

Recommendations from the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia National Policy Dialogue

Based on the detailed assessments of the DRR policies and practices as well as the NMHS capacities, gaps and needs in the beneficiaries to support DRR, policy recommendations were developed. Initial results were presented to national stakeholders for review and discussions during National Policy Dialogues organised by WMO together with the UNDP in Skopje, on 15 November 2010. During this meeting, high-level participants endorsed the assessment, as well as the set of recommendations emanating from it and presented hereunder.

HFA priority 1: Ensure that disaster risk reduction (DRR) is a national and a local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation

Recommendation 1: Integrate the DRR concept in Republic of Macedonia's key strategic documents and development and sectoral policies; Incorporate development and sectoral policies in a clear and comprehensive framework, i.e. produce a DRR Strategy which will link national, regional and local development priorities to natural disaster risk prevention and reduction; When incorporating DRR in national, regional and local sectoral policies institutions shall follow the DRR concepts and definitions accepted in the ISDR and use commonly accepted terminology.

Recommendation 2: When incorporating DRR in the various sectoral policies, use harmonized methodology and coordinated approach, emphasizing the proactive approach to promotion of development, adaptation to climate change and reduction of natural disaster risks.

Recommendation 3: Initiate adaptation/amendment of legislation to implement national and sectoral policies for accident and disaster risk reduction for later national and local implementation; In a coordinated approach, mutual coordination and respect of each others' advantages the actors of the Crises Management and Protection and Rescue systems (CMC and DRP) shall remove shortcomings causing overlaps of institutions' national or local responsibilities or activities.

Recommendation 4: The National DRR platform should blend into the current regulatory and institutional framework and continue its role as a public awareness promoter and a forum for harmonization and coordination of sectoral policies. The national platform shall improve its comparative advantages as an active and flexible forum for cooperation and initiation of projects and ideas that will facilitate efficient functioning of the DRR system.

HFA priority 2: Identify, assess and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning

Recommendation 5: CMC shall prepare a natural disaster risk analysis and monitoring methodology. In cooperation with other actors of the system, it shall organize appropriate training on that methodology; Improve cooperation between key institutions such as the CMC, PRD, HMS and IEEES for more efficient information exchange, implementation of standard operating procedures and their harmonization with the methodologies, procedures and recommendations of the UN/ISDR, DRR, WMO and of the European institutions engaged in this fields.

Recommendation 6: In cooperation with the other entities of the system, the CMC shall finalize the establishment of an early warning system, which will be based on natural and manmade disaster risk analysis, monitoring, and information sharing. The CMC shall continue with the introduction of the European Emergency Number 112; In preventing natural meteorological disasters, it is crucial to increase the technical capacities and expertise of the national hydro meteorological service, particularly in early warning on meteorological and hydrological disasters by improving weather and water measurement, analysis and forecasting.

HFA priority 3: Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels

Recommendation 7: The Protection and Rescue Directorate and the Training and Exercise Centre shall increase their capacity for efficient training of the central, regional and municipal headquarters, of the rapid response teams, the professional and volunteer firefighters, the command staff and the rescue and protection forces.

Recommendation 8: Establish partnership between educational, academic and research institutions and the Crisis Management System entities which promote and implement the DRR concept. The Ministry of Education and the Education Development Bureau, in cooperation with the educational and academic institutions, the CMS/PRS entities and CKRM, shall introduce continuous DRR education and training and shall support national and local projects in cooperation with UNDP and other relevant international institutions. Introduce compulsory and elective DRR courses in primary, secondary and higher education that will develop a culture of prevention and care for the relations between man, environment and development (as called upon by the UN in Approaching United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014).

HFA priority 4: Reduce the underlying risk factors

Recommendation 9: Establish a comprehensive risk identification, analysis and monitoring process, including community risk exposure and community risk vulnerability assessment methodologies, for specific risks. The CMS entities shall develop appropriate risk exposure and vulnerability assessment methodologies, paying thereby attention to the socio-economic and gender aspects. Separate funds shall be allocated within the existing budgets to finance the DRR policy nationally and locally and to strengthen regional cooperation.

Recommendation 10: Enhance the cooperation between HMS and the other entities to fully use HMS's potential for monitoring and early warning on the impacts of hydrological, meteorological and environmental risks (data, analyses, human resources, reporting).

HFA priority 5: Strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels

Recommendation 11: Strengthen technical and human resources of the hydro-meteorological sector to support risk assessment and early warning systems by promoting operational monitoring, warning, forecasting and mapping of meteorological and hydrological hazards. It is critical to upgrade and modernize the national hydro-meteorological monitoring and information exchange network and the forecasting system and to provide sustainable organizational resources, human resources (education and training, IT expertise, international cooperation and networking) and technical resources (upgrade the automatic hydrological and weather radar network, integrate hydrological models in NWP modelling, integrate air pollution dispersion models with NWP modelling) and increase the budget available to HMS for efficient meteorological and hydrological disaster risk monitoring, forecasting and warning.

Recommendation 12: Strengthen human resources for hydrological data management and analysis, modelling and water forecasting with at least 6 hydrologists (Construction Engineers – hydrology major); Strengthen human resources for automatic hydrological and meteorological observation station maintenance with 3 electronics technicians; Make organizational changes within HMS with emphasis on water forecasting and flood protection and meteorology (measurement instruments calibration); Modernize the Hydrological Information and Forecasting System.

Recommendation 13: Strengthen, modernize and regularly maintain hydrological and meteorological monitoring, and regularly upgrade measurement networks with modern monitoring, data collection and transfer systems using plans and standards; Include weather radars in hydrological monitoring as technically most efficient measurement tools for rain analysis and water and flood forecasting,, especially for early warning on flash floods.

Recommendation 14: Make hydrological models for water and long distance wave travel forecasting for rivers Vardar and Strumica, Crn Drim and their tributaries. Put in place a

hydrological warning and alarming system, containing information on extremely dangerous water thresholds and hydrological maps for risky floodable areas in urban and rural areas.