

Policy developments in Ecosystem- based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation

FURUTA, Naoya^{1*}

¹IUCN - International Union for Conservation of Nature

Since the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004, contribution of healthy ecosystems for disaster risk reduction (DRR) started to attract attention globally as many cases were reported that coastal mangrove forests reduced impacts of tsunami. Research and knowledge sharing on this area has also been accelerated since then and a global partnership called PEDRR (Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction) to exchange knowledge and experience on this issue was established in 2008 by more than 10 international organizations including IUCN.

Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA), which was adopted as a global framework on disaster risk reduction in 2005 at the 2nd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Kobe, also recognized the importance of ecosystem management under its 4th pillars on addressing underlying risks. This 4th pillar, however, is known as the least implemented elements according to the mid-term review of HFA at the same time. HFA is going to be revised at the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, March 2015.

Ecosystems contribute to reducing disaster risk in two important ways. First, healthy ecosystems such as wetlands, forests and coastal systems, can reduce physical exposure to natural hazards by serving as protective barriers or buffers and thus mitigating hazard impacts. Secondly, ecosystems can lessen disaster risk by reducing social-economic vulnerability to hazard impacts. As Ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR) can also contribute to the climate change adaptation for the longer-term, various examples and knowledge have been collected and practiced on the ground recently.

As a conservation organization, IUCN has been trying to integrate DRR into existing conservation measures such as forest management, ecosystem restoration, integrated water resource management and protected areas management. Particularly, since the Great East Japan Earthquake (GEJE), IUCN has been jointly working with Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ) to promote the role of protected areas for disaster risk reduction which was inspired by the establishment of Sanriku Reconstruction National Park in the affected area of GEJE.

MOJE and IUCN jointly organized the Asia Parks Congress in 2013 where protected areas and natural disasters were discussed as one of the 6 main topics of the congress. Following this success, MOEJ and IUCN jointly organized some 12 session on protected areas and DRR at the IUCN 6th World Parks Congress in 2014. In addition to that IUCN organized a pre-congress training workshop on PAs and DRR in Sydney. Another global policy development was observed under the Convention of Biological Diversity where a decision titled Biodiversity and Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction was adopted at its COP12 in 2014. A similar decision is also prepared under the Ramsar Convention at its COP12 in 2015.

This presentation will review recent developments mentioned above on global policy in terms of Eco-DRR.

Keywords: disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, ecosystem, biodiversity