

**CO-CHAIR'S SUMMARY REPORT OF THE ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM
WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION
AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

31 May-1 June 2016, Bangkok, Thailand

Introduction

1. Pursuant to the decision of the 22nd ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) held on 6 August 2015, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the ARF Workshop on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Management was held on 31 May-1 June 2016 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop was co-chaired by the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Government of the United States of America.

2. 80 representatives from 16 countries took part in the Workshop, involving officials and representatives of international and regional organisations, Track 2 institutes and academics. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

3. The Workshop supports the ARF Work Plan on Disaster Relief 2015-2017's key objectives to build capacity for disaster preparedness and risk reduction, and to capture and build on shared experiences and lessons learned among ARF Participants. It aims to (1) share experiences in disaster risk management and climate policy and planning processes; (2) identify needs and opportunities for national and regional coordination on disaster risk management and climate resilience, and (3) identify and develop examples of best practices aligned with the above themes to be shared with ARF Participants and the international disaster management community. The programme is attached as Annex II.

Opening Session

4. Mr. Jakkrit Srivali, Director-General of Department of ASEAN Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand and Mr. Lewis M. Dinger, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, the Embassy of the United States, Bangkok, Thailand, as Co-Chairs gave their opening remarks.

Keynote Address

5. Dr. Rawewan Bhuridej, Secretary General, Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), delivered the keynote address. She stressed the importance of addressing the impacts of climate change, and Thailand's commitment to the global and regional efforts on this issue, especially within the UN framework. Amongst other efforts, Thailand has pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 to 25 percent from the projected business-as-usual (BAU) level by 2030. At the national level, Thailand has formulated the Climate Change Master Plan: CCMP (2015-2050), which serves as a long-term policy framework for initiating plans, programmes, and activities as well as allocating budgets in an appropriate and adequate manner to address climate change in order to move toward a low carbon society.

Panel Discussion 1

Government Leadership in Fostering Effective Stakeholder Engagement in Climate Resilience

6. Mr. Bui Quang Huy, Deputy Director, Disaster Management Center, Directorate of Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, emphasised the need for knowledge/experience sharing platforms in order to (1) develop mechanism for collaboration, coordination of activities and sharing of information of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation (2) ensure participation, contribution, and mobilisation of resources of governmental organisations, enterprises, research and training agencies, and (3) ensure sustainable development through the enhancing resilience of community towards disaster under the impact of climate change. Dr. Supin Wongbusarakum, Program Manager, Research Affiliate Faculty (Social Science Research Institute), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, University of Hawaii, gave an overview of a vulnerability framework that introduces and offers examples of three main components: exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity. She elaborated on LEAP (Local Early Action Planning), which was developed in response to the needs of Pacific island communities to better address climate risks on natural and social targets. Assistant Secretary Rommel Cuenca, Climate Change Commission, the Philippines, elaborated on the 8-Point Convergence Agenda, which includes, among others, (1) establishing a national climate and disaster risk information system (2) developing capacities on climate change and disaster risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis for local development planning (3) establishing a national disaster loss and damage inventory-database system.

Panel Discussion 2

Leveraging Regional and International Frameworks

7. Mr. Larry Maramis, ESCAP Regional Advisor on ASEAN, explored the complementarity between the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (SFDRR) and the ASEAN Community Vision 2025, which are founded upon similar universal visions, principles and consequently are highly complementary. Ms. Kristen Knutson, Head, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office – Asia Pacific, OCHA, reflected on AADMER's 2016-2020 in the context of ongoing efforts to improve adherence to international standards of humanitarian assistance by the World Humanitarian Summit on 23-24 May 2016 Summit), and the Global Humanitarian Assistance's "Gold Label" accreditation. Dr. Peeranan Towashiraporn, Director, Head Office-Thailand, Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (APDC), discussed the disaster impact on the private sector and ways to build resilience of the private sector, including ADPC's work on improving disaster resilience of Thai SMEs through Business Continuity Plan (BCP). He concluded with policy recommendations on options to incentivise and further embed BCP into SMEs. Some of these were the establishment of a governing body on BCP as per industrial sector and the establishment of BCP Resource Centre. Mr. Arnel Capili, Head of Operations, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre), elaborated on the development of the mechanism on disaster relief and reduction under the ASEAN framework, including the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), One ASEAN, One Response, and ASEAN Joint Disaster Response Plan's (AJDRP).

Break Out Session 1

Reflecting on AADMER and the Sendai Framework

1. Break Out Session 1 discussed on how the AADMER can be transformed to play a more enabling role in measuring disaster-related losses to gauge regional economic integration and social protection. With greater focus on cross-cutting development themes in the Sustainable Development Goals, AADMER will have to coordinate and manage reinforcing complementarities between disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainable development. It also explored on how the AADMER can be an instrument to address disaster risk reduction indicators in poverty, hunger, health and whether the AADMER Work Programme drives the regional disaster management architecture and delivers the SFDRR goals and targets, as well as what is required for AADMER to support development of ambitious national and local DRR strategies by 2020 and other targets by 2030.

Breakout Session 2

Reflecting on AADMER and WHS Standards of Humanitarian Assistance

2. Break Out Session 2 reflected on AADMER and WHS Standards of Humanitarian Assistance. It discussed the idea of global preparedness package and revolutionalising preparedness-linking levels. The emergency response preparedness package includes taking the the regional experiences and making it global. This could also be linked to contingency plans of member countries, which must be nationally led. It explored on the idea of how disaster relief “should be as local as possible and as international as necessary”.

Breakout Session 3

Engaging the Private Sector: Removing Obstacles

3. Break Out Session 3 explored on how to get the private sector to be engaged in disaster relief and reduction. It acknowledged that there are obstacles such as limited access to useful data, lack of incentives to participate and invent, and the exclusion of the private sector from policy-making process, lack of understanding – what it involves, what it costs, and how it helps. The suggested ways to overcome these obstacles were to make more effective use of local government, capacity building of businesses, and stakeholder involvement in policy and planning (e.g. ensure businesses have defined role in emergency management), and to eliminate regulatory bottlenecks and give incentives (e.g. tax breaks, practice-sharing fora, awards/recognition), as well as to include SMEs in the process.

Breakout Session 4

One ASEAN, One Response: New Opportunities

4. Break Out Session 4 discussed how the region is willing to embrace ASEAN framework when initiating disaster response. In the past, cooperation in this area has been more focused on bilateral relations. The suggested way forward would be to use existing regional mechanism to coordinate and facilitate international assistance. The Session also explored how the ARF could be used as a platform and how ASEAN would pool and co-ordinate assistance through the UN. It

also discussed the comparative advantage of which framework would trigger a better and faster response, as well as responding to what ASEAN Member States want.

Panel Discussion 3

Best Practices

5. Mr. Arnel Capili, Head of Operations, ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre), elaborated on the development of the AJDRP and its main purpose to develop a predictable response to achieve the speed, scale and solidarity of the ASEAN response through partnerships, arrangements standby assets and capabilities. Major General Permsak Robchangwad, Director, Office of Civil Affairs, Office of Policy and Planning, Ministry of Defence, discussed the military's role in disaster relief in Thailand, including its capabilities both personnel and equipment to support civilian authorities and cooperate with humanitarian actors, including private sectors to reduce disaster risks. He also emphasised that the importance of the coordination between civil and military in any activities according to the disaster risk management cycle. Mr. Stephen Carruth, Deputy Director, Office of Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation, Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States, also stressed on the importance of coordination in disaster relief operations and elaborated on the Incident Command System (ICS), which is designed to enable effective and efficient domestic incident management by integrating a combination of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications.

Recap of the Workshop

6. Climate change is a complex driver and perhaps the biggest challenges of our time with significant economic, societal, and political implications. Global, regional and national mechanism and processes are therefore essential to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. Although in the past, climate change has not always been seen as having security implications, the current trends seem to reflect a more general acceptance of climate change having some impact on security, particularly through it being linked in some cases with natural disasters.

7. The Workshop discussed extensively on the efforts of the international community to respond these challenges of climate change and disaster risks, including global frameworks, such as the SFDRR and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and core commitments produced in the recently concluded World Humanitarian Summit. Meanwhile, at the regional level, there are also efforts to further operationalising and articulate the AADMER into specific programs, as well as guidelines and strategies, such as One ASEAN, One Response and AJDRP.

8. The Workshop acknowledged that there is a number of existing regional and international frameworks. There is therefore a need for greater understanding of how regional and international frameworks can complement and synergise one another. At the regional level, there is a need for more linkages among the different frameworks and platforms, not only ASEAN-related platforms, but also others, such as the APEC and the Trans-Pacific Partnership.
