



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
Impact Assessment Board

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Opinion

Title

**Impact Assessment on a Commission Communication on EU
Disaster Response Capacity**

(draft version of 30 July 2010)

(A) Context

The Treaty of Lisbon introduced a specific article 196 on civil protection which calls on the Union to encourage co-operation between Member States in the field of civil protection. Additionally, the Treaty of Lisbon classifies development cooperation and humanitarian aid as “shared parallel competences”: this means that the Union conducts an autonomous policy, which neither prevents the Member States from exercising their competences nor makes the Union’s policy merely “complementary” to those of the Member States. In 2009 the Commission issued two Communications on increasing disaster prevention COM(2009) 82 focused on the internal EU aspect, and COM(2009) 84 focused on the developing countries. The proposal analysed in the impact assessment is aimed at spurring political discussion on disaster response.

(B) Overall assessment

Given the nature of the initiative, which is a Communication to present options, the impact assessment report provides a sufficient, proportionate analysis. The report should nevertheless be clearer on a number of points: first, it should provide more empirical information on the nature of the problems encountered; second, it should indicate the extent to which the problems being addressed are the result of co-ordination problems with disaster response or of overall capacity problems; third, it should explain how the major issues raised by stakeholders will be addressed. Finally, while a separate impact assessment would be necessary for any future proposal to pool national resources or to create EU level assets, this report should already discuss more fully the possible advantages and disadvantages of such an approach, and an indication of the key issues that any future impact assessment would have to address.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

(1) The report should provide more empirical information on the nature of the problems encountered. It should explain the nature of the shortcomings which have been experienced in providing relief, including how often it was not possible to provide support in response to important requests and whether the situation is becoming more difficult as the number of disasters increases. In doing so, the report should distinguish more clearly the problems that result from lack of co-ordination from those that result from an overall lack of capacity. In this context, the report should explain what work is underway to identify where needs are most acute.

(2) The major concerns raised by stakeholders need to be addressed in the options. The IA report should make clear how each of the options would deal with major issues raised by stakeholders including: strengthening the Monitoring and Information Centre, enhancing planning and logistics including transport, funding and training.

(3) The IA reports should discuss more fully the advantages and disadvantages of pooling resources at the EU level and indicate the key issues that any future impact assessment would have to address. While these issues will be fully analysed in a future impact assessment, the IA report should nevertheless describe in greater detail the process for doing this and the main issues that will have to be addressed. This description could benefit from an analysis of the existing pooling of resources at regional level in EU. The analysis should be complemented by examples of synergies and economies of scale of pooling the resources, and a discussion about the appropriate size of EU assets.

(D) Procedure and presentation

The abbreviations used in Figure 4 should be explained and a glossary of key terms should be provided.

(E) IAB scrutiny process

Reference number	2010/ECHO/008
External expertise used	No
Date of IAB meeting	8 September 2010