

## Disaster Risk Reduction

The disaster risk reduction pillar of the UNEP Disasters and Conflicts programme focuses on countries that have been identified as vulnerable to natural hazards, and on human-made disaster events with an environmental component. As well as producing environmental risk assessments, UNEP seeks to strengthen the hand of Member States for environmental management through developing responsive strategies, building capacity and implementing pilot projects to reduce identified risks, thereby contributing to long-term disaster risk reduction. UNEP also contributes to global policy development by producing policy toolkits and training modules that demonstrate good practices and lessons learned in reducing risks, and provides environmental data and expertise on sustainable management of shared natural resources.

### Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessment (ISEA) in Sri Lanka

Two missions were carried out by UNEP in Q3 in relation to the Integrated Strategic Environmental Assessment (ISEA) process conducted in collaboration with the National Government and UNDP in Sri Lanka. Following the cessation of hostilities in 2009, the Government of Sri Lanka launched a major development thrust known as Uthuru Wasanthaya or Northern Spring, involving new settlements, urban and rural infrastructure and livelihood as well as economic development. In order to anticipate and avoid the potential adverse environmental consequences of accelerated development, the ISEA is expected to produce a sustainable

development framework for the region that identifies development opportunities based on environmental sustainability and disaster risk management criteria. From 12-16 July, UNEP participated in a consultation process between national government agencies to develop initial environmental sensitivity and “opportunity” maps using GIS. These integrate information on planned development initiatives with environmental baselines, providing an indicative visual appraisal of potential conflicts between development priorities and the environment. In addition, UNEP delivered a two-day training on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) involving over 40 participants from different government agencies. The main objective of the second mission, which took place from 23 August to 5 September was to continue providing additional technical support and mentoring, working especially with the Central Environment Authority (CEA) and the Urban Development Authority in further refining “opportunity maps” and preparing the assessment according to identified strategic environmental objectives, different development alternatives and different stress-testing scenarios. Moreover, field visits to all five districts in the Northern Province were undertaken to raise local awareness of the ISEA process and to consult with district authorities. UNEP engagement in Sri Lanka has already shown positive results, as the initial preparation of development plans and environmental baselines facilitated greater inter-agency cooperation and coordination with respect to the sharing and integration of data. Enhanced national capacity and greater awareness of the value of undertaking ISEAs is expected to help bring about improved institutional practices with respect to sustainable land-use planning that effectively anticipate and mitigate against adverse environmental outcomes, as well as vulnerabilities to natural hazards.



The Ecosystems, Livelihoods and Disaster Risk Reduction Workshop organized by the PEDRR from 21-23 September gathered scientific and practitioner communities in order to improve knowledge and practice on ecosystem management approaches for disaster risk reduction (see next page)



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### The Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR)

Within the context of the Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR) and together with the UN University's Institute for Environment and Human Security, IUCN and UNDP, UNEP co-organized a workshop on "Ecosystems, Livelihoods and Disaster Risk Reduction," which took place on 21-23 September in Bonn, Germany. The objective of the three-day workshop was to enhance dialogue between the scientific and practitioner communities in order to improve knowledge and practice on ecosystem management approaches for disaster risk reduction. As the first major workshop organized by PEDRR, the event brought together 50 participants from around the world, including scientists, researchers, practitioners, international development partners, civil society, and government representatives. Participants deliberated on the potential role of ecosystems in providing natural hazard protection and reducing vulnerability to hazard impacts. Special focus was placed on storm surges, flooding, landslides and wildfires. Latest scientific research was presented, complemented with field-based experiences on good practices of ecosystems-based disaster reduction shared by practitioners. A key outcome of the event was the development of an "Agenda for Action" based on key issues and gaps identified during the sessions. PEDRR and its expanding network will use the Agenda as a catalyst for mobilizing activities in the future, which include: investing in capacity-building and awareness-raising events on environment and disaster risk reduction, mainstreaming of ecosystems-based DRR in development planning processes, further research on ecosystem and livelihood thresholds for different types of hazards, and improving valuation of ecosystem functions and services.

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### Building Capacity for Industrial Risk Reduction with a focus on Emergency Preparedness in Developing Countries – APELL

During Q3, UNEP initiated contacts with government agencies and industry associations in Argentina to undertake preparations for a regional workshop on experience-sharing on APELL (Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level) in Latin America, and to promote UNEP's new Flexible Framework Initiative for Chemical Accident Prevention and Preparedness. During a mission to Argentina in early July, UNEP met with the Secretary of Environment of Argentina, the Ministry of Production of Buenos Aires Province, the Latin American Association of Chemical and Petrochemical companies (APLA), the Argentinean Association of Chemical Engineers (AAIQ), the Federation of Municipalities and the Chamber of Chemical and Petrochemical Industries (CIQyP). The CIQyP, a key industrial association in the country responsible for the promotion of "responsible care" in Argentina, agreed to host the workshop together with APLA on 29-30 November 2010. A significant number of regional public and private sector organizations are expected to attend to share their experience and expertise in the implementation of the APELL process in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Peru, in both the chemical and mining sectors.

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