

Healthy Ecosystems Reduce Vulnerability to Disaster Risk

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Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, and colleagues,

Healthy and well-managed ecosystems act as cost-effective natural buffers against hazard events and the impacts of climate change as well as build local resilience against disasters. Additionally, ecosystems provide important services to local populations and are a core livelihood strategy for some of the most vulnerable segments of society. Healthy ecosystems play a critical role in people's ability to reduce the frequency and severity of, cope with, and recover from disasters. They provide key services such as coastal protection, soil stabilization, and are crucial for supplying communities with natural resources such as fuel, food, medicine, and water.

Over time, ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction has gained greater appreciation in policy processes as well as infrastructure investment and financing mechanisms. Milestones include the enhanced profile of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction in the post-2015 UNISDR Framework and the recent adoption, by all Parties, of the CBD voluntary guidelines for the design and implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction during the CBD COP 14 in November 2018. Thus, recognizing the critical role of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services for human well-being.

By further development of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), IUCN is building a long-term path for ensuring that Nature-based Solutions, including ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, contribute effectively and at scale towards the achievement of the SDG targets.

IUCN strongly believes that investing in ecosystems and mainstreaming disaster risk and ecosystem management in development planning and budgetary processes will make a major contribution to the goals of achieving sustainable livelihoods for the marginalised sectors of society and substantially reduce disaster losses.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates, IUCN will continue helping countries in achieving their Sendai targets through:

- Further showcasing how the degradation of ecosystems exacerbates the vulnerabilities of people and the impacts of disasters on populations, especially on the poor and the vulnerable;
- Advocating for the implementation of Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction and Ecosystem-based Adaptation;
- Continue building and strengthening stakeholders' capacities for the implementation of ecosystem-based approaches;

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- Promoting dialogue among science, policy and practice for sustainable development through the Partnership for Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR); and Friends of Ecosystem-based Adaptation (FEBA);
- Ensuring stakeholder engagement in mainstreaming Ecosystem based Disaster Risk Reduction and Ecosystem based Adaptation into climate and disaster sensitive planning, implementation and decision-making processes at all levels; and
- Encouraging the implementation of the CBD Voluntary Guidelines on ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

Both capacity building and stakeholder engagement will undoubtedly help countries in achieving target E.

Thank you.