



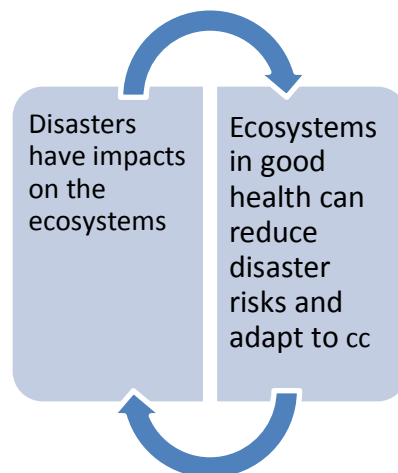
Disaster and the Environment: *Working with nature to build resilient communities*

Date and Venue: 29 July 2015 at Villa Bali Hotel
in Bloemfontein

10th Anniversary of DiMTEC

“Because We Can!”

- Disasters have impacts on the ecosystems



ATTENDANCE

- About 30 delegates from disaster and environment roleplayers
- National Disaster Management Centre of South Africa, Provincial Disaster management Centre for the Free State, Mangaung Metropolitan Disaster Management Centre, Free State provincial Department of Environmental Affairs, Economic Development and Tourism, UFS-DiMTEC, The Disaster Management Institute of Southern Africa, Department of Law of the UFS, the Post Graduate Student Council of the UFS.
- The workshop was coordinated by Mr. JA Belle of UFS-DiMTEC.

COMPOSITION OF PANELISTS

- **Guest speakers**

Dr Anthony Turton (Environmental Advisor | Speaker | Author & visiting professor at UFS-CEM) ***Impacts of aid mine drainage (AMD) on the environment***

Mr. Motlhale Tshepho (Senior Manager at the Johannesburg City Disaster Management Centre) ***The Sendai WCDR, the SFDRR and DM in South Africa***

Ms Nozi Mabafokeng Nkoe (Chief Director: Environmental Quality & Protection, FS) ***Climate change and disasters in the FS***

Mr. Monde Walaza (Director: Policy and planning at FS DETEA)

- **Specialist inputs on general discussion**

-Dr. Andries Jordaan (Director of UFS-DiMTEC)

-Prof. Miatland Seaman (immediate Ex-Director of UFS-CEM)

-Prof. Dusan Sakulski (Disaster Adviser to the Premier's Office)

-Dr. Oliver Fuo (Environmental law expert from UFS)



KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- DRR and CCA still valid, but emphasis shift to disaster and climate resilience with resilient ecosystems to play a pillar role. A2R (Anticipate, Absorb and Reshape)
- Acid mine drainage a slow onset disaster in SA. Extensive research but findings regarded classified information.
- The system approach recommended whereby systems adapt by learning and without learning there is no adaptation and adaptive response
- Government promotes research but reluctant to implement results (mistrust and paranoid between the two development approaches)
- Disasters result of unsustainable development. (Soweto mine dumps with flash floods and uranium contaminants. Uranium threat to water bodies in South Africa)
- Disaster Managers to think the unthinkable especially under the present situation of climate change
- Japan best case in DRR, but lack of funding for DRR in South Africa; learn from Japan
- Limited trained and skilled personnel in DM; lack of collaborative efforts within Government departments, integration of functions for example the South African Weather Services (SAWS) and the Joint Operation Centre (JOC) during disaster responses recommended.
- Lack of political will and too much political interference in appointment of disaster managers
- Wrong placement of the disaster management function; e.g. under the fire department in some cases. Recognition of disaster management as an important function by its own right.





KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONTINUED

- National Development Plan silent on disaster risk, the “Back to Basics” approach does not address disaster risk management. Correction needed.
- Disaster Management Centres as white elephants (a building, a few unqualified workers, no equipment, no adequate budgets). Allocate resources
- Most risk assessments thumb sucking; scientific risk assessment that include traditional, local and indigenous knowledge. Environmental issues and tools incorporated in DRR/CCA.
- Department of Environmental Affairs and Home to play active roles in DRR
- Disaster Management in South Africa a top-down approach without feedback from the bottom. Need for feedbacks
- Build in measurable targets in DRR deliverables as per the new Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR).
- Use ecosystem-based approaches to reduce disaster risk, adapt to climate change and build community resilience.
- Climate change affected agricultural output especially maize and wheat in the Free State province





OTHER RELATED ISSUES AND ACTION PLANS INCLUDED:

- Preparation for COP 21 Workshop at Presidents Hotel in Bloemfontein on 19 August 2015
- National Association of Clean Air launch from 28 September – 2 October 2015
- Free State Air Quality Management Plan was under review from 30 July – September 2015





**THANK YOU
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