



July 2013 Issue

Special Topic

Eleventh Session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification



The 11th Conference of Parties (COP11) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) will be held from 16 to 27 September 2013 in Windhoek, Namibia.

Meeting every two years, the 195 country parties to the UNCCD gather at COPs to make high-level decisions regarding the

status and future of the convention. Parties expect to review implementation of the convention over the last two years, particularly related to the achievements towards the objectives of the fighting against desertification/land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought, and plan its implementation for the next two years.

This will be the first time that the COP will be held in Southern Africa and the third time in Africa, as previous COPs were held in Senegal and Kenya. As focal point to the UNCCD, the Department of Environmental Affairs in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism will be coordinating the preparations for the pre-event planning and hosting of COP11.

A drylands country, Namibia has been a key supporter and leader over the years within the UNCCD process. The Namibian government is to decide who will be the COP president for the next two years, and the world will be looking at Namibia for guidance on these issues. "Namibia has some good practices and success stories on managing natural resources, for the benefit of the communities, and there are many more examples," said Mr. Luc Gnacadja, UNCCD Executive Secretary.

The event is expected to draw around 2,000 to 3,000 international delegates. Further details on the UNCCD COP11 will be made available at <http://www.unccd.int/en/about-the-convention/the-bodies/the-cop/cop11/Pages/default.aspx?HighlightID=215>, including the registration for the meeting and the applications for the side events and the exhibitions.

Contents

Special Topic: Eleventh Session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	1
Knowledge Resources and Networking Opportunities	2
Event and Training Opportunities	4
Employment/Grant Opportunities	5
AADP Publications Information	7
Useful Links on Drought Status Updates	7

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).

The project is funded by the Government of Japan and implemented by the UNDP Drylands Development Centre (DDC).

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

Knowledge Resources and Networking Opportunities

DARA

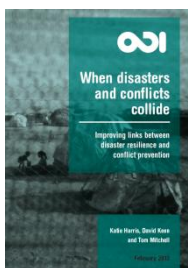


Founded in 2003 by Silvia Hidalgo, DARA is an independent organisation committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of aid for vulnerable populations suffering from conflict, disasters and climate change. DARA is one of few organisations to have direct experience in providing real-time evaluations which can assist decision-making while a humanitarian crisis is still unfolding. *Humanitarian Response Index*, for example, is an independent tool for measuring the individual performance of government donors against Good Humanitarian Donorship Principles.

Risk Reduction Index (RRI) looks at the factors and conditions that contribute to the generation of risk and provides, based on extensive local consultation and analysis, clear guidance for effective risk reduction in vulnerable and hazard-prone areas in different parts of the world. The first phase of the RRI was carried out in Central America. The second phase of RRI in the West Africa region is currently underway in collaboration with the Humanitarian Futures Programme and the African Leadership Centre. The objective of the exercise is to generate knowledge in West Africa region that will help local administrations, national governments, and ECOWAS (regional body) to address the underlying risk drivers, make risk management more effective and, thereby, contribute to an increased resilience of most vulnerable populations. RRI in West Africa will first examine three countries in the region: Cape Verde, Ghana and Senegal. Analysis of additional countries in the region will follow. Those under consideration are Gambia, Guinea, and Niger.

For more details on DARA and its disaster-related assessment tools, please visit <http://daraint.org/>.

When Disaster and Conflicts Collide: Improving Links between Disaster Resilience and Conflict Prevention



From 2005-2009, more than 50% of people affected by 'natural' disasters lived in fragile and conflict-affected states. Based on a rudimentary analysis, there appears to be a close association between the risk of mortality from drought, state fragility and climate change vulnerability. However, the intersection between mortality risk from other natural hazards (such as earthquakes and cyclones) and state fragility appears to be much less pronounced, though still significant in certain locations. This study assesses the evidence base for how natural disasters affect conflict, how conflict affects natural disasters, and how people living in complex environments are affected by multiple risks. It also considers what can be learned from current practices to improve conflict prevention, state building and disaster risk management in ways that help build resilience. The evidence base challenging: it is fragmented and contested, with a number of studies highlighting directly opposing lines of arguments. This suggests that the complexity of conflict and disaster dynamics can only be understood when grounded in specific contexts.

This report focuses on the links between conditions of vulnerability and risks associated with the nexus of natural disasters, conflict and fragility. However, it is recognised that any given context will be mired in an even more complex array of intersecting risks. Thus while there is a tendency to consider how one risk impacts another, our overarching focus is on advancing an understanding of how multiple vulnerabilities stack up for populations. 'How disasters and conflict collide' is an entry point to understanding how vulnerability is dynamic and shaped by interconnected shocks and stresses, and how it must be addressed as such.

The full report is available for download at <http://www.odi.org.uk/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8228.pdf>.

The Great Balancing Act



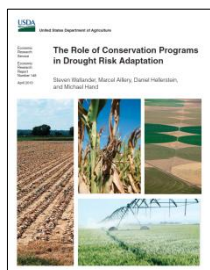
How can the world feed more than 9 billion people by 2050 in a manner that advances economic development and reduces pressure on the environment? This is one of the paramount questions the world faces over the next four decades. Answering it requires a “great balancing act” of three needs—each of which must be met simultaneously:

- 1) The world needs to close the gap between the amount of food available today and the amount required in 2050;
- 2) The world needs agriculture to contribute to inclusive economic and social development; and
- 3) The world needs to reduce agriculture’s impact on the environment.

The Great Balancing Act is the first in a series of working papers that the World Resources Institute will roll out over the course of a year. Each subsequent paper will take a detailed look at a potential solution that could help achieve a sustainable food future. These instalments will set the foundation for and culminate in the World Resources Report 2013-2014: Creating a Sustainable Food Future. The first instalment provides the overview of the menu of potential solutions and discusses the scope of the challenge. The paper emphasizes that many crop-generating regions already struggle with significant water stress, leading to declines in crop production, as were witnessed with the droughts of 2011 and 2012 in parts of Australia, East Africa, Russia, and the United States. It maps out the anticipated water stress level in the world by 2025 due to growing water demand coupled with climate change.

Please visit <http://www.wri.org/publication/the-great-balancing-act> for more information on *The Great Balancing Act* and the first instalment of the working papers.

The Role of Conservation Programs in Drought Risk Adaptation



During the summer of 2012, almost 80 percent of U.S. agricultural land suffered drought. In terms of severity and geographic extent, the 2012 drought approached the peak Dust Bowl year of 1934. However, agricultural production has grown more adaptive since the 1930s, aided by crop genetics, crop insurance, and conservation programs. Over the past decade, total drought-related crop insurance indemnities and disaster relief payments averaged about USD 4 billion annually, after averaging less than USD 1.3 billion per year in the 1980s. The rise in total payments is due to a combination of expanded enrollment in crop insurance, increased liabilities due to higher yields and commodity prices, and a series of major droughts in recent decades. Farms in more drought-prone regions may adapt to higher levels of risk by adjusting their crop choices or investing in more efficient irrigation systems. But do existing farm programs encourage or discourage farmers from reacting to drought risk?

This report, published by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, examines the relationship between drought risk and patterns of conservation program participation, and whether regional differences in drought risk can be incorporated into conservation program design. Prior research has shown that climate-related risk exposure influences production decisions such as crop choice; this research shows that adaptation also includes program participation decisions.

Programs like the Conservation Reserve Program and Environmental Quality Incentives Program play a role in drought preparedness and climate adaptation even if they do not directly target such behavior. Conservation program outcomes are influenced by regional differences in production risk, so participation choices due to drought risk can be an important consideration in designing such programs.

The full report is available for download at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/1094660/err148.pdf>.

Event and Training Opportunities

68th International Annual Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference (Reno, The United States; July 21-24, 2013)



The Soil and Water Conservation Society's (SWCS) 68th annual conference will be held in Reno, Nevada, in the United States of America. *Resilient Landscapes: Planning For Flood, Drought, and Fire* is the theme of this year's annual conference. The conference includes plenary sessions, workshops, concurrent sessions, symposia, posters, and technical tours designed to raise the awareness of conference participants to recent developments in the science and art of natural resource conservation and environmental management on working land - the largely privately-owned land comprising working farms, ranches, forests, and rural and urban communities.

The program committee has chosen five special areas of emphasis: 1) resilient landscapes; 2) adaptation and mitigation planning for drought; 3) rangeland conservation and grazinglands conservation effects assessment; 4) invasive plant species; and 5) water resources research, education, and outreach. In addition to the five special areas of emphasis, there are also nine ongoing areas of emphasis which comprise the core work of SWCS members and stakeholders to foster the science and art of conservation, which includes: adaptive management of conservation efforts; agricultural and conservation economics; biodiversity conservation and management; conservation policy and program design; conservation in urban settings; conservation models, tools, and technologies; outreach, education, and community engagement; soil resource assessment and management; and water resource assessment and management.

For further details on the SWCS's 2013 annual conference, please visit http://www.swcs.org/en/conferences/2013_annual_conference/.

Workshop: Pasture Plant Adaptation to Drought and High Temperature Stress (Sydney, Australia; September 14, 2013)



A one-day workshop on pasture plant adaptation to drought and high temperature stress will be held at the University of Sydney on September 14, 2013 as a satellite meeting of the 22nd International Grasslands Congress. As the impacts of climate change impinge more and more on agriculture and the demand for increased production of animal protein grows, the search for pasture and forage plants with

greater adaptation to drought and high temperature increases. This Workshop will bring together some of the leading researchers in the World in this field as well as providing a forum for young voices new to the discipline to present their findings.

Presentations will address a range of topics including, among others:

- Mechanisms of stress tolerance in two xerophytic and halophytic species with implications for improvement of forage legumes with contributions;
- Identification of traits of grasses for warmer and drier climates and insights into the role of leaf hydraulics for their relevance to biomass production and drought & heat tolerance; and
- Improving the drought tolerance of white clover through interspecific hybridisation and studies of the role of the winter dormancy trait in enhancing drought tolerance.

More information on the workshop is available at

<http://www.piarn.org.au/sites/piarn.boab.info/files/events/2013/759/workshop-pasture-plant-adaptation.pdf>.

Employment and Grant Opportunities

Executive Director – Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Programme (Closing date: July 19, 2013)



The International Council for Science invites applications from suitably qualified candidates for the post of Executive Director of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) programme, starting in December 2013 at the IRDR International Programme Office located in Beijing, China. IRDR is a decade-long, internationally integrated, all-hazards research programme bringing together the talents of the natural, social, medical

and engineering sciences. Its objectives are the scientific characterization of natural and human-induced environmental hazards, vulnerability and risk; the understanding of decision-making in complex and changing risk contexts; and the reduction of risk and curbing losses through knowledge-based actions. The programme is founded on the recognition that disaster prevention and mitigation are critical dimensions of the global poverty reduction agenda and efforts to adapt to climate change, and should be an integral part of all international and national development efforts.

The Executive Director heads an International Programme Office (IPO) for IRDR being hosted by the Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, China. Under the authority of the Scientific Committee for IRDR, and in particular its Chair, the Executive Director of IRDR is expected to:

- facilitate the development, implementation and co-ordination of IRDR science projects;
- liaise with such international centres as may be established within IRDR;
- ensure effective representation and links between IRDR and other relevant research programmes and their sponsoring organizations, relevant entities of the United Nations system, as well as the international policy community and funding agencies;
- support the development and implementation of an information strategy which promotes networking within the disaster risk research community and the wider practice community;

- play a major role in organizing capacity building and outreach activities;
- promote the establishment and/or strengthening of national IRDR committees and regional initiatives; and
- promote IRDR internationally and assist in the acquisition of funding for the programme.

Please visit <http://www.icsu.org/news-centre/jobs-at-icsu/jobs/vacancy-irdr-executive-director> for further details on the position.

Call for Experts for Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conferences (Closing date: August 18, 2013)



United Nations Convention
to Combat Desertification

The UNCCD's 3rd Scientific Conference shall take place in 2014 at the fourth special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) on the topic of "Combating desertification, land degradation and drought for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology, traditional knowledge and practices". The UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference is expected to produce sound scientific outputs and policy-oriented recommendations based on the analysis and compilation of peer reviewed and published literature that informs policy formulation and communication. These recommendations shall be submitted to the UNCCD Conference of the Parties for its consideration. The recommendations should also provide a clear picture of available options and possible scenarios for decision makers on the theme of the conference.

The UNCCD Secretariat is herewith inviting experts to apply to become and act as members of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) of the UNCCD 3rd Scientific Conference. The public call for candidature will end on 18 August 2013, 2400 hrs CET. Candidates fulfilling the competence requirements listed in the Call for Experts and wishing to be considered as a member of the SAC are invited to apply and shall submit the application form and a copy of the Curriculum Vitae to kmst@unccd.int.

For more information on the call, please visit <http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Science/Conferences/Pages/3rd-Scientific-Conference.aspx?HighlightID=211>.



Community Based Resilience Analysis (CoBRA) Conceptual Framework and Methodology (2013)

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, an integrated multi-faceted approach at scale is clearly required. This draft document is a result of the ongoing effort to develop a rigorous conceptual framework and standardized methodology, i.e. CoBRA, with which to define the key factors and indicators affecting local resilience levels and measure the impact of various sector-based interventions on resilience enhancement quantitatively. The CoBRA model will strengthen the existing monitoring framework, helping track progress along a resilience pathway in a given context systematically and guiding holistic planning processes. At present, the latest CoBRA conceptual framework and methodology is under field testing in the Horn of Africa region with the financial support from the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department of the European Commission (ECHO). The document is available for download at:

<http://www.disasterriskreduction.net/drought-online/documents/detail/en/c/2693/>.



Drought Risk Management: Practitioner's Perspectives from Africa and Asia (2012)

This report reviewed the current institutional and programmatic landscape in the realm of drought risk management (DRM) in the two regions and mapped out some of the main DRM capacity gaps and gap-filling opportunities. The exercise is based upon the consultations with key individuals in both continents, an online survey of some 400 practitioners working in drought-related fields and focused discussions at the First Africa-Asia Drought Adaptation Forum held in Bangkok, Thailand, in June 2011. It highlighted important similarities in DRM issues across Africa and Asia and identified priority areas to which the inter-regional south-south cooperation could add value. The full publication and the issue brief are both available for download at:

http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/environment-energy/sustainable_land_management/drought-risk-management-from-africa-and-asia.html.

Useful Links on Drought Status Updates

Africa

African Centre of Meteorological Application for Development: <http://www.acmad.ne/index.htm>

Experimental African Drought Monitor: http://hydrology.princeton.edu/~justin/research/project_global_monitor/

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/>

UNOCHA (Southern & East Africa): <http://ochaonline.un.org/rosea/LatestUpdates/tabid/6652/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

UNOCHA (West & Central Africa): <http://ochaonline.un.org/Bulletinshumanitaires/tabid/3099/language/fr-FR/Default.aspx>

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>