

## Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Geneva 8-13 May 2011

SIDE-EVENT on **THURSDAY 13.30-14.30 ROOM 2**

### Cities and Flooding in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Trends, Impacts and Policy Implications

**Chair:** Zoubida Allaoua, Director, Finance Economics & Urban Dept (FEU), World Bank

**Speakers:** Abhas K. Jha, Program Leader, DRM, East Asia and the Pacific, World Bank

**Dr. Avinash Tyagi**, Director, Climate and Water Department, World Meteorological Organization

**Dr. Hitoshi Baba**, Senior Advisor, Japan International Cooperation Agency

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#### Context:

Urban flooding is one of the top development challenges facing city managers and policy-makers in developing countries. Just over the past two years a large number (and wide variety) of cities in the developing and developed world have faced unprecedented flooding. The reasons behind this increase in urban flooding and flooding impacts are complex. Massive (and unplanned or poorly planned) urbanization is certainly one of the key drivers. Cities, too often, are ill-equipped to invest in and deliver sustainable basic services like drainage and solid waste management, which increases the risks of flooding. Climate change may probably make these risks much worse through more frequent and severe extreme-weather events, sea-level rise and stronger storm surges. In this context, the World Bank, funded by the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), in partnership with WMO and JICA, is producing a user-friendly Handbook aimed at key technical specialists and/or decision-makers at the city, provincial or national levels. The panel discussion will be an opportunity to present the main recommendations/findings from the Handbook. The session will further two key objectives of the Global Platform 2011: harmonizing the frameworks for both disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation and reducing risk at the community and local levels.

**Read World Bank Working Paper:** [Five Feet High and Rising - Cities and Urban Flooding \(May 2011\)](#)

#### Biographies

**Abhas K. Jha** is an urban and housing finance specialist, currently Lead Urban Specialist and Program Leader, Disaster Risk Management for the World Bank's East Asia and the Pacific Region. In this capacity he is responsible for managing the Bank's disaster risk management practice in the region. Abhas is currently leading two major studies: A flagship regional World Bank program on building urban resilience in East Asia and the Pacific and a technical manual for urban flood risk management. He has been with the World Bank since 2001, leading the Bank's urban, housing and disaster risk management work in Turkey, Mexico, Jamaica and Peru as well as serving as the Regional Coordinator, Disaster Risk Management for Europe and Central Asia. Abhas has also served as Advisor to the World Bank Executive Director for India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Bhutan on issues related to urban development, infrastructure and climate finance. He earlier served for 12 years in the Indian Administrative Service (the national senior civil service of India) in the Government of India (in the Federal Ministry of Finance and earlier in the state of Bihar) and is the lead author of the World Bank publication "Safer Homes, Stronger Communities: A Handbook for Reconstructing after Disasters" and "Five Feet High: Cities and Flooding in the 21st Century".

**Dr. Avinash Tyagi** is the Director of the Climate and Water Department of the World Meteorological Organization. An Indian water management expert, he has worked for over 28 years in India and was Commissioner of Policy and Planning in the Union Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India before he joined the WMO in 2003. Mr Tyagi has long experience in various facets of water resources management. As Director of Climate and Water Department, Mr. Tyagi is responsible for providing support to the WMO Member countries in the field of water resources management including flood management and climate related activities including adaptations to climate change particularly in the water sector and agriculture sectors. Mr. Tyagi is an ardent advocate of multi-disciplinary collaboration for solving complex development challenges, a continuing dialogue with various stakeholders and community participation in the water sector. At WMO he has contributed to the development of Global Framework for Climate Services, an initiative launched by WMO and its partner UN Agencies to meet the societal needs for adaptation to increasing climate variability and change in various sectors.

**Dr. Hitoshi Baba** is Senior Advisor for Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the field of water resources management and disaster management. He is a citizen of Japan and received a Ph.D. degree of Environment and Resource Engineering from the Hokkaido University. He has more than 30 years of experience of water and disaster management in Japan, Bangladesh, Philippines and Indonesia.

**Zoubida Allaoua**, an economist, joined the Bank in 1988 through the Young Professionals Program. Mrs. Allaoua has over 20 years experience with the World Bank, covering macroeconomic management, including public expenditure incidence on poverty, business environment, and financial sector development. She worked on many countries, including China, Ivory Coast, Cameroun, Togo, Guinea and Central African Republic from 1988 to 1992, India from 1994 to 1998, Pakistan from 1998 to 2002. She has managed the Young Professionals Program, the Bank's flagship recruitment program, from 1992 to 1994. In 2002, she became the manager for the private sector and financial sector development department in the Middle East and North Africa region. She led many World Bank flagship reports on macroeconomic management and poverty reduction on India, strategy for growth and development on Pakistan, and the regional flagship on the determinants of private investment in MNA. She has extensive experience in designing and managing lending operations and technical assistance programs in support of structural reforms during transitions. In 2009, she was appointed Director for Finance, Economics, and Urban Development, in the Sustainable Development Network, where she oversees the work on urban development and climate change adaptation, the regulatory and incentive environment for infrastructure development, the strategies for public private partnerships for the financing of infrastructure and urban development, including output based aid and subnational strategies for cities development as well as the economics and strategies for disaster risk management.