



**Organization of American States
Department of Sustainable Development**

Preparation workshop on Managing risk of natural hazards for the
First Inter-American Meeting of Ministries and High-Level Authorities on
Sustainable Development



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A. Introduction

In recent years, countries from the American hemisphere have encountered serious levels of vulnerability regarding natural disasters, which includes hurricanes, inundations, earthquakes, landslides, droughts, and natural phenomenon like EL Nino among others. Since the 60's, natural disasters in Latin American and the Caribbean have affected more than 40 million inhabitants, causing more than 45,000 fatalities and provoking more than 20 million in economic losses.¹

Responding to this depiction, the Santa Cruz Summit on Sustainable Development, established a conformity among states members, which was reaffirmed during the IV Summit of the Americas Mar del Plata (2005) to guide and elevate interest of topics, projects, and policies on Sustainable Development issues in Latin America and the Caribbean through the celebration of the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministries and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development

In reaction, The Department of Sustainable Development/OAS, have directed its energy to the materialization of this meeting, by creating an agenda that include the three main topics on sustainable development, which are economic development, social issues, and environment. Enclosed by this three subjects:

- a) Integrated Water-Resource Management;

- b) Sustainable Agriculture, Sustainable Forestry and Tourism
- c) Managing risk of natural hazards, risk sharing and risk transfer arrangements of Natural Disasters

Each topic is to be studied and analyzed in different workshops, developed by the DSD. This Department will bring experts and specialists of the States Members in each of the areas to contribute with their knowledge and expertise to finally create a series of proposals, and recommendations to be used later on by the Ministers of Sustainable Development. To summarize, each workshop will provide a series of measures, and policy making during the Ministerial sessions.

The Managing risk of natural hazards workshop intends to comprise experts and specialists knowledge to begin the creation of strategic alliances that promote enhancements in the natural hazards management in order to reduce the hazards effects; additionally, to identify policies, project and cooperation agreements that facilitates and increase the assessment of risks. This will provide State Members the ability to act upon this risks, and ultimately lessens the impact of them by the use of the previous mentioned assessment.

On the other hand, to be able to obtain an improved understanding and a broader vision for a risk management system and following with the Summit regulations, the four cross-cutting issues are: public and citizen participation, gender equality, good governance, and inclusion and respect of indigenous people.

¹ Grupo de trabajo de la CEPACI sobre Desarrollo Sostenible, Informe sobre proyecto de temario de la primera reunión Interamericana de Ministros y Altas autoridades de Desarrollo Sostenible (2005). http://scm.oas.org/DOC_SEARCH_ENGINE/SPANISH/hist_05/cepcd00696s02.doc

B. Background

In the IV Summit of the Americas Mar del Plata (2005), in which the main focus was “Creating Jobs to Fight Poverty and Strengthen Democratic Governance”, several action plans were established through the Declaration and Plan of Action of Mar de Plata (2005) related to natural disasters. In these declarations the member States expressed their concern over disaster risk and the devastating impact of natural disasters on the lives, infrastructure and economies of the hemisphere. These action plans can be implemented through several initiatives that will be developed in the **Managing risk of natural hazards workshop** with the goal of reducing the impact of natural disasters in the region and increasing support for the sharing of information.

Mainly, the Member States of the Organization of the American States, in the Declaration del Mar de Plata, call for “action at the national, regional, and international levels to strengthen disaster management programs.”

On the other hand, in the Plan of Action of the IV Summit of the Americas, Mar del Plata (2005), the Member States of the OAS called for the unity of efforts to “substantially improve the capacity at the national, regional and hemispheric levels for risk mitigation, to implement cost-effective and robust early warning systems, and to enhance disaster recovery and reconstruction capabilities in collaboration with relevant international and regional institutions and the coordinated development of effective public-private catastrophic risk insurances systems”.²

Initiative 1	calls to increased capacity for disaster preparedness
Initiative 2	Development of early warning and risk mitigation systems
Initiative 3	Development of post-disaster recovery and reconstruction
Initiative 4	Financial assistances as appropriate, particularly for disaster-prone countries, to reduce the impact of disasters.
Initiative 5	The member states also support efforts under way to explore private and public sector involvement in comprehensive approaches to catastrophic risk insurance

² Plan of Action. IV Summit of the Americas, Mar de Plata, Argentina, 2005.

The Managing Risk of Natural Hazards Workshop will take into consideration the results obtained in the World Conference on Disaster Reduction Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, on January 2005. the conference included in its report a guide for the prevention, preparation and mitigation of natural disasters. The conference drew upon the Plan of Action for 1994 in the "Yokohama Strategy," which established frameworks of action geared towards the reduction and mitigation of impact of natural disasters.

The World Conference on the Reduction of Disasters the strategic objectives were: (i) governance: organizations, law and politics; (ii) risk

identification, assessment, monitoring and early warning systems; (iii) generation of knowledge and education; (iv) reduction of risk factors; (v) preparation of responses and effective reconstruction strategies.

The Department of Sustainable Development, considering the initiatives of the IV and V Summit of the Americas and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, on January 2005, has organized the **"Managing Risks of Natural Hazards workshop: Risk sharing and Risk transfer arrangements of Natural Disasters"** for the First Inter-American Meeting of Ministries and High-Level Authorities on Sustainable Development

The international organizations have been called to "consider as a main issue, in the context of sustainable development, the reduction of impact of natural disasters as an important element within the international development goals included in the millennium declaration. Therefore, each effort should be geared towards humanitarian assistance so that future risks and vulnerabilities may be reduced to their least possible form."³

³ World Conference on Disaster Reduction. Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 2005. Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters. Pág. 5

C. Managing risks of natural hazards workshop description

C.1 Date and venue workshop

The "Managing Risks of Natural Hazards workshop: Risk sharing and Risk transfer arrangements of Natural Disasters" will take place on April 18-19, 2006 at the Courtleigh Hotel & Suites, New Kingston, Jamaica.

C.2 Objectives of the workshop:

It is expected that the international experts will analyze the themes of policies and operational projects that will address the vulnerability of populations and their economic and social infrastructure with the following specific objectives:

- (i) Identify projects, policies and cooperative partnerships that make progress in both risk mitigation and risk transfer,
- (ii) Strengthen economic analysis associated with the benefits and costs of risk mitigation and risk sharing,
- (iii) Identify best practices in the adoption of risk mitigation technical standards,
- (iv) Identify specific risk sharing and risk transfer initiatives at the regional and sub-regional levels, including through insurance pooling.

C.3 Agenda

Managing Risks of Natural Hazards Workshop:

"Risk sharing and Risk transfer arrangements of Natural Disasters"

Objective and Context: The objective of the small, informal workshop of experts is to highlight priority areas in relation to reducing the risks of natural disasters. Recommendations from the workshop will be conveyed to the First Inter-American Ministerial Meeting on Sustainable Development, to be hosted by the Government of Bolivia on October 5-6, 2006. Among the themes of the ministerial meeting will be risk reduction measures at the regional level, to mitigate the impacts of natural disasters.

A particular focus of the workshop will be to identify partnerships at the regional and sub-regional levels, including identifying specific priorities, gaps and opportunities in capacity building, information exchange and technical cooperation in relation to risk reduction. Given the overarching focus of the OAS Ministerial meeting will be sustainable development, a key priority will entail the identification of options to mainstream risk reduction measures into sector-specific planning, as well as cross-cutting fiscal, developmental and economic planning approaches.

Given the need to integrate risk reduction measures into specific sectors, the workshop will examine a limited number of sectors within which risk reduction efforts are underway.



These will include the tourism, agriculture, and water management infrastructure. The workshop will examine how best practices in sector-specific risk mitigation can be extrapolated into other sectors.

Finally, the workshop will recommend opportunities for collaboration among OAS member states in the area of risk reduction. This can include opportunities to enhance the exchange of information and related coordination among different regional organizations, such as the recently-launched Comprehensive Disaster Management plan under CDERA and other examples from North, Central, and South America

Tuesday, April 18th 2006

Time	Activity	Session Chair
8:30	Opening of the workshop.	Dr. Barbara Carby General Director Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) Jamaica Dr. Joan C. Neil Director Office of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States in Jamaica Pedro Bastidas Natural Hazards Specialist Department of Sustainable Development/OAS
9:00	Workshop Overview, Expected Outputs, and outcomes, and OAS Ministerial background:	Pedro Bastidas and Isis Márquez Department of Sustainable Development/OAS
9:20	SESSION ONE: MAINSTREAMING RISK REDUCTION: SIGNS OF PROGRESS OR STATUS QUO? The Socio-Economic impacts of Natural Disasters, and Mainstreaming Hazard Risk Mitigation approaches.	Moderator: Eleanor Jones Reporter: Jean Marc Racine
11:00	Coffee break	
11:30	Session Two: Sector-Specific: Best Practices and Obstacles to Risk Mitigation : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Education 	Moderator: Blanca Fiallos Reporter: Lizardo Narváez Marulanda
13:00	Lunch	
14:00	SESSION TWO CONTINUED: SECTOR-SPECIFIC: INTEGRATION IN RISK MITIGATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Infrastructure • Agriculture 	Moderator: Niels Holm-Nielsen Reporter: Jean N. Weaver



Time	Activity	Session Chair
15:30	Coffee break	
16:00	SESSION THREE: SECTOR-SPECIFIC : REGIONAL COOPERATION PRIORITIES IN RISK MITIGATION : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Risk Identification (i.e. Hazard Mapping, Vulnerability Risk Assessment) •Mainstreaming Hazard Risk Reduction 	Moderator: Juan Murria Reporter:
17:15	Wrap-Up of Day One	Reporters
18:30	Close of First Day	

Wednesday, April 19th 2006

Time	Activity	Session Chair
8:30	SESSION FOUR: Sector-Specific: Regional Cooperation opportunities in Risk Mitigation (continued): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Land-Use Planning and Zoning •Capacity-Building and Donors Coordination •On-going information exchange and hemispheric networks 	Moderator: Alberto Maturana Reporter: Charmaine Gentles
10:30	Coffee break	
11:00	SESSION FIVE: Governance in Risk Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Supportive National Legislative Frameworks •How to Enhance Civil Society Participation? 	Moderator: Marco Antonio Rodríguez Reporter: Paulette A. Jude
12:00	Wrap-Up of Morning Session and Draft Recommendations	Reporters
13:00	Lunch	
14:30	SESSION SIX: Risk Mitigation Initiative: Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) Consultation on draft Managing Risks of Natural Disaster policy	Kari Keipi IDB
16:30	Coffee break	
18:00	Workshop ends	

C.4 Participants list

#	Participante Participant	Información de contacto Contact information	País/ Región Country/Region
1	Jeremy Collymore Cordinator Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency CDERA	Building #1 Manor Lodge Lodge Hill, St Michael, Barbados Tel: (246) 425-0386 (24-hour) Fax: (246) 425-8854 cdera@caribsurf.com	The Caribbean El Caribe
2	Eleanor Jones , Managing Director and Consulting Principal, Environmental Solutions Ltd PADF	envirsol@mail.infochan.com Jamaica	The Caribbean El Caribe
3	Velda Octave-Joseph Community Development Officer National Disaster Management Agency	Cel: 1-758-7142225 Kyler96@hotmail.com	Saint-Lucia
4	Willie Clarke-Okah , Counsellor & Head, Development Cooperation High Commission of Canada CIDA	Kingston, Jamaica Mitnet: 333-3450 Local: (876) 511-3450 (876) 926-1500 Willie.Clarke- Okah@international.gc.ca	Canada
5	Dr. Cassandra Rogers Consultant Project Manager Disaster Mitigation Facility for the Caribbean (DMFC) Department Caribbean Development Bank	Telephone: (246) 431-1655 or 431- 1600 Fax: (246) 426-7269 E-mail: rogersc@caribank.org CDB website: http://www.caribank.org .	El Caribe The Caribbean
6	Dr. Barbara Carby Director General Office of Disaster Preparedness ODPEM	PO Box 122 12 Camp Road Kingston 4, Jamaica Tel. (876) 930-0796 Fax (876) 928-5503 dgodp@cwjamaica.com	Jamaica
7	Ms. Charmaine Gentles Office of Disaster Preparedness ODPEM	PO Box 122 12 Camp Road Kingston 4, Jamaica Tel. (876) 930-0796 Fax (876) 928-5503 dgodp@cwjamaica.com	Jamaica



#	Participante Participant	Información de contacto Contact information	País/ Región Country/Region
8	Mrs. Sylvia McGill , Director Meteorological Services	Kingston 5 929-3694, 929-3700 (f) 960-8989	Jamaica
9	Eduardo A. Carral Garcia Director Técnico, Dirección General de la Protección Civil de la Secretaría de Gobernación.	Av. Paseo de la Reforma No. 99, Piso 13, Torre B Col. Tabacalera, C.P. 06030 Deleg. Cuauhtémoc Tel: 51280030 Ext. 11423 ecarral@segob.gob.mx	México
10	Marco Antonio Rodríguez Consultor de Desarrollo Sostenible	(591 2) 242 13 48 (591 2) 242 23 89 Fax: (591 2) 241 87 41	Bolivia
11	Juan Murria Consultor Asesor de la Fundación Venezolana de Investigaciones Sismológicas (FUNVISIS)	Apartado 76.880 Caracas, Venezuela 1070 Oficina: Tlf 58-212- 257-5153; Fax 58-212-257-9977 Residencia: Telefax 58-212- 9770233. murrias@cantv.net. jmurria@hotmail.com	Venezuela
12	Lizardo Nardaez Técnico asistente/ Dirección de PREDECAN	Edificio Cartagena, paseo la Republica 3832 oficina 501, Lima 27, Perú. Tel: (511) 4111-442 Fax 51-1 2213329	Región Andina Andes Region
13	Alberto Maturana Director Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior (ONEMI)	Tel: +562-6718-333 6961- 903 Fax: +562-6894-094 or 6894-050 amaturan@entelchile.net	Chile
14	Jean N. Weaver International Coordinator Program Development Emphasizing Latin America and Saudi Arabia USGS	913 National Center Reston, VA 20192 USA Tel: 703 6486012 703 6486057 jweaver@usgs.gov	United States of America
15	Blanca Fiallos Peña Coordinadora de la unidad de gestión de Riesgos de la Secretaría Nacional de Desarrollo y Planificación (SENPLADES)	Dirección:Ed. La Unión 4to piso Benalcázar 679 y Chile - Quito Tel:(593-2-2) 2580 000 Ext. 349 blanca.fiallos@presidencia.gov.e c	Ecuador
16	Kari Keipi Senior Natural Resource Specialist Environment Division Inter-American Development Bank	1300 New York Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20577 USA Fax: (202) 623-1786 Tel: (202) 623-1939 e-mail: karik@iadb.org	Las Américas The Americas



#	Participante Participant	Información de contacto Contact information	País/ Región Country/Region
17	Niels Holm-Nielsen Environment Management Specialist Inter-American Development Bank	1300 New York Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20577 USA Fax: 202-623-1786 Tel: (202)-623-1956 e-mail: nielshn@iadb.org	Las Américas The Americas
18	Joaquin Toro Specialist Natural Disaster. World Bank	1818H Street, NW 20433 Tlf: 202 458 5990 Fax: 202 522 3552 Washington, DC, e-mail: jtoro@worldbank.org	Las Américas The Americas
19	Dr. Jean Luc Poncelet, Gerente del Area de Preparativos para Emergencias y Socorro en casos de Desastre PAHO	Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Relief Pan American Health Organization World Health Organization 525 Twenty-third Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20037 Tel: (202) 974-3708 Fax: (202) 775-4578 poncelej@paho.org	Las Américas The Americas
20	Dra. Mónica Zaccarelli, Asesora Subregional para el Caribe PAHO	Dayrells and Navy Garden Roads, Christ Church, Bridgetown, Barbados Tel: (1-246) 426-3860; 426-3865 Fax: (1-246) 436-9779 Correo electrónico: zaccarem@paho.org	El Caribe The Caribbean
21	Paster Eric Nathan Adventist Disaster Relief Agency	74 Constant Spring Road Kingston 10 (F) 924-0263 924-1061-3	Jamaica
22	Paulette A.Griffiths Project Manager Enhancing Civil Society Project CIDA/ Project Management Office	Bldg#3, 17 Ruthven Road Kingston 10 Tel: 929 3597/8 ext:225 fitecspcidal@cwjamaica.com	Canada
23	Leon Prop Head of Regional Delegation for Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	Clayton, Ciudad del Saber, Edificios 804/806 Panama City, PANAMA tel: + 507 317 1300 or 1301 fax: + 507 317 1304 e-mail: leon.prop@ifrc.org	The Americas Las Américas



#	Participante Participant	Información de contacto Contact information	País/ Región Country/Region
24	Herbert Thomas Deputy Managing Director WRA	Hope Gardens Kingston 6 Tel. 876 927-0077 extn 230 Fax 876-977-0179 E-mail: hthomasjam@yahoo.com.	Jamaica
OEA /OAS			
1	Dr. Joan Neil Director Office of the OAS General Secretariat in Jamaica	One Argyle Road. / P.O. Box 205 / Kingston 10, Jamaica Phone: (876) 978-7713 Fax: (876) 978-8378 oas@uwimona.edu.jm	Las Américas The Americas
2	Isis Márquez Consultora Departamento de Desarrollo Sostenible	Organization of American States.- 1889 F St. NW - Washington DC 20006 Tel 1 202-458-6470 Fax 1 202-458-3560	Las Américas The Americas
3	Jean Marc Racine Project Technical Coordinator - Natural Hazards Specialist.- Department of Sustainable Development	Organization of American States.- 1889 F St. NW - Washington DC 20006 Tel 1 202-458-3228 Fax 1 202-458-3560	Las Américas The Americas
4	Pedro Bastidas Natural Hazards Specialist Department of Sustainable Development	Organization of American States.- 1889 F St. NW - Washington DC 20006 Tel 1 202-458-6295 Fax 1 202-458-3560	Las Américas The Americas