

Press release

29 July 2015– UNISDR 2015/27

UN BACKS DISASTER RESILIENCE PLANS FOR HOTELS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC


29 July 2015, GENEVA – The head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), Margareta Wahlström, today announced a plan to develop and pilot disaster risk management standards for the hotel industry in Asia and the Pacific, home to 80% of the world's disaster events.

Ms. Wahlström said: "The hotel industry in hazard prone areas of the world is very vulnerable to major setbacks from floods, storms and earthquakes. Such events can result in closure of resorts and have a significant impact on tourism and employment. The hotel industry has a very important role to play in encouraging disaster risk management at the local level."

A joint study carried out by UNISDR, the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and the Global Initiative on Disaster Risk Management (GIDRM) funded by the Federal Republic of Germany has found significant interest in setting such standards among hoteliers, tour operators, tourism bodies, government agencies and insurance companies in the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and the Maldives.

The study was carried out for the Hotel Resilient Initiative which aims to develop internationally recognized standards for hotels and resorts that will assist them in reducing business risk and the risk of tourism destinations to natural and technological hazards, while demonstrating the level of preparedness and safety of their premises to potential clients, insurers and financiers.

Ms. Wahlström said: "The report is telling us that there is concern about the lack of universal standards for disaster risk management across the hotel industry. One incentive is that insurance companies could envisage premium reductions for hotels that demonstrate that they are investing in disaster resilience in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction which has been adopted with enthusiasm by governments across the region. The standards will be developed together with the partners of the Hotel Resilient Initiative in the Philippines at the end of this year."



PATA CEO, Mario Hardy, said: “Having standardized procedures accepted by the tourism industry seems to be increasingly important to hoteliers as there are none at the moment. These standards could even become a competitive advantage for hotels in the future if they were internationally recognized.”

About UNISDR: UNISDR is the UN office dedicated to disaster risk reduction. It is led by the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction and supports implementation of the *Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030*, which seeks the “substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries.”

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