



## Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Third Session, Geneva, Switzerland  
8 - 13 May 2011

The world's foremost gathering on reducing disaster risk and building the resilience of communities

### Featured Climate Event

**Title :**

Operational Climate Services for Managing Socio-Economic Risks Linked to the Changing Climate

**Date and Time:** Thursday 12 May, 13:00 – 14:30, Room 2

**Organized by:** World Meteorological Organization and UN-ISDR, in cooperation with United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, World Health Organization, United Nations Water, Food and Agriculture Organization, World Food Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Habitat, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

**Abstract:**

Every year significant economic losses linked to hydro-meteorological hazards are inhibiting the pace of development by years if not decades. The higher frequency and severity of these hazards, linked to a changing climate and increasing vulnerabilities associated with increasing populations, particularly in the coastal zone, are posing significant challenges. This session explores the link between hydro-meteorological extremes and socio-economic impacts in key sectors such as health, urban and infrastructure planning, agriculture, environment and water resource management. It will also address opportunities for improved risk management and decision-making based on the availability of operational climate information in the context of the Global Framework for Climate Services established by the third World Climate Conference. During this featured event, senior national officials will share their experiences and explore the challenges and opportunities for improved planning. The event will address the importance of national and regional multi-sectoral platforms and partnerships and the use of climate services as a critical input for national socio-economic development.

**Key Messages:**

- Many sectors experience significant economic impacts linked to hydro-meteorological hazards. These impacts having increased significantly over the years, and are expected to continue to further increase due to increasing frequency, and severity of these events, linked in part to climate change
- Progress in climate modelling and forecasting provide unprecedented opportunities for managing risks of extremes through informed medium- to long-term planning and risk management strategies
- Making routinely available , tailored climate information suitable to carry out forward-looking risk analysis as basis for informed decision-making while appropriately recognizing that needs for climate information varies across sectors and the industry value chain
- Establishment of the Global Framework for Climate Services to ensure the availability of high quality climate information to meet the critical needs for sectoral applications

**Key Issues to be addressed:**

- What are the main risks associated with climate variability and change along your sector's value-chain, both extreme events as well as slowly varying changes. Can you provide concrete examples as to how these over the years have impacted your countries economy and socio-economic development?
- Availability and quality of water as a resource is critical to many aspects of social and economic development, agricultural production, hydro-power generation, health, tourism, manufacturing, urban development and planning. In context of changing climate, many countries are experiencing reduction in their water supply and more frequency of flooding and droughts (too much or too

little water) requiring more complex water resource management practices spanning across many sectors. Can you provide your perspective on this issue and implications for challenges you confront in your decision-making?

- The field of Disaster Risk Reduction is shifting from post disaster response to focus on investments in preparedness and prevention. To what extent in your country, is disaster risk reduction evolving beyond emergency preparedness to planning and holistic risk management within the economic sectors?
- Over the years scientific progress in understanding of the earth's climate system and ability to forecast and develop future scenarios, have provided unprecedented opportunities for information to support decision-making To what extent you are utilizing climate information and how have you benefited from these information in your decisions? What are the opportunities and challenges for you as a decision-maker to tap into these sources of information?
- Investment in science-based information to support informed decision-making has been the foundation for success in many sectors, development of climate information requires significant amount of cooperation and investments at local, national, regional and global levels. Many socio-economic studies are indicating that investing in climate services has high return on investment: What is your experience and view point? Can you provide examples from your experience?

**Format:**

This will be an interactive session. After quick round of introductions by the facilitator, the Keynote speaker will deliver a statement on the topic (5-8 minutes), then each panellist will make a 5-minute opening statements focusing of 2-3 key questions from the list of issues to frame the discussions. This will be followed by targeted questions posed by the facilitator to the panellists while engaging the audience. Each panellist is invited to make a short closing statement at the end with a key message or recommendation that will be included as the recommendation of the session for the GPDRR-III report.

**Facilitator: Mr. Jan Egeland, Director, Norwegian Institute of International Affairs**

**Panellists:**

**Keynote speaker:** Mr. Michel Jarraud, WMO Secretary General

- Lic Harley Rodriguez, Vice minister of Public Investment, Ministry of Development Planning, Plurinational State of Bolivia
- Mr David Cadman, President, Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI )
- Dr Lucien Manga, Programme Manager of WHO Public Health and Environment in Africa
- Mr Christopher Chileshe, Assistant Director, Ministry of Energy and Water Development (Zambia)
- Mr Rowan Douglas, CEO Global Analytics of Willis Re and Chairman, Willis Research Network

For any questions, please contact:

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