

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Title of initiative:	Environmental Information for Risk Assessment and Early Warning
Countries primarily supported:	Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Maldives
Duration:	From 1 November 2005 to 31 December 2006

Objectives

The objective of the initiative was to integrate environmental management within the disaster risk reduction agenda. Specific capacity building initiatives were tailored to national circumstances pursuing the following three outcomes:

- Strengthened capacity of environmental authorities in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives to identify environmental factors contributing to risk in coastal areas vulnerable to tsunamis;
- Strengthened capacity of environmental authorities in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives to manage environmental features in coastal communities vulnerable to tsunamis;
- Strengthened capacity of environmental authorities in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives to link local risk information, preparedness plans and risk reduction activities to national and regional warnings systems.

Achievements

- **Enhanced integrated assessment instruments were adapted and delivered for coastal communities to environmental authorities**
 - ***Strategic Environmental Assessments in Sri Lanka:***

UNEP facilitated technical training and promotion of integrating disaster risk concerns within Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) in Sri Lanka. In addition to field-based exercises, this activity resulted in the establishment of an inter-ministerial taskforce for SEAs in Sri Lanka and parliamentary support for Strategic Environmental Assessments.
 - ***Detailed Risk Analyses for Safer Islands in the Maldives:***

UNEP supported the Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water (MEEW) in identifying vulnerable locations in ten islands. This activity resulted in cooperation between the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water and other sectoral agencies in planning for Safe Islands. It also contributed to having Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction identified as one of three pillars in the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Maldives.
- **National authorities were engaged with disaster managers to be involved with advancing national and regional early warning systems**
 - ***Strategic Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for Ministry of Environment Indonesia:***

UNEP worked with the Ministry of Environment in Indonesia to develop a strategic framework to guide disaster related work within the Ministry. The work has focused on identifying international practices and integrating environmental and disaster risk information into Spatial Planning for Recovery and Risk Reduction. This activity has led to an active and continuing dialogue among all the deputies within the ministry. This activity has also led to new opportunities for the Ministry's engagement in developing national plans for disaster risk reduction.

- ***Indian Ocean Tsunami Early Warning Consortium:***

UNEP, as part of the Consortium of ISDR partners to further strengthen tsunami multi hazard early warning systems in the Indian Ocean region, offered advisory support in assessing Environmental Flashpoints at sub-national level for use in preparedness and spatial planning and disaster risk reduction. UNEP fully participated in the Consortium's efforts and coordinated with national counterparts to review and revise national plans of actions for consideration by donors. This activity contributed to interdepartmental efforts at the national level to design an action plan: it has also supported the development of new modes of coordination among supporting agencies.

- ***UN/ISDR Environment and Disaster Working Group (EDWG):***

The 11th session of the Inter Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction agreed to establish an Ad-Hoc Working Group on Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction. The group has met three times to date (in Nairobi, October 2005, in Bonn, March 2006 and in Davos, August 2006). UNEP has provided leadership and technical guidance to the group. This activity has led to a consolidation of efforts by organizations concerned with environmental issues to advocate for greater attention among members of the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction.

➤ **National and international meetings were convened on environment and disaster risk reduction for enhanced early warning**

- ***International Conference on Disaster Reduction, Davos, Switzerland, August-September, 2006:***

This activity resulted in greater awareness among disaster managers of key environmental issues. It also resulted in a strong statement from Anders Wijkman, member of European Parliament of the need to specifically engage politicians.

- ***Second International Symposium on Disaster Reduction and Global Environmental Change, Bonn, December 2005:***

This activity has resulted in strengthening a coalition among organizations working on climate change, urbanization and environmental degradation.

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Photo 6: Field based exercise, Sri Lanka