



DISASTERS AND CLIMATE CHANGE: THE ETHICAL CONTEXT

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Climate change and disasters

Natural disasters characteristics:

- sudden onset
- high intensity
- (often) remoteness of stricken regions
- high toll in fatalities, injured and homeless
- disruption of daily lives and social systems



Climate change and disasters

Natural Disasters and Human provoked disasters.

Climate change Disasters = Weather-related events + Anthropogenic causes.



Climate Change Scenarios

Scientific models have elaborated different possible scenarios and predicted significant temperature rises for the planet in the near future (IPCC, Stern Report).



Climate Change Scenarios

Complex anthropogenic interactions appear to contribute and accelerate the natural process of global warming (extensive deforestation, intensive use of fossil fuels, urbanization, industrialization, ...).

The resulting Global warming and Rising Sea Level will have serious short and long-term impacts on the planet and on human life.

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Climate Change Effects

Effects of global warming on weather patterns seem to be also responsible for an apparent increase in the frequency and intensity of weather-related disasters.

While all areas of the world are and will be affected by climate change and natural, weather-related or human provoked disasters, the lesser-developed countries seem to be more prone to experience the highest toll in human lives and most severe economic and structural damages as opposed to developed countries.



Climate Change Effects

Often, such major natural and man-made disasters result in complex humanitarian emergencies that seriously compromise the socioeconomic development in affected nations and regions of the globe, creating escalating demands on rapidly diminishing international resources.



Climate Change Effects

In the past decades, there has been an apparent increase in the intensity and frequency of hurricanes and storms and in losses of life and property due to weather-related disasters.

In spite of mitigation efforts, disruption due to global warming and weather-related disasters will continue to raise because of high population growth and concentration in **vulnerable areas such as coastal regions and flood plains.**

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Climate Change Effects

Continuing global warming can be expected to significantly contribute to disaster frequency.

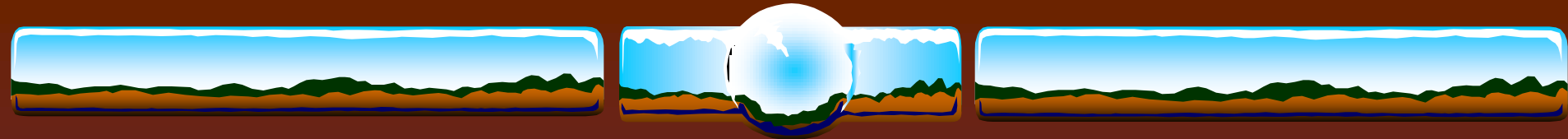
In recent years, weather-related disasters such as hurricanes, heavy rains, floods, flash floods, and droughts seem to have increased in frequency and magnitude leaving thousands of people dead, injured or homeless.



Vulnerability Assessment

It is important to evaluate vulnerabilities to climate change and short and long-term risks for potential disasters.

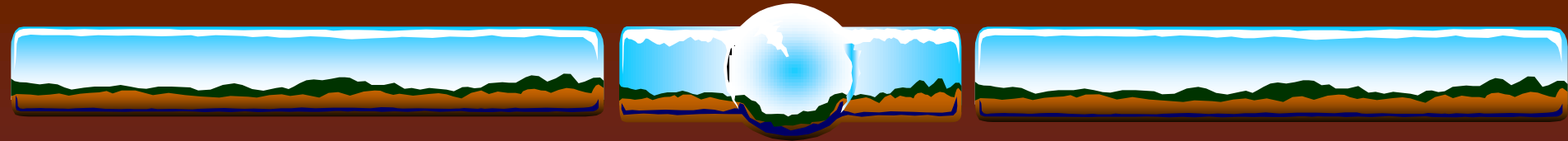
Disaster risk potential of a vulnerable area is of great interest to governmental, non-governmental agencies and to the public in general.



Disaster Risk Potential Assessment

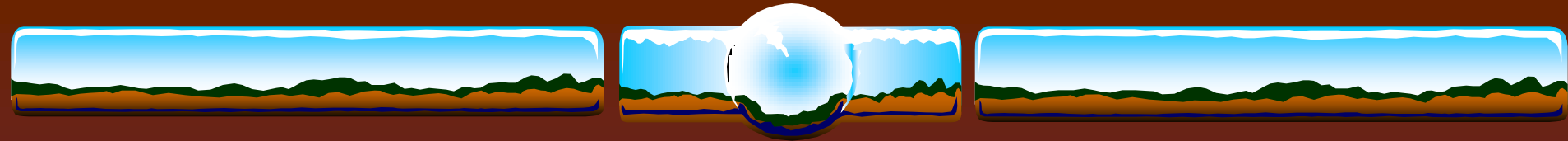
Proper assessment of a particular disaster risk requires:

- past events detailed historical analysis
- estimates of recurrence frequencies
- hazard modelling
- potential hazards zoning
- mitigation preparedness and planning



Disaster Risk Potential Assessment

- public safety
- property protection plans
- warning procedures
- warning dissemination



Disaster Reduction Requirements

- Emergency response: immediate, international, organized, and flexible
- Common set of rules and understanding among nations



Ethical responsibilities

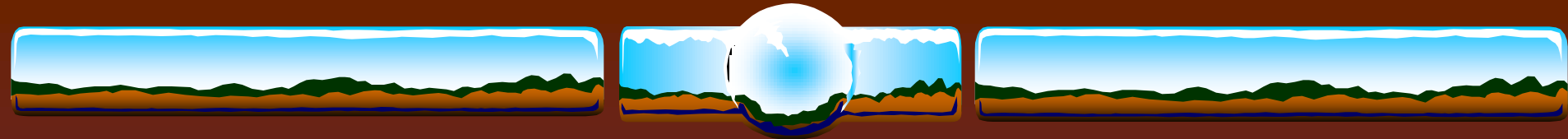
A. Mid- and Long-term Responsibilities:

- ❖ Emission Reduction
- ❖ Consequence Monitoring
- ❖ Adaptation Policies Implementation
- ❖ Industrialized and Developing Countries
(new technologies dissemination)
- ❖ Global governance



Ethical responsibilities

- A. Mid- and Long-term Responsibilities:
- ❖ Information and Communication at all levels
 - ❖ Public Awareness and Education Campaigns
 - ❖ Public Authorities binding Commitments
 - ❖ Individual Sense of Solidarity and Community belonging as opposed to individualistic logics
 - ❖ Responsibility towards future generations



**VI International Conference on Ethics
and Environmental Policies**
**“Ethics and Climate Change. Scenarios for
Justice and Sustainability”**

Fondazione Lanza, Padova, 23-25 October 2008

Final Document
Recommendations



Recommendations

- Reinforcement and acceleration of International negotiation processes aimed at defining a set of rules, characterized by cost-sharing criteria strongly justice-oriented, for the period following the Kyoto Protocol time-span
- Definition of significant, timely and effective goals in order to reduce emissions (i.e. – by at least 50% by 2050 from 1990 levels), identified through indications of intermediate deadlines for the diverse actors involved, according to the perspective indicated by the European Union.



Recommendations

- ❖ International integrated policies of adaptation to climate change, aimed at the limitation of emissions, particularly for vulnerable subjects and areas and/or for those less equipped with the necessary resources to face it.
- ❖ A concrete attention on the part of the whole International community towards environmental refugees issues and climate change victims



Ethical Responsibilities

B. Emergency Responsibilities

- ❖ Borderless Aid Missions
- ❖ Planned strategies to quickly dislocate means, men and resources
- ❖ Sovranational Institutions role (OMS)
- ❖ Examples of special task forces (Protezione Civile italiana)
- ❖ Focus on more vulnerable subjects, particularly women and children
- ❖ Re-defintiion and up-date of all triage procedures



RECOMMENDATIONS

The maintenance and realization, on the part of all actors involved, of the Kyoto Protocol objectives, which is the first expression of the International community will in contrasting the climate change.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The reinforcement and acceleration of the international negotiation processes aimed at defining a set of rules, characterized by cost-sharing criteria strongly justice-oriented, for the period following the Kyoto Protocol time-span.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The definition of significant, timely and effective aims in order to reduce emissions (i.e. – by at least 50% by 2050 from 1990 levels), identified through indications of intermediate deadlines for the diverse actors involved, according to the perspective indicated by the European Union.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Improvement of research in the field of energy efficiency aimed at the reduction of emissions and the diffusion of relative technology; for developing countries, research may be aided by a specific fund, particularly sponsored by countries with high *per capita* emission levels.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Greenhouse gas concentration reduction through forest preservation and sustainable management, which for developing countries will be supported by International funds.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Concrete attention on the part of the whole International community towards environmental refugees issues and climate change victims.