

AFRICA AGREES ON A COMMON POSITION FOR DURBAN

Over 50 African Ministers of the Environment attending the Fourth Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) adopted a declaration endorsing an 'African Common Position' as the basis for negotiations by African States at the next round of UN Climate Change negotiations (COP17) to be held in Durban, South Africa starting 17 November. The development of the Africa Common Position is being guided by agreement that a legally binding pact on emissions reduction is required under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); that the Kyoto Protocol needs leadership; and that developed countries should provide this leadership by ensuring that there is no gap between the first (2008-2012) and second commitment periods (2012-2016) of the Kyoto Protocol.

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INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION

Countries across Africa including Ethiopia, Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda marked the International Disaster Reduction Day on the 13 October by putting children and youth at the centre of their observance of as the young are the group most affected by disasters on the continent.

SEYCHELLES

In Seychelles, the departments of Environment, Education, Youth, Social and National Council for Children signed the Children's Charter. Ian Dine, an 11 year old school boy gave a speech highlighting the role played children and schools in disaster reduction.

KENYA

Several Children in Nairobi were quizzed on disaster reduction issues. during a public event by a renown Kenyan comedian, Eric Omondi. The event attracted about 20 agencies, government, civil society organizations and UN agencies to participate in an exhibition during the International Day. The day was marked by UNISDR, UNDP, Ministries of Special Programmes and Immigration, UNOCHA and IOM who conducted satellite events focused on the ongoing campaign 'Ending drought emergencies' in Kenya.

SOUTHAFRICA

South Africa's Western Cape Provincial Government announced that it was increasing the budget allocation for safe schools from Rand 19 million to Rand 21 million and is taking steps to incorporate DRR into the school curriculum.

[International Day for Disaster Reduction 2011](#)



Ian Dine, an 11 year old school boy giving a speech during IDDR day in Seychelles. Photo/Courtesy

REGIONAL PLATFORMS

Regional platforms for DRR are multi-stakeholder forums that reflect the commitment of governments to improve coordination and implementation of disaster risk reduction activities while linking to international and national efforts. Inter-governmental collaboration is key to addressing disaster risk reduction at a regional level.
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SOUTHERN AFRICA LAUNCHES DRR PLATFORM

Gaborone, 26 October 2011 – When unexpectedly heavy floods displaced more than a million people in southern Africa in 2007, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) began to meet annually to prepare for future occurrences, culminating in the creation of the SADC Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction this month.

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SARCOF-15: BRIDGING GAPS BETWEEN CLIMATOLOGISTS AND DRR EXPERTS

Windhoek (Namibia), 27 August 2011 – The Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Disaster Risk Reduction Unit in partnership with the World Bank’s Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) and UNISDR conducted a disaster risk reduction (DRR) stakeholders training workshop from 27 -28 August 2011. The workshop was held alongside the Fifteenth Southern Africa Region Climate Outlook Forum (SARCOF-15) from 29-30 August 2011.



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EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SEEKS COMMON STRATEGY TO ADDRESS DRR

Arusha, 12 July 2011 - The Africa Union Commission held a regional workshop for the East Africa region in collaboration with the EAC and the UNISDR Africa. The Workshop was held to accelerate action in the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy on disaster risk reduction and its Programme of Action.



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29TH GREATER HORN OF AFRICA CLIMATE OUTLOOK FORUM

Entebbe (Uganda) , 2 September 2011- The Minister of State for Environment, Hon. Flavia Munaaba, launched a special joint session on disaster risk reduction during the Twenty-Ninth Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum (GHACOF29). The aim of the special session is to move towards a “paradigm” shift when addressing climate change and risks for sustainable development in the Region.

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CORE GROUP OF THE AFRICA WORKING GROUP ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The first formal meeting of the Core Group of the African Working Group on DRR (AWGDRR) concluded with participants deliberating on the strategic areas of work to implement the Africa Programme of Action for DRR. An online tool to monitor progress of the Africa Programme of Action was also presented. The representatives from regional economic communities (RECs) informed on the ongoing DRR activities in their respective regions as well as gaps in the DRR implementation. The Group also looked into sustainable solutions for Drought Risk Reduction against the background of the Horn of Africa Drought Situation. The rationale for two categories of membership is to have a small core group that meets regularly to transact of business while at the same time providing opportunities for participation of all relevant stakeholders for wider a consultation. The meeting was held jointly by the AUC, UNISDR with the support of the World Bank Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR). [Related article...](#)

The AWGDRR was formed to in March 2011 to provide coordination and technical support to AUC, RECS Member States and partners for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for DRR and its Programme of Action. Its membership consists of two categories: the Core group and the Extended Group.



Photo/UNISDR file

NATIONAL UPDATE

NATIONAL PLATFORMS

National Platforms are nationally owned and led multi-stakeholder forums or committee working on disaster risk reduction. They reflect the commitment of its government to implement national and local disaster risk reduction activities while linking up to international efforts.

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NATURAL DISASTER LOSSES INVENTORY DATABASE IN ETHIOPIA, KENYA & UGANDA

The Natural Disaster Losses Inventory Database (DesInventar) trainings have been conducted successfully in Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. The trainings were facilitated by UNISDR with the supported of European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department (ECHO), seeks to provide support towards the development of national disaster databases in the Horn of Africa on one hand, and the active usage of GIS and remote sensing for disaster management und early warning. These specialized training aim to anchor a country's disaster management information within the Desinvetar data base. This information can then be available to government and all interested stakeholders for planning purposes to prevent or reduce disaster risks, for disaster monitoring, early warning, preparedness and response planning. The key ministries with the support of the UN Volunteers have embarked on data collection that will build the envisaged disaster data base.

[Related article](#)

GABON PLATFORM LAUNCH DRR ACTIVITIES

Libreville, Gabon 25-27 July 2011 – A three-day workshop took place in Libreville from 25-27 July to officially launch the activities of Gabon's National Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction. There was a clear vision from the participants of the workshop that humanitarian response could not solve the problem of disasters.

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MAKING CITIES RESILIENT: "MY CITY IS GETTING READY"

Cities and local governments need to get ready, reduce the risks and become resilient to disasters. For the next two years and beyond, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) will campaign together with its partners for this to happen. The 2010–2015 World Disaster Reduction Campaign "Making Cities Resilient" addresses issues of local governance and urban risk while drawing upon previous ISDR Campaigns on safer schools and hospitals, as well as on the sustainable urbanizations principles developed in the [UN-Habitat World Urban Campaign 2009–2013](#).

www.unisdr.org/campaign

CAPE TOWN: WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A ROLE MODEL CITY

Cape Town (South Africa) 12 October—During its observation of the 2011 International Day for Disaster Reduction, Cape Town launched its Disaster Risk Management Centre (DRMC). On 11 May this year Cape Town joined 17 other cities around the world who have been awarded 'Role Model City' status by UNISDR, the UN office for disaster risk reduction [Read more...](#)

WEST AFRICA MAYORS LOOK TO DURBAN FOR CLIMATE CHANGE BREAKTHROUGH

Lagos (Nigeria) 23 September - In a further sign that Africa is mobilizing for its voice to be heard at the COP17 negotiations in Durban, the Mayors of major cities and chairmen of local governments across West Africa met this week in Lagos, Nigeria, to endorse and sign the African Mayors Climate Change Declaration. [Read more...](#)

THREE EAST AFRICAN CITIES JOIN

The East African cities, Arusha, Moshi (Tanzania) and Bujumbura (Burundi), became signatories of the campaign in the wake of severe drought warnings and threats of famine across large parts of east Africa. The signing up session was held in 13 June during a meeting of experts and policy makers who were engaged with finding a common strategy within the overall framework of the Africa Regional Strategy to tackle disaster prevention through strengthening of national and regional risk reduction platforms in the East African region. [Read more](#)

STATUS REPORT ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN AFRICA

The exercise of the development of [The Status Report on Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa](#) in which the assessments on individual countries will be published has kicked off. The Status Report is an initiative to contribute to the Implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy and Programme of Action for DRR in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action. Two such reports already exist for 2007 and 2009. The status report makes use of the information presented in the National HFA assessment reporting tool as well as additional information from other credible sources. As part of this process, an appeal for the validation of the information presented in the country profile reports

was placed in July 2011 with a 3 weeks deadline for the same.

We are reminding the countries that have yet to send in their validated copies to kindly to elizabeth.mukora@unep.org and pedro.basabe@unep.org.

20 COUNTRIES HAVE SUBMITTED

Algeria, Cameroon, The Congo Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Guinea Conakry, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania Republic, Togo and Zimbabwe

UNISDR AFRICA INFORMS 2010-MID 2011 AVAILABLE



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This issue of Africa Informs covers disaster risk reduction (DRR) activities in Sub-Saharan Africa at regional, sub regional and national level. It is intended to provide an advocacy platform, targeting regional and sub-regional fora, in order to increase the understanding and knowledge of DRR.

UNISDR AND UNDP DDC HOLD THE 4TH AFRICA DROUGHT ADAPTATION FORUM

Nairobi, 13 October 2011 - The recent drought disasters in the Horn of Africa cannot be attributed only to consecutive failures of the past rain seasons, but rather to other inherent vulnerabilities such as increasing human population, limited availability of land and limited land carrying capacity, conflicts and insecurity, high food prices, climate change impacts, low investment by governments in the HoA, poor quality of and limited access to services, low education levels, finance, (animal) health, and unfavorable policies. This was highlighted at the fourth Africa Drought Adaptation Forum which had its focus on the current drought situation in the HoA. Participants were drawn from local, regional and international organizations including UN Agencies, INGOs, European Union, Governments representatives, World Bank, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Community representatives, and regional climate producing centres such as ICPAC and ACMAD.

The scope was to make a problem analysis and show-case possible solutions regarding the three thematic topics: *Gaps in existing funding mechanism for long-term drought mitigation measures; Access of communities in drought affected areas to basic services and resources; Preparedness - Early Warning and Early Action.*

The UNISDR Regional Office for Africa and the UNDP Drylands Development Centre (UNDP-DDC) will continue networking with partners to share expertise and best practises to reduce drought impacts in the Region. [Related article...](#)

HORN OF AFRICA LEADERS ISSUE CALL TO REFORM EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Nairobi, 13 September 2011 - Horn of Africa, leaders have issued a strong call to “reform the system of emergency humanitarian response in the region, aiming to enhance resilience and promote long-term solutions.” The East African Heads of State also said they will try to allocate a “significant portion of national revenue” to fund regional projects in drought-prone areas focussed on ecosystem rehabilitation and sustainable livelihood practices, and promoting disaster risk reduction among pastoralists and agro-pastoralists in particular. The final text of the Joint Declaration of the Summit on the Horn of Africa Crisis which took place over September 8 and 9 in Nairobi lays out the essentials of a major strategic thrust in the region for a greater emphasis on DRR. The leaders agreed on a “Nairobi Strategy” which includes a twin track approach to drought risk management whose “new approach and focus should be preventive rather than reactive, and should be holistic rather than emergency oriented.” The call was backed by Summit host, Kenya’s President Mwai Kibaki, President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania, President Salva Kiir of South Sudan, President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed of Somalia and Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia. [Read more](#)

Drought is a slow-onset hazard, which provides time to consider and address its complex root causes, such as understanding people’s vulnerabilities and identifying unsafe conditions related to poverty, fragile local economy, livelihoods at risk, lack of strategies and plans, limited institutional capacities and resources. Understanding these issues allows government authorities and the public to undertake effective drought mitigation and preparedness measures. [Drought Risk Reduction Framework and Practices UNISDR 2009](#)



UPCOMING....

ECHO DROUGHT RISK REDUCTION IN HOA LESSONS LEARNT FROM COMMUNITY BASED OPERATIONS IN: DJIBOUTI, ETHIOPIA, KENYA AND UGANDA	14 NOV 11 ICRAF NAIROBI, KENYA
12TH SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM FOR AFRICA OF UN AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN AFRICA IN SUPPORT OF THE AU AND ITS NEPAD PROGRAMME	21-22 NOV 11, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
MEDIA TRAINING, KARAMOJA	22-24 NOV UGANDA
GLOBAL MEETING ON HOW TO MONITOR HFA	23 -24 NOV SOUTH KOREA
17TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP17) TO THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC)	28 NOV -09 DEC DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

CONTACTS:

UNISDR Africa
UN Complex, Gigiri
P.O. Box 47074, Nairobi
Tel: 254 20 762 1569
Email: isdr-africa@unep.org



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