



GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



OECD

Concept Note: EU/GFDRR/OECD joint side-event at the EU Pavilion, COP22 Marrakesh
“Building climate resilience of Small Island Developing States”

14 November 2016, 12.30-14.00

1. Thematic background

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are a group of 39 countries that share small sizes, geographic isolation, and a high vulnerability to climate and disaster related disasters. They include two-thirds of the countries that suffer the highest relative losses due to natural disasters (between 1 and 9 percent of their Gross Domestic Product each year), majority of these climate-related. Their pressing socio-economic concerns include poverty alleviation, high unemployment, food security and the improvement of housing, education and health care facilities. Climate change is adding to these and increasing the cost of development.

During COP21 in Paris leaders from SIDS had called for limiting global average temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels to ensure their survival. The global agreement committed to holding the increase in temperature to well below 2°C. In addition to the increasing temperature trends, recent El Niño event contributed to hottest year on record, drought in many Pacific island countries, intense cyclones and storm surges in many SIDS. It was thus no surprise that the first 14 countries to ratify the Paris agreement were SIDS. Addressing the impacts of climate change and disasters, enhancing resiliency of the people, economies and ecosystems is becoming increasingly urgent for the small island states.

Supporting climate and disaster resilient development in SIDS is a priority for the EU, World Bank and GFDRR, the OECD and the members of its Development Assistance Committee (DAC). Bilateral DAC providers have been a major support to the efforts made by SIDS to build resilience, accounting for the bulk of concessional finance in this area (71% in the period 2011-14), and investing increasing resources in regional and multi-country initiatives (e.g. Pacific Islands Forum, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, etc.). The OECD has recently increased its analytical and policy focus on SIDS’ financing challenges and opportunities in a view to maximise the full potential of development finance, particularly of scarce Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows, and support the development of financial instruments and approaches that are tailored to SIDS’ specific circumstances and needs. The ACP-EU Natural Disaster Risk Reduction Programme has been active in small islands since 2011 with the objective to address prevention, mitigation, preparedness and resilience to natural hazards. World Bank and GFDRR have been supporting climate and disaster resilience since 2010 with a portfolio of around US\$200 million annually supporting 24 SIDS. In 2014, recognizing the special needs of these states, GFDRR and World Bank launched Small Island States Resilience Initiative (SISRI) to scale-up support for climate and disaster resilience. SISRI has brought together extensive knowledge and experience, a specialized team and framework for coherent support to SIDS. Recently, SISRI has initiated a practitioner’s network to promote knowledge sharing amongst small island states. Examples include strengthening institutions to help coordination across sectors and mainstream climate and disaster resilience into development as well as increase the ability of the countries to implement projects and programs. This is also highlighting the fragmented nature of climate and disaster financing. Risk based spatial planning and coastal protection are emerging areas of support that SIDS are requesting. Challenges like population retreat from high risk areas is also being addressed and lessons learned shared amongst islanders.

2. Objective and expected outcome

The objective of this side event is to highlight the increasing climate and disaster related challenges and the innovative solutions that SIDS are implementing as an integral part of their development.

The discussion will build on the findings from *Climate and Disaster Resilience Financing in Small Island Developing States*, a report produced by OECD and World Bank jointly, which will be launched during this side event. The report event documents the increasing climate and disaster challenges SIDS face, the complex

financing landscape they are confronted with to finance resilience, and innovative solutions to make their people, economies and ecosystems climate and disaster resilient, including insurance solutions to minimise and address the negative impacts of climate change.

The expected outcomes are:

- Underscoring of challenges that many small islands face with regard to climate change.
- Discussing solutions related to risk reduction, resilient ecosystem and infrastructure-based solutions, risk financing, disaster risk insurance and financial risk transfer mechanisms, and social protection.
- Identifying partnerships and networks that support the design and implementation of the activities.

3. Target audience and timeframe

The main targeted audience are members of developing country delegations (SIDS) and development agencies, NGOs and practitioners committed to support initiatives on climate and disaster resilience, including instruments to address the risk of loss and damage, for SIDS.

4. Format and content

The side event will be organized around the following main elements allowing sufficient time for discussions:

- Short introductory presentations: SIDS and the issues they face, SISRI framework and key lessons, and the role insurance can play.
- SIDS country experiences: Representatives of Government from the Caribbean, Indian Ocean/Africa coast and Pacific region implementing innovative solutions with the support of EU and/or the World Bank/GFDRR will present their country cases.
- Panel discussion/Q&A

5. Speakers / panellists

| | | |
|---|--|--------|
| Chair: | H. E. Dr. Angus Friday, Ambassador to the U.S., Grenada | |
| Opening remarks | | |
| | Beatriz Yordi, Head of Adaptation Unit, DG CLIMA, European Commission | 5 min |
| | Francis Ghesquiere, Manager, GFDRR | 5 min |
| | ACP Group of States (TBC) | 5 min |
| | Jorge Moreira da Silva, Director, OECD | 5 min |
| Presentation of OECD/WB report 'Climate and Disaster Resilience Financing in Small Island Developing States' | | |
| | Suzanne Steensen, Manager, Development Finance Architecture Unit, OECD | 10 min |
| Panel / SIDS country experiences | | |
| | Tracy Polius, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development and Housing, St. Lucia (TBC) | 10 min |
| | H. E. Alain Wong Yen Cheon, Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, Disaster and Beach Management, Republic of Mauritius | 10 min |
| | Paula Ma'u, CEO for Ministry of Meteorology, Energy, Information, Disaster, Environment, Climate Change and Communications, Kingdom of Tonga | 10 min |
| | Panel discussion and Q&A | 20 min |
| | Conclusions by Chair | 5 min |
| Closing remarks | | |

