research of both flood and landslide hazards aptly underlined the need for integrated, multi-hazard approaches. The International Consortium on Landslides, established 2002, and its International Programme on Landslides as presented by K. Inoue and K. Sassa of Kyoto University and P. Lytle of the Landslides Hazards Programme, Coordinator of ICL, presented both the development of ICL and the first impressive results of the 40 individual projects of IPL. This development can serve as a model for the emerging IFI and is the result of the 7 years efforts of UNESCO, WMO and several scientific associations and individual scientists, as outlined by B. Rouhban of UNESCO.

The international importance of ICL and its programme is underlined through the creation of a UNESCO chair and the UNITWIN Landslide Programme at Koto University. The concept, focal areas, the challenge, and guiding principles to be addressed and followed by IFI and the targeted International Flood Programme have been outlined by S. Simonovic. The dedication of IAHS to contribute to IFI was outlined in the presentation of IAHS president K. Takeuchi. IAHS concentrates on prediction of the flood hazard in ungaged basins. The role of early warning was highlighted by him, suggesting to halve the number of people without access to proper predictive information against natural hazards by 2015. This goal would emphasize how the initiative could contribute to sustainable development and to the MDGs.

The following forum discussion, moderated by A. Szollosi-Nagy of UNESCO, has further strengthened the session's message:

- to contribute to make Earth a better place to live
- to consider multi-hazard threats in an integrated way: floods, droughts, erosion, sedimentation, and landslides
- to use and integrate the best scientific knowledge available and develop it further
- to establish indicators, targets, and assign to the Plan of Action a specific time frame
- to contribute to UN/ISDR
- the need for massive educational efforts and human capacity building to match the MDGs related to water and water-related natural hazard mitigation
- to identify simple, measurable and policy relevant indicators to monitor development towards the achievement of the goals set.

2. Primary Issues

- Establishment of formal partnerships involving UN agencies, scientific-professional associations and government agencies to unite the respective competencies to address multiple hazards, risks, and vulnerabilities. Letter of intent on "Integrated Earth System Risks Analysis and Sustainable Disaster Management"
- Launch of international initiatives: International Flood Initiative, International Programme on Landslides contributing to the achievements of the UN Decade of Action: Water for Life 2005-2015.
- Agreement on the interdisciplinary nature of hazard risk management, considering multiple hazards and the complex relations between the Earth system and human society.
- Develop site-specific, in-depth knowledge on the natural and societal process involved and continue them on behalf of people-centred problem solution.
- Live the "Spirit of Kobe": fill vivid cooperation the framework agreements and the joint programmes launched,

3. Suggested targets and indicators

In the in depth debate over potential indicators the practical consensus has emerged to use and to monitor the average annual number of human fatalities due to all extreme natural hazard events. This number can be captured over all possible extreme natural hazard events as an indicator of the effectiveness of early warning, integrated natural risk management and other risk mitigation and remedial measures. This indicator can be aggregated over different spatial and temporal scales (global, continental, regional, country and local, but also annual, decadal respectively).

In conformity with the spirit of the MGDs it should be targeted to halve the average annual casualties by 2015.

4. Partnerships

Letter of Intent (over Integrated Earth System Risk Analysis and Sustainable Disaster Management) (Signature process started)

Launching the International Flood Initiative (IFI)

Strengthening ICL and exploring the cooperation and synergies between ICL and IFI

5. Any other relevant and brief comments

The session was attended by more than 80 participants. Room Kitano was overcrowded and could not accommodate all potential interested participants.

6. Name, Affiliation and contacts of presenters and titles of presentation

Speaker	Affiliation	Contact
Koichiro Matuura	UNESCO	Opening Remarks
Michel Jarraud	WMO	Opening Remarks
Kazuya Inoue	Kyoto University	Opening Remarks
Tadahiko Sakamoto	PWRI	Opening Remarks
Akira Terakawa	PWRI	Integrated Flood Risk Management – Role of CHARM
Slobodan Simonovic	ICLR	IFI: Time for Action
Kuniyoshi Takeuchi	IAHS	IAHS PUB contribution to IFI/P – Providing Predictive Hydrological Information to Ungaged Basins
Badaoui Rouhban	UNESCO	Remarks
Peter Lyttle	USGS	Outline of the IPL and US Government & USGS Contribution to IPL
Kyoji Sassa	ICL	Role of the IPL for the Progress of Landslide Disaster Risk Reduction

Speakers can be contacted through the organizing agencies.

Name, affiliation and contact of person filling the form

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