Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction

Eighth session
Bangkok and online, 25–27 July 2023
Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its eighth session

Draft report

I. Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention

A. Matters calling for action by the Commission

1. The following recommendations of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) for its consideration and possible action:

Recommendation 1

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction recommends that the secretariat further develop a regional strategy to support the achievement of early warnings for all by 2027 by strengthening multi-hazard early warning systems in Asia and the Pacific in coordination with member States and relevant partners.

Recommendation 2

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction recommends that the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific step up efforts in transformative adaptation, which protects lives, livelihoods and food, energy and other critical systems, taking a balanced and comprehensive disaster and climate risk management approach that includes the scaling up of innovations to address transboundary hazards.

Recommendation 3

Taking note of the report on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction recommends that the secretariat, in partnership with relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, support the implementation of the Sendai Framework at the regional level, promote the critical role of the health sector in addressing disaster challenges and strengthen regional and subregional cooperation mechanisms to unlock financing, including through the private sector, for building resilience.
B. Matters brought to the attention of the Commission

2. The following decisions adopted by the Committee are brought to the attention of the Commission:

Decision 1

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction endorses the secretariat’s proposals to further develop a regional strategy in support of the global and country-level implementation of the four pillars of multi-hazard early warning systems – namely, disaster risk knowledge and management, observations and forecasting, dissemination and communication, and preparedness to respond – taking note of the discussions during the thematic expert meeting entitled “Regional learning platform for multi-hazard early warning systems” held on 24 July 2023.

Decision 2

Welcoming the key findings of the Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2023 and the data-driven analysis available in the Risk and Resilience Portal, the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction underscores the importance of the recommendations on transformative adaptation and requests the secretariat to implement those recommendations by deepening its analytical research, knowledge-sharing and capacity development.

Decision 3

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction requests that the secretariat increase the provision of support for building national capacities for disaster preparedness, adaptation and resilience, including through the Asia-Pacific Disaster Resilience Network, by leveraging digital innovations and geospatial applications and sharing information, expertise, resources and good practices for developing regional multi-hazard early warning systems.

Decision 4

The Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction encourages members and associate members to make financial and in-kind contributions to the ESCAP multi-donor trust fund for tsunami, disaster and climate preparedness as a means of accelerating efforts to achieve early warnings for all in Asia and the Pacific.

II. Organization

A. Opening, duration and organization of the session

3. The Committee held its eighth session in Bangkok and online from 25 to 27 July 2023. The session was opened by the Executive Secretary of ESCAP; the Vice-Minister of the Interior of Thailand, Police Lieutenant General Nadhapit Snidvongs; the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO); the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction and Head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; the Secretary-General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Mr. Jagan Chapagain; the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU); and the Chair of the eighth session of the Committee.
B. Attendance

4. Representatives of the following member States attended: Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Palau, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Türkiye, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.

5. Representatives of French Polynesia, an associate member, also attended.

6. Representatives of the following Permanent Observers attended: Italy, Mexico, Sweden and Switzerland.


9. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations also attended: Asia-Pacific Telecommunity, Asian Reinsurance Corporation, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, Regional Integrated Multi-hazard Early Warning System for Africa and Asia (RIMES) and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

10. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and other entities also attended: Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, IFRC, Institut Panafricain pour la Paix et la Démocratie, International Committee of the Red Cross, Pan-African Institute for Development and Tohoku University.

11. In accordance with rule 12 of the Commission’s rules of procedure, the Chair and Vice-Chairs examined the credentials of all the representatives and found them to be in order.

C. Election of officers

12. The Committee elected the following officers:

   Chair: Ms. Marilou G. Erni (Philippines)
   Vice-Chairs: Mr. Phuchphop Mongkolnavin (Thailand)
               Mr. Seyed Reza Nobakhti (Islamic Republic of Iran)

D. Agenda

13. The Committee adopted the following agenda:

   1. Opening of the session:
      (a) Opening addresses;
      (b) Election of officers;
      (c) Adoption of the agenda.
2. Targeting transformative adaptation.

3. Trends emerging from the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Asia and the Pacific, including the implementation of its health aspects.

4. Supporting the implementation of the Executive Action Plan on Early Warnings for All, 2023–2027, through a regional strategy.

5. Overview of the work of the secretariat and the United Nations system at the regional level.

6. Future focus of the subprogramme.

7. Other matters.

8. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its eighth session.

E. Other events

14. The fourth ESCAP Disaster Resilience Week was held in conjunction with the Committee session. The following expert group meetings, side events and special sessions were also held:

   (a) 24 July 2023: side event on the regional learning platform for multi-hazard early warning systems with expert thematic sessions on disaster risk knowledge, co-organized with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction; side event on detection, monitoring and forecasting of hazard, co-organized with WMO and RIMES; side event on warning dissemination and communication, co-organized with ITU and the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development; and side event on preparedness and response capabilities, co-organized with IFRC and the United Nations Development Programme;

   (b) 24–27 July 2023: weather forecasting and climate prediction training, co-organized with RIMES;

   (c) 24–27 July 2023: regional workshop on innovative geospatial applications for sustainable development;

   (d) 24–27 July 2023: consultation on the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action on Sand and Dust Storms in Asia and the Pacific with the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management;

   (e) 25–27 July 2023: twenty-seventh session of the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development;

   (f) 25 July 2023: side event on why it is so difficult to take anticipatory action when managing disasters and on overcoming mainstream challenges and unlocking solutions, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;

   (g) 25 July 2023: side event on innovation in climate adaptation and resilience in Asia, organized by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center;

   (h) 26 July 2023: side event on the role of women in early warning systems, organized by IFRC;
(i) 26 July 2023: side event on risk data governance and policy design, co-organized by the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction;

(j) 26 and 27 July 2023: side event on the regional learning platform with expert spotlight sessions on: building resilience to slow the onset of disasters in small island developing States, co-organized with the regional hub of the United Nations Development Programme, the National Institute of Environmental Studies and RIMES; facilitating disability- and gender-inclusive disaster risk reduction; bridging the gap in risk-informed decision-making for infrastructure resilience, co-organized with the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center; and building the resilience agenda through technology, co-organized with the United Nations Satellite Centre, the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology;

(k) 27 July 2023: side event on the state of the climate in Asia, co-organized with WMO.

III. Account of proceedings

15. The discussions held during the session will be summarized in an account of proceedings that will become available within a week following the conclusion of the session and be annexed to the present report.
Annex

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