



**UNISDR – WMO
Building Resilience to Disasters in Western Balkans and Turkey**

PROJECT STEERING COMMITTEE

**Second meeting
31 May 2013, Skopje**



MEETING REPORT

25 June 2013



I. Introduction

I.1. Background

IPA/2012/290552 regional project: “Building Resilience to Disasters in Western Balkans and Turkey” has been approved by the European Commission Directorate General for Enlargement for joint implementation by UNISDR and WMO, for a period of 24 months (May 2012 – May 2014).

The project is part of EC DG Enlargement Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) Programme for the Western Balkans and Turkey under the Multi-Beneficiary Programme 2011, sector for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

The overall objective of the project is to reduce vulnerability of IPA beneficiary countries to disasters caused by natural hazards in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action and increase their resilience to climate change.

The Project Steering Committee has been established at the beginning of the project, in June 2012, to monitor the implementation of the tasks and activities reviewing the reports developed by WMO and UNISDR as well as the final evaluation of the project.

The 1st meeting of the Project Steering Committee was held on 30 August 2012, in Zagreb, Croatia. The meeting report is available on the project web site and can be accessed via the following web link: http://www.preventionweb.net/files/workspace/27746_unisdrwmoip1stscagreportfinal.pdf.

The 2nd meeting of the Project Steering Committee was kindly hosted by the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, in Skopje, at the premises of M6 Educational Center, on 31 May 2013. The objectives of this meeting were to review the project Implementation plan and provide recommendations for the way forward. See attached the programme of the meeting.

I.2. Participants

The meeting was attended by 40 participants, representing the relevant national institutions (National Meteorological and Hydrological Services and the Disaster Risk Management agencies/stakeholders) and international institutions, such as the United Nations International Strategy Office for Disaster Risk (UNISDR), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank (WB), European Commission (EC) Directorate-General for Enlargement, and the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Initiative for South-East Europe (DPPI SEE). The list of participants is attached.

II. Description of the meeting

II.1 Session I - Opening session

The meeting was opened by Demetrio Innocenti, Programme Officer of UNISDR Regional Office for Europe, who extended welcome to the participants and offered the floor to the podium members.

Dr. Ljupco Ristovski, State Counselor of General Secretariat of the Government, welcomed the participants. He highlighted the relevance of the Southeast European Cooperation Summit (SEECF) in Ohrid, which included DRR and CCA as main topics of discussion at the meeting of the Heads of States and at the Ministerial Conference. Dr. Ristovski noted with regret that the SEECF has been cancelled due to some political issues, but nonetheless the relevance of CCA and DRR will remain high in the agenda of the Government and the SEECF. He also expressed his pleasure for the established partnerships through the implementation of the IPA Project, and for



the desire to build the resilience to disasters in Western Balkans and Turkey, calling for increased donor investments in CCA and DRR.

Mr. Vancho Dimitriev, the Director of the Hydrometeorological Service of the Republic of Macedonia, welcomed the representatives of all participating institutions. He highlighted that this project is a good platform for regional cooperation development and strengthening between Hydrometeorological Services and reminded that the project is continuing the work and building upon the previous IPA Project, successfully implemented from 2009 to 2012.

Ms. Paola Albrito, UNISDR Head of the Regional Office for Europe, welcomed the participants and noted that this sub-region is strongly committed to reduce disasters risks, joining efforts towards a successful implementation of the common goals. This is perceived by the number of National Platforms for DRR established in the region as well as the active role that SEE countries have had in these years within the European Forum for DRR and the Global Platform for DRR (GPDRR). She highlighted the recommendations emerged from the GPDRR 2013 and how the SEE countries and IPA project are already addressing in their activities the elements emerged from the draft GPDRR13 Chair Summary. Ms. Albrito noted that several SEE countries are pioneers in the establishment of standardized national databases on disaster losses in Europe and stressed the coherence of the project actions with the work that in these years have been undertaken in DRR by multiple actors from the local to the national and regional level.

Mr. Dimitar Ivanov, WMO Representative for Europe, expressed words of appreciation to all beneficiaries and participating institutions for the cooperation during the first year of project implementation and wished the continuation of the excellent cooperation during the second year as well.

II.2 Session II-Overall Project status

The session II was moderated by Dr. Ljupco Ristovski. He offered the floor to Dr. Maryam Golnaraghi, Chief of WMO Disaster Risk Reduction Office, for a short intervention. She summarized the activities related to the design of the Early Warning System (EWS), which was the topic of the Technical Meeting that was held from 29 to 30 May in Skopje. She briefed the participants on the results of the discussions at the technical meeting. She also thanked the beneficiary institutions for their engagement and further support towards the implementation of this project task, whose objective is to design EWS for each Project Beneficiary.

Mr. Demetrio Innocenti, the Programme Officer of UNISDR Regional Office for Europe, reminded the participants about the Project preparatory process and the project tasks implemented by UNISDR, i.e. the Project Tasks: 1, 2, 7 and 8. He briefed the participants on the progress of the implementation of each task.

Task 1: The exchange kit was finalized, the plan for all the Beneficiaries of the visits in their respective hosting countries developed and Croatia and UK were the first two countries that undertook the exchange (May 2013).

Task 2: The participants were briefed on the actions needed for the re-assessment of the IT technical specifications Knowledge Management System (KMS) and the recruitment process of an international expert currently working on the KMS development (a web-portal containing resources for DRR in IPA beneficiaries which will be hosted by DPPI SEE).

Task 7: Mr. Innocenti briefed the participants on the re-assessment of the task implementation which required an amendment to the contract between UNISDR and the EC and on the content of the Statement of Work developed for the procurement (done by UNOPS) of an international



consulting company specialized in disaster insurance. The company submitted the training package aimed at the national insurance regulators and insurance agents.

Task 8: Visibility products were developed (banners) to promote DRR at local level and the organization of an event with the mayors and city representatives from the Beneficiaries took place in Geneva on 21 May 2013 within the GPDRR 2013. The event was followed by a press conference and provided an opportunity for the local representatives of the Beneficiaries to build their capacity in DRR and develop their networking capacities through a connection with other mayors from EU and other part of the world.

Sari Lappi, the Project Coordinator of the WMO/FMI Project Office in Skopje, presented an overview of the progress achieved in the implementation of the IPA Project tasks 3, 4, 5 and 6 to date, whose implementation is the responsibility of the WMO. She highlighted that one of the main relevant project progress is the participation of all project beneficiaries in majority of project activities that have been implemented to date.

Task 3: The assessment missions were carried out to review national climate archives and climate data management systems (CDMS) were carried out to Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo*. The evaluation activity was aimed at assessing climate data availability in digital format, the potential and needs for data rescue (DARE) activities and high-quality climate datasets development and characteristics and needs for CDMS of these beneficiaries. The current status in all targeted beneficiaries is non-satisfactory. The assessment provided information on the existing CDMS capabilities and their needs for both upgrading and training in CDMS usage. Based on the assessment the solutions for CDMSs were proposed. For Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Federal Hydrometeorological Institute) and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the upgrade of CLIDATA was proposed and accepted by the beneficiaries. For Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, (the Republic Hydrometeorological Institute, Republic of Srpska) and Kosovo* other system, the Meteorology, Climatology and Hydrology Information System (MCH) was proposed. MCH is based on free database engine and therefore is a sustainable solution for the beneficiaries with limited funds for Oracle license fees that are linked to CLIDATA. A pre-training survey has been submitted to these beneficiaries. Installation and training for both systems are expected to take place in the coming months. As a part of the task 3, the regional training workshop on Historic Hydro-meteorological Data Management was organized in April 2013 in Skopje. The workshop focused on hydro-meteorological data management with specific modules for data quality assurance, homogenization and standardization.

Task 4: During the first year of project implementation training on severe weather forecasting was given including organization of on-the-job training in the National Meteorological Administration of Romania to improve the skills of beneficiaries forecasters on severe weather forecasting and warnings with the use of state-of-the-art technologies including issues related to thunderstorm initiation, monitoring, forecasting and warnings. The project supported forecasters from beneficiaries to attend European severe weather forecasting testbed organized by the European Severe Storm Laboratory in Austria. At the Testbed, participants take part in real-time testing of new forecasting and nowcasting tools that are based on model, satellite, radar or observational data. The testbed is one week of intense hands-on severe weather forecasting training, where participants jointly prepared experimental forecasts for the real-time weather as it occurs across the Europe. As part of the task 4 the workshop on integrated flood management, flood forecasting and early warnings was organized in Turkey. The aim of this training was to introduce the Integrated Flood Management (IMF) concepts and tools available stakeholders in flood management with an aim incorporate IFM into existing water resource management plans, disaster management plans and land use management plans. Through project support, EUMETNET approved the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina to EUMETNET Programme EMMA, which is



required for the integration into Meteoalarm. The test period for the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the Meteoalarm web-service was initiated. As planned the project purchased calibration kits with the assistance WMO Regional Instrument Centre (RIC) in Slovenia with aim for the kits to be donated to the beneficiaries in the end of the project. The calibration kits have been received by the RIC and currently being calibrated.

Task 5: As a part of the task 5 related to the development of capacities needed to support climate risk management and climate change adaptation we supported the organization of South-East Europe Climate Outlook Forum including capacity building for long-range forecasts and related climate services; Collaborative production of regional climate outlooks and Interactive session with the end-users from climate sensitive sectors.

Task 6: Most of the activities related to the task 6 of the project will be carried out during the second year of the project implementation. Gap analysis will be developed with respect to the four components of effective early warning systems and preparation of a concept document identifying the technological and institutional needs for building the business case for a regional Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS). Two consultants have been hired to develop this analysis based on the outcomes of Phase I project and with further cooperation and consultation with the beneficiaries as necessary.

Mr. Antonio Barbera, IPA Project evaluation Consultant, thanked all those who collaborated during the one month-evaluation process of the project performance. The evaluation was composed of the following 3 phases: (1) the desk review, (2) the use of the survey and (3) the interviews. The main findings presented were related to the project efficiency, effectiveness, impact prospects and sustainability. 5 main recommendations were also provided for the further implementation of the project, as follows:

1. To enhance the dialogue-teamwork among the Disaster Management, Disaster Risk Reduction actors, NMHSs and other groups;
2. To secure the optimal participation in the project activities by all IPA Project Beneficiaries;
3. To secure timely implementation to ensure appropriate project support;
4. To extend in depth hands-on approach in training events;
5. To review project Log Frame (links between activities and results; indicators).

The final version of the Evaluation Report will be circulated to SC members and Advisory Group on 10 June 2013; therefore all key stakeholders have been invited to provide inputs, comments by 7 June at latest to the draft interim report shared by UNISDR on 28 May 2013.

II.3 Session III- Work Plan 2nd year

Mrs. Albrito has moderated the Session III of the Meeting. She invited Mr. Innocenti to present the work plan for the 2nd year of the project. Mr. Innocenti shared with the participants the activities planned for the 2nd year of the project, the expected deliverables, as well as the milestones established to monitor the implementation progress.

Mr. Eugene Gurenko, the World Bank Lead Insurance Expert and partner of the project for Task 7, provided additional information related to the implementation of the activities related to disaster insurance. He informed the SC members about the contribution of the project to the South Eastern Europe and Caucasus Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (SEEC CRIF administered by Europa Re) and how the contribution of the project activities is key to promote the capacities of the Governments (Insurance Regulators in the Ministry of Finance) of the countries which are part of Europa Re (Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and, expected to join, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro). The project will also contribute to work on increasing



awareness on the possibilities and opportunities from disaster risk insurance among the general public - home owners, farmers and small-medium enterprises.

Prof. Petteri Taalas has shared with the participants the experience of Finland in Disaster Risk Reduction. He listed the services and know-how of the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) for Finland and noted that the aviation sector is the major customer of the FMI. He also noted that since 2005, there is a Weather Phenomena Warning Centre in the FMI, which recorder the highest level of flooding in 2010. Recently, several radar satellites have been deployed for severe flooding monitoring, which enables the receipt of pictures, for instance from the Italian COSMO satellite. Finland is currently applying the free data exchange policy which is expected to increase the number of customers. Mr. Taalas also shared the climate change scenarios for Finland noting that climate change will directly influence the sea level raise and the coastal flooding in Finland.

Mr. Ivanov presented an overview of the planned activities and expected deliverables during the second year of project implementation related to tasks 3, 4, 5 and 6 implemented by WMO.

II.4. Session IV- Closing session

The Project web site has been demonstrated by Mr. Innocenti (<http://www.preventionweb.net/jpadrr/>). He noted that all the presentations of this meeting will be available on the web site as soon as possible on the webpage dedicated to the second Steering Committee Meeting: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/trainings-events/events/v.php?id=32853>. The participants were encouraged to provide suggestions for improvements. Also, the participants were invited to keep in touch with the project coordination team and send comments, and suggestions, if any.

Ms. Albrito and Mr. Ivanov, the Chairs of the fourth and final session of the meeting expressed their appreciation to the host country for hosting the meeting. The meeting was closed at 4 p.m.