

2019 Global Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction

PEDRR Key Messages

- 1. PEDRR encourages Members States to recognize 'Green and Blue Infrastructure' as Critical Infrastructure, by enhancing national reporting in the Sendai Monitor Targets C and D.**
- 2. PEDRR promotes increased investments in ecosystem restoration and protection to reduce the impacts of water-related disasters, with particular attention to water-related ecosystems such as lakes, coastal ecosystems, swamps and peatlands**
- 3. PEDRR emphasizes the importance of 'Building Back Better and Greener' by mainstreaming ecosystem-based solutions in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction.**

The 2019 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction comes at a critical time, when Member States are focusing attention on how to most effectively report, on the progress and implementation of the Sendai Framework. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) explicitly recognizes the important role of ecosystems – such as mountain forests, coastal and marine habitats like mangroves and reef systems, river basins and drylands - in reducing disaster risks. Yet, efforts to promote Ecosystem-based Approaches for Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) remain limited, under-financed and under-reported.

PEDRR therefore calls on Member States, private sector, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders to advance implementation of the Sendai Framework, through increased investments and reporting on Eco-DRR efforts globally and to include ecosystem approaches in Disaster Risk Reduction Strategies (target E).

Message 1: PEDRR encourages Members States to recognize 'Green and Blue Infrastructure' as Critical Infrastructure, by enhancing national reporting in the Sendai Monitor Targets C and D.

While the SFDRR is clear about the crucial role ecosystems play in the DRR context, ecosystems have not been directly included in any of the Global Targets - making it difficult to monitor ecosystem losses and damages and implementation of ecosystem-based measures. Ecosystem-based approaches are explicitly mentioned under Priority Areas 1-3 of SFDRR, **yet are notably absent in the Sendai Framework Monitor**. The only exception are two footnotes in Targets C and D where Green Infrastructure is mentioned as a type of 'critical infrastructure'.

The Chair's summary of GPDRR 2017 specifically called for the development of standards for Green Infrastructure (GI) to stimulate investments in nature-based solutions to DRR. In the GPDRR Issues Brief on 'Green and Blue Infrastructure' developed by PEDRR partners in 2019, GI is defined as: "a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation, climate mitigation and adaptation, and management of wet weather impacts that provides many community benefits". Examples include coral reefs and coastal green belts for attenuating coastal hazards, protection forests in mountains to reduce the occurrence of avalanches and landslides and peatlands and swamps to buffer flood impacts. Water-related ecosystems, such as coral reefs and wetlands are often referred to as 'blue infrastructure'. Green-Blue Infrastructure (GBI) approaches are

often combined with grey infrastructure such as sea dykes, or para-avalanche barriers for greater sustainability, or so-called hybrid approaches to DRR. GBI also provides many benefits beyond protection such as livelihoods support, well-being of women and men and carbon sequestration that grey infrastructure does not.

Therefore, PEDRR urges Member States, private sector, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders to take action to:

- Increase investments in GBI and hybrid solutions as critical infrastructure in the context of DRR;
- Increase investments in developing performance indicators, GBI standards, cost-benefit analyses and monitoring mechanisms for greater investment in GBI for DRR;
- Increase reporting on GBI in Sendai Monitor Targets C and D and in Custom Indicators;
- Encourage a paradigm shift within development, finance and engineering sectors towards [Building with Nature](#), or [Engineering with Nature](#) approaches to design effective, sustainable solutions in which an inclusive approach with stakeholders is part of the process.

For further discussion on the role of green and blue infrastructure, read: https://www.preventionweb.net/files/globalplatform/5cca9d1c61ef0WS12-Issue_Brief.pdf

Message 2: PEDRR promotes increased investments in ecosystem restoration and protection to reduce the impacts of water-related disasters, with particular attention to water-related ecosystems such as lakes, floodplains, coastal ecosystems, swamps and peatlands

Water-related disasters account for almost 90 percent of the 1,000 most disastrous events that have taken place since 1990. Investing in water-related ecosystems, or Green-blue infrastructure, such as rivers, swamps, lakes, estuaries and peatlands is essential to sustain water resources and effective for climate change adaptation and DRR. Despite their values the degradation of wetlands and other ecosystems continues unabated, rendering local communities and the economy highly vulnerable to climate change. Furthermore, fresh water resources are under increasing pressure from economic development and disaster management approaches such as water infrastructure (dams, dykes) for energy, agriculture and coastal defence. PEDRR therefore encourages 'risk-informed' development, tolerant of climate uncertainty that puts water-related ecosystems centre-stage.

Without securing our natural resource-base as a core element of DRR and adaptation practice, other measures will be undermined and fail.

Therefore, PEDRR urges Member States, private sector, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders to take action to:

- Invest in the sustainable use and management of ecosystems for building resilience to disasters by 1) maintaining intact ecosystems, e.g. through protected areas planning; 2) sustaining and restoring ecosystems in rural areas for livelihoods support and protection, considering the important role of women; and 3) restoring and protecting ecosystem services in urban watersheds and heavily degraded environments, such as sustaining wetland parks, re-creation of flood plains;
- Consider the key role of wetlands in undertaking risk assessments at the relevant social and spatial scale (land or seascape), specifically when assessing water-related hazards such as floods and droughts;
- Consider resilient ecosystems as a *pre-condition* for establishing resilient societies and economies, not only as co-benefits;
- Invest in water security to reduce disaster risk through integrated planning, restoration and protection of water-related infrastructure;

- Implement integrated flood management and integrated drought management as participatory, multi-stakeholder approaches to developing solutions for reducing water-related disaster risks and adapting to climate change;
- Encourage risk informed development and policies which take into account increasing risks to water-related infrastructure
- Prevent plans for major development infrastructure from going ahead if they cause ecosystem degradation

For more information on water-related infrastructure, read:

https://www.preventionweb.net/files/globalplatform/5cc70c37ebd98WS14-Concept_Note.pdf

Message 3: PEDRR emphasizes the importance of 'Building Back Better and Greener' by mainstreaming ecosystem-based solutions in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction

Ecosystem-based approaches should be part of post-disaster recovery and reconstruction efforts, of particular importance to 'building back better and greener', yet absent from Sendai Framework Target 4.

In the aftermath of disasters and conflicts, affected countries often experience a sense of urgency to rapidly restart development. At the same time, accelerated development and reconstruction create pressure on natural resources often degrading services that communities depend upon. New development activities in such contexts, if not planned sustainably, can have negative environmental impacts that undermine long-term economic growth. However, post-crisis situations also present opportunities. For example, in the aftermath of the devastating 2018 flooding in Kerala, India, the ensuing Post-Disaster Needs Assessment called for massive ecosystem restoration and protection. It also recommended establishing institutions such as River Basin Committees and Integrated Water Resources Management mechanisms for risk-sensitive natural resources management and land use planning. For more information, see World Reconstruction Conference session on 14 May, 2019 (2.00-3.30 pm).

Therefore, PEDRR urges Member States, private sector, civil society, development partners and other stakeholders to take action to:

- Guide the initial stages of recovery and reconstruction so that new developments minimize environmental impacts and build resilience to future disaster, climate and conflict risks
- Undertake integrated Strategic Environmental Assessments which are approaches that bring together key stakeholders to make strategic decisions about how to promote sustainable reconstruction while considering disaster and climate risks. Read more here: <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/disasters-conflicts/what-we-do/risk-reduction/rebuilding-safely-and-sustainably>
- Include ecosystem-based solutions in their Disaster Risk Reduction strategies (Target E) and early warning and risk information (Target G)

For more information, read about the Coordination of Assessments for Environment in Humanitarian Action: <https://ehaconnect.org/about/initiative/>

PEDRR key events (with two or more partners organizing)

- **'We bend, we do not break': Integrated approaches to building resilience in light of Target E of SFDRR** (15 May, 7.30-9.30 pm)
Forum de Genève, 11-19 Rue de Lausanne, 1201 Genève
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/we-bend-we-do-not-break-integrated-approaches-to-building-resilience-tickets-59045022251>
- **Innovation platform at the 2019 Global Platform**
UN Environment was selected to display our proposals at the Innovation Platform of GP2019. UN Environment will host a booth about Opportunity Mapping with GRID-Geneva, MapX and PEDRR partners, who are welcome to display their knowledge products at the booth.
<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2019/globalplatform/programme/platform/view?id=958>
- **Side event:** Recipes from around the world for sustainable and institutionalized Community Based Disaster Risk Management (15 May 1-2 pm, CCV Room CICG)
Global network for civil societies for disaster reduction (GNDR) and Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC)
<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2019/globalplatform/programme/side-events/view?id=925>
- **Working session:** The Role of Green, Blue and Gray Infrastructure in Reducing Disaster Risk (17 May 2019 / 11:00 - 12:30)
The concept and practice of resilient infrastructure provides a concrete measure to achieve the objectives of risk-informed development, as enshrined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2019/globalplatform/programme/working-sessions/view?id=918>
- **Working session:** Integrating Risk Management Ecosystems and Water-Related Risks (17 May 2019/ 14:30 - 16:00)
Water-related disasters account for most disasters, with devastating environmental and economic consequences, wherein the deficit or excess of water result in a range of hazards, from drought to flood. Poor water resource and ecosystem management makes disaster risk more pronounced.
<https://www.unisdr.org/conference/2019/globalplatform/programme/working-sessions/view?id=920>

Please find a on the link below a compilation of all PEDRR engagement during the Global Platform 2019:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15xsWo5yGJZcuSStpVPJjtxV8hPYSb1u1F2IRSa6CULw/edit#gid=0>

PEDRR on social media

- **Hashtags:** #GP2019Geneva #TheResilienceDividend #SendaiFramework #PEDRR #DisasterRiskReduction

- **Partners handles:** @PEDRRnetwork @UNEnvironment @UNDP @unesco @UNISDR @WWF @councilofeurope @Helvetas @IUCN @IUCN_Ecosystem @ProActNetwork @StockholmEnvironmentInstitute @ADPCnet @GNDR.org @thenatureconservancy

PEDRR logos



PEDRR Contact information

PEDRR Co-Chair: Lucy Pearson lucy.pearson@gndr.org

PEDRR Secretariat pedrr.secretariat@gmail.com