



Special Topic

August 2015 Issue

12th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification



The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will host its Twelfth Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP12) in Ankara, Turkey, on 12-23 October 2015. Decision-makers from 195 member states will attend COP12 to discuss solutions to issues related to desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD).

Land rehabilitation is one of the pathways to sustainable development. By rehabilitating degraded land, many of the sustainable development goals (SDGs) would be more attainable. Land that is properly nurtured fosters food and water security and reverses negative climate change impacts, such as forced migration, by cultivating opportunities for growth and ensuring stability. To invest in the land is to invest in sustainable livelihoods, therefore the goal of COP12 is to provide practical steps to make the rehabilitation of degrading land areas a reality. The Parties are also expected to identify ways to contribute to the success of the 2015 Climate Change Conference in Paris.

COP12 will begin with an opening plenary segment. The high-level segment will take place on 20-21 October. During the high-level segment, ministers and other heads of delegation will hold round-table discussions and special plenary sessions to identify possible solutions to water scarcity, land degradation and desertification while upholding efforts to mitigate the effects of drought and preventing further land degradation.

COP delegates hope to strengthen and expand stakeholder engagement and encourage more involvement of the parliamentarians, civil society organizations and the private sector in identifying and developing solutions to DLDD. Through collaboration and policy implementation, achieving a land degradation neutral world is within reach. The UNCCD also hopes to garner support for the Global Land Outlook, an in-progress publication to serve as a reference document for businesses looking to support sustainable initiatives.

For more information on the UNCCD COP12, please visit the host country website at www.unccdcop12.gov.tr.

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About AADP

[Africa-Asia Drought Risk Peer Assistance Network](#) (AADP) is a network established under the *Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management Peer Assistance Project*. The project is designed to mitigate the risks of drought and improve human livelihoods in Africa and Asia by creating an enabling environment for inter-regional knowledge sharing among drought-prone countries and facilitating the up-scaling of proven drought risk management (DRM) practices.

AADP provides the DRM practitioners and policymakers with a variety of peer learning and capacity development support to, based on their priorities, operational gaps and capacity needs, building on the pool of experiences and expertise of the ongoing [African Drought Risk and Development Network initiative](#) (ADDN).

AADP's [Drought Online website](#) aims to offer an easy access to a growing collection of DRM related resources... [More >](#)

Click [here](#) to view past issues of AADP newsletter.



Knowledge Resources and Networking Opportunities

Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction

PEDRR

Ecosystems for Adaptation
and Disaster Risk Reduction

Formally established in 2008, the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR) is a global alliance of UN agencies, NGOs and specialist institutes. As a global thematic platform of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, PEDRR seeks to promote and scale-up implementation of ecosystem-based DRR and ensure it is mainstreamed in development planning at global, national and local levels. Ecosystem management is an integral part of DRR. Disasters due to natural hazards, including drought, can have adverse environmental consequences. On the other hand, degraded environments can cause or exacerbate the negative impacts of disasters. Healthy and well-managed ecosystems reduce disaster risk by acting as natural buffers or protective barriers.

PEDRR provides technical and science-based expertise and applies best practices in ecosystems-based DRR approaches. PEDRR is guided by its vision of: “Resilient communities as a result of improved ecosystem management for DRR and climate change adaptation (CCA)”. Its objective is to pool expertise and advocate for policy change and best practice in ecosystem management for DRR and CCA, based on science and practitioners’ experiences. The weekly PEDRR news alert, for example, informs over 4,000 subscribers on ecosystem-based DRR and CCA. Sections include special reports upcoming events, job vacancies, featured publications and news articles.

For more information on PEDRR and its activities/knowledge resources, please visit <http://pedrr.org/>.

Africa-European Union Climate Change Partnership



The Joint Africa-European Union (EU) Strategy was agreed upon in 2007, with the aim to provide the overarching long-term framework for Africa-EU relations. Climate change is one of 8 priority area of cooperation within the strategy. Climate change leads to an increased incidence of droughts, desertification, floods, heat stress and water management problems in Sub-Saharan Africa. This in turn affects other areas such as agriculture and livestock, health and migration. In addressing these climate change related issues, the Africa-EU Climate Change Partnership (ACP) was created as a framework for dialogue, cooperation and exchange on concrete actions. Some of the key progress having been achieved through ACP and related activities include:

- Enhanced political dialogue and cooperation, mainly under the EU Global Climate Change Alliance;
- Reinforced capacities of African negotiators in international climate negotiations and decision-making;
- Sustainable land management, fight against desertification and prevention of deforestation; and
- Addressing the crisis of African wildlife and promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems.

Institutions, organisations and other stakeholders involved in the Partnership are invited to share their experience and to connect with the wider development community on Capacity4dev.eu. Please visit <http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org/areas-cooperation/global-and-emerging-issues/climate-change-and-environment> for more information on ACP and other activities undertaken under the framework of Joint Africa-EU Strategy.



The Water Network



The Water Network by AquaSPE AG is the leading online knowledge sharing platform and business exchange for global water professionals in the \$600 billion water sector to share content, best practices, policies, and technologies. Access to clean water is the biggest humanitarian and economic crisis in the world today. Global water demand is forecast to exceed supply by 40% in the next 15 years. The Water Network aims to closing this gap by supporting accelerated learning, innovation and an efficient market.

The Water Network have members from 190 countries representing over 8,500 companies. Its service offerings include: smart company profiles hosted by The Water Network to promote suppliers products, services and jobs; Marketing promotion in our monthly Newsletter; and online knowledge sharing communities. Members of The Water Network are bonded by a combination of shared interests, purpose, and values that provides a strong incentive to collectively nurture, sustain, and protect the ecosystem as a shared “commons.” Everyone contributes, everyone benefits. This enhances the longevity and durability of The Water Network.

For further details on The Water Network, please visit <http://thewaternetwork.com/>.

Promoting Ecosystems for Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation: Opportunities for Integration



This paper seeks to highlight the differences and commonalities between ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation (EBA) and ecosystem-based approaches to disaster risk reduction (Eco-DRR) and suggests key integration points at the project level through examining a number of Eco-DRR, EBA and hybrid (Eco-DRR/CCA) projects. A total of 37 (Eco-DRR, EBA and hybrid Eco-DRR/CCA) projects were examined in terms of their aims, assessments, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and policy and institutional contexts to understand how in practice these approaches differ and overlap and to find key integration points. Drought is among the most frequently addressed hazards in all examined types of the projects.

While Eco-DRR and EBA projects have some differences, they have more similarities given their focus on ecosystem management, restoration and conservation to increase resilience of people (or reduce risk or reduce vulnerability). Five areas for Eco-DRR and EBA integration in project design and implementation identified by this paper include: 1) defining aims of the project; 2) conducting risk and vulnerability assessments; 3) project implementation including methods, approaches and tools; 4) M&E; and 5) policy and institutional engagements. Fostering collaboration at the project level would provide good lessons for future practice and facilitate integration of EBA and Eco-DRR. This would then facilitate the development of much needed integrated tools. Gaps in knowledge in both communities should be filled through interdisciplinary research and practice, appropriate M&E frameworks that support learning and knowledge exchange platforms.

The full report is available for download at:

http://www.unep.org/disastersandconflicts/portals/155/publications/Eco_DRR_discussion_paper.pdf?pdf=EcoDRR_Discussion_paper_web.



Building Resilience to Droughts: Scaling up Weather Insurance in China, India, and Thailand



The Asia-Pacific region faces more disasters than any other region in the world. Risks of disasters, including drought, are expected to increase in many countries of the region as vulnerable people and assets are increasingly exposed to extreme weather events. Climate change and variability are expected to create more hotspots in the region. This is a case study presented during the INR 1.3 AP session on Building Resilience to Water-Related Disasters in the Asia-Pacific Region 7th World Water Forum 2015 12–17 April 2015, Daegu and Gyeongbuk Republic of Korea.

The case study by the United Nation Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) placed special focus on the index-based weather insurance, as part of the drought risk reduction strategies, which is gaining significance in the region as a way of transferring risk and protecting small farmers. With concrete examples from China, India and Thailand in rainfall index insurance, UNESCAP stressed the need to invest in hydrometeorological networks (as well as crop-specific disaster loss databases, satellite-based products, and vegetation indexes) to ensure the availability of accurate and timely weather data and raise the awareness of farmers to improve the uptake of insurance products. Other recommendations for expanding Index-based weather insurance include reducing the basis risk; using risk-layered schemes; developing reinsurance markets; and targeting institutions as insurers instead of individual households. The full report is available for download at http://lib.icimod.org/record/30291/files/CaseStudy_4WWF.pdf.

Event and Training Opportunities

Building a Global Network for Semiarid Cereal Systems (13-14 November, 2015; Minneapolis, The United States of America)



Transitioning Cereal Systems to Adapt to Climate Change

Projected impacts of changing climates on major staple crops presents one of the most important threats to global food security. This workshop-style conference will address the challenges facing cereal production systems in semi-arid regions throughout the world as the climates in these regions change. The conference will uniquely emphasize the integration of diverse aspects of these complex agricultural

systems including responses to changing water availability, potential for alternative cropping systems to impart climate resilience, managing soil nutrients, pests, pathogens and weeds, social and economic factors affecting farmer behavior and policy, and genetic resources that can help address climate change. Frameworks for integration will include cropping system models, approaches to improving collaborative translational science, and data management and harmonization. Outputs will include a newly invigorated global collaborative network of scientists and practitioners addressing these issues, collaboratively generated policy recommendations and a published volume of contributions. This conference will:

- Establish a global network of research teams addressing the implications of climate change for cereal based systems in semiarid regions;
- Develop a plan for supporting ongoing integrative collaboration to address this issue; and
- Articulate and disseminate to scientists and policymakers the importance of integrated approaches and actionable research to support this key component of global food security through the 21st century.



Keynote presentations by internationally eminent experts will set the overall context and objectives for the conference deliberations. Please visit <http://www.aridcereals.org/index.html> for more information on the conference.

International Water Conference 2015 (17-18 November, 2015; Karachi, Pakistan)



The scope of the conference reflects the theme of the UN Water dedicated global goal for 2015: "Securing Sustainable Water for All." Promoting sustainable water for all implies the protection of water resources from over exploitation and pollution while meeting the needs of water for life, agriculture, energy, environment, industries and other uses. It further implies protection of communities from water-related disasters, such as drought and flood, and recognizing the basic human right

to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. By sharing research findings, technical solutions, innovations inclusive models examples of integration and experiences at different levels, policy level dialogue on sustainable water can be initiated for ensuring conservation, sustainability and integrated management of water resources in Pakistan, South Asia and globally. The aims of this conference are to:

- Identify avenues of integration, innovation & inclusion in order to ensure water security and sustainable water for all;
- Identify strategies for promoting and implementing and inclusive sustainable water policy;
- Reach out to all critical stakeholders including government, academia, civil society, media, business & corporate sector, urban and rural communities, and experts on water to develop integration; and
- Showcase models and experiences from across the world that display innovation and integration.

Over 1200 people are expected to attend this event mainly from Pakistan, South Asia and across the globe. The conference is being promoted through this website, social media, newspapers, television channels and extensive email communications.

For more information concerning the conference, please visit

http://www.hisaar.org/4_conferences/2015_conference.html?utm_content=buffer506ae&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer.

Employment and Grant Opportunities

Disaster Risk Reduction Consultant – CARE Australia (Closing date: 9 August 2015)



Desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) is globally affecting some 1.9 billion hectares and 1.5 billion people. Reasons causing DLDD are multiple, including: i) climatic variations (e.g. soil degradation, drought, desertification, violent winds and heavy downpours); and ii) human activities and poor land practices (e.g. over-cultivation, overgrazing, agricultural expansion, landscape fragmentation or poorly drained irrigation systems).



The objective of the consultancy is to carry out a global desk review in order to identify and assess the empirical evidence provided by case studies indicating the positive and negative causal linkages between DLDD, climate change and resource conflicts. Based on the provisions of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure, the study will also help to clarify the linkages between the insurgence of conflicts and increased competition over natural resources due to overlapping or unclear tenure rights as consequence of DLDD (for example as consequence of forced or voluntary displacements and resettlements, changes in migration routes, changes in livelihoods systems etc.). It should encompass both adaptation and coping strategies to environmentally-induced migration and conflict settlement mechanisms, as well as the conditions conducive to strengthen peace and stability around natural resource management. This should contribute to the comprehensive and systematic scientific assessment of the social science research on the potential societal outcomes of climate change and DLDD advocated in the UNCCD publication in 2009.

Further details on the position, including the application procedure, is available at <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/The-Secretariat/Vacancies-and-consultancies/Documents/33%20VA%20DLDD-Conflict%20assessment,%20GM.pdf>.

Regional Resilience Advisor for West, Central and North Africa – Mercy Corps (Closing date: 9 August 2015)



Mercy Corp is currently seeking applicants for the post of Regional Resilience Advisor for West, Central and North Africa. Reporting to the Regional Program Director for West, Central and North Africa (WCN). Resilience in the WCN Region is a priority that involves using a systems-based approach that builds on proven

solutions, accesses new ideas and information, and integrates multiple sectors and partnerships to strengthen food security and livelihoods, economic development, conflict management, governance, natural resource management and adaptation to climate variability and change, including drought. Working closely with Country Directors, the Regional Resilience Advisor will serve as the agency's focal point for resilience in the Sahel.

Working with country teams, technical support teams and partners, s/he will develop the regional resilience strategy and coordinate all resilience efforts in the region. The focus of resilience in the region will be primarily in the Sahel (Niger, Mali and Nigeria), where a great deal of work is underway and learning is relevant for the broader region. S/he will be tasked with agency-wide communication and marketing strategies to share out the successes and lessons learned from our resilience-focused programs, identifying and supporting new strategic partnerships with key peer organizations, government and donor agencies, private sector actors and academic institutions; designing quality programs that win and leverage funding to continue to build resilience of communities in the region; providing technical support for innovation and learning.

For more information regarding the position, please visit

https://mercycorps.silkroad.com/epostings/index.cfm?fuseaction=app.jobinfo&jobid=219789&company_id=15927&version=2&source=reliefweb.int.

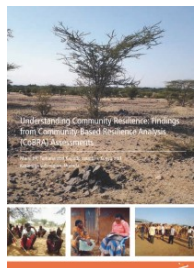


Community Based Resilience Analysis (CoBRA) Conceptual Framework and Methodology (2014)

In order to ensure that drought prone communities move onto a path of resilience building and sustainable development, rather than being pushed back to poverty trap with increased vulnerability, an integrated multi-faceted approach at scale is clearly required. Community-Based Resilience Analysis (CoBRA) is a tool which intends to measure and identify the key building blocks of community resilience, or "resilience characteristics", and assess the attribution of various development/humanitarian interventions in attaining these resilience characteristics. In disaster affected areas, where protracted crises with spikes in need are the norm, resilience measurement tools are required through which to document evidence of groups of interventions that have high impact and spur positive changes at household and community levels. This publication presents the

conceptual framework that underpins the CoBRA model and describes in brief the methodology that supports the model:

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/sustainable_land_management/CoBRA/cobra-conceptual-framework/.



Understanding Community Resilience: Findings from CoBRA Assessments in Kenya and Uganda (2014)

In the last few years, as natural disasters, particularly drought, and other crises have pushed communities to the limits of their adaptation and coping capacity, 'disaster resilience' has emerged as a key goal for governments and other development and humanitarian stakeholders in the Horn of Africa. This report summarizes the findings of the first round of CoBRA field testing in four drought-prone locations in Kenya (Marsabit, Turkana and Kajiado counties) and Uganda (the Karamoja sub-region). Individual assessment reports for each location are attached as Annexes to this report. The CoBRA approach is largely qualitative, based on understanding resilience from a community perspective. It does not identify any preconceived components of resilience but rather allows communities to define it, assess their progress in achieving it, identify households that are more (or fully) resilient and specify the interventions they believe best build resilience:

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/sustainable_land_management/CoBRA/CoBRA_assessment/.

Useful Links on Drought Status Updates

Africa

African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development: <http://acmad.net/new/>

Experimental African Drought Monitor: <http://drought.icpac.net/>

Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) Africa: <http://www.fews.net/Pages/default.aspx>

Food Security & Nutrition Working Group Update: <http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/east-central-africa/fsnwg/drought>

IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC): <http://www.icpac.net/Forecasts/forecasts.html>

Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) Africa: <http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Africa.aspx>

Prevention Web Africa: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/africa/>

Relief Web Africa: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc115?OpenForm&rc=1>

Southern African Development Community (SADC) Climate Service Centre: <http://www.sadc.int/english/regional-integration/is/csc/>

Asia

Asian Disaster Reduction Center: <http://www.adrc.asia/latest/index.php>

East Asian Drought Monitoring System: <http://atmos.pknu.ac.kr/~intra2>

FEWS NET Central Asia: <http://www.fews.net/Pages/default.aspx>

IRIN Asia: <http://www.irinnews.org/IRIN-Asia.aspx>

Pacific Disaster Center/World Natural Hazards Website: <http://www.pdc.org/iweb/pdchome.html>

Prevention Web Asia: <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/countries/asia/>

Relief Web Asia: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc115?OpenForm&rc=3>

SAARC South Asian Disaster Knowledge Network Weekly Disaster News: <http://www.saarc-sadkn.org/about.aspx>