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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS**

**The post 2015 Hyogo Framework for Action: Managing risks to achieve resilience**

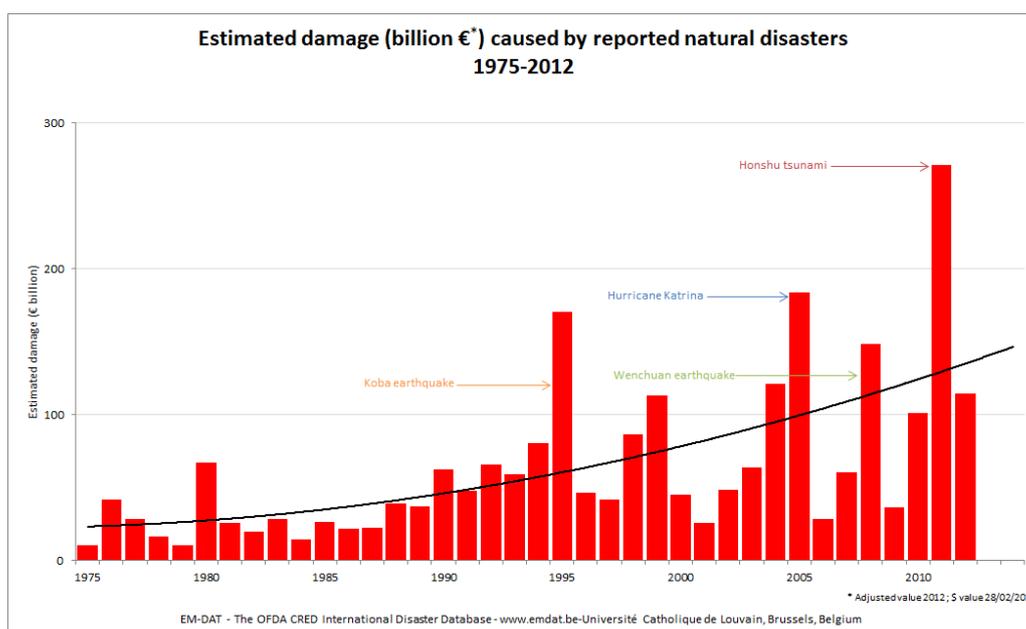
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## 1- TOWARDS A POST-2015 HYOGO FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

The Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) "Building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters" is a 10-year plan adopted by 168 UN Member States which voluntarily committed to work on five priorities for action with the objective of making the world safer from natural hazards and building disaster resilience. Adopted in 2005, the HFA is due to expire in 2015 and a wide consultation process is taking place<sup>1</sup> on shaping the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction that will be endorsed at the 3rd World conference for disaster risk reduction in Sendai (Japan) on 14- 18 March, 2015.

Disasters and climate risks have a major impact on the economy as well as on the security and well-being of citizens. In recent years, exposure to disasters has increased significantly due to climate change, rapid and unplanned urbanisation, demographic pressure, construction and more intensive land-use in hazard prone areas, biodiversity loss and eco-system degradation.

Between 2002 and 2012, natural disasters have caused the death of more than 100,000 people annually on average. In the past decade, there has been an increasing trend in direct overall losses worldwide, with an average annual economic loss of over €100 billion<sup>2</sup>. Impacts vary across regions depending on the geographic exposure to risk as well as level of socio-economic development. While fatalities tend to be higher in developing countries and economic losses higher in developed economies, all countries are vulnerable to disasters. The European Union is not spared, with natural disasters causing 80,000 deaths and €95 billion in economic losses over the last decade<sup>3</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) has been requested (UNGA Resolution 66/199 of 22 December 2011) to facilitate development of a *post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction*

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED)

<sup>3</sup> Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) – the data covers EU-28 and the period between 2002-2012.

To address these alarming trends, risk prevention and management policies are essential to ensure sustainable development and economic growth, both within the Union<sup>4</sup> and worldwide. Prevention and risk management make strong economic sense in terms of avoiding losses with a rate of return on every euro between 4 and 7 times<sup>5</sup>. Investments in disaster risk management bring also extended economic benefits and can act as a means of promoting jobs and help to ensure structural sustainability of public and private finances.

Against this background, a renewed international framework for disaster risk reduction offers a unique opportunity to build on the successes of the HFA to better address future challenges.

The outcomes of initiatives such as the Rio +20 Summit<sup>6</sup>, the UNFCCC<sup>7</sup> and the extensive international support for the resilience agenda, show that risk reduction and disaster management should become a priority for developing countries, emerging economies and developed countries.

The revision of the HFA is also an opportunity for the EU to take stock of the policies developed and progress made in building resilience and disaster risk management through EU policies and support provided through development cooperation and humanitarian aid.

The purpose of this Communication is to set out the Commission's initial views on the shaping of the post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action building on the achievements of a range of EU policies including civil protection, environmental protection, internal security, climate change adaptation, health, research and innovation, as well as the resilience agenda promoted through the EU external action. It analyses progress made and addresses implementation gaps and emerging challenges of increasing risks in the future.

## **2- PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES**

Since its adoption in 2005, the HFA has been instrumental in supporting global, regional, and national efforts for disaster risk reduction. Despite positive developments, significant implementation gaps remain and additional challenges have emerged.

Support to disaster risk management has gained momentum and contributed to greater attention and investments in disaster risk management by key stakeholders including the main development aid donors. Self-monitoring of the progress in implementation of the five HFA priorities for action<sup>8</sup> shows, however, that most progress has been made for priorities 1 (ensuring that disaster risk reduction is a national and a local priority with a strong

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<sup>4</sup> As envisaged in the Europe 2020 Strategy COM(2010) 2020

<sup>5</sup> " Natural disasters, counting the cost " (World Bank, 2004)

<sup>6</sup> 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

<sup>8</sup> Priorities for action: (1): ensure that disaster risk reduction is a national and local priority with a strong institutional basis for implementation, (2) identify, assess, and monitor disaster risks and enhance early warning, (3) use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels, (4) reduce the underlying risk factors, (5) strengthen disaster preparedness for effective response at all levels.

institutional basis for implementation) and 5 (the improvement of the capacities to prepare and respond to disasters), while there is a consistently lower progress in priority 4, which aims to reduce the underlying risk factors<sup>9</sup>.

Most countries continue to have difficulties integrating risk reduction into public investment planning, urban development, spatial planning and management, and social protection. There is still the need to translate policies and institutional strengthening into actual implementation and more resilient societies. Current investments and policy responses are insufficient to effectively address existing risks, let alone to keep pace with emerging challenges, including:

- Effects of the changing climate and continued environmental degradation will lead to more intense and frequent extreme natural events, including floods, droughts, and cyclones;
- Climate change is also a threat multiplier for instability, conflict and state fragility leading to migration and displacement, weak governance and geo-political instability;
- Conflicts and fragility also further affect the vulnerability to disasters;
- Population growth, primarily in poorer countries and households, as well as rapid urbanisation will increase pressure on natural resources and on economic activities in disaster prone areas;
- Rapid urbanisation leading to the concentration of population and investment in hazard and risk prone areas is also a trend that increases significantly vulnerability (it is estimated that by 2050, 60 to 70 % of the world's population will live in urban areas)<sup>10</sup>;
- Demand for energy and food is growing and puts pressure on resources like land and water. Water scarcity is projected to become a major problem with almost half the world's population living in areas of high water stress by 2030<sup>11</sup>;
- New risks are emerging with potentially highly disruptive consequences (space weather related events, multi-risk events such as the 2011 Fukushima triple disaster, risks in a digital and high-tech era, including cyber risks);
- Extensive risk events (small scale, highly frequent, and localised events such as flash floods, fires and landslides) are often underestimated and under-reported but they nevertheless undermine local development as well as national competitiveness;
- Economies are globalised and increasingly structured around complex global supply chains; as demonstrated by the 2011 Floods in Thailand the economic shock of a disaster can ripple out to economies and businesses on the other side of the world;

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<sup>9</sup> Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, Summary reports 2007-2013, UNISDR, 2013

<sup>10</sup> Global Health Observatory, WHO

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

- Economic and financial downturn puts pressure on national budgets to secure disaster risk management funding.

### **3- EU DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RESILIENCE AGENDA: A VITAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HFA**

Enhancing the EU's resilience to crises, as well as its capacity to anticipate, prepare and respond to risks, especially cross-border risks, is amongst the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy<sup>12</sup>: competitiveness and sustainability depend upon effective disaster risk management which helps to avoid losses and strengthens resilience to increasing global shocks and threats. Investing in disaster risk prevention and management is a strong driver of innovation, growth and job creation, opening also new markets and business opportunities.

Significant achievements have been made both through Union policies and financial support. These present important EU deliverables towards a coherent policy on disaster risk management that can be shared and underpin the new international framework on disaster risk management.

#### **3.1. Policy achievements related to disaster risk management in the EU**

The new provisions in the revised EU civil protection legislation<sup>13</sup> set the framework for implementation of a cross-sectoral disaster risk management policy, promoting a holistic approach for all natural and man-made risks throughout all phases of the disaster management cycle (prevention, preparedness, response).

Building on the new legislation and earlier Communications and Council Conclusions, key actions to support the implementation of the EU disaster risk management framework include:

- **Risk assessment and analysis:** Building on the available national risk assessments, the Commission has prepared a first cross-sectoral overview of risks in the EU, taking into account, where possible and relevant, the future impact of climate change and the need for climate adaptation; following a consistent approach, multi-hazard national risk assessments are to be produced by Member States by end 2015 and followed up by assessment of national risk management capabilities and improved risk management planning.
- Encouraging **learning and exchange of experience to improve governance** - promotion and support for lessons learnt and peer reviews (such as the 2012 United Kingdom and 2013 Finland peer reviews<sup>14</sup>) to encourage learning across Member States and steer progress in further developing and implementing risk management policies and practices;
- **Furthermore guidance for disaster prevention based on good practices** is currently under preparation on cross-cutting themes (governance, planning, data, risk communication and information, research and technology);

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<sup>12</sup> COM(2010) 2020, 3.3.2010

<sup>13</sup> Decision N° 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism.

<sup>14</sup> Supported by the European Commission and developed in cooperation with UNISDR and OECD.

- **Data availability, accessibility, sharing and comparability**, including ongoing work with Member States and international partners (including UNISDR and IRDR<sup>15</sup>) towards establishing European standards and protocols for recording disaster losses<sup>16</sup>;
- **Mainstreaming of disaster risk management**: risk prevention and management considerations have been integrated in a number of key EU policies and financial instruments to support resilient investments (i.e. cohesion policy, transport and energy, research and innovation, critical infrastructure protection, cross-border health threats, environmental impact assessment, green infrastructure, integrated coastal management, agriculture, food and nutrition security, water, flood risk management, major industrial accident prevention);
- **Insurance used as a tool for disaster management** – the Green Paper on the insurance of natural and man-made disasters<sup>17</sup> aims to involve the private sector and explore ways to effectively use insurance as an incentive for risk awareness, prevention and mitigation;
- **Strong synergies with adaptation to climate change** as outlined by the EU Strategy on adaptation to climate change<sup>18</sup>, on cross cutting areas such as sharing of data and knowledge, assessment of risks and vulnerabilities, urban resilience, development of European standards for climate resilient infrastructure, coherence between national adaptation strategies and risk management plans, tracking of resilient investments<sup>19</sup>;
- **Science and innovation for disaster risk management**: In 2013, the Commission launched an initiative with EU Member States to explicitly map and improve approaches to science-based advice for risk reduction and emergency response. Furthermore, the Horizon 2020 research programme will support challenge-oriented approaches for improving disaster resilience (such as monitoring, prevention, prediction, early warning, awareness raising, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, crisis communication, technology transfer, pre-standardisation);
- **Address cross-border impacts** (through macro-regional projects and strategies such as the Baltic Sea strategy, Danube Strategy or regional maritime strategies) **and cooperation activities** with candidate, potential candidates, and other neighboring countries.
- **Enhanced preparedness** for response through the development of voluntary pool of pre-committed disaster response capacities, better response planning, a training network, and

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<sup>15</sup> Integrated Research on Disaster Risk, <http://www.irdrinternational.org>

<sup>16</sup> De Groeve, T., K. Poljansek and L. Vernaccini, 2013. Recording Disaster Losses: Recommendations for a European approach. Publications Office of the European Union, Scientific and Technical Research Reports EUR 26111. ISBN 978-92-79-32690-5, DOI: 10.2788/98653 (online), <http://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/111111111/29296>

<sup>17</sup> COM(2013)213, 16.4.2013

<sup>18</sup> COM(2013)216, 16.4.2013

<sup>19</sup> Contributing to the EU target for 20% climate-related investments of EU budget.

reinforced cooperation among authorities in the field of training and exercises<sup>20</sup>, strengthened early warning systems<sup>21</sup>. New operational emergency management services are also provided worldwide through EU space programmes such as Galileo and Copernicus.

### **3.2. EU support to developing countries with a focus on building resilience in crisis prone countries**

Based on the 2012 Communication on Resilience<sup>22</sup> and subsequent Action Plan<sup>23</sup>, the EU is committed to reducing vulnerability and building resilience to future stresses and shocks as pre-requisites for poverty reduction and sustainable development. Risk management approaches will be an integral part of all EU humanitarian aid and development assistance programming within all sectors and contexts. This work will further build on the 2009 EU Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction in Developing Countries<sup>24</sup> and the 2011 Implementation Plan<sup>25</sup>.

The EU resilience approach calls for multi-sectoral and multi-level approaches (local, national, regional, global) that address the interlinked and causal dynamics of vulnerability and fragility, whilst optimising capacities from each level or sector. The leadership role of local, national and regional institutions is strongly emphasized.

Significant progress is already being made. The recent initiatives SHARE<sup>26</sup>, AGIR<sup>27</sup> and GCCA<sup>28</sup>, are already contributing to building the resilience of the most vulnerable. In the same line, the Intra-ACP Strategy<sup>29</sup> is supporting regionally-owned disaster risk reduction and climate change strategies and action plans in Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific”.

The Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme (DIPECHO) that enabled the piloting and replication of community based approaches and proven good practices to risk reduction (including promotion of safer schools, hospitals, and urban resilience) will be further disseminated to feed into government policies.

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<sup>20</sup> Decision N° 1313/2013/EU on a Union Civil Protection Mechanism

<sup>21</sup> Such as the EFFIS (European Forest Fire Information System) or EFAS (European Flood Awareness System)

<sup>22</sup> COM(2012)586, 3.10.2012

<sup>23</sup> SWD (2013) 227. 19.6.2013

<sup>24</sup> COM(2009)84. 23.2.2009

<sup>25</sup> SEC(2011) 215, 16.02.2011

<sup>26</sup> Supporting Horn of Africa Resilience

<sup>27</sup> Alliance Globale pour l'Initiative Resilience Sahel

<sup>28</sup> The Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) <http://www.gcca.eu>

<sup>29</sup> European Community – ACP Group of States Intra-ACP Strategy Papers and Multiannual Indicative Programme

Progress has been also made in crisis and vulnerability assessments through the development of a common, transparent science-based humanitarian risk index (InfoRM<sup>30</sup>) based on open data and aimed at harmonizing disaster risk management across humanitarian actors (a joint initiative of the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the European Commission as well as donors, NGOs and Member States).

These initiatives would also inform the wider EU external policy, including the Common Foreign and Security Policy (e.g. work on conflict prevention and development of a conflict early warning system).

#### **4- PRINCIPLES FOR THE NEW FRAMEWORK**

In a global context of increasing needs and new challenges, the successor framework to the HFA has to identify and implement approaches and practical means to reduce disaster risks and strengthen resilience more effectively. Building on successes and lessons learnt under the current HFA, the following principal elements need to be included in the post-2015 HFA framework:

##### **(i) Improving accountability, transparency and governance**

The current framework is voluntary, based on self-assessments. While it is expected to remain non-binding, the negotiations on the future framework should develop a set of standards and mechanisms to ensure that different actors can be held accountable for their actions (or lack of action). It should provide incentives for commitments to be met while ensuring ownership of the implementation process.

Periodic peer review mechanisms, including voluntary peer reviews (as successfully piloted in the United Kingdom and Finland in the context of the EU cooperation on disaster risk management and HFA), should be established as helpful instruments for improving policy-making, sharing experience and increasing accountability.

To improve transparency, the new framework should lead to the collection and sharing of sound and comparable data on disaster losses, hazard and vulnerability in an open data policy, including the development of common and interoperable data and risk assessment protocols and public risk registers and databases. Standardisation efforts should also cover the overall actions relevant to risk management. This should be supported by systematic actions to raise public awareness of risk and improve risk and crisis communication (education, involvement of media, networks).

The new framework should further contribute to enhance governance for disaster management at all levels and across all sectors, building effective coordination mechanisms and sustainable partnerships between different public authorities and relevant stakeholders (civil society, academia and research institutions, private sector). Involvement of relevant actors and communities in decision-making processes should be ensured through inclusive participatory mechanisms and the promotion of a right-based approach<sup>31</sup>. Strong local structures and enhancement of local authorities' capacities are essential to improve planning and resilience of

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<sup>30</sup> Index for Risk Management (InfoRM), <http://inform.jrc.ec.europa.eu>

<sup>31</sup> Such as the rights to be protected, informed or consulted.

cities and ensure local political commitment and effective implementation of existing legal and policy frameworks.

Regional inter-governmental organisations should play an important role in the implementation of the new framework and in the Regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction as integrated regional disaster risk management strategies are being developed in several regions, including within the EU. More effective regional mechanisms and programmes for cooperation and capacity development should be also encouraged, in particular to address common and trans-boundary risks. Regional risk assessments and more efficient planning should be promoted.

## **(ii) A framework to deliver results – role of targets and indicators to measure progress and encourage implementation**

Existing priorities for actions and indicators<sup>32</sup> under the current HFA consider the extent to which countries have put in place the policies and institutions needed to reduce disaster risk. However, self-monitoring of the progress in implementation of the five HFA priorities has not resulted yet in a consistent effort by countries to monitor disaster risk and resilience. In addition, there were no links between the monitoring of progress under the HFA and the mechanisms to monitor progress under the MDGs<sup>33</sup> and the UNFCCC. A simplified new monitoring system should address these gaps to become a more effective tool for measuring progress made, encouraging implementation at different levels and sharing successes.

Action-oriented targets should be further developed to effectively measure the implementation of the new framework and to encourage stronger accountability. They should address the essential components of disaster resilience and encourage countries to put in place and effectively implement the necessary policies and tools to prevent risk generation and accumulation in order to reduce disaster risks and strengthen resilience.

Targets will need to be politically acceptable and operationally feasible and measurable, achievable and result-oriented, and with a clear timeframe. Possible areas could cover commitments by a certain date to develop and implement integrated risk assessment and assessment of risk management capabilities (as already envisaged in the EU civil protection legislation) or other result oriented actions (making sure that all citizens, including vulnerable people have access to early warning and risk information, that newly built infrastructure, including hospitals, health facilities, schools can withstand disaster; that the percentage of the people and infrastructure exposed to hazards is reduced).

Setting up universal targets could facilitate a more integrated approach to compare worldwide the results from the implementation and exchange good practices between developed and developing countries.

However, due to very different risk profiles of different countries and regions, setting more specific targets and indicators is likely to be more appropriate at national or regional level. Building on the regional strategies that have been developed by several regions, a regional approach to targets should be supported, considering specificities to hazards and progress

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<sup>32</sup> 22 core indicators under 5 priorities for action.

<sup>33</sup> Millennium Development Goals

made in HFA implementation as well as existing mechanisms for regional cooperation in disaster management.

Furthermore, indicators measuring the changes in the impact of disasters over time could contribute to the tracking of progress towards building resilience to disasters. This could be measured for example by indicators such as the frequency of disasters, direct economic losses as a % of GDP per country, number of victims and injured persons, the percentage of insured losses as compared to total losses, percentage of private and public budget allocated to disaster risk reduction and preparedness (e.g. measured through a reliable disaster risk management tracking system<sup>34</sup>).

The targets and their indicators must translate into tangible reductions of losses and risks where they matter most.

### **iii) Strengthening the contribution to sustainable and smart growth**

The new framework should promote disaster proofing in economic and financial decisions and strategies, in both public and private sectors. Special attention should be paid to cost benefit analysis of disaster prevention measures also to help support resource allocation. All major infrastructure and projects should be risk sensitive and climate and disaster resilient.

It is essential that the new HFA is developed and implemented in close partnership with the private sector, international financial institutions such as the EIB<sup>35</sup> and the EBRD<sup>36</sup> and major investors. New initiatives for engagement of all businesses should be promoted, including the development of partnerships across public, private and other stakeholders. Insurance/reinsurance value chain, including (re-)insurance intermediaries, insurance and re-insurance undertakings, but also market-based instruments should play a key role in helping countries and regions that are particularly vulnerable to disasters to create effective financial contingency mechanisms and discourage risky behavior.

Innovative technologies and instruments to support disaster management should be further encouraged (ICT, early-warning systems, resilient infrastructure and buildings, green infrastructure, climate and integrated disaster risk modelling, ecosystem-based approaches, communication, knowledge management). This will also lead to increased business opportunities and contribute to green growth.

The new framework should reinforce the science-policy interface, capitalizing on knowledge including innovation and technology. More effective use of science and research in both physical and social science is needed to systematically inform policies and operations. This should include a foresight comprehensive multi-hazard approach (covering both natural and man-made risks, including industrial and chemical accidents) and solution driven research to better address future risks and societal challenges. Close international collaboration in this area is essential.

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<sup>34</sup> Complementing existing ones, including Rio-markers <http://www.oecd.org/dac/stats/rioconventions.htm>.

<sup>35</sup> European Investment Bank

<sup>36</sup> European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Joint approach with climate change adaptation and a strengthened focus on reducing the underlying risk drivers in ecosystem management, resource efficiency, land use and urban planning, environmental monitoring and impact assessment are essential conditions for ensuring long term sustainable growth.

#### **(iv) Addressing vulnerabilities and needs in a comprehensive framework**

The new HFA should be more inclusive and gender-sensitive. A better targeting and empowerment of particularly vulnerable persons (children, elderly people, persons with disabilities, homeless, poor and food insecure people, etc.) and civil society are needed. This should include effective use of appropriate social safety net mechanisms and social protection systems responsive to disaster risks. The role of women in building resilience in households and communities should be promoted.

Particular attention should be paid to building resilience in all urban and vulnerable rural settings as well as coastal areas, including through integrated planning. In this respect, comprehensive risk assessments, strong coordination mechanisms between local and national administration with active engagement of civil society and awareness raising initiatives (such as twinning of cities) are instrumental.

Globally, disaster risk is highly concentrated in poorer countries suffering from weaker governance. In many cases this vulnerability is compounded by political instability and conflict. Equally, a resilience approach that works well in a stable, well governed country will not be directly applicable to one which is in a conflict situation.

The new framework should therefore factor in state fragility and conflict when it considers the most appropriate ways to reduce disaster risks. A comprehensive international framework should also address other forms of violence and fragility as well as technological risks alongside natural hazards, including everyday small local disasters and global shocks and stresses such as food and nutrition insecurity and epidemics.

#### **(v) Ensuring coherence with the international agenda**

Integrating disaster risk management and climate change adaptation policies into the international sustainable development agenda is essential. Disaster resilience and its related risk factors outlined above are already featuring as important issues in the international preparations for the post-2015 development framework addressing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Furthermore, the design of the 2015 agreement on climate change provides for another opportunity to enhance adaptation efforts and integrate disaster risk management. This should build on and be coordinated with related processes under the UNFCCC, such as the National Adaptation Planning process, the adaptation window under the Green Climate Fund, and the Warsaw International Mechanism on loss and damage. Initiatives like the Joint National Action Plans (JNAPs) in the Pacific region are combining efforts in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management and should be promoted in other regions.

Other related international high-level events are also taking place in parallel, in particular on nutrition<sup>37</sup>, biodiversity<sup>38</sup>, culture<sup>39</sup>. The United Nations Third Conference of Small Island

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<sup>37</sup> UN International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) in November 2014.

Developing States and the United Nations General Assembly leaders' summit on climate change are also both taking place this year.

Policies, goals, and targets, and their monitoring that are discussed in each of these fora and the post-2015 Hyogo Framework should be mutually supportive and reinforcing.

The new framework should also clarify the relationships between UNISDR and UNFCCC, as well as other UN bodies responsible for framing the global and national response to the threats of disasters and the impacts of climate change.

Finally, the progressive recognition at international level that prevention is a legal obligation (*duty to prevent*) through the development of international law by the International Law Commission concerning the “Protection of persons in the event of disasters” is also highly relevant and should be used as a vehicle to improve the implementation of the post-2015 HFA.

## **6- MOVING FORWARD**

A renewed post-2015 Hyogo Framework for Action is a significant opportunity to advance disaster risk management across the world.

The ideas presented in this Communication should serve as basis for further dialogue with EU Member States, European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, European Economic and Social Committee, and other stakeholders (civil society, academia, private sector) as well as international partners and the UN System on how to further shape this agenda in the preparatory process to the Sendai Summit.

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<sup>38</sup> 12th CoP of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in October 2014 in Korea and the 1st MoP of the Nagoya Protocol.

<sup>39</sup> UNGA Special Session in September 2014 on Indigenous People as well as a planned UNGA high level meeting on culture and sustainable development.