

Webinar: Unpacking hazards: launch of a new scientific report on hazards definition for the Sendai Framework

29 July 2020, 14:00-15.15 Geneva, 19:00 Bangkok, 8:00 New York

[Registration:](https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3424682260674298895) <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3424682260674298895>

Concept note

Summary

The broad range of hazards, and the incrementally interconnected, cascading and complex nature of natural and human-induced hazards, including their potential impact on health, social, economic, financial, political and other systems, calls for a standardised fully-fledged characterisation of hazards that serves as a basis for countries to assess and accordingly enhance their risk reduction policies and operational risk management practices. Recognizing this challenge, in 2019, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) and the International Science Council (ISC) launched an ambitious science project to identify the full scope of all hazards relevant to the Sendai Framework and the scientific definitions of these hazards.

Supported by the Integrated Research for Disaster Risk (IRDR) programme of the ISC, a dedicated technical working group which brought together scientists, technical UN agencies and other experts from the private sector and civil society developed a detailed report including 6 targeted recommendations.

The webinar will launch and present the final UNDRR/ISC Sendai Hazard Definition and Classification Review Technical Report addressing the narrative of hazards relevant to the Sendai Framework and discuss user value and next steps to enable policy- and other decision-makers to apply and implement the recommendations of the report.

Background

Building on an evolving scientific understanding of hazards and their related impacts over the past 20 years is captured in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (UNDRR, 2015) ('the Sendai Framework') which makes a clarion call to Governments and stakeholders to take a more comprehensive approach to risk reduction and resilience. Among other, this evolution is reflected in the scope of hazards, with the Sendai Framework identifying a wider set of hazards which covers "natural or man-made hazards, as well as related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks" (Sendai Framework, §15). This broadened hazard spectrum and the increasingly interconnected, cascading and complex nature of natural and human-induced hazards, including their potential impact on health, social, economic, financial, political and other systems, are thereby all clearly interlinked in the discussions on sustainable development and climate change adaptation.

As the world continues to battle with the COVID-19 pandemic and its complex interplay and impacts on lives, livelihoods and economies, the crisis has shifted global focus not only on the importance of addressing biological hazards but especially the increasing complexity of the global risk landscape. This brings into sharp focus the need for implementation of the Sendai Framework.

Hazard information when combined with exposure, vulnerability and capacity is fundamental to all aspects of disaster risk management, for example, for risk assessments; policy development and review; planning and

implementation of risk management measures; monitoring and reporting; and for documenting the losses and damage from hazardous events including disasters (WMO, 2014).

Yet, while several hazard definition lists exist or are under development in different sectors and are informed from different risk contexts (e.g., economic, social, political), there is currently no technical overview available that would provide a comprehensive picture of hazards to help inform the policy, practice and reporting of disaster risk reduction and management, and so enable the implementation of global and regional framework agreements such as the Sendai Framework, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the International Health Regulations 2005 (WHO, 2016). This lack of a coherent view of hazards, for example, compromises the effective reporting by UN Member States for the Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM) and the global targets on reduction of mortality, morbidity, economic loss and damage to basic infrastructure and disruption of basic services, some of which are also indicators for the SDGs. Lack of a comprehensive document on hazards is also a barrier to a comprehensive and inclusive approach to the development and sharing of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (from 2020) which should help to proactively plan for the identification, enhanced understanding and effective management of risks associated with the range of hazards that a country or community faces (UNGA, 2016). It also affects the scoping, availability and access of multi-hazard early warning systems (by 2030).

Building on the hazard terminology¹ adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2017 and other existing hazard glossaries and terminologies, the technical working group compiled a first all-encompassing hazard list through extensive consultation with technical science experts, UN organisations, the private sector and other relevant partners. Recognizing the complexity of hazards and its constantly evolving nature, the report provides a significant tool for the development of national DRR strategies, Sendai Framework monitoring and broader risk assessment and risk-informed investment work. The narrative on hazards generates a technical output to the broader science and policy context and raises important questions and opportunities for further work.

Content and objectives

The webinar will present, from a technical and scientific perspective, the findings and recommendations of the new UNDRR/ISC Sendai Hazard Definition and Classification Review Technical Report.

As the understanding of the systemic nature of risk forms the basis for evidence-based national risk assessment processes, disaster risk reduction and risk-informed sustainable development, this webinar will uptake the Sendai Hazard list to discuss potential and imperative engagement between policymakers and the science and technology community. This webinar is an extension of UNDRR-ISC collaboration, including the Science and Policy Forum during GP18 and the DRR research agenda.

Target audience:

The target audience includes policy makers from the DRM, climate, development and science domains, national statistics offices, research funders, scientists and relevant private sector entities.

Date and time:

The webinar will be held on 29 July 2020 from 14.00-15.15. The possibility of simultaneous interpretation will be considered by the organizers.

Structure:

The webinar will last for 75 minutes. Following the above objectives, the proposed structure is as follows:

Moderation: Alison Meston, Director of communications, International Science Council

¹ As defined by the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group (OIEWG) on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction, that was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2017, a hazard is a "process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury, or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation"

- Opening – Heide Hackmann, ISC and Mami Mizutori, UNDRR (5 min each)
- Overview of process and findings presented by Virginia Murray (15min)
- Targeted input – reflections on the findings of this work and how to take it forward
 - John Schneider, Global Earthquake Model Foundation (5 min)
 - Aslam Perwaiz, UNDRR Asia-Pacific STAG (5 min)
 - Nick Moody, Insurance Development Forum Risk Modelling Steering Group (5 min)
- Q&A (25min)
- Wrap up – Moderator (5 min)

Follow up

The information received through the preliminary survey, the evaluation questionnaire, and input provided during the webinar itself will be used by the UNDRR and ISC to assess the need of holding other webinars and to identify the most relevant topics to be addressed.

Modalities

Responsibility in the organization and running of the webinar will be shared among UNDRR and ISC as follows:

The ISC will be responsible for:

- Input into the concept note
- Providing introductory remarks (Heide Hackmann)
- Contributing to the identification of speakers and discussants
- Identifying a moderator with experience with virtual tools
- Hosting the webinar

UNDRR will be responsible for:

- Drafting first draft of concept note
- Identifying a suitable date for the webinar in end July/early August (29 July pm CEST)
- Providing the platform and staff to run the webinar
- Providing technical guidance and support to ensure the smooth running of the webinar
- Providing introductory remarks (Mami Mizutori)
- Contributing to the identification of speakers and discussants

Virginia Murry and the Technical Working Group will be responsible for:

- Providing an overview of the process and findings during the seminar
- Targeted reflections on certain critical aspects
- Contributing to the identification of speakers and discussants
- Managing the preparations of identified speakers and discussants
- Providing input to the concept note and speaking points