



United Nations
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
Secretariat, Geneva

Opportunities to enhance action on adaptation under Decision -/CP.16 and the Cancun Adaptation Framework

Submission by the United Nations secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) to the UNFCCC Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action and the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Background

To capitalize on the momentum of the successful outcome of UNFCCC COP 16 in Cancun, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) Support Group established an informal group of Governments. The United Nations secretariat of ISDR (UNISDR) facilitated the work of the informal group and the development of a set of recommendations which are informed by views the UNFCCC Parties and ISDR system partners.

The informal group convened twice to assist the UNISDR secretariat to develop a final set of proposed views, which are intended to assist Parties and relevant organizations effectively address the issue of disaster risk reduction, as invited by UNFCCC decision -/CP.16.¹

The fact that the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) calls for “enhanc[ed] climate change related disaster risk reduction strategies” and mentions the Hyogo Framework for Action by name represents significant progress strengthening the implementation of adaptation and the reduction of climate-related disaster risks.² In particular, the CAF forms the basis for strategic and focused suggestions regarding the form and function of the Adaptation Committee and elements to facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction via the proposed work plan on loss and damage associated with climate change impacts.³

The views in this submission focus on two fundamental points: the relevance to climate change adaptation of efforts carried out under the Hyogo Framework for Action to reduce and manage risk to extreme climate events, in both policy and practice; and second, that disaster risk reduction and adaptation have the most leverage when placed at the centre of national development planning.

In light of above, the longer-term perspective of the views provided in this document is to support Parties and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to develop a process to enable least developed country Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans and to effectively integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation efforts into the proposed process.

¹ “Outcome of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention.”

² Ibid., Paragraph 14(e).

³ Ibid, Paragraph 26.

The views below were circulated in draft form to the ISDR Inter-Agency Group (IAG) and other ISDR partners. They benefited from inputs from the United Nations University (UNU), the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR), ACT Alliance, among others. The proposed views in this document relate specifically to the submissions concerning:

1. Views on the composition of, and modalities and procedures for, the proposed Adaptation Committee, including on proposed linkages with other relevant institutional arrangements;⁴ and
2. Views and information on what elements should be included in the work programme, including, including through workshops and expert meetings, approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries.⁵ These include the following:
 - a) Possible development of a climate risk insurance facility to address impacts associated with severe weather events;
 - b) Options for risk management and reduction; risk sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance, including options for micro-insurance; and resilience building, including through economic diversification;
 - c) Approaches for addressing rehabilitation measures associated with slow onset events;
 - d) Engagement of stakeholders with relevant specialized expertise.

1. Views related to the Adaptation Committee

It is suggested that the Parties consolidate the link between the activities carried out to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action and its related institutional mechanisms established by the UN General Assembly under the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and the Adaptation Committee.

Therefore, the following views, if taken into consideration, would “promot[e] synergy and strengthen [. . .] engagement with national, regional and international organizations, centers and networks” (Paragraph 20(c)). Such action is also in line with the Parties’ request to enhance climate change related disaster risk reduction strategies, taking into consideration the Hyogo Framework for Action where appropriate; early warning systems; risk assessment and management; and sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance, at local, national, sub regional and regional levels.

Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (Decision -/CP.16, Para. 21)	Views on the Adaptation Committee
<i>Invites</i> Parties to submit to the secretariat, by 21 February 2011, views on the composition of, and modalities and procedures for, the Adaptation Committee, including on proposed linkages with other relevant institutional arrangements;	1. The composition of, and modalities and procedures for the Adaptation Committee should reflect the importance of disaster risk reduction as a crucial element of climate change adaptation, with a focus on expertise and know-how that exists in developing countries and regional organizations. Recognizing that extreme climate events is only one aspects of climate risk to be addressed by the Adaptation Committee.

⁴ Ibid., Paragraph 21.
⁵ Ibid, Paragraph 28.

	<p>2. The Parties should establish a mechanism to formalize the integration of disaster risk reduction experts (from governments, international organizations, research institutes, civil society and the private sector) to assist the Adaptation Committee in its proposed functions⁶ as set out in Decision -/CP.16.</p> <p>3. To achieve the above, the above mechanisms under the Adaptation Committee should be composed of experts with technical expertise on planning and implementing disaster risk reduction and adaptation, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experts from national meteorological services; - National focal points and experts in disaster risk reduction; and - Experts from development agencies. <p>4. The Adaptation Committee should be able to provide guidance and support on emerging issues.</p>
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2. Views related to the work programme to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change

The work program should prioritize activities that contribute to strengthening capacities in countries with high levels of vulnerability in addressing natural hazard risk and adapting to climate change extreme events—in particular, activities that contribute to sustainable development efforts and align with existing disaster risk reduction expertise and priorities that are regularly set out by the ISDR Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Sessions.

In this context, the secretariats of the UNFCCC and UNISDR should ensure the integration of disaster risk reduction experts in all relevant UNFCCC workshops and expert meetings.

The recommendations below suggest how Parties can improve the effectiveness of adaptation through existing UNFCCC bodies and processes. The proposed activities will support the work program areas as described in -/CP.16, Paragraph 28, while contributing to the objectives of the Hyogo Framework.

Finally, the outcomes of the proposed activities are mutually reinforcing: for example, the workshop on effective development investment will also provide guidance on measures concerning slow-onset events. Similarly, the outcomes of the workshop/technical paper on extreme events can also be used to: identify the countries and regions most vulnerable to the

⁶ These include, but are not limited to the following:

- provide technical support and guidance to the Parties;
- strengthen information and knowledge sharing;
- promote engagement with national, regional and international organizations and networks;
- provide information and recommendations to enable climate resilient development and reduce vulnerability;
- strengthen data and knowledge systems; and
- improve climate-related research and systematic observations for modeling.

impacts of climate change; assess the most cost-effective instruments and tools for reducing climate-related risks; and informing development and national investment policies.

<p>Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (Decision -/CP.16, Para. 28)</p>	<p>Proposed elements</p>
<p><i>Invites</i> Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 21 February 2011, views and information on what elements should be included in the work programme, including the following:</p> <p>(a) Possible development of a climate risk insurance facility to address impacts associated with severe weather events;</p> <p>(b) Options for risk management and reduction; risk sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance, including options for micro-insurance; and resilience building, including through economic diversification;</p> <p>(c) Approaches for addressing rehabilitation measures associated with slow onset events;</p> <p>(d) Engagement of stakeholders with relevant specialized expertise</p>	<p>1. An expert meeting on insurance mechanisms and disaster risk reduction. Elaborating on already carried out work on insurance mechanisms for climate change impacts under the UNFCCC, this workshop should address specific risk sharing mechanisms that provide incentives for reducing risk and assist in furthering strategies for risk reduction.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide guidance on how climate risk insurance can be used to reduce risks - Support consensus-building with respect to what types of climate risks the proposed facility would cover <p>2. A workshop and/or technical paper on integrating disaster risk assessment and climate change impact assessment approaches to support decision making in the context of national and local development planning.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adoption of a standard methodology for assessing climate change impacts - Methods and tools for assessing risk to extreme climate events to guide adaptation planning, disaster risk management strategies and insurance work. - Identification of capacity gaps and challenges for conducting joint assessments at regional, national, and sub-national scales <p>3. Potentially combined with the above workshop, convene an expert meeting on Effective Development Investment that reduces natural hazard risk and increases adaptive capacity to climate change impacts.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information sharing concerning the type of investments that would allow developing country Parties to reduce and manage climate-related risks at scale rather than on a project-by project basis. - Formulation of guides and tools to integrate the climate resilience analysis in the cycle of projects and in the Public Investment systems <p>4. A workshop on early warning system building on the networks and expertise developed in the three International Conferences on Early Warning under the ISDR and focusing on early warning systems in the context of climate change.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidance on integration of long-term forecasting and climate predictions into decision making and preparedness plans - Assessment of capacities and gaps for monitoring gradual changes in temperature, precipitation and climate variability - Recognition of internationally accepted standards, including those that pertain to human rights, to guide early warning systems, with a focus on the dissemination to vulnerable groups and preparedness

	<p>5. Regional workshops on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction building on the existing regional intergovernmental organizations⁷ partnerships under the ISDR.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidance on integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction plans - Strengthened links between regional adaptation and disaster risk reduction - Integration of national reporting against the UNFCCC and the Hyogo Framework. - Guidance on a joint reporting mechanism for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation - Guidance for national planning and priority setting and provide opportunities to exchange good practices between countries and regions - Support for regional and national academic systems of research on the development of norms and codes for the climate resilience construction of public infrastructures and human settlements <p>6. The UNISDR and UNFCCC secretariats should convene and promote “Synergy” workshops for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction focal points, at all levels of government and in the UN Missions communities, designed to improve knowledge sharing and coordination between climate change and disaster risk reduction focal points.</p> <p><i>Expected outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adaptation plans that leverage existing disaster risk reduction capacities - Better harmonisation of key concepts and terms related to adaptation and disaster risk reduction - More robust communication and information sharing platform that could lead to more efficient meetings and conferences of the Parties
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⁷ Such as the African Union, Association of South East Asian Nations, Comité Andino para la Prevención y Atención de Desastres, Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency, Council of Europe, Economic Cooperation Organisation, League of Arab States, South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, Secretariat of the Pacific Community/SOPAC, etc.