

Steering Committee



Partners



Hemispherical Consultation on Early Warning 3-5 June, 2003, Antigua, Guatemala

**ANNOUNCEMENT
HEMISPHERIC CONSULTATION ON EARLY
WARNING,**

**AND
PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE**

3-5 JUNE 2003

**HOTEL VILLA ANTIGUA
ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA**

ANNOUNCEMENT

Hemispheric Consultation on Early Warning, 3-5 June 2003 Hotel Villa Antigua¹ Antigua, Guatemala

Introduction

A regional consultation on Early warning systems is scheduled to take place in Antigua, Guatemala from 3-5 June 2003. The consultation is part of the preparations leading the Second International Early Warning Conference (EWCII), which will take place in Bonn, Germany, 15-19 October 2003. The objective of the regional consultations is to identify existing early warning systems, responsible persons/organizations, as well as other relevant aspects of early warning systems such as financial aspects, costs of investment, and sustainability. The regional consultation will also identify shortfalls and future needs such as data, information, knowledge, skills, and resources.

In addition the regional consultation will provide an opportunity for enhanced inter-linkages and dialogue among stakeholders at various levels and between different sectors; thus effectively strengthening coordination and cooperation amongst the various groups involved in the early warning process.

Rationale:

The new information age has brought forth a rapid spread of global communications, data has become more rapidly accessible and forecasting methodologies have made significant progress. Improvements in global observation systems including earth observation and remote sensing have also enhanced the early detection of medium-term abnormal climatic conditions such as El Niño events, and contribute to warnings of long-term hazards associated with environmental change.

However, the ability to deliver this vital information to communities affected by disasters has not always enjoyed similar success. The ultimate objective of an early warning system it is to protect lives and property through a timely forecast.

Local mechanisms for communicating risk, or downscaling the interpretation of alerts to relate to local conditions or experience, remain very weak in many cases. Sophistication must be weighed against local capacities, needs, resources and traditions.

Finally, data about the adverse impacts of disasters on people and infrastructure necessary to make informed decisions is often incomplete or absent. Even in some cases where abilities and procedures exist, communities are sometimes unable to respond appropriately to them due to lack of information, resources, or viable options that they can utilize in a timely manner.

¹9 calle poniente final Antigua, Guatemala, Tel./ Fax. +(502) 832-3002

Programme:

The programme of the regional consultation comprises a series of plenary and parallel sessions of both oral and poster presentations. The working languages of the consultation will be Spanish and English (with simultaneous translation into both languages).

The regional consultation will address a broad range of actors involved in the early warning chain. It will allow an interaction to take place between experts in early warning systems and decision makers, politicians, public authorities, non-governmental organizations, community leaders, educators and media. It will seek to capture the perspective of these phenomena in both developed and developing societies.

More detailed information including the agenda, program content and registration documentation will be available at the following websites: www.eird.org

Expected Results:

- Result 1: **Early warning blueprints** for Latin America and the Caribbean, including best practices, gaps and shortfalls in early warning applications and effectiveness. As an appendix, a list of institutions and key personnel with experience on deployment and operation of EWS of various types for different types of hazards will be included.
- Result 2: Regional recommendations on **strategies for dissemination of early warning knowledge**. This includes technological aspects such as the Internet as well as training and other options.
- Result 3: A proposal containing technical recommendations to be forwarded and presented at the EWCII as part the regional Latin American activities related to such a global conference.

Organizers:

The regional Consultation is hosted by Guatemala and is supported by the Government of Germany under the auspices of the United Nations and promoted by the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and UNDP. The consultation has been planned by a steering committee, comprised of representatives from: ACS, CDERA, CEPREDENAC, CONRED, GTZ, UNDP and UN-ISDR.

For more information, please contact: Wolfgang Stiebens (GTZ):
wstiebens@gold.guate.net, glradm@gold.guate.net and/or Elina Palm (UN-ISDR):
elina.palm@eird.org

HEMISPHERIC CONFERENCE ON EARLY WARNING
Antigua, Guatemala
June 3-5, 2003

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
DAY 0	JUNE 2	
	Arrival of participants in Antigua in the evening	
Evening, night, on lobby of hotel	Registration of participants	The participants register in the lobby at their convenience
8:00-9:00 pm	Working dinner, Task Force with moderators and reporters	Purpose: The methodology to be implemented during the parallel sessions will be presented; as well as strategies related to the open discussions with regards to the expectations in relation to the proposed results concerning the discussions. Specific documentation will be distributed to the moderator of the each parallel session.
DAY 1	JUNE 3	
7:30-8:15	Registration of participants (continuation)	Open to all local and external participants.
8:15-9:15	Inaugural Ceremony	Will be presided by a Committee with national and international personalities and members of the Steering Committee
9:15-9:30	Presentation of the program	Brief presentation of the overall program of the event
9:30-10:00	Main Conference: Integration of the topic of Early Warning on Public Policies	Purpose: A conference, which must foster throughout the event open discussions among technical/scientific and social actors (authorities, personnel from institutions, members of agencies and of the civil society). Thematic proposals for the Conference: The problems which can emerge between the technical community which proposed the evacuation of the whole population of a large city and municipal authorities which may not possess the necessary resources to carry out such an evacuation. A possible solution implies the discussion regarding the zoning of geographical regions as high, medium, and low hazard zones, so that a limit can be set regarding the amount of population to be evacuated with municipal and national resources.

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
10:00-10:30	Main Conference: Strategies to enhance Early Warning at the Global level: EWCII	Purpose: A conference which must encompass the event in relation with other hemispheric events which are in execution in various continents, as well as the relation with the Bonn global conference, EWC II.
10:30-11:00	COFFEE	
11:00-11:30	Main Conference: The need for a Hemispheric Strategy on Early Warning	Purpose: A conference which must display the benefits which can be obtained through a Strategy of this nature in the hemispheric context of the Americas. Thematic proposals for the Conference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A hemispheric center which houses all technical information regarding the subject of early warning ➤ A center which can coordinate technical assistance and horizontal cooperation between countries with an added value of dimensioning the types of EW systems which could be implemented within one country according to existing conditions and resources
11:30-12:00	Methodology of the Conference	Basic guidelines related to the parallel sessions are presented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Expectations based on proposed results, ➤ Preliminary list of participants selected to participate in each parallel session, and ➤ Information regarding panelists, moderators, and reporters for each session
12:00-2:00	LUNCH	
2:00-4:30	Parallel session on hazards with impact at the following levels: 1. Global & Regional 2. National 3. Local	Description: 3 parallel sessions with a balance of participants from the sub-regions of the hemisphere, where the panelists are from the scientific/technical area and the audience are actors from the social areas. Thematic proposals for the sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At the global level, discussions with respect to the state of the art of EWS for El Niño, tsunamis, hurricanes, and forest fires. ➤ At the national level, a discussion with respect to EWS for volcanic eruptions and earthquakes and national policies supporting those systems ➤ At the local level, how local authorities and the local population participate in the operation of EWS in the case of floods in small basins. Discussions will include the current state, and state of the art of such systems.
4:30-5:00	COFFEE	

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
5:00-6:30	Plenary session to present results and conclusions from the first set of parallel sessions, as well as a presentation of the program for the next day.	Purpose: Conclusions and recommendations from the first set of parallel sessions will be presented by the moderators of each session. The sessions for the next day will also be presented.
8:00-9:00	Dinner Buffet Cultural Event	A cultural event from Guatemala will be presented to enrich the dinner
DAY 2	June 4	
8:00-9:00	Plenary Session: Panel The use of information for the decision-making process: Links among scientists and Decision Makers	Description A panel discussion will be carried out with the participation of a representative from a technical/scientific institution and a City Major which share a common experience involving some kind of early warning associated to a natural Thematic proposals for the session: ➤ The experiences from Mexico Montserrat, and Ecuador with respect to volcanic eruptions. ➤ The North American and Caribbean experiences with respect to hurricanes. Purpose: The goal is to discuss the role of the technical/scientific information in the decision making process. In particular, the political compromise which must exist regarding the implementation, operation, and improvements of EWS in order to generate more precise warnings in the spatial and temporal frames with respect to natural events.
9:00- 12:00	Parallel session regarding: 1. Policy issues 2. Legal and institutional issues 3. Social issues	Description: 3 parallel sessions with a balance of participants, where the panelists are mainly from the political and social areas, and the audience is composed mostly of members of the scientific/technical areas. It will seek to engage panelists from the sub-regions of the hemisphere. Thematic proposals for the sessions: ➤ In the issues related to policies such as the implications of warnings in relation to society and the awareness of political leaders in order to promote EWS. ➤ In the legal and institutional issues the following topics can be discussed: legal bases and institutional responsibilities related to warnings and EWS, as well as the management of information and its broadcast. ➤ In the social issues, the following topics can be analyzed: means and types of social participation in EWS and the role which the media must play.
12:00-2:00	Lunch	

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
2:00-3:00P	Plenary Session: Discussion of conclusions and recommendations from the parallel sessions and presentation of the program for the next day.	Description: Conclusions and recommendations from the first set of parallel sessions will be presented by the moderators of each session. The sessions for the next day will also be presented.
3:00-6:30 p	Fieldtrip to Fuego Volcano – Local community-operated system in case of volcanic eruptions	Visit to some communities located on the foothills of Fuego volcano, which participate in the warning system managed by CONRED.
7:30	Dinner Buffet	
DAY 3	June 5	
8:00-9:00	Main Conference: Pending	
9:00- 12:00	Working group session 1. Strengthening Yokohama strategies regarding EW 2. Hemispheric Strategy on Early Warning 3. Network of consultants, institutions, and national and sub- regional platforms for EW.	Purpose: 3 working groups to discuss the topics with the goal of contributing comments, conclusions and recommendations for the Bonn global conference and Yokohama + 10. Thematic proposals for the session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A revision of the strategies proposed in Yokohama in 1994 and recommendations which emerge a decade later from experiences gathered with respect to EWSs. ➤ An analysis of the needs or reasons which justify the implementation of a hemispheric strategy with respect to early warning and the expectations with respect to possible benefits as the short, medium, and long-range levels, and its possible structure. ➤ Identification of consultants and institutions which can provide technical assistance to the implementation of EWSs. ➤ The role of sub-regional and national agencies in order to design and operate EWSs for regional and global hazards,
12:00-2:00	LUNCH	

TIME	ACTIVITY	COMMENTS
2:00-3:30p	Poster session and stands	Purpose: Presentation of EWS in operation targeting diverse hazards in various countries of the hemisphere, stands from agencies such as CEPREDENAC, CDERA, NOAA, USGS, GTZ, etc.
3:30-4:30P	Plenary Session Presentation of conclusions and recommendations from working groups.	Purpose: Conclusions and recommendations from the working groups will be presented by the moderators of each session. Final conclusions and recommendations emanating from the entire event will also be presented.
4:30-5:30 p	Presentation of the Declaration of Antigua Proposal	Purpose: Presentation of a Draft of a proposal for the discussion by in the plenary session. In its final version, the Declaration will be presented in Presidential and Political Summits and in similar forums to gather political support for activities related to early warning.
5:00-5:30p	Closing Ceremony	Will be presided by a Committee with national and international personalities and members of the Steering Committee