

Press release

January 26, 2015– UNISDR 2016/03

SCIENCE IS VITAL TO MANAGING DISASTER RISK IN ORDER TO AVOID DISASTER LOSSES AND FUTURE CONFLICT OVER DEPLETED RESOURCES

26 January 2016, GENEVA – On the eve of the first-ever gathering of scientists to discuss disaster risk management, the head of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, Dr. Robert Glasser, today said: “Government leaders and decision makers should give greater attention to the science on disaster risk and climate change to reduce exposure to extreme disaster events and to promote sustainable development.

“Disasters worsen entrenched poverty and directly impact the lives of over 100 million people every year. The application of science and technology is vital to reducing escalating losses from disasters which can often worsen the potential for strife and conflict in many parts of the world particularly in places where eco-systems are being lost.

“Last year saw a doubling of the number of major droughts recorded globally and these affected over 35 million people. Improved forecasting and the development of drought-resistant agricultural practices can help reduce ethnic rivalries and tensions, for example, between pastoralists and farmers. This needs to be better understood as desertification spreads and food security is undermined in many parts of the world, exacerbated by the current El Niño phenomenon which is having a devastating impact on crop production.”

Over 1,000 scientists, politicians, policy makers, disaster risk managers and representatives of the business community are gathering in Geneva tomorrow for a three-day UNISDR Science and Technology Conference which seeks to mobilise the scientific community to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Sendai Framework was adopted in March 2015 as a new global agreement on measures to reduce disaster risk and disaster losses.

Over the last ten years, the annual average death toll from disasters has been 76,000 while an average of 173 million have been affected by floods, storms, droughts, earthquakes and other disaster events.

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.”

www.unisdr.org
<http://www.twitter.com/unisdr>
<http://www.facebook.com/unisdr>