

Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction



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Suggested Inputs to the Zero Draft of HFA2¹

PEDRR and the Convention on Biological Diversity welcomes the Co-Chair's Zero draft of the post-2015 framework on disaster risk reduction (or HFA2), dated 20 October 2014, especially with its stronger language on investing in disaster prevention.

Ecosystem degradation as a driver of disaster risk is now widely acknowledged. What is less understood and recognized is the role of ecosystems in reducing disaster risk and enhancing community resilience to disasters. In other words, *environment/ecosystems should not only be viewed solely as a problem to be tackled (i.e. underlying risk driver) but should also be regarded as a DRR solution.*

Clear language that explicitly recognizes ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction is still needed in the current Zero draft of HFA2. More and more countries around the world are already recognizing and applying ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction (see Annex 1 for some examples). Ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation have already been endorsed in several multilateral processes, including in the UNFCCC and the most recent decision adopted by the 12th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (*XII/20. Biodiversity, climate change and disaster risk reduction*) in October 2014. The growing evidence and experience on ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction should likewise be reflected in HFA2.²

Partners would like to put forward 3 priorities for inclusion in the post-2015 framework on DRR:

¹ These inputs also reference PEDRR's position paper on the post-2015 global framework on disaster risk reduction (May 2013) and PEDRR Inputs to Pre-Zero Draft (October 2014) at www.pedrr.org or <http://www.wcdrr.org/preparatory/viewsandcomments>

² Ecosystem-based measures for DRR have been endorsed in the Outcomes of Regional DRR Platforms of Asia, Africa, Latin America and Arab states, the European Ministerial Meeting on DRR, as well as in previous Global Platforms (2011 and 2013) held in Geneva. These measures are also supported by several multilateral agreements, namely: (i) the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention), and specifically in reference to the Draft Resolution on Wetlands and DRR sponsored by the Government of the Philippines, to be discussed at the CoP 12 meeting in June 2015; (ii) UN Convention on Biological Diversity, specifically in reference to its CoP 12 decision recently adopted which promotes ecosystem-based approaches to climate change and disaster risk reduction; (iii) UN Convention to Combat Desertification, (iv) the UNFCCC Nairobi Work Programme and UNFCCC Cancun Agreements, as well as (v) the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

1. Explicit recognition of the role of sustainable ecosystem management in disaster risk reduction (Section D: Priorities for Action)

In Section D, Priority 3, Paragraph 28 K) - Current text should be replaced with the following:

“Promote and implement the sustainable management of ecosystems, including the conservation and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity, in disaster risk reduction strategies, programming and planning at all levels and across sectors; and implement environmental and natural resource management approaches that incorporate disaster risk reduction”.

The suggested language seeks to ensure that ecosystem-based approaches are recognized as a DRR solution and that mainstreaming of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction can be pursued both ways: disaster risk reduction is incorporated into relevant environmental agendas, and sustainable ecosystem management approaches are incorporated into disaster risk reduction agendas.

There is a need to provide further guidance to Member States, by citing specific examples of ecosystem management approaches, such as river basin management, integrated coastal zone management, integrated water resource management, dryland and wetland management, and protected areas management, which could be harnessed for disaster risk reduction.³ These examples should be inserted as a footnote to Paragraph 28 K).

2. Recognition of ecosystem-based approaches for disaster risk reduction in Section C. Guiding Principles

There is currently no reference to ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction approaches under Section C. Given that environmental measures are already explicitly recognized at the Expected Outcome and Goal level, reference to ecosystem-based DRR approaches in Section C is key to provide a clear rationale for pursuing the Expected Outcome and Goal and the Priorities for Action.

We suggest a new bullet under Paragraph 15:

“Disaster risk reduction requires the integration of ecosystem-based solutions, including ecosystem restoration and the sustainable management of land and water resources at the relevant spatial scale. The sustainable use and restoration of ecosystems and biodiversity play a significant role in reducing disaster and climate change-related risks and strengthening the resilience of countries and people.”

3. Clarify language on environmental impact assessments in Section D, Priority 3

PEDRR suggests clarifying the important role of environmental impact assessments (EIAs) in DRR under Section D, Priority 3, Paragraph 28:

1. Integrated DRR-EIAs should apply for both public and private investments.

³ These approaches have been endorsed through the ISDR Global Platforms on Disaster Risk Reduction (2011 and 2013), Asia, America and Africa Regional Platforms on Disaster Risk Reduction (May-June 2014), as well as the European Ministerial Meeting on DRR (July 2014) and Arab Ministerial Conference on DRR (September 2014).

2. Disaster risk must be considered integral to the EIA process. Taking into account disaster risk in EIAs will help to identify existing risks on proposed investments, assess the potential of creating or exacerbating disaster risk as a result of proposed investments, and identify environmentally-sustainable mitigation options to prevent, manage and reduce disaster risks.

3. EIAs should encompass strategic environmental assessments (SEAs) which are applied for sector-wide or area-based development planning, going beyond the scale of individual projects.

EIAs are already practiced in most countries and are a tool for development and land-use planners to anticipate, avoid and mitigate potential health, social and environmental impacts that result from development human activities. Several countries, such as India, the Philippines and more recently the EU, have passed legislation to incorporate disaster risk as part of EIA implementation.

We suggest amending Paragraph 28 b) which makes unclear reference to applying EIAs in public investments. We suggest a separate bullet under Paragraph 28, as follows:

“Promote the incorporation of disaster risk in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments for both public and private investments, in order to identify disaster risks on proposed investments , assess risks which could be potentially created or exacerbated as a result of investment activities, and identify sustainable mitigation options to prevent, manage and reduce disasters risks”.

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Additional Notes:

Further recommendations for inclusion in the Zero draft of HFA2 can be found in Annex 2.

Main references to environment/ecosystems in the Zero draft that provide a strong basis for promoting ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction approaches and should be maintained in future drafts include:

1. Paragraph 5, Preamble – Call for dedicated action to focus on tackling underlying risk drivers, which include “declining ecosystems” (but suggest adding, “unsustainable use of land and water resources”)

2. Expected Outcome (Section B) explicitly calls for “The substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives, and in the social, economic and environmental assets of persons, communities and countries”.

3. To attain the Expected Outcome, the following Goal is articulated (Section B): “The prevention of disaster risk creation and the reduction of existing disaster risk through economic, social, cultural and environmental measures which address exposure and vulnerability, and thus strengthen resilience”.

4. Priority 1, National/ Local Levels, Paragraph 22 – It is important to “g) Strengthen the technical and scientific capacity to develop and apply methodologies, standards, metrics and models to assess vulnerabilities and exposure to all hazards, taking into account landscape and watershed level considerations and ecosystem functions and services to reduce disaster risk in risk assessment protocols”

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and Disaster Risk Reduction**

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) • Asian University Network of Environment and Disaster Risk Management (AUNEDM) • Council of Europe • Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) • Global Risk Forum (GRF) • Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation • International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) • ProAct Network • Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) • The Nature Conservancy (TNC) • UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) • United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) • United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) • United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) • United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) • Wetlands International • World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

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Annex 1. Examples of implementing ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction

- After Typhoon Yolanda devastated coastal areas in the Philippines, the Philippine government quickly pledged USD 22 million from its own budget towards mangrove reforestation and rehabilitation activities to function as natural buffers against future storm surge impacts.
- After Hurricane Sandy, the Governor of New York (USA) set up a USD 400 million fund to buy back homes from residents in Sandy-affected communities, with plans to convert these areas into green spaces that would function as coastal buffer zones.
- From 2012-2015, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Lukaya River Users Association are pilot-testing river basin management for the first time to better manage flood risks and improve water quality.
- In Burkina Faso and Niger, local farmers restored degraded drylands by applying traditional agricultural and agroforestry techniques, significantly increasing local resilience against droughts. In Burkina Faso, more than 200,000 hectares of drylands have been rehabilitated, now producing an additional 80,000 tons of food per year. In Niger, more than 200 million on-farm trees have been regenerated, providing 500,000 additional tons of food per year. (Reij, C., G. Tappan, and M. Smale. 2010)
- In Bolivia, community-based forest rehabilitation, improved both slope stability and the condition of watersheds, increasing community resilience to landslides and extended dry periods (Robledo, C., Fischler, M. and Patiño, A. 2004)
- European countries affected by severe flooding in recent years, including the UK, Netherlands, Belgium and Germany have made significant policy shifts to “make space for water” to protect people from flooding, restoring floodplains, applying river basin management and integrated coastal zone management. (Temmerman, S., Meire, P., Bouma, T. et.al. 2013)
- The Netherlands invested €2.3 billion to make “Room for the River” and re-establish floodplains, resulting in reduced flood risk for 4 million people along its main rivers (Van Eijk, P., C. Baker, R. Gaspirc, and R. Kumar, 2013)
- Switzerland invests up to 150 million Swiss francs per year in forest management which provides protection against mountain hazards, such as rockfalls, snow avalanches and landslides and is 5 to 10 times less costly than engineered measures (Wehrli, A and L. Dorren, 2013).
- In north-eastern India, in Orissa, the State government and communities are working together to restore floodplains and allow floods of moderate intensity. This strategy provides significant benefits for local agriculture and downstream fisheries, while sustainably managing flood regimes and water flows (Van Eijk, P., C. Baker, R. Gaspirc, and R. Kumar, 2013)
- In Ethiopia, the Government and local communities have been implementing, since the 1980s, a sustainable land management and rain catchment programme, which has increased food production and mitigated the impacts of drought and floods. The programme known as MERET has increased food security of MERET households by 50%, reduced the average annual food gap from 6 to 3 months, rehabilitated 1 million hectares of land, and reforested 600,000 hectares (World Food Programme, Office for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, 2010).

Further references can be found at: www.pedrr.org

Annex 2. Additional PEDRR Inputs to the Zero Draft of HFA2

Reference in Zero draft	Suggested Change / Comments
A. Preamble	
4. We are at a crossroads. It is urgent and critical to anticipate, plan for and act on risk scenarios over at least the next 50 years to protect more effectively human beings and their assets, and ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unclear, suggest rephrasing: <p><i>“We are at a crossroads. It is urgent and critical to anticipate, plan for and act on risk scenarios over at least the next 50 years to protect more effectively the social, economic and environmental assets of persons, communities and countries.”</i></p>
5. There has to be a broader and a more people-centred preventive approach to disaster risk. Enhanced work to address exposure and vulnerability and ensure accountability for risk creation is required at all levels. More dedicated action needs to be focused on tackling underlying risk drivers and compounding factors, such as demographic change, the consequences of poverty and inequality, weak governance, inadequate and non-risk informed policies, limited capacity especially at the local level, poorly managed urban and rural development, declining ecosystems, climate change and variability, and conflict situations...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “declining ecosystems” are a consequence of several of the factors mentioned; suggest adding: <p><i>“There has to be a broader and a more people-centred preventive approach to disaster risk. Enhanced work to address exposure and vulnerability and ensure accountability for risk creation is required at all levels. More dedicated action needs to be focused on tackling underlying risk drivers and compounding factors, such as demographic change, the consequences of poverty and inequality, weak governance, inadequate and non-risk informed policies, limited capacity especially at the local level, unsustainable use of land and water resources poorly managed urban and rural development, declining ecosystems, climate change and variability, and conflict situations....”</i></p>
Section D. Priority 1	
National/Local Paragraph 22 b) Systematically survey, record and publicly account for all disaster losses and the economic, social and health impacts;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add: <p><i>“...economic, social, health and <i>environmental</i> impacts”</i></p>
Global/Regional Paragraph 29 b) Recognizing the different multilateral processes, work through the United Nations and other relevant institutions and processes, as appropriate, to promote coherence at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Important to recognize and take advantage of opportunities presented by multilateral processes that are linking environmental management and DRR, e.g. Convention on Biological Diversity, Ramsar Convention, UNCCD, UNFCCC.

and across sustainable development, climate change and disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programs;	- Add text: “...across sustainable development, <i>environmental management</i> , climate change and disaster risk reduction policies, plans and programs;
Priority 2	
National / Local Paragraph 25	- Add additional bullet, as follows: “ <i>Promote ecosystem-based approaches and the sustainable management of natural resources and integrate these into disaster risk reduction policies and strategies</i> ”
Global/Regional Paragraph 26	- Add additional bullet, as follows: “ <i>Promote collaboration with regards to shared resources at transboundary levels, such as within a river basin, and along coastlines, to enable policy and planning for disaster risk reduction and prevention and to build resilience across the entire landscape.</i> ”
Priority 3	
Paragraph 27 Investing in risk prevention and reduction through structural and nonstructural measures is essential to enhance the economic, social, cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets as well as the environment.	- Awkward – should be rephrased as follows: “...is essential to enhance the <i>economic, social, cultural and environmental resilience</i> of persons, communities, and countries”
Priority 3	
National/Local Paragraph 28 e) Promote the incorporation of disaster risk assessment into rural development planning and management, in particular with regard to mountain and coastal flood plain areas, including through the identification of land zones that are available and safe for human settlement;	- Add: “urban”: “Promote the incorporation of disaster risk assessment into rural <i>and urban</i> development planning and management, in particular with regard to mountain and coastal flood plain areas,....”
Priority 4	
National / local Paragraph 31 g) Learn from the recovery and reconstruction	- Add as follows: “Learn from the <i>sustainable</i> recovery and

<p>programs over the HFA decade and exchange experience knowledge and lessons learned in order to develop guidance for preparedness for reconstruction, including on land use planning and structural standards improvement;</p>	<p>reconstruction programs over the HFA decade and exchange experience knowledge and lessons learned in order to develop guidance for preparedness for reconstruction, including on water- and land-use planning and structural standards improvement;</p>
<p>Global/Regional Paragraph 32</p> <p>b) Promote the further development of standards, codes and other guidance instruments to support preparedness and response, and contribute to the lessons learned for policy practice and reconstruction programmes;</p>	<p>- Add as follows:</p> <p>“....to support preparedness and response, sustainable recovery and reconstruction, and contribute to lessons learned.....”</p>