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EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT (EUR-OPA)

Climate Change Impact on Water Related and Marine Risks

Murcia, Spain, (26-27 October 2009)

DRAFT CONCLUSIONS

www.coe.int/europarisks

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1 Ideas and proposals on climate change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Even if it is difficult to summarise all the rich contents of presentations and ideas explored at the workshop, a number of general ideas seemed to reach consensus. They are presented in the first part of this summary. Participants agreed that those ideas might be put in the form of action recommended to governments so that the exercise may be followed by some operative guidelines that may serve as a source of inspiration for government policy and action.

- A. The rapid development of human induced climate change is an unprecedented phenomenon in the history of humankind that will force to rethink how we build our societies and needs to lead to a more sustainable use of resources (food, water, energy, space and other).
- B. Climate change will make European and Mediterranean societies more vulnerable to a number of hazards, particularly those linked to extreme climate events, marine risks and other water-related hazards. A non exhaustive list include drought and shortages in food production, heat waves, increased wild fires, desertification and aridification of natural systems, environmental stress, floods and flush floods, landslides, storms, and coastal and marine risks.
- C. The old solutions will not work and new and innovative solutions will have to be found to make European and Mediterranean societies more resilient to increased climate-related disasters. There will be need for an improved knowledge-based approach to disaster risk reduction, better tuning both the response mechanisms in emergencies, to make them more efficient, and to deploy renewed efforts and energy on an improved prevention.
- D. Climate change is a powerful supplementary reason to further and deepen the disaster risk reduction agenda, paying particular attention to integrate climate change and disaster risk reduction concerns, thus improving governance and creating the appropriate partnerships with a varied range of stakeholders (authorities at all levels, industry, rescuers, scientist and technicians, volunteers, insurers, environmentalists, etc.) so that the issue of protecting lives, property, livelihoods and the environment becomes a common concern of the whole society.
- E At the government scale, an integration and harmonisation of policies is essential to success. Economic and development policies need to consider disaster risk reduction, safety of populations and sustainability as the inspiring driving forces for change.
- F. Governments have a particular responsibility and need to show leadership, promoting more education to risk, creating the fora for debate, proposal and innovation in promoting sustainability and disaster risk reduction, such as the national platforms for disaster risk reduction being built in many European countries.
- G. The cost of inaction will be too high and it should not be consider a reasonable option for its likely cost in resources, lives, and potential conflict.
- H. International cooperation, exchange of knowledge and experiences and solidarity will be key factors to control or limit the effects on people of climate change and the expected rise in risk. This refers not only to the international sphere –cooperation and solidarity among states- but also within societies, where particular attention needs to be paid to the most vulnerable populations. In the international context United Nations programmes and initiatives, in particular the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), have a special role to play so they need to be reinforced with a strong mandate and sufficient resources to further the world's disaster reduction agenda. In the European and Mediterranean sphere, the European Union, the Union for the Mediterranean and the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA) will be key players.
- I. In the international arena, success of climate change negotiations are key to avoid climate change effects becoming an unmanageable disaster with lasting negative consequences for the future of human societies, so all necessary efforts need to be deployed to avoid the worst of scenarios.
- J. Even if climate negotiations succeed and global warming, changes in rainfall and rising in sea level are limited and somehow put under control, a moderate climate change will occur, so there will be

need to adapt to the new climate circumstances and their impact on the safety of European and Mediterranean societies. For those reasons, disaster risk reduction should be an important part of the climate change adaptation agenda.

K. Societies need to identify the areas and sectors where climate change may produce an increase in vulnerability and set up appropriate prevention policies and early warning and rapid response mechanisms.

Based on the reflexions above, the participants would like to submit a few recommendations for the attention of governments. European and Mediterranean government are recommended to:

1.1 Identify problems and vulnerabilities

- 1. Identify how climate change, in the context of global change, will affect the vulnerability of population, paying special attention to the following:
 - a. how climate change will affect specific hazards, such as floods, marine risks, wild land fires, drought, heat waves, melting of permafrost, landslides and storms on local and regional scale;
 - b. identify populations at risk, specially the most vulnerable because of social inequality;
 - c. map the risks, paying attention to areas and regions that may become more vulnerable such as mountains, areas prone to flooding, arid and semi-arid areas, coastal areas and urban areas, as well as the Arctic and the Mediterranean Regions.
- 2. Evaluate the costs in lives, the economy and the environment of the increase in vulnerability of populations, assessing at the same time the cost of preventive adaptation action and improvement of response in emergencies, so that decisions on action may be supported on hard data and appropriate cost-benefit analysis.

1.2 Reinforce the disaster risk reduction agenda and integrate it with the climate change agenda

- 1. Reinforce at the national level the disaster risk reduction agenda, devoting more resources to improve the resilience of populations and ensuring that adaptation to climate change are integrated into development and act as a driving force for change and modernisation of societies, making sustainability and safety principles of good governance and progress.
- 2. Improve existing legal and technical tools for early warning, response and prevention of disasters to integrate the new threats brought by global warming, changes in rainfall patterns and rise of sea level; devise new tools specially in "aid to decision" tools in crisis situations and prevention tools, reinforce in this context the building of a culture of risk, integrating as appropriate climate change.
- 3. Improve governance of disaster risk reduction, involving all authorities, integrating science, industry and citizens into appropriate partnerships and encouraging all to act both for mitigation of climate change and contribute to the implementation of adaptation measures that may reduce vulnerability; take account, in that framework, of the important federating role of multi-stakeholder national platforms for disaster risk reduction.

1.3 Adopting a knowledge-based approach to prevention and response. The role of science and innovation

1. Recognise the role of knowledge, both science and traditional knowledge, in disaster risk reduction, using existing resources to encourage innovation and favouring exchange of knowledge and good practices; integrate social sciences in to disaster risk reduction, as the human dimension is a key aspect of both preparedness and response.

1.4 The role of cooperation and solidarity

2. Reinforce international cooperation on disaster risk reduction at the global and the European and Mediterranean levels, making disaster risk reduction an important part of the climate change negotiations and supporting global and regional mechanisms of cooperation.

2 Appendix 1 - Agenda

Strasbourg, 20 October 2009

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EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT (EUR-OPA)

EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN WORKSHOP

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ON WATER-RELATED AND MARINE RISKS

26-27 October 2009 Hotel Nelva, Murcia (Spain)

Programme

In collaboration with





Climate change is probably one of the major challenges addressed to contemporary societies since the first assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in 1990 clearly stated that "human activities are substantially increasing the atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases, resulting on average in an additional warming of the Earth's surface". If, as a first step, emphasis was put on mitigation of such human generated greenhouse effects which lead to the Kyoto protocol, the data collected over the ensuing years governed IPCC in its latest assessment report in 2007 to state that "anthropogenic warming and sea level rise would continue for centuries due to the timescales associated with climate processes and feedbacks, even if greenhouse gas concentrations were to be stabilized".

Consequently, mitigation cannot be the sole response and adaptation to the new context generated has turned out to be as crucial as the reduction of the greenhouse effect. This enlarged approach reinforces the need for traditional disciplines to cope with the emerging facts due to this almost irreversible trend and disaster risk reduction is obviously one of the more affected domains. The overall definition of prevention measures for natural disasters, which are often directly or indirectly linked to meteorological events, must focus on present features but also on the longer term impact which climate change will have on them.

Moreover, the latest IPCC assessment report in 2007 gives more details on the expected temperature rise during the 21st century (between 1.1 and 6.4 °C) and on its likely consequences:

- sea levels may rise by 18 to 59 cm,
- more frequent warm spells, heat waves and heavy rainfall (confidence level >90%);
- increased droughts, cyclones and extreme high tides (confidence level >66%).

There are even some reservations on these predictions as in February 2009, at the meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of science, several experts suggested that temperatures may rise between 2 and 11.5 °C.

All these forecasts confirm that water-related phenomena will play a crucial role in the future and associated extreme events will be more likely to happen. For better protection of the population from these risks induced by climate change and to develop common understanding and readiness to respond, the international workshop "CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ON MARINE AND WATER RELATED RISKS" will be organised on 27-28 October 2009 in Murcia (Spain).

The main aim of the Workshop is to foster better preparedness and response amongst populations living in the European and Mediterranean areas which might be affected by water related disasters induced by climate change. This can be done by spreading the latest knowledge on the potential impact of climate change and identifying the challenges of the associated scenarios to such domains as public awareness, protective actions, emergency planning, early warning procedures and emergency response.

The workshop will be structured around the following major issues:

- 1. Reassessing risk identification: how the traditional risk evaluation can be merged with the diverse climate change scenarios?
- 2. Adapting preventive measures: how the often short term designed measures will be able to cope with longer term evolutions due to climate change?
- 3. Improving populations' information: how to communicate on the specific natural hazards component of climate change?
- 4. Enhancing emergency plans and training: how to adapt the existing procedures to the new features imposed by climate change?
- 5. Fostering international co-operation: how to coordinate transboundary initiatives on both climate change issues and disaster risk reduction?

To enrich the discussion and identify concrete proposals, decision makers, civil society and mass media representatives, as well as experts, are invited to participate in the Workshop.

The main expected output of the Workshop is thus twofold:

• to identify new requirements for risk management responding to the recent context of increased threats related to climate change consequences.

• to promote, with the support of international organizations and central authority institutions, a network of actors to transform such new requirements into a better protection of the population against such emerging hazards.



Sunday 25 October 2009

Arrival of participants at Alicante airport (70 km from Murcia)



Monday 26 October 2009

8:30-9:00 **Registration of participants**

9:00-10:00 **Opening session**

Spanish authorities

Rafael González Tovar, Delegate of the Spanish Government in the Murcia Region

María Pedro Reverte García, Presidency and Public Administration Counsellor of the Autonomous Community of the Región of Murcia

International organisations

Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, Council of Europe

Demetrio Innocenti, International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, United Nations

10:00-10:30 *Coffee break*

10:30-12:00 **I. Background work**

 Findings of the French presidency of the European Union in disaster risk reduction and climate change

Philippe Boullé, French Association for the Prevention of Natural Disasters (AFPCN), Paris, France

• Linking the disaster risk reduction to adaptation to climate change

Karl-Otto Zentel, German Committee for Disaster Reduction (DKKV), Bonn, Germany

• The role of local and regional authorities in Disaster Risk Reduction in the face of Climate Change

Iñigo de la Serna Hernáiz, Rapporteur of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe on Coastal towns and cities facing rising sea levels, Mayor of Santander, Spain

Round table discussion on session I

12:00-13:30 II. Floods and related water management problems

- 2007 floods: a forerun of climate change implications?
 Steven Barnes, Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office, London, United Kingdom
- Floods and climatic change trends in Germany

 Janos Bogardi, United Nations University, Institute for Environment and
 Human Security, Bonn, Germany
- Climate change and river management: the Loire example

 Jean-Claude Eude, Etablissement Publique de la Loire, France (Public Establishment of the Loire river)
- Climate Change Challenges to Water Management in Jucar River Basin Authority
 (Juan José Moragues Terrades, President of the Jucar Hydrological Confederation)
- Round table discussion on session II

13:30-15:30 Lunch

15:30-16:30 III. Droughts, desertification, heat waves and forest fires

Impact of climate change on drought appearance in Slovenia and South-eastern Europe

Gregor Gregorič, Meteorological Observations and Applications, Environmental Agency, Ljubljana, Slovenia

 Climate change impact on drought management in Mediterranean area: how to improve the approach Michele Vurro, Water Research Institute, National Research Council (CNR), Bari, Italy

16:30-17:00 Coffee break

17:00-18:30

- **Desertification: a threat for both sides of the Mediterranean**Fattoum Lakdhari, Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Scientific and
 Technical Research in Arid Zones (CRSTRA), Biskra, Algeria
- Heat waves: learning from the 2003 experience in France Raquel Bohn-Bertholdo, Symlog Institute, Paris, France
- Climate change and forest fires risk
 Nikola Nikolov, UNISDR Global Wild land Fire Network
- Round table discussion on session III

19:00-20:00 Cultural tour of the city

21:00 Official dinner



Tuesday 27 October 2009

9:30-11:00

IV. Marine risks, coastal erosion and landslides

- Mediterranean Coastal risks in a climate change context Anton Micaleff, Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Insular Coastal Dynamics (ICoD), La Valetta, Malta
- Geomorphological coastal effects of climate change Olivier Maquaire, European Centre for Seismic and Geomorphologic Hazards (CERG), Strasbourg, France
- Oceanic risks in a climate change context Romain Chancerel, European Centre on Coastal Risks (CERCO), Biarritz, France
- **Presentation by Segura Hydrographical Confederation on the** topic "Water Management in Extreme Hydrological Situations Joaquin Ezcurra Cartagena, Technical Director of the Segura Hydrographical Confederation Fernando Toledano Sanchez, Head of the Automatic Hydrological Information System Management of the Segura Hydrographical Confederation
- Round table discussion on session IV

11:00-11:30 Coffee break

11:30-13:00 **Concluding session** IV.

- Summing up and conclusions Eladio Fernandez-Galiano, EUR-OPA Major Hazards Agreement, Council of Europe
- Closing speech Pilar Gallego Berruezo, Spanish General Director of Civil Protection and **Emergencies**

13:00-14:00 Closing Cocktail

15:00-18:00 Field visit (on request)

> Visit of the Segura Hydrographic Confederation on the topic "Water Management in Extreme Hydrological Situations"

3 Appendix 2 – List of Participants

EUROPEAN AND MEDITERRANEAN MAJOR HAZARDS AGREEMENT (EUR-OPA)

European and Mediterranean Workshop

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT ON WATER-RELATED AND MARINE RISKS

26-27 October 2009 Hotel Nelva Murcia, Spain

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