

Report from the Session Workshop Agenda item 4.2.4 on “Ecosystems and environmental management for disaster risk reduction” Wednesday 6. June.

The session agreed that:

Ecosystem services, environmental management and environmental information offer major opportunities to reduce risk, decrease poverty and achieve sustainable development. Ecosystems have been shown to provide services that save lives and reduce disaster risk.. There is a need to urgently move from policy and science to practical applications.

To realize these opportunities the working group recommended the following:

1. The practical role of ecosystem services in reducing risk and strengthening community resilience must be better understood. Disaster reduction infrastructure should be made more environmentally friendly. Multidisciplinary science using gender-sensitive local knowledge is essential to achieve this.
2. Policy and planning frameworks that integrate environment and disaster risk reduction are essential for climate change adaptation and sustainable development. Existing frameworks and mechanisms such as UNDAF and PRSP should be strengthened accordingly. Environmental management tools such as Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment and land and natural resource use planning offer practical opportunities in this regard.
3. Engage environmental stakeholders in disaster risk reduction. Environmental authorities, NGO's, local communities, professional associations and private sector each bring valuable skills and capacities. Innovative and effective partnerships need to be fostered.
4. *Encourage the international community to integrate environment in Disaster Risk Reduction and assist in building corresponding national level capacity.*