

# World Conference on Disaster Reduction

Kobe, Hyogo, 18-22 January 2005

Title :	<b>Environmental Management and Disaster Reduction: Building a Multi-Stakeholder Partnership</b>
Date, time & location:	<b>Date: 19 January 2005 Time: 12:00 to 14:00 Location: Room Kitano, Portopia Hotel</b>
Abstract:	<p>Environmental degradation combined with human activities are at the origin of numerous catastrophes such as flooding, desertification, fires, as well as technological disasters and transport accidents.</p> <p>"Around the world, a growing share of the devastation triggered by 'natural' disasters stems from ecologically destructive practices and from putting ourselves in harm's way. Many ecosystems have been frayed to the point where they are no longer able to withstand natural disturbances ... Although the inherent links between disaster reduction and environmental management are recognized, little research and policy work has been undertaken on the subject. The concept of using environmental tools for disaster reduction has not yet been widely applied by many practitioners." (ISDR)</p> <p>Comprehensive understanding of natural systems coupled with the application of management tools such as environmental evaluation and risk assessment can make a major contribution to a reduction of risks and mitigation of any impacts. An important aspect is the involvement of a broader range of partners in such a process, and to fully engage the resources and interests of the private sector in prevention and mitigation. Business leadership of 'prevention' actions in civil society and industry needs to occur as a complement to government policies and institutional arrangements. Such an approach relies on industry codes and standards as a supplement to regulations, thus achieving enhanced reduction of civil society's vulnerability to potential disasters.</p> <p><b>The session will highlight the role that comprehensive environmental management can play in reducing the risk of disasters, and to mitigate the consequences if they should nevertheless occur – both on human lives and on the broader ecology.</b> It will explore the link between environmental systems and disasters, and also the synergies between man-made and natural disasters.</p> <p>The session will specifically examine the need for a multi-stakeholder partnership that links local governments, private sector entities, and civil society organizations in order to facilitate more effective disaster prevention and mitigation. It will compare successful partnership models between corporations, communities and the government, examining the way entities prepare for disasters themselves, as well as the need to be part of a larger partnership that strengthens local communities' ability to prevent, mitigate and recover from disasters.</p>
Session Structure:	<p>The session will provide a forum to share knowledge, exchange views and experiences, promote good practice and innovations, and create opportunities for mutually beneficial linkages and partnerships – on the theme of effective environmental management for mitigation of environmental risks.</p> <p>It will be based on short presentations complemented by a panel discussion, concluding with an open debate to propose a portfolio of ideas for follow-up that can be incorporated in the broader theme of disaster mitigation and management.</p>

<p>Session Agenda:</p>	<p><b>Welcome Remarks</b></p> <p>Monique Barbut, Director, UNEP-DTIE</p> <p><b>Facilitator</b></p> <p>Svein Tveitdal, Director, UNEP-DEPI</p> <p><b>Keynote Address</b></p> <p>Yuriko Koike, Minister of Environment, Government of Japan Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director, UNEP</p> <p><b>Special Presentations</b></p> <p>Muneharu Nakagai, Mayor of Toyo-oka City, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan</p> <p><b>Focus on the Indian Ocean Tsunami</b></p> <p><i>Reports from UNEP Teams in affected countries</i></p> <p><b>Panel Discussion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Highlighting Environmental Impacts of Disasters in Humanitarian Assistance" - Terje Skavdal, UN-OCHA</li> <li>2. "Interlinkages between Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management" - A.R. Subbiah, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center</li> <li>3. "Partnerships for Community Risk Management" - Ana Maria Bejar, Save the Children-UK, Cuba</li> <li>4. "EMS for Risk Reduction" - Iksan van der Putte, FIDIC</li> <li>5. "Financial Industry in environmental Risk Reduction" - Joanne Linnerooth Bayer, IIASA, Austria</li> </ol> <p><b>Closing Remarks</b></p> <p>Svein Tveitdal, Facilitator (Director, DEPI)</p>
<p>Organizers:</p>	<p>United Nations Environment Programme</p>
<p>Thematic focus:</p>	<p>Cluster 4: Reducing the underlying risk factors</p>
<p>Contribution to WCDR:</p>	<p>This session will highlight the potential of environmental management systems and methodologies as an effective tool for disaster reduction. It stresses the close correlation between environment and disasters and recommends a wider participation of all stakeholders- government, civil society and private sector - to improve the cost-effectiveness of reducing vulnerability.</p>
<p>Local contact and coordination:</p>	<p>For all information regarding this session, please contact:</p> <p>Dr. Hari Srinivas Chief of Urban Environmental Management Unit International Environmental Technology Centre United Nations Environment Programme 2-110, Ryokuchi Koen, Tsurumi-ku, Osaka 538-0036, Japan Tel: +(81-6) 6915-4594 Fax: +(81-6) 6915-0304 Mobile: 81-90-4059-4231 Email: hari.srinivas@unep.or.jp Web: <a href="http://www.unep.or.jp/">http://www.unep.or.jp/</a></p>