SIDE EVENT

HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS, RESILIENT PLANET

ACCELERATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND THE 2030 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

● THURSDAY, 26 MAY 2016 ● 13:00 – 14:30 ● ROOM: CONFERENCE ROOM 11 ● UNITED NATIONS, GIGIRI, NAIROBI ●

BACKGROUND NOTE

THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

The Sendai Framework was agreed at the Third UN World Conference for Disaster Risk Reduction at Sendai, Japan in March 2015 and adopted by the UN General Assembly in June 2015.

The Sendai Framework:

- aims to reduce existing disaster risk and prevent the accumulation of new risk;
- sets global targets for reductions in the loss of lives, people affected and economic damages and for increased availability of early warning and risk information, national and local strategies and international cooperation;
- identifies four priorities for national and local governments and global and regional organizations. These include:
    - Understanding disaster risk;
    - Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk;
    - Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience and
    - Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to "Build Back Better" in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction;
- places emphasis on integrated and inclusive approaches to reducing disaster risk; it is universal to all countries, calls for action by all sectors of society and draws on leadership from public and private sector, civil society – and women in particular – to support governments in their efforts to reduce disaster risk.

THE SENDAI FRAMEWORK AND ECOSYSTEMS

Environmental sustainability underpins achievement of the Sendai Framework's seven global targets. The Sendai Framework encourages the sustainable use and management of ecosystems for building disaster resilience; it identifies poor land management, unsustainable use of natural resources and ecosystem degradation as underlying risk drivers that need to be tackled.

The Sendai Framework specifies a range of priority actions for achieving disaster risk reduction focused on implementation of integrated natural resource management and ecosystem-based approaches including:

- assessing disaster risks, vulnerability, capacity, exposure, hazard characteristics and their possible sequential effects on ecosystems at the relevant social and spatial scale;
- mainstreaming disaster risk assessments, mapping and management into rural development planning and management of, inter alia, mountains, rivers, coastal flood plain areas, drylands, wetlands;
- integrating disaster risk reduction in global, regional and national policies related to environment, natural resource management and biodiversity;
- establishing mechanisms and incentives to ensure high levels of compliance with existing laws and regulations addressing land use, environmental and resource management, and updating them, where needed, to ensure an adequate focus on disaster risk management;
- transboundary cooperation that enables policy and planning for the implementation of ecosystem-based approaches with regard to shared resources at appropriate scales, such as within river basins and along coastlines, recognizing the impact of transboundary environmental conditions on disaster risk;
- active engagement of environmental managers in national platforms for the adoption and implementation disaster risk reduction strategies and plans aimed at strengthening economic, social, health and environmental resilience;
- use of environmental impact assessments as important tools to achieve risk-sensitive public and private investments;
- collaboration for the implementation and coherence of relevant international instruments and tools[1].

The Sendai Framework emphasizes a multi-hazard approach to DRR, including new references to technological hazards and environmental emergencies.

The Sendai Framework calls for an all-of-society engagement and emphasizes the importance of involving local governments, community-based organizations, indigenous peoples and the private sector. Scientific and local and indigenous knowledge are also needed to strengthen ecosystem considerations and anticipated environmental changes in disaster risk modelling, assessment and monitoring.

[1] *The following international environmental agreements include goals and targets that directly contribute to disaster risk reduction: Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Convention to Combat Desertification, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands and the UN Forum on Forests*

ECOSYSTEMS AND DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Sustainable ecosystem and natural resource management is an integral part of disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change impacts.

- Ecosystems function as "natural" or "green" infrastructure that can contribute to reducing disaster and climate risks.
- Water-related hazards account for 90% of all disasters; therefore, how we use and manage water resources -and the ecosystems that sustain them is central to disaster and climate risk management.

If managed wisely, ecosystems can act as a buffer against hazards and help to reduce the impact of hazards, including loss of lives, assets, livelihoods and damage to critical infrastructure and basic services. For example:

- restored mangrove belts can protect coasts against high waves and storm surges;
- well-functioning floodplains can reduce floods downstream;
- hill reforestation, agro-forestry and terrace agriculture can be effective disaster risk reduction interventions to prevent landslides as well as ensure the sustainable provision of water resources downstream.

Human settlements depend to a great extent on the natural environment. Fully-functioning ecosystems build local 'socio-economic' resilience against disasters by supplying fresh water, timber, fisheries and other products and sustaining livelihoods, in particular in times of crisis.

Disaster risk reduction requires assessment of the environmental causes of disasters and climate risks and promoting integrated solutions to address disaster risks, in other words recognizing the interdependency between human well-being, ecosystems and the services they provide and risk patterns which are visible when viewed from the landscape scale.

Risk management strategies and investments are strengthened by ecosystem-based solutions, such as ecosystem conservation and restoration and the sustainable management of land, wetlands and other natural resources. Ecosystem-based measures are best implemented through a multi-stakeholder approach at the relevant spatial or landscape scale and integrated in disaster risk reduction, climate change and sectoral plans and policies.

DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND AGENDA 2030

"Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" recognizes the Sendai Framework and reaffirms the urgent need to reduce the risk of disasters. It identifies specific opportunities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through reducing disaster risk. There are 25 targets related to disaster risk reduction in 10 of the 17 SDGs, firmly establishing the role of disaster risk reduction as a core development strategy.

Inter-linkages between ecosystem management, climate change and disaster risk reduction are reflected in the targets under **Goal 2** (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), **Goal 6** (Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all); **Goal 11** (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable), **Goal 14** (Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) and **Goal 15** (Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems).

CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTER RISK REDUCTION AND ECOSYSTEMS

The IPCC reports that social, economic, and environmental sustainability can be enhanced by disaster risk management and adaptation approaches and that:

- interactions among climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk management may have a major influence on resilient and sustainable pathways;
- addressing the underlying causes of vulnerability, including the structural inequalities that create and sustain poverty and constrain access to resources is a prerequisite for sustainability in the context of climate change; and
- the most effective adaptation and disaster risk reduction actions are those that offer development benefits in the relatively near term, as well as reductions in vulnerability over the longer term.

In December 2015, governments agreed to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and also recognized the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Key elements of the Paris Agreement have direct implications for disaster risk, including:

- The aim of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 °C, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.
- A global goal on climate adaptation that considers enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change.
- Agreement to enhance understanding, action and support with respect to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Focus is placed on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with extreme weather and slow onset events. Measures include the tools of disaster risk reduction - early warning systems and emergency preparedness, comprehensive risk assessment and management and risk insurance facilities, climate risk pooling and other insurance solutions.