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Asia-Pacific States agree at UN meeting to cooperate on disaster risk reduction



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Ministers and senior government officials from 31 countries, meeting at a United Nations-supported conference in Bangkok, have agreed to work more closely together on disaster risk reduction and make it central to national development strategies, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific ([ESCAP](#)) reported today.

The participants at a session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, a subsidiary of ESCAP, “have asked the UN to help promote regional cooperation to minimize the adverse socio-economic and environmental impact of disasters,” the agency said in a press statement.

“Reliable and quality data are crucial for effective disaster preparedness and Asia-Pacific countries have asked ESCAP to support national capacity building in the collection and analysis of disaster data for better disaster preparedness and vulnerability assessments, and to provide training on disaster assessment methodologies,” ESCAP said.

Asia-Pacific countries which are most vulnerable to nature's fury have also agreed to speed up implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) 2005-2015, which calls for making disaster risk reduction a national development priority, ESCAP said.

Recurring and increasingly severe natural disasters striking the Asia-Pacific region have become a serious obstacle to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) and slowed down the pace of economic development in the region.

ESCAP, with the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and other regional partners, have been requested to build regional knowledge through the publication of the Asia-Pacific Disaster Report and the development of the web-based Asia-Pacific gateway for disaster risk reduction and development, the agency said.

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