

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE  
IASC WEEKLY MEETING

**Summary Note**

27 February 2008  
Geneva

**Joint WMO, IFRC and OCHA Update on Climate Change**

Presenters:

Dr. Maryam Golnaraghi, Chief, WMO's Natural Disaster Prevention and Mitigation Programme

Mr. Robert Mister, Coordinator, IFRC's External Relations and Communications Department

Mr. Micha Meier, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA's Emergency Preparedness Section

Ms. Jenty Wood, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA's Disaster and Vulnerability Policy Section

Mr. Roy Brooke, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA's Environmental Emergencies Section  
(Seconded to the Global Humanitarian Forum, January-February 2008)

Key issues discussed:

Dr. Golnaraghi, Mr. Mister, Mr. Meier, Ms. Wood, and Mr. Brooke, jointly provided participants with presentations on the humanitarian implications of climate change and initiatives undertaken by their respective agencies in this regard.

Dr. Golnaraghi presented key trends in existing disaster data pointing to a drastic increase in disasters related to weather / climate related hazard events over the last 25-30 years: According to WMO, 90% of all disasters since 1980 have been related to climate related events. Dr. Golnaraghi, moreover, provided an overview of the meteorological data collection and forecasting provided by WMO through its network of national and regional partners, and underlined that critical information, which is now available, could be customized to support humanitarian activities. She emphasised that better communication channels need to be established between humanitarian practitioners and these official and credible sources of forecasts and warnings in order to improve preparedness and contingency planning. During 2008 WMO will launch a study / consultations with humanitarian agencies to identify such requirements.

Mr. Mister gave a brief update on IFRC's priorities in relation to the humanitarian impact of climate change and the outcomes of the Red Cross/Red Crescent International Conference in November 2007 related to Climate Change. Moreover, he pointed participants' attention to the work of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre (<http://www.climatecentre.org/>), including the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Guide.

Ms. Wood and Mr. Meier debriefed on the internal workshop convened by OCHA/EPS on 6 February 2008 and on the round table discussion hosted by OCHA/DVP on 8 February 2008

bringing together a selection of research organisations, UN agencies and NGOs on emerging research and policy on the humanitarian implications of climate change.

Finally, Mr. Roy Brooke gave participants a brief update on the activities of the Global Humanitarian Forum, focussing on the first Annual High-Level Meeting to be convened in Geneva on 24-25 June 2007. The High-level meeting will bring together global leaders and heads of agencies to raise awareness about major humanitarian issues, help mobilise political will and provide opportunities for generating new partnerships. More information is available at <http://www.ghf-geneva.org/ghf.php?langue=en&page=accueil>. Moreover, Mr. Brooke pointed to the importance of lowering greenhouse gas emissions to reduce future climate change impacts and adaptation needs. In this regard, the UN Secretary General has requested UN organisations to lead by example on climate change, hence a strategy is being developed within OCHA to reduce its emissions and climate change impacts.

#### Follow-up actions

The IASC Secretariat will together with OCHA/EPS circulate an email requesting all organizations to identify their respective climate change focal points and send the contact details to [meierm@un.org](mailto:meierm@un.org). Once the list has been consolidated, it will be uploaded to the IASC Website and an email will be circulated to notify the IASC Focal Points and Weekly participants.

#### **AOB**

- Ms. Louise Johannsen (Associate Humanitarian Officer) and Ms. Mirja Peters (Intern), who have been organising the weekly meetings, will end their assignments with the IASC Secretariat this week. Ms. Johannsen will continue working with OCHA's Displacement and Protection Support Section.
- The future contact person for the IASC Weekly Meetings will be Mr. Peter Neussl (Humanitarian Affairs Officer). Peter can be reached at [neussl@un.org](mailto:neussl@un.org) or +41 22 917 15 11.
- Due to Working Group preparations, there will be no IASC Weekly Meeting next week (5 March 2008).

Prepared by: IASC Secretariat (Geneva)

## List of participants

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