



UNEP Official Statement – Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, Fourth Session

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues

At the Rio +20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the international community agreed that disaster risk reduction must be integral to sustainable development and climate change strategies. There is now global recognition that disaster risk is largely a result of underlying vulnerabilities linked to developmental challenges, namely poverty, environmental degradation and poor governance.

At this Fourth Session of the Global Platform on DRR, and as we deliberate on the post-2015 global framework on disaster risk reduction, there is opportunity to address rising disaster risk, growing development needs and the impacts of climate change in a more coordinated and cost-effective manner. One such opportunity lies in strengthening the role of environment in the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction or “HFA-2”.

UNEP would like to bring attention to the following recommendations on how to strengthen the role of environment in the HFA-2.

- 1. Environment should be a cross-cutting issue in the new post-2015 framework,** considering the multiple linkages between environment and disasters and the fact that sound environmental management can reduce disasters by mitigating hazards, reducing exposure and increasing local resilience. Presently, environment is only explicitly addressed under Priority 4 of the HFA, while environment could be a cross-cutting element across all five HFA priorities.
- 2. Existing DRR institutions and structures should be formally recognized in the post-2015 framework as effective vehicles for delivering action on climate change mitigation and adaptation priorities and targets.** Integrated risk assessments should be undertaken for joint analysis of disaster risks and climate change, and results used for joint programming in DRR and climate change adaptation. Efforts to link climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction will enable more efficient and effective strategies, as called for in the Rio+20 Outcomes.
- 3. One way to promote the integration of DRR and adaptation is through the application of ecosystem-based approaches. Ecosystem-based approaches should be incorporated into risk-sensitive, climate-resilient planning across development**



sectors, including urban development. Ecosystem-based approaches are the sustainable management, conservation and restoration of ecosystems – such as forests, drylands and coastal and marine habitats – as part of a strategy to reduce people's vulnerability and increase their resilience to natural hazards and climate change.

4. **Technological and industrial hazards should be given equal priority in disaster risk reduction efforts**, acknowledging the fact that increased industrialization, combined with urbanization trends, is likely to increase these hazards around the world. Moreover, technological-industrial hazards are likely to be aggravated by climate change impacts and climate variability, compounding the threats posed to development, in both developing and developed countries.
5. **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) of projects and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) – widely used by development and land-use planners - should be expanded to incorporate disaster risk assessments** so that development investments must take into account disaster risks and mitigate those risks in an environmentally-sustainable manner. EIAs and SEAs should also be applied in post-disaster reconstruction.
6. Given the growing number of actors involved in disaster risk reduction, there needs to be stronger differentiation of responsibilities and accountabilities in the post-2015 framework. **Environmental actors - including Ministries of Environment as well as other national, regional and international institutions working on ecosystem management – can and should play a stronger role in the implementation of the next HFA**, but their effective engagement will require an enabling DRR policy and implementation framework.

UNEP is working together with the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction, a global alliance of 15 organizations, in promoting ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction and adaptation for sustainable and resilient development.

UNEP is committed to supporting Member States and the international community in strengthening the role of environment in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and accelerating the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and its successor.

Thank you.