



World Meteorological Organization  
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Subject: Progress report on WMO preparations for, and contributions to, the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR-III), 14-18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following WMO circular letters PR-6765 dated 25 April 2014, PR-6799 dated 5 November 2014, and PR-6803 dated 2 December 2014, concerning the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR-III), 14–18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan (<http://www.wcdrr.org>), I am pleased to provide you with the progress report that highlights WMO preparations for, and contributions to, the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and WCDRR-III (see Annex). More information on WMO activities at WCDRR-III is available at <http://www.wmo.int/wcdrr>.

Members are encouraged to attend WCDRR-III as part of their national delegations and to participate actively in the conference sessions and events, including the WMO Symposium on Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems.

Furthermore, Members that wish to share documentary video materials on good practices in early warning systems in your country, for inclusion in the joint WMO-JMA special exhibit booth on Building Weather and Climate Resilience, may send them to WDS/WMO at [wds@wmo.int](mailto:wds@wmo.int) before **18 February 2015**.

Yours faithfully,

(E. Manaenkova)  
for the Secretary-General

To: Permanent Representatives (or Directors of Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services) of Members of WMO (PR-6818)

cc: Hydrological Advisers to Permanent Representatives

## **Progress report on WMO's preparations for and contributions to the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction and the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR-III), 14–18 March 2015, Sendai, Japan**

This report presents the progress and highlights of WMO's contributions to and participation in the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR-III), to be held on 14–18 March 2015 in Sendai, Japan (<http://www.wcdrr.org>). These include the progress with the development of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (DRR) to be adopted at WCDRR-III and the engagement of WMO in the high-level and ministerial sessions, the working sessions, and side events of the conference.

### **1. WMO contributions to the development of the post-2015 framework for DRR**

The latest draft of the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (dated 28 January 2015) prominently includes the term **multi-hazard early warning systems** (MHEWS), which was absent in the pre-zero and zero drafts. Moreover, provisions that cite climate change and climate services also abound in the draft text.

Particularly on MHEWS, the draft conveys the calls made by States to:

- a) *enhancing/ensuring the full coverage of multi-hazard early warning systems* (par. 12);
- b) *enhance the development and dissemination of science-based methodologies and tools (...) to strengthen multi-hazard early warning systems* (par. 23-a);
- c) *invest in, develop, maintain and strengthen people-centred multi-hazard, multi-sectoral forecasting and early warning systems (...) Promote application of simple and low-cost early warning equipment and facilities and broaden release channels for natural disaster early warning information* (par. 31-b); and
- d) *promote the further development and investment in effective, nationally compatible, regional multi-hazard early warning mechanisms, where relevant, in line with the Global Framework for Climate Services, and facilitate sharing and exchange of information across all countries* (par. 32-c).

Moreover, States have called for the formulation of a specific global target on MHEWS, as well as indicators for measuring progress of implementation. As consultations and discussions continue, the current formulation of the target (as of 27 January 2015) is as follows:

*Target 7: Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to the people by 2030.*

In line with the above-mentioned developments, WMO is paving the way for the establishment of an international network of institutions and experts that will initiate relevant baseline studies, reviews and researches, and make available to governments and key stakeholders risk profiles, knowledge, expertise, and technical guidance in strengthening MHEWS and related services at all levels.

### **2. United Nations High-Level Event**

As a member of the United Nations Chief Executive Board (CEB), WMO SG, together with 10 other United Nations Executive Heads, will participate in the United Nations High-Level Event. The session will address how the United Nations System will support and achieve the collective goals stated in the *United Nations Plan of Action on*



*Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience* and deliver its commitments to implement the post-2015 framework for DRR.

Moreover, the discussions will address how the United Nations System will anchor DRR for resilience as a core principle in its collective efforts for sustainable development. Among the DRR-related topics that the event will address are (1) challenges to the United Nations, (2) promoting innovation, and (3) coherence in action.

Issues of particular relevance to WMO that will be discussed include (1) the challenge of engaging United Nations leadership to drive change at the country level; (2) advances in science and technology that can change future disaster risks; (3) progress in building weather and climate resilience, i.e. progress with (a) observations and monitoring data processing and modelling; (b) impact-based weather forecasts and predictions and risk-based warnings; (c) warning and risk dissemination and communications; and (d) crowd-sourcing under the concept of MHEWS and weather, water, and climate services; and (4) innovative partnerships on DRR for resilience.

The above-mentioned topics and issues concern the implementation of the *United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience* by the United Nations System through enhanced and accelerated programme implementation, especially at the national level by Members, and strengthened multi-stakeholder partnership and networking in building weather and climate resilience.

### **3. Inter-Governmental Segment: Ministerial Roundtables and Multi-Stakeholder Partnership Dialogues (High-Level Sessions)**

The WMO Executive Management is keen on participating in and contributing to the discussions at the following high-level sessions:

- *International Cooperation in Support of a Post-2015 Framework for DRR*
- *Public Investment Strategies for DRR*
- *Risk-sensitive investment: Public-Private Partnerships*
- *Inclusive Disaster Risk Management: Governments, Communities and Groups Acting Together*

### **4. Multi-Stakeholder Segment: Working Sessions**

This segment of the conference is comprised of 34 working sessions that address the experiences and progress of States in implementing the HFA, emerging risks, commitments to implementing the post-2015 framework for DRR, and accelerating such implementation.

WMO has been a major actor in organizing the following Working Sessions:

- a) **Working Session on Early Warning**, jointly organized by WMO, UNESCO, UNDP, UNESCAP, UNOOSA, ITU, UNITAR, IFRC, and Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA), and the National Platforms for DRR of Germany (DKKV, including GFZ/KIT/CEDIM); and
- b) **Working Session on Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM)**, jointly organized by WMO/UNESCO/GWP on behalf of UN-Water, and the Governments of Namibia, Switzerland (FOEN), and the Netherlands.

For its expected outcome, the Working Session on Early Warning will conclude with the announcement and launch of the multi-agency networking on early warning

provisionally called *International Network for Multi-Hazard Early Warning* (IN-MHEW). For the Working Session on IWRM, implementation measures needed to reduce losses from the occurrence of floods and droughts will be identified and recommended.

Moreover, WMO, through its designated focal points for the WCDRR-III sessions, has been contributing to the organization of further sessions, e.g. (3) Applying Science and Technology to DRR Decision-Making; (4) Climate and Disaster Risk; (5) Underlying Risk Factors; and (6) the Ministerial Roundtable on Mobilizing Women's Leadership in Disaster Risk Reduction, among others.

In the various Working Sessions, the participation of the members of the WMO Secretariat delegation and a number of PRs as members of their national delegations will be arranged to seize any opportunities to convey WMO key messages to panel speakers before the sessions as well as through interventions during the session.

## 5. WMO Side Event at the Public Forum

As a conference side event in the Public Forum Segment, WMO will hold the **WMO Symposium on Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems and Service Delivery** on 16 March 2015 at the Sendai Civic Auditorium, Sendai, Japan. PRs who have been confirmed as participants of WCDRR-III and members of their national delegations to the Conference, are invited and expected to attend this Symposium.

This one-day symposium will discuss the following topics:

- *What is a Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS)?*
- *Cases of good practice on risk-based MHEWSs and flood early warning system*
- *How is information provided by NMHSs is currently utilized?*
- *The next generation of MHEWS, service delivery, partnership, and building resilience*

As an expected outcome, the WMO Symposium will conclude with the adoption of a symposium report with conclusions and recommendations on the abovementioned topics.

## 6. Special Exhibit on Building Weather and Climate Resilience

In collaboration with JMA, WMO will have a special exhibition booth on *Building Weather and Climate Resilience*. The booth will make available for the public audience filmed messages and documentary videos of good practices in early warning systems shared by Members.

## 7. WMO Key Messages and Statement

The *WMO Key Messages for the Post-2015 Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction* are currently being enhanced to reflect recent progress in the development of the post-2015 framework for DRR. Based on the key messages, a draft WMO Statement will be issued for possible articulation by the WMO delegation and Members at the WCDRR-III sessions and for further dissemination during the conference.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the *Hyogo Framework for Action: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters 2005-2015* (HFA) on 22 January 2015, the message of the United Nations SG to the international media focused on effective early warning systems as a major achievement of the HFA. Headlined "*Better disaster early warning systems have helped save lives globally, says Secretary General*," the message is quoted as follows:



*"Marking ten years after the adoption of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction's (UNISDR) Hyogo Framework for Action, the Secretary-General said that early warning systems, improved weather forecasting and greater understanding of the dangers posed by natural disasters have helped to save thousands of lives. The Framework, which focuses on building the resilience of disaster-affected communities and countries, was adopted just weeks after the Indian Ocean Tsunami which as you would recall claimed some 227,000 lives. Since its adoption, there have been more than 3,400 internationally reported disasters triggered by earthquakes, floods, storms, drought, heat waves and other natural hazards."*

Link to video and message: <http://www.un.org/sg/spokesperson/highlights/index.asp>  
(accessed on 22 January 2015)

## **8. Communications Plan**

As part of the WMO communications plan for WCDRR-III, WMO has prepared a draft WMO brochure that highlights the progress of Members in the delivery of weather and climate services, including for MHEWS. Moreover, close coordination of WMO with the UNISDR communications group on media affairs, has been established.

## **9. Participation of PRs in the WCDRR-III sessions and events**

As of 26 January 2015, 64 representatives of NMHSs, of whom 25 are PRs, have confirmed their interest and attendance in the WMO Symposium and WCDRR-III. Some 45 of them are attending as members of their respective country's national delegation to WCDRR-III.

More information on WMO activities at WCDRR-III will be available on the WMO website.