

Comments from Japan at the consultative meeting on 5 September 2014

General comments

Thank you, the chair.

We would like to express our appreciation on the Co-Chairs' work compiling key issues into this Pre-Zero Draft, which should a good basis for our discussion.

First, we would like to echo what delegations including Canada and Mexico have already expressed - the importance of ensuring sustainability of DRR efforts. The post-2015 HFA should be a guideline to ensure sustainability of DRR efforts of Member States and encourage their concrete actions. DRR measures in each Member State have made progress based on the HFA since 2005. This is mainly because the HFA is an easy-to-understand and useful reference for DRR practitioners at the national level and provides action-oriented priorities. The post-2015 HFA should therefore maintain this HFA's basic nature and characteristics, updating and reinforcing the HFA based on emerging issues and the development of DRR measures since 2005. For developing countries in particular, the post-2015 HFA should inherit the terminologies and ideas of the HFA so that concrete DRR measures could continue to be implemented. It should maintain consistency with widely accepted concepts of DRR measures that are currently practiced on the ground. Therefore, we would like to propose that a kind of table should be developed so that we can easily compare the HFA and the Pre-Zero Draft for Guiding Principles and Priorities for Action in order to check if key issues of HFA are included in the Pre-Zero Draft.

Second, the post-2015 HFA should be a stand-alone document with no need to refer to Yokohama Strategy and the HFA. Otherwise, practitioners have to refer to all three documents, which could hinder their DRR efforts.

Third, paragraphs from seven to eleven, which consist of purpose, outcome, targets and strategic goals, have too many layer and are not easy to understand. The existence of these strategic goals complicate this part. In addition, the goals are not independent, as the Co-Chair mentioned at the beginning of the meeting. We understand the ideas of the goals, so they should be moved to Guiding Principles.

Lastly, the structure of Priorities for Action should be based on the so-called disaster management cycle, from prevention, mitigation and preparedness to recovery, which is more understandable for DRR practitioners.

Specific comments on Section A:

Paragraph 4

Prevention of new risk creation and reduction of existing risk make countries and people resilient. Therefore, this paragraph should be replaced as follows:

“ to prevent the creation of new risk, reduce the existing risk, **thus** strengthen economic and social resilience of countries and people, by addressing both people and assets’ exposure and vulnerability.”

Paragraph 5

To emphasize the importance of investment in DRR, the first item of this paragraph should be amended as follows:

“ - Investing in **reducing** underlying risk factors and **integrating DRR into** development investments is **crucial, since it is** more cost-effective than is primary reliance on post-disaster response and recovery.”

Tenth item should be amended as follows:

“ Risk-informed investments and strengthened financial investments are required at national, **regional** and international levels.”

Utilizing earth observation technology for DRR is quite important. **A new item** should be added as follows:

“ - Development of earth observation and geospatial information technology should be applied more for all the stages of disaster risk management including collection and assessment of location-based risk and disaster information, monitoring of progress and adoption of the necessary measures, early warning and damage assessment for disaster response.”

Specific comments on Section B:

Paragraph 8

Achievement of the “Expected Outcome” of HFA is still important. We support the adoption of the same “Expected Outcome” as HFA for the post-2015 HFA as in this paragraph.

Paragraph 7 and paragraph 11 – meaning of “resilience”

The wording of resilience is used in paragraph 7 and paragraph 11. However, the meanings are different. The former means “status”, while the latter means “a tool” for DRR. The different usage of a key concept would confuse readers. We support the usage of resilience as “status”, the same usage in the subtitle of the HFA.

Paragraph 10

The meaning of “ a given percentage in function of number of hazardous events” should be clarified.

Paragraph 11

As stated in our general comments, the ideas of these strategic goals should be moved to Guiding Principles.

We understand that it does not make sense to differentiate prevention of new risk creation and reduction of existing risk, as the countermeasures applied to both are almost the same. For example, water control measures such as development dykes and dams are effective to reduce risks for people living in flood plain. Creation of new risk might be prevented if expansion of exposure is stopped. However, in reality, it is very difficult to prevent additional population inflow to cities in the flood plain. Therefore, the same countermeasure for reducing existing risk is applied to address new risk caused by population increase, considering the extent of increased risk. We understand, however, the importance of addressing new risk. Therefore, it can be stated in Guiding Principles.

Our position paper is also attached for your reference.