

8 Jul 2009

Natural Hazard/Disaster Updates:**6 Jul: South China rains kill 20, force 700,000 from homes**

Torrential rains and floods in southern China have left at least 20 people dead and two missing. Heavy rain and storm struck the city paralysing part of the city's communications. More than 700,000 people have been relocated as downpours have destroyed houses, flooded crops, cut power, damaged roads and caused rivers to overflow, according to the latest figures from the provinces of Hunan, Fujian, Jiangxi and Guangdong and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. In Hunan, eight people died and 140,000 were forced out of their homes, according to the provincial flood control office. In Fujian, five people died and two are missing. In Jiangxi, three people who were previously reported as missing have been confirmed dead, bringing the province's death toll to five. About 230,000 people had to flee their homes. In Guangdong, two construction workers were killed by a collapsed wall. In Guangxi, 309,400 people were relocated. There have been no reports of casualty from the region so far. The flood control headquarters in Jiangxi said that crops on 200,000 hectares of farmland have been damaged and thousands of homes toppled. Direct economic losses were estimated at 3.13 billion yuan (458.9 million U.S. dollars). Jiangxi's Chongyi and Dayu counties witnessed the worst rainstorm and flood in history. Flood water was 2 meters deep in the county seat of Dayu. In Guangxi's Rongshui county, 62 schools were flooded, and about 300 students were trapped in a boarding school. www.chinaview.cn

6 Jul: Flooding causes deaths in Bangladesh

Six people were killed and half a million marooned in their homes in Bangladesh, when torrential rains triggered landslides and flash floods, according to official reports. The Bangladesh Meteorological Department has forecast more rains in the region, including north-eastern India. http://www.wmo.int/pages/mediacentre/news/index_en.html

4 Jul: Flash-Flood across Bangladesh

Thousands of people on the north and north-eastern part of the country have been marooned due to the flash-flood situation. In those areas hundreds of households were washed away by flood water causing miseries for scores of people. The Flood Forecasting Centre of the Water Development Board said that the situation will deteriorate further as heavy to very heavy rainfall continues over north-east, south-eastern part of the country and adjoining Indian state Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura.

Low lying areas on the outskirts of the city including some part son of Meradia and Badda were inundated due to the heavy rainfall. Low laying areas in the districts of Netrokona, Sunamganj, Sylhet and Feni are experiencing flash flood. In Kurigram flood situation has worsened with the rise in water level in the Dharla river. http://priyo.com/files/upload/news/2009/07/132372_Flood.jpg

3 Jul: Vietnam: Floods kill seven people in northern mountainous provinces- Since late evening July 3, heavy rains and floods have caused severe damage to the northern mountainous provinces of Ha Giang, Cao Bang and Bac Kan, leaving seven dead and three missing. In Ha Giang Province, heavy rains continue to raise river levels, causing floods in many in low-lying districts, such as Bac Quang, Vi Xuyen, Quang Binh and Bac Me. The Weather Forecast Bureau predicts that low-lying areas in the district are likely to see flooding increase, with nearby mountainous districts seeing the

possibility of landslides. In Cao Bang Province, landslides have occurred on a section of Highway 34, which links Cao Bang to Bao Lac and Bao Lam Districts, causing severe communication disruption <http://www.nchmf.gov.vn/website/en-US/71/103/2159/Default.aspx>

Pandemic (H1N1) 2009

7 Jul: Two Canada hog workers hit by new non-pandemic flu

* New flu virus not connected to H1N1 outbreak

* Hogs transmitted virus to workers

Two farm workers in Western Canada have become infected with a new flu virus, health officials said on Tuesday, stressing the strain was not related to the H1N1 pandemic. The two workers, both employees at a hog barn operation in the province of Saskatchewan, have fully recovered. A third case is under investigation. The new virus contains genes from a seasonal human H1N1 flu strain and a flu virus common in the swine population called triple reassortant H3N2, said Dr. Greg Douglas, Saskatchewan's chief veterinary officer. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N08342126.htm>

7 Jul: Asia Updates

- Thailand reports 9th death from A/H1N1 flu
- Vietnam: Eleven H1N1 cases reported; tally up to 226
- China: Health ministry warns of possible cluster infection of A/H1N1 flu in communities
- Malaysia: A(H1N1): 34 new cases, 12 locally transmitted
- Brunei Schools Reopen Yesterday Amidst Uncertainty

For more information, please go to <http://www.adpc.net/v2007/SwineInfluenza/Default.asp>

News:

7 Jul: G8 signals on climate change fall short - experts

As in the run-up to any Group of Eight summit, talk is swirling about the promises the leaders of the world's richest nations might make when they meet in Italy this week. Aid groups, climate scientists and developing countries say the signals on curbing global warming are promising but don't go far enough. In particular, they say any commitments to curb climate change will lack focus unless they include short-term targets for reducing carbon emissions by 2020. Progress on this is regarded as highly unlikely at the July 8-10 summit in the quake-hit town of L'Aquila. "It is really quite hopeful that the G8 is even at the level of what it's discussing now, but in terms of the most vulnerable (people) and in terms of the science it probably still isn't enough," said Diana Liverman, a scientist and member of the new National Academy of Sciences Committee on America's Climate Choices, which is advising the U.S. government on responses to climate change.

http://www.alertnet.org/db/an_art/20316/2009/06/7-164638-1.htm

7 Jul: Big economies try break climate impasse before G8

* Last-minute talks seek climate goals for expanded G8

* Rich, poor split on 2050 halving of world emissions

Major economies tried to break the deadlock between rich and poor nations over 2050 goals for cuts in greenhouse gas emissions at a last-minute meeting before an expanded G8 summit in Italy. Ministers or senior officials from the 17-member Major Economies Forum (MEF) met in Rome to try to agree a declaration for leaders that could be a building block for a new U.N. climate pact due to be agreed in Copenhagen in December. "We want to prepare in the best way possible the outcome of the G8 and the MEF in view of an ambitious climate change agreement in Copenhagen," said Barbara Helfferich, spokeswoman for European Commissioner Stavros Dimas who was at the meeting. MEF nations, which account for 80 percent of world emissions, are split over whether to set a target for

halving world emissions by 2050, in line with a "vision" adopted by the rich G8 nations at a summit in Japan last year. China, India and many other developing nations say rich nations are to blame for most emissions from burning greenhouse gases since the Industrial Revolution and must set deep 2020 goals for cutting their own emissions before asking for help. India, the world's number four emitter of greenhouse gases, has said it opposes a MEF goal of halving world emissions by 2050, arguing that developing nations need to be able to burn fossil fuels to help escape poverty. If the deadlock persists, U.S. President Barack Obama, who launched the MEF to pave the way to a U.N. deal, would end the July 9 meeting -- part of the G8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy -- with just a "chair's summary" rather than a statement agreed by all 17 MEF leaders.

A June 30 MEF draft said: "We support an aspirational global goal of reducing global emissions by 50 percent by 2050, with developed countries reducing emissions by at least 80 percent by 2050." The Rome meeting was added after little progress at a MEF meeting in Mexico last month. Italy, France and Britain on Monday called on major developing nations to sign up for the goal of halving emissions as a way of showing willingness to combat climate change. China has recently overtaken the United States as top world emitter. A separate climate draft for the G8, dated June 24, indicated progress towards setting a target of limiting a rise in world temperatures to two degrees Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) over pre-industrial times. The European Union views 2C as a threshold for "dangerous" climate changes such as rising sea levels, ever more heatwaves, floods, droughts and extinctions. The United States, Russia, Canada and Japan have not signed up for such a target at the G8. The G8 draft said "global emissions should peak by 2020 and then be substantially reduced to limit the average increases in global temperature to 2 Celsius (3.6 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels." Environmental group Greenpeace welcomed the draft. "At last the G8 is recognising 2C. The wording should have been much stronger, but still: it is in," said Tobias Muenchmeyer of Greenpeace. Separately, 22 leading climate scientists called in a letter for the summit to set a global peak in emissions by 2020 and a cut of at least 50 percent compared to 1990 levels by 2050. <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L7100155.htm>

7 Jul: Afghanistan: After the floods, malaria?

Stagnant water in flood-affected parts of Afghanistan is the perfect breeding ground for malaria-causing mosquitoes, health specialists warn. "We anticipate an increase in malaria cases this year," Najibullah Safi, director of the National Malaria and Leishmaniasis Control Programme (NMLCP), reported. "Malaria mosquitoes breed in wet conditions and because we have had ample rainfall this year there will be opportunities for an increase in malaria cases," he said. January-June floods affected over 21,000 households and caused extensive damage in over 15 of the country's 34 provinces. At least 14 provinces (in the north, east and south) are highly vulnerable to malaria, especially in summer. Afghanistan is considered to have the fourth largest malaria burden worldwide with an estimated annual incidence of 18 per 1,000 people in 2007, according to the UN World Health Organization (WHO). "We cannot remedy all the stagnant water pools across the country in order to reduce malaria risks, but local people and municipalities can, and we're calling on them to do so," said Safi. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85169>

7 Jul: WHO sees little Tamiflu-resistant H1N1 flu spread

- * WHO says Tamiflu-resistant cases sporadic, not spreading
- * Not changing recommendations about H1N1 patient treatment
- * Resistance due to mutation not reassortment

(Adds southern hemisphere in paragraphs 9-10 and vaccines)

By Laura MacInnis and Stephanie Nebehay

Tamiflu-resistant H1N1 flu does not appear to be spreading in a sustained or worrisome way, a World Health Organisation official said. "At this point we are not recommending any clinical changes to the approach in treating patients," WHO Acting Assistant Director-General Keiji Fukuda said,

responding to the discovery of drug-resistant H1N1 viruses in three people. "Right now these examples of oseltamivir resistance remain sporadic cases. We do not see any evidence of widespread movement of oseltamivir resistant viruses," he told a briefing, using the generic name for Tamiflu, an anti-viral tablet made by Roche <ROG.VX> and Gilead Sciences <GILD.O>.

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L792464.htm>

6 Jul: Bangladesh: Cyclone Aila victims still in need

More than a month after Cyclone Aila battered southern Bangladesh, hundreds of thousands of people are still unable to return to their homes, and the government and aid agencies are struggling to provide basic relief. "As of 2 July, 350,000 people were still living in makeshift shelters in open fields, schools, embankments and cyclone centres," Oxfam reported. Damaged sanitation systems and lack of access to drinking water are the main problems in the most severely affected areas, say experts. According to Bangladesh's Disaster Management Bureau, 500,000-750,000 people are in need of water and sanitation support. <http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85141>

1 Jul: Rockefeller Foundation announces initiative to boost health systems in Africa and Asia

The Rockefeller Foundation announced its plans to implement a US\$100 million initiative to support the strengthening of health systems in Africa and Asia on Wednesday (July 1), Xinhua news agency reported. The initiative, called Transforming Health Systems (THS), will tackle the global need for affordable, accessible and quality health services, the Foundation's President, Judith Rodin, said while addressing a news conference in Nairobi, Kenya. She added that their effort will shift focus from treatments and vaccines to informing the efforts of low-income countries to take on the challenges of health systems. With the goal of expanding health coverage and providing new health and financial protections for everyone, Rodin was quoted by Xinhua as saying, "The Rockefeller Foundation has long been committed to public health interventions in the developing world to break bottlenecks that prevent access to quality health services." The THS initiative is a five-year plan and will be launched with investments in Ghana, Rwanda and Vietnam. <http://news.xinhuanet.com>

Global warming may halve Bangladesh rice yields Scientists say that rice yields in Bangladesh will decrease by 20 per cent in the next 50 years

Rice yields across Bangladesh could decrease by almost half over the next six decades because of global warming, scientists report. The Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) and the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Meteorological Research Centre used a computer model to simulate the yields of two popular rice varieties in 2008, 2030, 2050 and 2070 across 12 locations in major rice-growing areas of the country. They used the 'CERES-Rice' model — a computer model that evaluates the effect of land use and environmental changes on rice production — to incorporate data such as the genetic characteristics of the two varieties; soil, water and weather data; and crop management practices such as planting date and fertiliser application.

The model predicted a decline in yields of more than 20 per cent by 2050 and 50 per cent by 2070, for both varieties, Mohammad Nazrul Islam — a professor at BUET's Institute for Water and Flood Management (IWFM) — and colleagues reported at a seminar on climate change and development needs, held in Dhaka earlier this year (21 April). An increase in daily temperatures and shifts in rainfall patterns will be the major causes of this decline, the scientists say. A related study by A. K. M. Saiful Islam — also at the IWFM — published in *Open Atmospheric Science Journal* earlier this year (March), shows that mean temperatures in Bangladesh have risen by about one degree Celsius over the last half-century.

Using a regional climate modelling system developed at the United Kingdom-based Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research, the researchers assessed temperature changes in Bangladesh from 1948–2000 as well as future predictions for temperature and rainfall until 2090. The analysis reveals that temperatures are expected to rise, on average, by 1.7 degrees Celsius by 2050 and 3.3 degrees Celsius by 2090 — relative to average temperatures of 25.4 degrees Celsius in 2000, Saiful Islam, associate professor at BUET's Institute for Water and Flood Management, told SciDev.Net.

Rainfall is also projected to increase relative to 2000 values by about four millimetres per day until 2050, and about two millimetres per day until 2090. Saiful Islam told SciDev.Net their findings will be applied to wide-ranging studies, such as the impact of the changes on livelihoods; drought and flood forecasting; and disaster management. <http://www.scidev.net/en/news/global-warming-may-halve-bangladesh-rice-yields.html>

Mobile masts used in African weather monitoring

Africa hopes to plug gaps in its weather and climate data by mounting automatic weather stations onto its extensive network of mobile phone masts. Less than 200 of its weather stations meet UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO) standards — compared to several thousand in Europe — leaving many smallholder farmers without forecasts. The vast majority of farmers in Africa practise rain-fed agriculture, leaving them highly vulnerable to shifts in weather and climate patterns. 'Weather Info for All', a public-private partnership involving the WMO, humanitarian groups and telecommunications companies, will gather data on wind, rainfall and other aspects of weather and send it to national weather agencies. So far, the project has installed 19 stations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Five thousand stations could be established if Africa's mobile phone companies are willing to get involved. The eventual aim is to disseminate weather information via mobile phones to Africa's remotest communities. "Today you find cell phone towers in almost every part of Africa. We have never been able to establish weather monitoring on that scale, until now," says former UN secretary-general Kofi Annan. Jeffrey Sachs, head of Columbia University's Earth Institute, a partner in the scheme, says that the data would benefit everyone from national policymakers to smallholder farmers. <http://www.scidev.net/en/news/mobile-masts-used-in-african-weather-monitoring-1.html>

Information Resources:

Briefing paper: Credibility crunch-Food, poverty, and climate change: an agenda for rich-country leaders

The year 2008 is halfway to the deadline for reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Despite some progress, they will not be achieved if current trends continue. Aid promises are predicted to be missed by \$30bn, at a potential cost of 5 million lives. Starting with the G8 meeting in Japan, rich countries must use a series of high-profile summits in 2008 to make sure the Goals are met, and to tackle both climate change and the current food crisis. Economic woes must not be used as excuses: rich countries' credibility is on the line.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/debt_aid/downloads/bp113_credibility_crunch.pdf

Global sectoral industry approaches to Climate Change: Helping or harming?

Proponents of global sectoral industry approaches, such as the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, argue that sectoral agreements could help level the international playing field, provide incentives for developing countries to contribute to the global climate deal, and be more manageable than economy-wide efforts to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. In this paper Jonas Meckling assesses the two types of sectoral approach advocated by the World Business Council on Sustainable Development: voluntary sectoral target setting and sectoral industry technology co-operation against the criteria of environmental effectiveness and global equity. This paper finds that

on balance, voluntary sectoral target setting has significant flaws and does not represent a fair and safe approach to engaging industries in developed and developing countries. On the other hand, if issues relating to intellectual property rights, fair governance, adequate provision for measuring, reporting and verifying emissions reductions and corresponding financial flows, and reform of the Clean Development mechanism are resolved, then sectoral industry technology co-operation presents a potential option for engaging the private sector in delivering a fair and safe deal.'

[http://environment.developmentgateway.org:80/index.php?id=10976&tx_dgcontent_pi1\[tt_news\]=497999&cHash=7a39f08590&MP=10976-8690](http://environment.developmentgateway.org:80/index.php?id=10976&tx_dgcontent_pi1[tt_news]=497999&cHash=7a39f08590&MP=10976-8690)

Another inconvenient truth: How biofuel policies are deepening poverty and accelerating climate change

'Biofuels are presented in rich countries as a solution to two crises: the climate crisis and the oil crisis. But they may not be a solution to either, and instead are contributing to a third: the current food crisis. Meanwhile, the danger is that they allow rich-country governments to avoid difficult but urgent decisions about how to reduce consumption of oil, while offering new avenues to continue expensive support to agriculture at the cost of taxpayers. In the meantime, the most serious costs of these policies – deepening poverty and hunger, environmental degradation, and accelerating climate change – are being 'dumped' on developing countries.

[http://environment.developmentgateway.org:80/index.php?id=10976&tx_dgcontent_pi1\[tt_news\]=497934&cHash=72ab6868f&MP=10976-8690](http://environment.developmentgateway.org:80/index.php?id=10976&tx_dgcontent_pi1[tt_news]=497934&cHash=72ab6868f&MP=10976-8690)

Viet Nam: Climate Change, Adaptation and Poor People

'Viet Nam is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change. The government's impressive achievements in pulling millions of people out of poverty are seriously jeopardised by the likely increase in extreme weather events such as severe rainfall and drought, and by slow climate changes like sea level rises and warming temperatures. Poor men and women are particularly at risk. A team of Oxfam researchers travelled to the two provinces of Ben Tre and Quang Tri in May 2008 to take a snapshot of how poor families are experiencing the changing climate, and how they might deal with this in the future.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/downloads/vietnam_cc_adaptation_poverty.pdf

Turning carbon into gold

How the international community can finance climate change adaptation without breaking the bank. Recognizing that poor communities in developing countries are the least responsible for climate change but most vulnerable to its impacts, the Bali Action Plan calls for 'new and additional resources' and 'innovative finance mechanisms' to address urgent climate adaptation needs. Oxfam suggests that new financing mechanisms linked to emissions reduction regimes could be the way forward in the post-2012 climate negotiations and yield the minimum of \$50 billion per year necessary for adaptation needs in developing countries.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/downloads/bp123_turning_carbon_gold.pdf

Coping with climate change: what works for women?

Climate change adaptation policies at every level to be gender-sensitive so that they address both women's and men's needs and interests. Only this approach will be effective in building community-wide resilience to climate change, reducing gender inequalities, and so also promoting development.

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/downloads/climate_change_women.pdf

Oct 15, 2009 International Day of Rural Women

Oct 16, 2009 World Food Day

For archived DRM updates:

ADPC Website:

<http://www.adpc.net/v2007/IKM/EVENTS%20AND%20NEWS/DISASTER/2008/DISASTER-NEWS-2008.asp>

Note: The information has been collated from publicly available information. Although the sources are deemed reliable, the information reported here are topical and are subject to change.

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