

Effective Adaptation to Climate Variability and Climate Change in Small Island States

Policy and Institutional Imperatives for Caribbean SIDS

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Structure of Presentation

- Review of key influencing factors
- Elements of an overarching philosophy
- Key Policy objectives
- Guiding principles
- Sector-specific policies and strategies
- Institutional imperatives
- Implementation considerations

Influencing Factors

- Climate hazards (CC/CV):
 - pose a significant hazard risk, especially to vulnerable social, economic and environmental systems in SIDS
 - are exacerbated by and can worsen the inherent and acquired social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities of SIDS
 - can have a compounding effect when occurring in combination with non-climate induced shocks such as commodity and energy price shocks
 - Pose a more significant challenge for fragmented and uncoordinated policy and institutional frameworks
 - Can best be addressed within an integrated hazard risk management framework (IHRM).

Elements of an Overarching Philosophy

- Integrated hazard risk management (IHRM) allows for:
 - The systematic application of policies, procedures and practices to the task of analyzing, controlling and communicating about risk issues
 - A more effective approach to risk assessment, planning and forecasting of all risks
 - More sustained coordination and collaboration among the relevant actors
 - On-going assessment of the costs and benefits of risk reduction measures
 - Build economic, social and environmental resilience

Some Key Policy Objectives

- An IHRM Policy should aim to:
 - Build capacity of relevant institutions and agencies
 - Promote the inculcation of a risk management ethic in all public and private sector planning and development initiatives
 - Foster the establishment of an appropriate decision-support system based on systematic research and observation of natural hazard risks
 - Empower local communities to build their resilience
 - Increase public education and awareness.

Some Guiding Principles

- A strong and diversified economy is a sine qua non for effective hazard risk management
- An effective hazard risk management is a sine qua non for economic resilience
- Hazard risk reduction is most effective when:
 - it is approached in a development planning context
 - It involves a multi-stakeholder approach at the earliest stage and
 - When it is sustained by PEA programs
- Reducing the number and effects of natural disasters requires that the development challenges that lead to the accumulation of hazard and human vulnerability is addressed

Some Guiding Principles

- Investing in IHRM ...
 - is investing in sustainable development
 - can significantly reduce disaster losses and the future cost and speed of recovery
 - can help to minimize the use and cost of limited technical, administrative and financial resources
 - can reduce potential conflicts in policy development
 - can promote coordination among development partners

Strategic Responses – Settlements and Infrastructure

- Build adequate capacity for research into climate dynamics that may affect social and economic infrastructure
- Integrate climate and other natural hazards in the physical planning and development control process
- Ensure the adoption of planning standards and guidelines that facilitate adaptation, retreat and/or relocation of human settlements from vulnerable areas
- Strengthen early warning systems
- Promote retro-fitting of homes, especially low income), businesses and public buildings
- Introduce certification and licensing schemes for contractors and tradesmen

Strategic Responses – Human Health

- Promote sustained research into the human health impacts of natural hazards
- Establish/strengthen epidemiological surveillance systems to effectively track the incidence of respiratory, cardiovascular and vector-borne diseases and any links to episodes of flood/drought, and extreme temperatures
- Build the capacity of health personnel to deal with psychological trauma associated with extreme weather events

Strategic Responses – Agriculture

- Develop an IHRM policy and strategy for the agriculture sector to address short, medium and long term impacts
- Assess the implications of hazards risk for food security
- Identify drought-resistant crop varieties that yield more mass per unit of water consumed
- Promote better soil management, fertilization and pest and weed control
- Encourage sustainable land management practices that reduce land degradation
- Encourage the use of more deficit, supplemental and precision irrigation systems
- Introduce crop insurance and other risk transfer schemes for the agriculture sector

Strategic Responses – Tourism

- Develop, in concert with stakeholders, a sustainable tourism strategy that addresses climate hazards and general sustainability concerns
- Ensure that appropriate physical planning guidelines are enforced for new tourism developments
- Protect coastal assets from sea level rise and wave action using natural defense systems where possible
- Explore options for joint insurance of tourism infrastructure
- Require EIAs for all major tourism investments
- Build adequate foreign exchange reserves to cushion the impact of disruptions to the tourism industry caused by natural hazards

Strategic Responses – Financial Services

- Promote lending mechanisms for ensuring adequate financial support for rehabilitation and reconstruction activities
- Explore opportunities for pooled insurance and reinsurance arrangements among public and private sector interests
- Encourage insurance companies to:
 - develop appropriate capacity to identify and forecast risk and to share data with other actors in IHRM
 - Support scientific work to develop better risk identification tools
- Encourage the private sector to develop innovative risk reduction and transfer instruments

Strategic Responses – Coastal and Marine Resources

- Adopt measures to protect coastal areas and to strengthen the resilience of coastal ecosystems and resources
- Develop a comprehensive coastal zone management plan which incorporates natural hazards concerns and guides the location of investments within the coastal zone
- Identify and promote alternative fishery and resource use activities where predicted impacts preclude the continuation of traditional activities
- Design and implement poverty reduction programs for coastal communities
- Work in conjunction with other countries and international organizations in developing an effective early warning system
- Implement a continuing monitoring and assessment program, including observation of the health of coastal ecosystems and changes in coastal processes

Strategic Responses – Water Resources

- Undertake risk assessments that can inform decisions dealing with water-related, natural and man-made hazards
- Build the capacity of meteorological entities to undertake flood and drought forecasting
- Undertake reforestation and other measures to increase the resilience of watersheds
- Assess and address the needs for water storage and distribution infrastructure to ensure water availability during extensive drought periods
- Promote initiatives to identify and where necessary exploit non-traditional water resources
- Require large water consumers such as hotel and drinks manufacturers to adopt water conservation measures
- Monitor the impact of saltwater intrusion on the integrity of groundwater aquifers

Strategic Responses – Land Resources

- Develop and implement national land and land use policies and strategies
- Adopt scientifically-sound and cross-sectoral approaches to land management that integrate ecological, economic and social dimensions of land degradation
- Mitigate the impacts of physical development on natural resources through the use of EIAs
- Preserve important sites, ecosystems and wildlife habitats, rivers and watersheds
- Design and implement sustainable forestry policies and plans
- Examine feasibility of adopting debt-for-nature swaps

Institutional Imperatives

- Introduce an integrated development planning framework of which IHRM is an integral part
- Strengthen those institutions with key disaster preparedness, response, administrative and coordinating capabilities so as to...
 - Provide adequate support to stakeholders on adaptation measures
 - Monitor the impact of IHRM policies and strategies
 - Enable the conflicts between development policies and projects and IHRM initiatives to be readily assessed and addressed

Implementation Considerations

- Role of Governments:
 - Provide effective leadership in IHRM
 - Incorporate IHRM in national sustainable development strategies and in the budgetary process
 - Identify research needs and the ways in which they can be met
 - Develop and apply appropriate engineering, planning and building standards
 - Strengthen meteorological services to provide high quality and timely climate forecasts
 - Develop an effective policy and legislative framework that supports IHRM

Implementation Considerations

- A Role of the Private Sector
 - Develop and implement corporate environmental policies that emphasize prospective and compensatory IHRM principles
 - Observe the “Polluter Pays Principle”; the “User Pays Principle” and the “Precautionary Principle” respectively
 - Make informed investments in hazard mitigation and management

Implementation Considerations

- Role of Civil Society
 - Monitor the actions and responses of government and the private sector
 - Assist in disseminating information and knowledge on IHRM practices
 - Assisting in community resilience building efforts
 - Assist with vulnerability assessments

Implementation Considerations

- Role of Regional Organizations
 - Strengthen national capacities through training, program support and resource mobilization
 - Share information and documentation and comparative analyses of issues on a regional or sub-regional basis
 - Develop common regional policy platforms
 - Assist in the conduct of comprehensive post-disaster assessment
 - Collaborate in the conduct of research on hazard risks

Implementation Considerations

- CARICOM-Specific strategies:
 - Mainstream IHRM into programs of the CARICOM Secretariat and regional agencies
 - Make environmental policy an integral part of region's foreign policy
 - Develop a cadre of Environmental Diplomats
 - Establish a CRNM-type agency or arrangement to represent the region's interests in MEA negotiations
 - Establish a dedicated and sustained funding stream for a Regional Adaptation Fund
 - Establish high level participation in and oversight of work of the GEF Council
 - Build capacity for effective participation in global carbon trading schemes

Implementation Considerations

- Role of the International Community:
 - Support national and regional institutions that are engaged in IHRM capacity building efforts
 - Share more effectively existing knowledge that can help countries to meet various hazard management challenges
 - Develop internal policies that ensure IHRM is factored into development aid and in disaster recovery/reconstruction programs
 - Assist with the enhancement of global indexing of risk and vulnerability
 - Support the development of a detailed procedure for identifying and placing an appropriate value on risk

A Role for OAS-DSD

- Undertake research to:
 - establish the benefits of “no regrets” investments in IHRM
- Support efforts to:
 - retro-fit homes and schools
 - develop early warning systems
 - integrate climate and other natural hazards in the physical planning and development control process
 - reduce land degradation through sustainable land management practices
 - assess climate-related risks to water resources
 - build capacity for effective climate change adaptation
 - Build capacity for effective participation in negotiating MEAs

A Role for OAS-DSD

- Work through Collaborative Agreements with the following agencies:
 - CARICOM Secretariat
 - OECS Secretariat
 - CARICOM Climate Change Centre
 - Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Centre
 - Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology
 - Caribbean Environmental Health Institute

A Role for OAS-DSD

- Develop/strengthen Implementing/
Executing Agency status with:
 - Canadian International Development Agency
 - Caribbean Development Bank
 - European Union
 - Food and Agriculture Organization
 - Global Environment Facility
 - United Nations Environment Program

- THANK YOU!!!
- MERCI BEAUCOUP !!!
- MUCHAS GRACIAS !!!