



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

Side event

Title :

Integrated Drought Risk Management

Date and Time: Tuesday 10 May, 12.15 – 13.15, Room 7+8

Organized by: World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Abstract:

Building on the 2011 Global Assessment Report, the case for integrated drought risk management needs to shift from response and crisis management to proactive risk reduction. Partners in the field have been coordinating policy and research that focuses on two key strategic areas: the causes of drought risks; and the most effective tools and methods for reducing and managing drought risks, such as integrated drought management and linkages to integrated water resource management, assessments, and enhanced drought early warning and monitoring systems.

Key Messages:

- Throughout the world there is an increasing awareness that drought is a complex problem. Because of the slow onset characteristics of droughts, monitoring and early warning systems provide the foundation for an effective drought mitigation plan. A plan must rely on accurate and timely assessments to trigger mitigation and emergency response programs.
- Drought risk is not exclusively a problem of precipitation deficits. Emphasis needs to be placed on the economic, political and social factors that contribute to drought risk.
- In view of the complex nature of droughts, it is important to move towards an Integrated Drought Management approach which can help mitigate the drought hazard and create opportunities for improving the quality of life, maintaining ecosystems, generating wealth and promoting sustainable development.
- Emphasis needs to be placed on improving food security and reducing vulnerability to drought impacts. Productive safety net programmes can reduce the amount of resources needed for drought response.
- There are potential economic and political gains that can be derived from integrated drought risk management. These include, for example: more efficient agricultural policies; improvements in food security and livelihoods; more equitable water management; relevance for climate change adaptation strategies, etc.

Key Issues to be addressed:

- Does an “integrated” approach imply a standard international drought risk model (particularly in the case of transboundary water resources), and if so what would this require? What are the baselines? What are the key data gaps and how can they be overcome? What existing models and methodologies can be used?
- Integrated drought/water management is a classic “public goods” problem. What are the

political challenges and how can governments generate political capital for this approach? How can governments address water equity and manage water more transparently and efficiently among its various users across and within sectors? What is the role of the private sector in this process?

- What institutions are needed to develop and implement integrated drought risk reduction and management policies? What existing mechanisms and processes can be leveraged to bring this management regime into existence? What new partners are needed?

Format:

This will be an interactive session. After quick round of introductions and the overview of session's key issues by the moderator, 10-min presentations will be made by each of the three speakers. This will be followed by targeted questions posed by the moderator to the panellists while engaging the audience, identifying in advance a few of the audience for reflections and comments. Each panellist is invited to make a 1-minute 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.

Moderator:

Dr. Roger Pulwarty, Chief, Climate and Societal Interactions Division, Director of the National Integrated Drought Information System (NOAA, USA)

Panellists:

1. **Margaret Hiza Redsteer**, United States Geological Survey (USGS)
2. **Richard Choularton**, World Food Programme (WFP)
3. **Hartmut Brühl**, Global Water Partnership

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