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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Brussels, 23.2.2009
SEC(2009) 218

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Accompanying document to the

**EU STRATEGY FOR SUPPORTING DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

{COM(2009) 84 final}
{SEC(2009) 217}
{SEC(2009) 220}

1. SUMMARY OF THE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Disasters undermine development and endanger the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Disasters associated with natural hazards are currently increasing both in frequency and intensity. Climate change may already be contributing to the increasing number and intensity of recent disasters. Disasters hit developing countries and their populations hardest as they are the most vulnerable and have the least capacities to cope. Evidence has long suggested that disaster risk reduction (DRR) has a high ratio of benefits to costs.

The EU is the world's largest donor of Official Development Assistance and Humanitarian Aid. It has a global presence and wide experience with individual DRR projects and programmes, but is lacking a strategic framework to guide its DRR support in developing countries in a coherent and coordinated manner. Given the risk disasters pose to development efforts and investments, the EU needs to assist developing countries in their DRR efforts, as well as make its own development assistance both more disaster resilient and ensure that it also reduces vulnerability to hazards.

This proportionate impact assessment has informed the Commission's adoption of a communication on an EU Strategy for supporting DRR in developing countries through both development cooperation and humanitarian aid, to help support the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action¹ and the achievement of the MDGs.

Both the strategy and the impact assessment have been informed by and reflect the outcome of an open debate held between January and December 2008 with key civil society organisations, UN agencies, developing countries, international financing institutions, EU Member States and the private sector.

The impact assessment addresses the need for EU action and the potential added value of such action. It includes an assessment of three possible options:

- (1) a 'no policy change' scenario,
- (2) the development of an EC strategy for supporting DRR in developing countries, guiding European Community instruments only, and
- (3) the development of an EU strategy for supporting DRR in developing countries, serving as an overarching and comprehensive framework on DRR action for the EC and the EU Member States.

looking in particular at their potential political, economic, social and environmental impacts.

While each of the policy options could have benefits with regard to DRR in developing countries, the impact assessment concludes that for reasons of effectiveness, coherence, consistency and proactiveness towards its partners' needs, the Commission should favour the third option which would be the best option to meet real needs while at the same time being in line with existing EU commitments on DRR and international and EU commitments on aid effectiveness. In particular, an EU Strategy for supporting DRR in developing countries would aim to anticipate possible fragmentation and/or duplication of DRR efforts in the near future when the Commission and some ten Member States scale up support for DRR. It would

¹ Adopted in 2005 at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

capitalise and build on existing strategic work done by the EC² and Member States, as well as extensive experience of DRR programmes and projects in all developing country regions.

The desirability of action at EU level is thus explained by the following factors:

- The European Consensus on Development and the European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid both commit the EU to progress on EU policy and action on DRR. An EU strategy will foster joint understanding of priorities and areas where EU instruments can obtain the greatest impact.
- The EU is the largest aid donor, but still needs to make progress with regard to effectiveness, efficiency and lower transaction costs. Closer EU collaboration on a common DRR framework will contribute to this and constitutes good policy and practice; collective EU action will be more efficient than actions taken by individual Member States and actions will better complement each other.
- Making full strategic use of the various strengths of Commission and the Member States with regard to disaster risk reduction is fully in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness and the EU Code of Conduct and Division of Labour.
- EU partner countries will benefit from more donor coordination (dealing with fewer donors, more consistent messages) and possibly more significant support for DRR, given current up-scaling of funding and less duplication and/or fragmentation of aid.

² Commission communications on Reinforcing the Union's disaster response capacity (COM(2008)130); Building a Global Climate Change Alliance between the European Union and poor developing countries most vulnerable to climate change (COM(2007)540); Reinforcing EU disaster and crisis response in third countries (COM(2005)153), the joint High Representative and Commission paper on Climate and international security (S113/08) and the Commission Staff Working Paper on Disaster Preparedness and Prevention (2003).