

23 Feb 2009

**Natural Disasters:****19 Feb: Australia hit by floods**

Australian officials have declared a number of areas disaster zones after widespread floods hit the continent that is still battling wildfires in the south. In eastern Australia, parts of New South Wales (NSW) state were declared natural disaster zones after storms triggered floods that left towns cut off after roads were submerged. The drought-hit town of Bourke was inundated with eight inches (200 mm) of rain, or around two-thirds of its annual rainfall, in 15 hours and officials said some US\$3.9 million (AUS\$6 million) in damages had been incurred. The areas north of NSW's state capital, Sydney, were declared a disaster zone. In western Australia, global mining giant Rio Tinto, reportedly the third-largest mining company, said that its iron ore operations in western Australia have been disrupted by heavy rains and floods and that it has suspended several projects. Meanwhile, in Australia's south, officials said they had confirmed 11 additional people had been killed by deadly wildfires which swept through Victoria state on February 7, bringing the death toll to 200. Officials expect the death toll to go higher. According to the AP, the more than 400 fires destroyed 1,800 homes and burned more than 1,500 square miles (3,885 square km) of farms, forests and towns.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jlUCqDbfvOMgcnOmljSsqFNni6iOD96DE8F81>

[http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxNvmJs2yhMwVK\\_iuzLrmsg8FntQ](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hxNvmJs2yhMwVK_iuzLrmsg8FntQ)

[http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=a5O7Ifu\\_R8pA&refer=australia](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601081&sid=a5O7Ifu_R8pA&refer=australia)

**News:****For a safer Delhi, risk atlas in the offing**

To make Delhi one of the safest cities, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) is preparing a Risk Atlas for the Capital to assess how vulnerable it is to disasters. The atlas will highlight risk areas and guidelines on how to mitigate the risks. "One of the biggest natural risks in Delhi is earthquake, so seismic studies and microzonation will be an important part of the atlas," Vinay Kumar, joint secretary, DDMA, said. "Besides, Delhi is also vulnerable to chemical, biological and nuclear attacks, so those will also be covered with other terrorist threats." Despite the time constraint, the atlas will also seek to map the risks to the Commonwealth Games projects. After the DDMA invited an Expressions of Interest for the project, various consultants have come forward. <http://www.expressindia.com/latest-news/for-a-safer-delhi-risk-atlas-in-the-offing/424777/>

**13 Feb: Australian officials say wildfire damage worse than thought**

Australian officials said that more than 1,800 houses were destroyed by the worst wildfires in the nation's history, nearly doubling the figure previously reported. The wildfires have killed at least 181 people in southeastern Victoria state. The scale of the destruction had become clearer as more resources, including the use of emergency planes, were engaged in assessment and clean-up operations. More than 7,000 people have been made homeless and hundreds have moved into tent cities near hard-hit towns. Australia's south has been suffering from a record heatwave and on Saturday (February 7), temperatures as high as 122 degrees Fahrenheit (50 degrees Celsius), along with strong winds and drought conditions,

helped fuel hundreds of fires that burned some 1.1 million acres (450,000 hectares). Officials say that they will press murder charges against arsonists if evidence supports it, and at least one suspect has been arrested, the AP reported. Australian officials said that more than US\$50 million had been pledged to various charity funds for survivors and Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd ordered military bases to open to house some of the homeless. Rudd also announced plans for a national day of mourning but did not yet name a date.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jlUCqDbfvOMgcnOmljSnqFNni6iOD96AF2F00>

<http://news.ph.msn.com/topstories/article.aspx?cp-documentid=2486012>

### **Feb 10: Internews establishes emergency Media Fund for disasters and conflicts-MacArthur Foundation Challenge Grant Enables Local Media to Provide Lifesaving Information in Emergencies**

With a three-year, \$500,000 challenge grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Internews Network has established a fund to enable local media to provide vital news and information to survivors of humanitarian disasters and other crises. "Internews' global reach and experience make it possible for us to respond immediately in emergency situations," said David Hoffman, President of Internews Network. "With the generous and far-sighted support of the MacArthur Foundation, we will be able to help more people more effectively by providing the timely and accurate information that is so essential during a disaster." [http://www.internews.org/prs/2009/20090210\\_macarthur.shtm](http://www.internews.org/prs/2009/20090210_macarthur.shtm)

### **Information Resources:**

#### **Research: Urban governance for adaptation: assessing climate change resilience in ten Asian cities**

This research, undertaken with a set of partner research institutes, examines how to manage climate-related impacts in an urban context by promoting planned and autonomous adaptation in order to by improve resilience in a changing climate. Rapidly expanding urban settlements in the developing world face severe climatic risks in light of climate change. Urban populations will increasingly be forced to cope with increased incidents of flooding, air and water pollution, heat stress and vector-borne diseases. This research, undertaken with a set of partner research institutes, examines how to manage climate-related impacts in an urban context by promoting planned and autonomous adaptation in order to by improve resilience in a changing climate. It investigates the linkages between the characteristics of propoor good urban governance, climate adaptation and resilience, and poverty and sustainable development concerns. The paper develops an analytical framework by combining governance literature with rapid climate resilience assessments conducted in ten Asian cities. Based on this empirical data, we argue that a number of key characteristics can be identified to assess and build urban resilience to climate change in a way that reduces the vulnerability of the citizens most at risk from climate shocks and stresses. These characteristics form the basis of a climate resilient urban governance assessment framework, and include (1) decentralisation and autonomy, (2) accountability and transparency, (3) responsiveness and flexibility, (4) participation and inclusion and (5) experience and support. This framework can help to assist in the planning, design and implementation of urban climate change resilience-building programmes in the future. <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=7849>

#### **Photos reveal climate change impacts: "a climate for life" exhibit opens at California academy of sciences**

A visually arresting look at the impacts of climate in remote places rarely seen by most people is the focus of a new photo exhibition entitled *A Climate for Life: Meeting the Global Challenge* opening at the California Academy of Sciences on January 17. A collaboration of Conservation International (CI) and the International League of Conservation Photographers (ILCP), the exhibit will run through April 12, 2009. It includes more than 50 fine art prints produced on canvas using the giclée printing process. In addition to the exhibit, the Academy will host a lecture on Feb. 3 at 7 pm in the Herbst Forum entitled

“The Art of Conservation,” with ILCP Executive Director Cristina Mittermeier and CI Senior Director Michael Totten, both lead authors of the accompanying book, also entitled *A Climate For Life: Meeting the Global Challenge*. <http://www.conservation.org/newsroom/pressreleases/Pages/Climate-For-Life-Exhibit-Opens.aspx>

**Climate Change and Human Health: Risks and Responses**

**Training Manual, Worksheet and Full Text is available on the following link:**

<http://web.wkc.who.int/projects/uhe/heatw/>

**Impact of Climate Change and Bioenergy on Nutrition**

Food security has deteriorated since 1995 and reductions in child malnutrition are proceeding too slowly to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target for halving hunger by 2015. Three major challenges threaten to drastically complicate efforts to overcome food insecurity and malnutrition : climate change, the growing use of food crops as a source of fuel and soaring food prices. Food security has four dimensions: food availability, access to food, stability of supply and access and safe and healthy food utilization. It is a key factor in good nutrition, along with health, sanitation and care practices. Globally, one billion people are currently without access to safe water and over 2 billion lack adequate sanitation facilities. <http://www.unisdr.org/eng/risk-reduction/climate-change/docs/ISDR-System-Submission-Adaptation.pdf>

**Report: Can China and the US cooperate on climate change?**

*Common Challenge, Collaborative Response* was produced by the Initiative for US-China Cooperation on Energy and Climate Task Force, a joint initiative of the Asia Society and Pew Center on Global Climate Change. It claims that there is now an unparalleled opportunity to form a new strategic partnership aimed at averting catastrophic climate change, and that without the active participation of the two largest producers of greenhouse gases being aggressively committed to reducing emissions, efforts by other nations are bound to fall short of being able to halt climate change. The report presents both a vision and a concrete roadmap for a new collaboration that could turn the US and China into global leaders on the climate change challenge, while simultaneously helping to transform this most critical of all bilateral relationships in the world into one based on cooperation on this crucial common interest.

[http://www.csr-asia.com/weekly\\_detail.php?id=11609](http://www.csr-asia.com/weekly_detail.php?id=11609)

**Interview:** Dr. Robert Glasser, Secretary General of CARE International speaks out on Natural Disasters and Conflict <http://disaster.developmentgateway.org/>

**Paper: Scaling-up climate change mitigation efforts** This paper shares the experience gained from the Kyoto mechanisms, outlines potential opportunities for scaling up mitigation efforts, discusses potential approaches for quantification of impacts and proposes issues for discussion.

[http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/02/04/000333037\\_20090204012432/Rendered/PDF/47308WP0Box331ion1Efforts01PUBLIC1.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2009/02/04/000333037_20090204012432/Rendered/PDF/47308WP0Box331ion1Efforts01PUBLIC1.pdf)

**Manual: Total disaster risk management handbook:** This handbook's central theme is the development and application of a system for managing any hazards which appear to threaten a continually habitable and secure society. Directly relating to Thailand, the suggestions presented are applicable to any region or nation at risk of natural or man-made disasters. Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM) uses a risk management methodology comprising a management and a decision-making process to guide the systematic and consistent assessment and evaluation. <http://www.adpc.net/tudmp/eng-screen.pdf>

**Policy Research Working Paper:** Valuing Mortality and Morbidity in the Context of Disaster Risks benefit-cost analyses of disaster risk reduction (DRR) projects are an important tool for evaluating the efficiency of such projects, and an important input into decision making. These analyses, however, often fail to monetize the benefits of reduced death and injury. The authors review the literature on valuing reduced death and injury, and suggest methods for calculating order-of-magnitude estimates of these benefits. Because few empirical estimates of the Value of a Statistical Life (VSL) are available for developing countries, methods for transferring estimates from high income to middle and low income countries are reviewed. The authors suggest using the range of values implied by an income elasticity of 1.0 and an elasticity of 1.5. With regard to injury valuation they discuss arguments for and against monetizing Quality Adjusted Life Years, and provide shortcuts to valuing injuries that may be used to assess their importance in DRR benefit-cost analyses.

[http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2009/02/03/000158349\\_20090203160631/Rendered/PDF/WPS4832.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2009/02/03/000158349_20090203160631/Rendered/PDF/WPS4832.pdf)

**Publication:** Private Sector Activities in Disaster Risk Reduction: Good Practices and Lessons Learned On 13 January 2009, the ADRC and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR) Secretariat Hyogo Office held a joint press conference to introduce the UN/ISDR's latest publication, "Private Sector Activities in Disaster Risk Reduction: Good Practices and Lessons Learned 2008." The ADRC has supported various projects that promote disaster risk reduction efforts through public-private partnerships. As a part of this effort, the ADRC published "Promoting Public-Private Partnerships in Disaster Risk Reduction: Japanese Cases" in collaboration with the UN/ISDR in June 2007.

**Study: Disaster risk, livelihoods and natural barriers, strengthening decision-making tools for disaster risk reduction: a case study from Northern Pakistan:** The goal of this interdisciplinary study is to better understand the land use factors that increase vulnerability of mountain areas in northern Pakistan. The study will identify and analyse the damages and losses caused by the October 2005 earthquake in two areas of the same valley: one "low-risk" watershed with sound natural resources management, the other, "high-risk" in an ecologically degraded watershed. Secondly, the study will examine natural and man-made causes of secondary hazards in the study area, especially landslides; and third it will evaluate the cost of the earthquake damage in the study areas on the livelihoods of local communities and the sub-regional economy. <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=4156>

**Publication:** Risk wise: Published in August 2008 for launch at the International and Risk Conference (IDRC Davos 2008), Risk Wise is the latest in a series of volumes addressing natural disasters, and how their impact can be reduced by effective capacity building and prevention strategies. A fully illustrated, 200-page book, Risk Wise offers perspectives, case studies and analysis on disaster risk reduction and mitigation in light of the increasing threat of natural disasters. It brings together the knowledge and experiences of public and private organisations working toward disaster preparedness and mitigation at local, national and international levels. <http://www.preventionweb.net/english/professional/publications/v.php?id=7964>

**Study: Finding an Early Warning System For Earthquakes: Seismic 'Stress Meter'** Warned of Earthquake 10 Hours In Advance. <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/07/080709144210.htm>

**Publication: Inclusion of Disaster Management in School Curricula:** Lessons for South Asia, and Understanding and Mitigating Disasters the community level through school safety. All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) has recently published an issue of Institutionalising Disaster Risk Reduction in Schools: Lessons for South Asia. The following topics are included: Institutionalising Disaster Risk Reduction in Schools, Protecting and Education Children in India: A Safer Schools Campaign, Stakeholder Perspectives on School Safety and Needs, Working Together for the Elimination

of Child Labour, Do Safe Schools Interest Insurers? For a copy please contact Manish Patel at [bestteam@aidmi.org](mailto:bestteam@aidmi.org).

**e – Discussion on global public health:** A moderated e-discussion on Global Public Health is being jointly organized by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and UNDP from 29 January to 26 February 2009 as part of the preparatory process for the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review (AMR). Experts, practitioners and policy-makers, from within and outside of the UN system, will interact within this online forum to share relevant knowledge and experiences and generate practical input towards the 2009 AMR.

[http://elearning.developmentgateway.org:80/index.php?id=10976&tx\\_dgcontent\\_pi1\[tt\\_news\]=488958&cHash=98b8b3ffdd&MP=10976-9488](http://elearning.developmentgateway.org:80/index.php?id=10976&tx_dgcontent_pi1[tt_news]=488958&cHash=98b8b3ffdd&MP=10976-9488)

**Study opportunity:** ITC - the International Institute for Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation - offers courses in Applied Earth Sciences (including disaster studies e.g. floods, landslides, earthquakes), water resource management, natural resources, urban planning, earth observation and geo-information science. The EMMA program provides funding opportunities for students, researchers and academic staff to take part in 'mobilities' between the target group countries and the EU. The programme offers study scholarships to attend courses at Master of Science level, pursue PhDs, Post Doctoral research and to facilitate academic staff exchange. Eligible countries are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar/Burma, Nepal, North Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. **Deadline for application is 28 Feb!** For more information on the EMMA program and the other European partners, I refer to the EMMA home-page: <http://math.unice.fr/EMMA>. The Asian Consortium Partners are: Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology (Bangladesh); BRAC University (Bangladesh); University of Dhaka (Bangladesh); Royal University of Phnom Penh (Cambodia); Jadavpur University (India); NED University of Engineering & Technology (Pakistan); Ateneo de Manila University (Philippines); University of the Philippines-Diliman (Philippines).

**Profile:** Trucker Weather Watch™ (TWW™) was founded by Sean Kiaer of Everett, Wa. on October 12 2006 to integrate the Trucking industry in to the National Weather Service's Severe Weather Reporting Network, known as SKYWARN™. SKYWARN™ is the National Weather Service (NWS) program of trained volunteer severe weather spotters. SKYWARN™, formed in the early 1970's, and has historically provided critical severe weather information to the NWS in time to get the appropriate warnings issued. Thus the key focus of the SKYWARN™ program is to save lives and property through the use of the observations and reports of trained volunteers. <http://truckerweatherwatch.org/>

**Forum:** The frontline knowledge explorer is a collaborative initiative by four leading climate change knowledge service providers committed to developing new ways of working together and with others to meet the challenges of climate change: Current topic: Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change, 19 February to 27 March 2009, <http://tinyurl.com/frontlineknowledge>

*For archived DRM updates:*

**ADPC Website:**

<http://www.adpc.net/v2007/IKM/EVENTS%20AND%20NEWS/DISASTER/2008/DISASTER-NEWS-2008.asp>

*Note: The information has been collated from publicly available information. Although the sources are deemed reliable, the information reported here are topical and are subject to change. To subscribe or unsubscribe, please drop a mail to [adpc@adpc.net](mailto:adpc@adpc.net).*

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