



Drought Resilience Conference

+10

Conclusions and Recommendations

Turning Drought Resilience Challenges into Action

The Drought Resilience +10 Conference (DR+10), held in Geneva on 30 September – 2 October 2024, brought together numerous participants from all over the world and provided a global forum for the exchange of knowledge, perspectives, and visions amongst the global drought community on how to enhance drought governance and management at all levels and boost actions towards drought resilience.

Under the auspices of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Global Water Partnership (GWP), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Integrated Drought Management Programme (IDMP), coordinated an open, inclusive, and participatory process in which all participants were invited to develop, review and refine the conclusions and recommendations of the Conference.

Based on the discussions and the information exchanged during the Drought Resilience +10 Conference, the IDMP has summarized the following key conclusions and recommendations:

Conclusions

The High-Level Meeting on National Drought Policy (HMNDP) was held in 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland, and it had a transformative impact on drought management by shifting the focus from crisis response to proactive and prospective¹ risks mitigation in numerous countries worldwide.

The joint efforts of many organizations, following the HMNDP, to support countries in intensifying their efforts for drought resilience through the three-pillar and ten-step approaches of Integrated Drought Management and other approaches, have successfully mitigated drought risks in many countries around the world.

¹Prospective drought risks management addresses and seeks to avoid the development of new or increased drought risks. It focuses on addressing drought risks that may develop in the future if drought risk reduction policies are not put in place. Examples are better land-use planning or disaster-resistant water supply systems. (Adapted from the Sendai Framework Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction)

It is important to note the [United Nations Environment Assembly resolution 6/14](#) of 1 March 2024 on strengthening international efforts to combat desertification and land degradation, restore degraded land, promote land conservation and sustainable land management, contribute to land degradation neutrality, and enhance drought resilience.

Despite efforts on all levels, drought risks continue to escalate rapidly in many regions around the world due to an observed increase in the frequency of high-magnitude droughts driven by climate change, water scarcity, increasing water use, poorly implemented water resources management, unsustainable and inadequate land management, increasing structural vulnerabilities in many societies, and the growing exposure of both expanding and aging populations in many regions.

Drought, directly or indirectly, affects the health and well-being of people in both areas at risk of drought and areas directly impacted by drought, particularly in groups with a higher vulnerability to the negative health impacts, including persons living off the land or in remote rural areas, communities with lower incomes, historically and/or systematically marginalized populations, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, older adults, women, including those who are pregnant and lactating, children and youth.

Many national drought policies established in the aftermath of the HMNDP remain inadequately implemented and many countries still lack drought policies entirely.

The effect of accelerating climate change on drought raises concerns and we acknowledge the findings of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that, even under a best-case scenario with global warming limited to 1.5°C, point to a doubling of the frequency of agricultural and ecological droughts in most parts of the world compared to pre-industrial levels, with their intensity increasing by 0.5 standard deviation².

The interlinkages between ecosystem health and drought are recognized. Droughts can alter the ecological balance of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, as well as the services that these ecosystems provide to human communities, and limit ecosystems to sequester carbon, hence worsening climate change.

Reducing global Greenhouse Gas Emissions will lead to a means of eventually mitigating the risk of increasing frequency of high-intensity droughts, and climate adaptation cannot be fully achieved without building drought resilience.

The integrated and sustainable management of both water and land is essential to reducing drought risks and increasing resilience.

While scientific research is still needed to deepen our understanding of drought and improve management strategies, sufficient knowledge is available to take immediate action to enhance global drought resilience.

²Standard deviation measures typical variability in drought severity. An average increase of 0.5 standard deviations in drought magnitude suggests that droughts are becoming moderately more severe overall compared to historical norms. However, the increase in severity may be more extreme in some regions, depending on local climate conditions.

Drought impacts are complex, affecting various sectors - such as agriculture, land and water resources, the economy, industry, health, ecosystems, energy, transport, and tourism - directly, indirectly, and in cascading ways. These impacts can also lead to political instability, displacement and forced migration, and conflict.

It is recognized that there are challenges in managing droughts in transboundary basins and opportunities provided by transboundary water cooperation for strengthening drought resilience.

Drought is a challenge of global dimensions that contributes to and aggravates economic, social, and environmental challenges such as poverty, poor health, food insecurity, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, reduced hydropower generation, reduced resilience to climate change, and human mobility challenges.

Migration is closely influenced by the degradation of natural resources and in areas affected by drought, this phenomenon is an important direct and indirect driver of migration as people are forced to or decide to leave areas of origin where they can no longer sustain their livelihoods.

The contribution of the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) has been acknowledged since it was created by the governments of Spain and Senegal. This alliance is playing the role of a unifying force for countries to commit to concerted policies and partnerships at all levels for global drought resilience.

The outcomes of the nine workstreams were welcomed by the participants as a result of an open and inclusive process of the Drought Resilience +10 Conference.

Recommendations

All governments and other relevant stakeholders around the world are encouraged to manage drought risks in an integrated, proactive and prospective manner, shifting from the current reactive crisis-oriented approach, develop and strengthen drought policies and turn them into action by considering inter alia the recommendations of the DR+10 workstreams:

1. **Drought resilience and global alignment:** Strengthen international collaboration and dialogue on drivers of globally networked risks (e.g. trade and food security impacts from droughts in different parts of the world), on monitoring, and on vertical and horizontal coordination across regions, nations, sectors, and communities. Use the opportunity provided by drought events and lessons from experience to increase coherence, align financing, and prioritize resilience building across the Paris Agreement, Sendai Framework, Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework and Sustainable Development Goals, and build forward smarter at appropriate scales.

2. **Drought risk governance:** Extend proactive drought risk management towards integrated drought resilience management by implementing a whole-of-society, systemic approach. Ensure that drought management is further integrated into Sustainable Land Management (SLM), Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and climate change adaptation

strategies while mainstreaming Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) and gender-responsive approaches.

3. Monitoring, assessing, and forecasting of droughts and their impacts: Tailor drought monitoring, assessment, impact-based forecasting, and early warning systems for national governments, NGOs, relevant sectors, and vulnerable groups to prevent or reduce impacts. Make local knowledge central to the full climate services value chain. Prioritize better monitoring, prediction, and systematic collection of impact data, including for cascading and compounding impacts, as well as fast-moving flash droughts, to address key challenges. Follow international standards where applicable for data sharing and application interoperability.

4. From policies to action: To turn policy into practice, mobilize resources, catalyze political will, and enhance coordination, communication, and operationalization of national drought plans. Ensure these actions follow the principles of proactive, prospective, and integrated drought management, in an inclusive process, while outlining necessary steps at national, regional, and global levels.

5. Ecosystems: Given the increasing impacts of droughts on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and their services, it is important that all drought risk management efforts include planning around these in their developments. Resilience-building efforts can be greatly enhanced by including nature-based solutions and the increasing evidence base of results that also support biodiversity enhancement and climate change mitigation provide a strong case for increased inclusion and investment.

6. Social inclusion and climate justice: Prioritize historically and/or systematically marginalized communities with higher vulnerability to the negative impacts of drought, including women, youth, people with disabilities, refugees, migrants, displaced persons, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and people with limited resources, as they are crucial to building drought resilience. National drought policies must adopt intersectoral, gender-transformative, and whole-of-society approaches, involving all stakeholders, particularly young people, in decision-making and resilience planning.

Integrate traditional, indigenous, and local knowledge into modern scientific solutions to enhance drought responses that respect and involve all communities. As climate change heightens drought risks for vulnerable communities least responsible for the crisis, prioritize their needs, promote climate justice, and amplify their voices to achieve fair solutions. Given the impact of drought on migration and displacement, implement sustainable land management and restoration policies, strengthen national and regional strategies, and support data collection to monitor mobility patterns. Manage migration adaptively, enable safe and regular migration pathways, and leverage remittances and diaspora engagement for solutions and evidence-based policies across migration, environmental change, human rights, and other related sectors.

7. Drought finance: Intensify finance flows to build drought resilience at the desired pace. Increase the use of science-backed incentives in drought insurance policies. Diversify financial sources, including alternative sources such as the private sector and household contributions. Strategies to increase financial allocation, including youth-friendly funding,

should be grounded in a solid understanding of the business potential of drought mitigation measures, identifying where partnerships must be established to create financially appealing, effective, and sustainable investment designs.

8. Public-private-civil society partnerships: Preconceived notions between these 'sectors' can hamper partnerships. Potential partnerships can be fostered by being open to challenging assumptions and addressing other barriers to collaboration, such as adjusting risk aversion levels and giving new ideas a chance. Enabling and convening institutions, such as funding organizations and leaders within countries can facilitate opportunities to seed partnerships, and spark more trust, openness, discussion, and action between the sectors.

9. Health: Enhance understanding of the linkages between drought impacts on environmental, economic, and social determinants of health, as well as their direct or indirect effects on human health. This knowledge will help public health systems prepare for drought-associated health risks, ensuring timely risk management and resilience strengthening, which can ultimately reduce health risks, save lives, and lower healthcare expenditures.

There is a need for the mobilization of resources from all sources to enhance the implementation of proactive, prospective and integrated drought risk management, particularly in developing countries, and especially the least developed countries.

The global drought community, including governments, organizations, academia, the private sector, and civil society, are encouraged to work together in collective action in scaling up efforts to integrate knowledge and policy, reducing systemic drought risks - especially for the most vulnerable - and bringing drought resilience to the scale needed in the next decade.

The IDMP and its partners are invited to make efforts to integrate and scale up their support collectively to countries and other stakeholders in strengthening their drought resilience in the next decade.

The IDMP is encouraged to take the necessary steps to transition to a global interagency coordination mechanism on drought to promote multilevel and multisectoral collaboration with international, regional, and national organizations and initiatives by ensuring the mechanism includes relevant countries, United Nations organizations, development agencies, private sector, knowledge centers, local and regional learning and practice networks, centers of excellence, and civil society organizations.

The IDMP and its partners are encouraged to consider organizing biannually a Drought Resilience Conference ahead of the sessions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNCCD to review progress and coordinate efforts of scaling up and accelerating efforts to increase drought resilience and inform the COP about these.

The International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) is encouraged to continue supporting the coordination of global drought policy, raise awareness for the urgency to scale up drought resilience and mobilize drought finance.

The COPs of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and UNCCD are encouraged to cooperate and align their efforts towards more global drought resilience.

Governments are encouraged to be ambitious and collaborate closely to reach strong, decisive actions at upcoming and other future sessions of the COPs of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD.

Governments and basin organizations are invited to work on jointly addressing drought risks through cooperation in transboundary basins.

The IDMP and its partners are invited to disseminate and make the outcomes of the DR+10 accessible to governments and other stakeholders.