



Natural Disasters and Disaster Management in China

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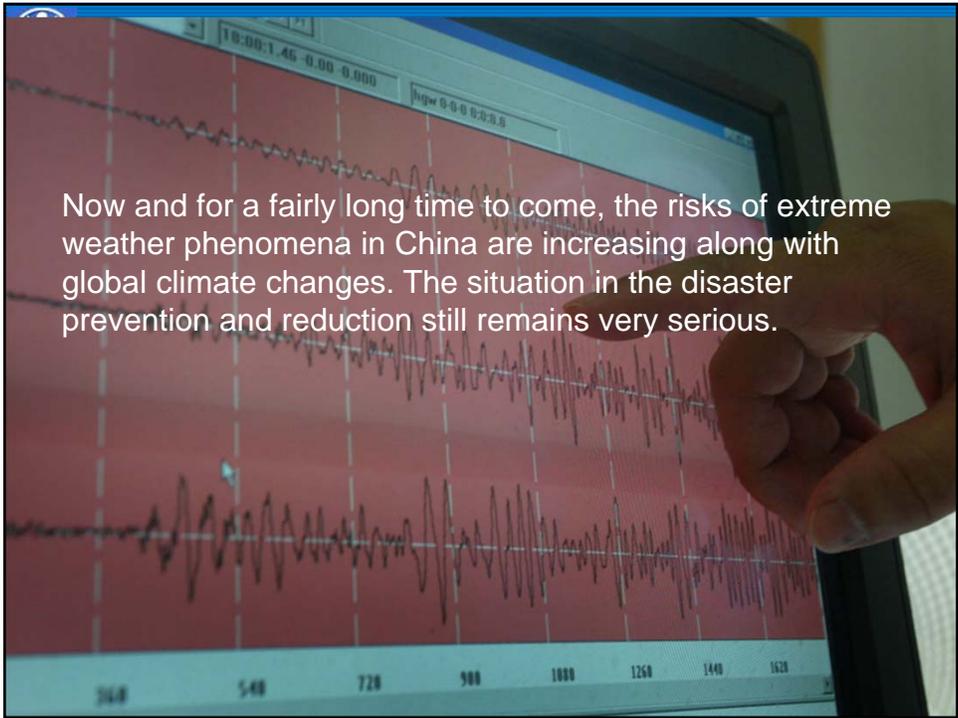


China is one of the countries most severely affected by natural disasters in the world. China's natural disasters are featured by the multi-diversity, high frequency, wide coverage and grave losses.





For nearly 20 years, on annual average, natural disasters affected about 300 million people, destroyed more than 3 million buildings, and forced the evacuation of more than 9 million people. The direct economic losses exceeded RMB 200 billion yuan. The extreme cold weather and sleet in south China in early 2008, and the destructive Wenchuan earthquake that occurred on May 12, 2008 all caused tremendous losses.



Now and for a fairly long time to come, the risks of extreme weather phenomena in China are increasing along with global climate changes. The situation in the disaster prevention and reduction still remains very serious.



The Chinese government has always attached great importance to disaster management work and has listed the disaster prevention and reduction in its economic and social development plan. While pushing forward the rapid economic development, China pays attention to decrease the ecological, resource and environmental vulnerability to reduce disaster risks. The main practices that China adopts in disaster management work include:



I. Establishing and improving disaster management work system

China has adopted a disaster management leadership system featuring central leadership, departmental responsibility and disaster administration at different levels with major responsibility on local authorities. In the wake of a major natural disaster, under the unified leadership of the State Council, the relevant departments with different focuses shall act in coordination to do all the disaster control and relief work. The central organs coordinating and organizing disaster reduction and relief work are the National Disaster Reduction Committee, State Flood and Drought Control Headquarters, State Forest Fire Control Headquarters and National Disaster Control and Relief Coordination Office. Local governments also have set up corresponding coordination offices to handle disaster reduction and relief work.



II. Improving laws and regulations system regarding disaster management

China attaches great importance to legislation regarding disaster management and has promulgated and implemented more than 30 laws and regulations concerning disaster prevention and reduction including the *Emergency Response Law of the People's Republic of China*, *Law of the People's Republic of China on Protection Against and Mitigation of Earthquake Disasters*. A law system concerning disaster management that conforms to the actual situations of China has been basically established.



The central government has promulgated and implemented the *National Emergency Relief Plan for Natural Disasters* while the local governments at all levels have formulated corresponding emergency relief plans, carried out actively emergency response exercises and provided management training. A national disaster relief emergency response system has been basically established. China has formulated the *Comprehensive Disaster Prevention and Reduction Plan(2011-2015)*, and has made clear the strategic objectives and the major tasks for national disaster reduction efforts.

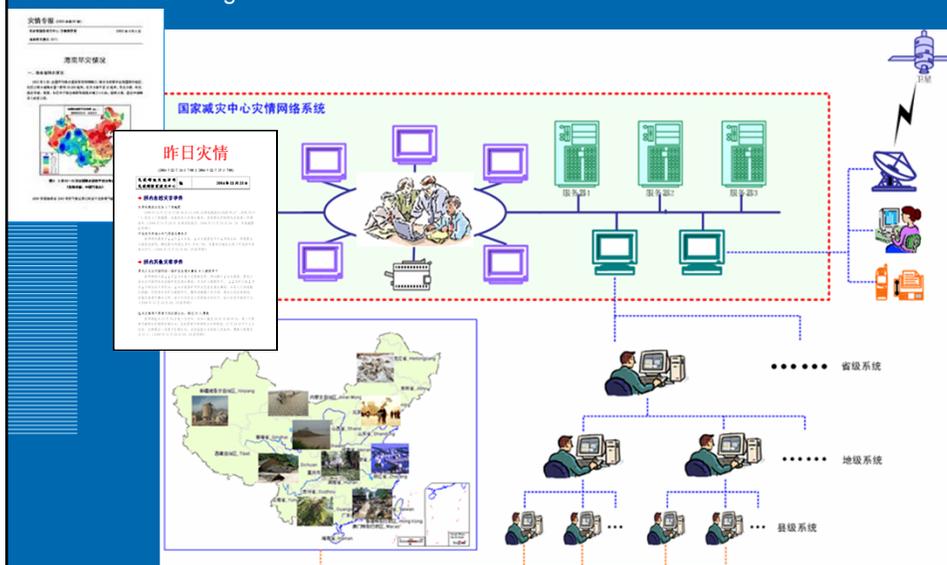


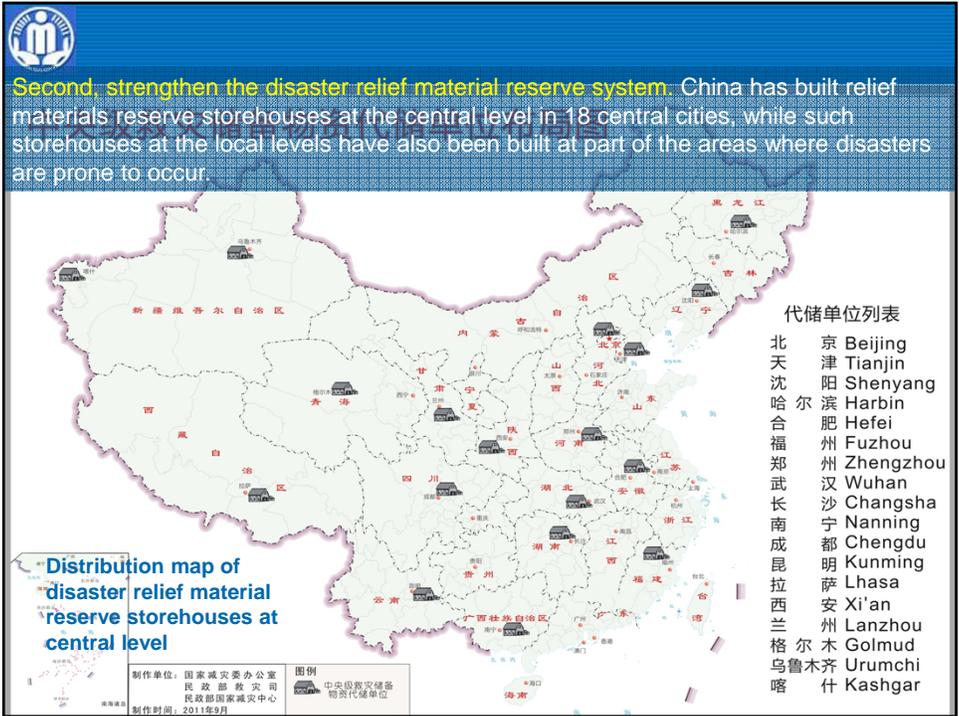
III. Building a disaster emergency relief system

China has continuously strengthened the disaster monitoring and early warning, emergency rescue, disaster relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction and other relief efforts, and reduced the casualties and economic losses, and helped the disaster-stricken people to restore their production and lives to the maximum.



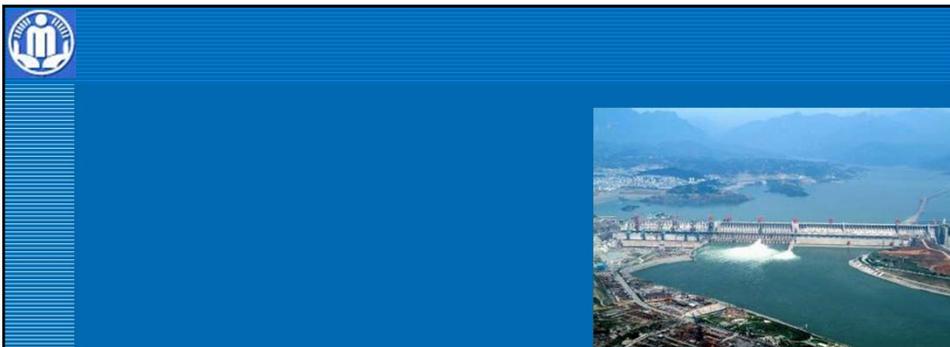
First, strengthen the management on disaster information. China has realized the 24-hour monitoring of the disasters all over the country, established an information exchange and consultation system among the disaster-afflicted departments, and attached importance to increasing the scientific and technological support in the field of disaster relief management.







Fourth, China has established an appropriation mechanism regarding disaster relief emergency fund and materials. The disaster relief emergency fund from the central government can be appropriated to the disaster-hit areas three days after the disaster, and the first batch of relief materials can be transported to the disaster-stricken area within the 24 hours after the disaster.



IV. Advancing the construction of major disaster-reduction projects
Adhering to the principle of “Relying mainly on the prevention of and taking initiative in the precaution against disaster”, China increases its input in a series of important disaster-reduction projects, including those concerning flood control, drought combat, earthquake prevention and relief, cyclone control, red tide and other marine disaster prevention. China has completed a number of pillar projects concerning disaster prevention and reduction, such as the water conservancy projects at the Three Gorges and Gezhouba on the Yangtze River, Xiaolangdi on the Yellow River, shelter-forests in northern China, sand-storm sources control in the Beijing and Tianjin areas.

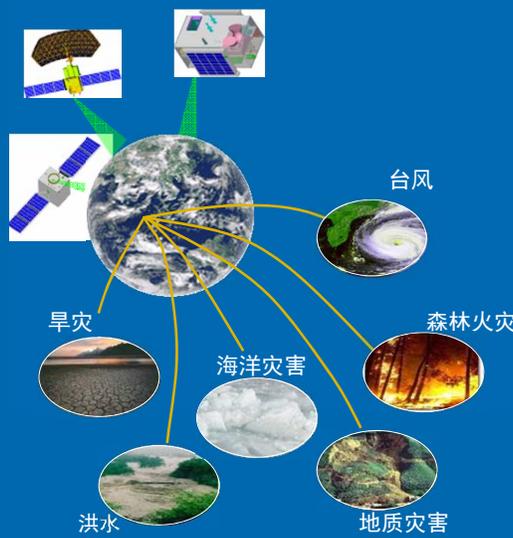


China has carried out such projects as housing renovation for impoverished rural residents, decrepit school building renovation, seepage prevention and reinforcement for unsafe reservoirs, drinking water safety in rural areas, water and soil erosion control, and ecological construction and environmental improvement. The level of the comprehensive disaster prevention and reduction efforts in key areas and urban-rural regions has been effectively improved.



V. Promoting the scientific and technological applications in the field of disaster reduction and relief efforts

China has established a network monitoring and observing the meteorological, marine, earthquake, hydrologic, forest fire and pest, and other disasters. Meteorological, marine and terrestrial satellites have been widely used in disaster reduction and relief efforts. Small satellites named Constellation A and Constellation B for environmental disaster-reduction monitoring and meteorological satellite E of FY-2 have been launched last year, further improving the natural disaster forecasting, early-warning, evaluating and information service monitoring system.





China continuously strengthens its capabilities in the fields of issuing disaster risk warnings, emergency handling, emergency decision-making and commanding. China attaches great importance to the scientific research concerning the disaster reduction and relief efforts and the extension of practical technologies, and actively promotes the application of unmanned plane, satellite positioning and other telecommunication technologies in disaster relief and emergency handling works.



VI. Improving the social mobilization mechanism of disaster management

Adhering to the principle of “Integrating the government leadership with public participation”, the Chinese government continuously improves the social mobilization mechanism concerning disaster reduction and relief efforts.





First, set up a social donation system. The government encourages all sectors of society to participate in the disaster relief donation, standardizes the management and utilization of the donated money and materials, and improves a work mechanism in which both government and society coordinate to promote the disaster relief donations.



Second, develop the disaster relief volunteer service. The government guides all NGOs, volunteers and social workers to engage in disaster reduction and relief efforts, and to cooperate well with the government in on-the-spot rescue, medical rescue, hygiene and quarantine work, psychological help, material distribution, disaster reduction publicity and other works.



Third, improve the emergency rescue requisition and compensation system. The government standardizes the requisition, use, returning, compensation and other works of the materials required for emergency rescue efforts. Meanwhile, it actively explores the way to establish a disaster insurance system.



VII. Raising the public's awareness of disaster prevention and reduction in an all-round way

The Chinese government continuously improves the long-term mechanism of publicity and education concerning disaster prevention and reduction. Knowledge related to disaster prevention and reduction will be incorporated in school textbooks. General or specialized education concerning disaster prevention and reduction will be encouraged to raise the public awareness and skills.





In the wake of Wenchuan earthquake, the Chinese government decided to make May 12 “Disaster Prevention and Reduction Day” and organized a series of publicity activities with rich content and diverse forms to mark the “Disaster Prevention and Reduction Day”.

经国务院批准，自2009年起
每年5月12日为国家“防灾减灾日”



防灾减灾日

加强防灾减灾 构建和谐社会

国家减灾委员会 民政部



China sets store by raising the disaster reduction capacity of the communities at the grassroots level in urban and rural areas, promotes actively the establishment of disaster-reduction demonstration communities and the “disaster reduction and earthquake-proof project demonstration cities (counties)”. Through the disaster-reduction publicity and education activities in a variety of forms, China strengthens the extension of knowledge related to disaster reduction, accelerates the training of personnel in this regard, and raises the disaster reduction awareness and the disaster management skills of government staff workers.





VIII. Promoting international cooperation and exchange in the field of disaster management

China always attaches importance to international cooperation and exchange in the field of disaster management, works hard to improve the international disaster reduction and relief mechanism, and strengthens the capabilities of disaster reduction and relief with earnest efforts. In recent years, China has successfully held the first Asian Disaster Reduction Conference, signed bilateral and multilateral agreements on disaster reduction and relief with the related countries, and taken an active part in international cooperation concerning disaster relief drills.



China and international community provide mutual support and aid in coping with major natural disasters. In the wake of Indian Ocean earthquake tsunami, South Asian earthquake, tropical storm "Nargis" in Myanmar and other calamitous disasters, the Chinese government provided the aid as much as possible and dispatched the rescue teams and medical teams to the disaster-hit countries in a timely manner.





As natural disasters pose a common challenge to mankind, China will continue to work unrelentingly to reduce the risks and damage posed by natural disasters together with the rest of the world for the development and progress of human society.

