

A network of European National Platforms and Focal Points for Natural Disaster Reduction

The need for a regional network

The increasing number and intensity of disasters caused by the impact of natural hazards calls for additional structures and instruments on disaster risk reduction. Regional networks and platforms have been considered of critical importance to ensure regional coordination and exchanges.

Europe is a hazard prone region as well as comprising a number of major international actors in disaster risk reduction (DRR), in humanitarian assistance and development aid. The European Commission and the Council of Europe are strong political regional structures, which could become major partners and decision-making structures for the implementation of DRR as part of development frameworks and strategies.

Regional activities and good practises in DRR are evident through e.g. the activities of European Commission's Solidarity Fund, the Flood Management Directive and the DIPECHO Programme. In accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), there is increasing integration of DRR into sustainable development programmes and tangible efforts of the Council of Europe through the EUR-OPA Major Hazard Agreement activities and specialized centres.

The International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and more recently the HFA have established at the international level a global approach to DRR in its political, scientific and socio economic dimensions.

National platforms and focal points, as a nationally based backbone of the UN strategy for Disaster Reduction, provide the ideal structure to establish in Europe a regional network which would permit closer cooperation between countries as well as closer interaction with the ISDR movement.

A meeting held in Paris in December 2006, following previous German initiatives with the same objectives, has shown that there was a convergence of views among the participants to the meeting on the urgent need to proceed to initiate a European Network for DRR.

Common Goals

- To facilitate and improve the exchange of information on good practices, the experiences and public policies of each of the members by establishing a more structured approach to issues and problems.
- To support the integration of DRR into all aspects of policy, decision making, private sector and civil society of the national, regional and international level of European countries with the aim to reduce the vulnerability of the society.
- To become a partner to the European Union, the Council of Europe and other relevant international organisations in all aspects related to DRR.
- To provide consolidated, substantive input to the Global Platform starting in June 2007.

Specific objectives

- To facilitate within Europe the contacts and relationship building between national platforms, focal points and experts by e.g. organizing periodical theme based meetings (to be defined case by case), identifying important upcoming topics, developments and political processes of DRR on the regional and international level.
- To formulate substantive proposals after discussions among members, to be submitted to the bodies or authorities of the European Union (EU), Council of Europe (CoE) a.o.
- To represent civil society vis a vis the EU, CoE.
- To provide a European Network for support of DRR efforts in developing countries and countries in transition.
- To support the development of additional National Platforms in Europe and in developing countries for example by twinnings.

Work Plan

Initial elements of the first phase of the network will be among others to:

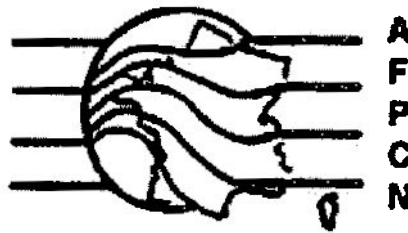
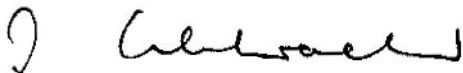
- Develop a system of information exchange and channelling among the members of the network.
- Establish a system of information flow between UNISDR and the members of the network.
- Prepare a coherent presentation of European National Platforms as an input to the Global Platform meeting.
- To initiate a structured approach to European institutions with regard to DRR matters with the aim to identify synergies for harmonization of DRR efforts across the European countries.
- Build on existing information on European national platforms as part of the UN/ISDR Strengthening the Network of European National Platforms initiative collected by DKKV.
- Examine the possibility of establishing a two to three year programme of seminars to be hosted by one or several of the network's members in the field of technical and scientific issues of importance to European countries, such as Early Warning or adaptation to climate change.

Structure and Organisation

- The network is open to all European National Platforms and Focal points.
- Meetings of the network will be open to interested parties on invitation.
- UNISDR will be the key partner to the network.
- On a voluntary rotating system one of the members will chair the network for a period of 2 years.
- The chair will coordinate the implementation of the work plan and organise and host the annual meeting of the network members.
- Members of the network will be encouraged to provide additional resources to the chair of the network for the execution of the tasks.
- The network will meet once a year to discuss substantive issues of DRR and the upcoming work plans.
- The working language of the network will be English.



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Nationale Plattform Naturgefahren
Plate-forme nationale «Dangers naturels»
Piattaforma nazionale «Pericoli naturali»
National Platform for Natural Hazards

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