



Food and Agriculture
Organization of the
United Nations



Working Group 2 “Hazards and Disaster

Risk Management in Mountains”

Strategy Paper (24/Apr/2020)

In 2011, the Working Party on the Management of Mountain Watersheds (WPMMW) established two Working Groups (WG) as part of the implementation of a novel WPMMW structure and modus operandi. WG 2 focuses on Hazard and Disaster Risk Management in Mountains.

This Working Group strategy builds on a previous strategy document from 22 October 2013 and was elaborated at the 32nd Session of the WPMMW on 25 September 2019 in Innsbruck, Austria. It is subject to further discussion and elaboration.

Contacts

Austria: Mr. Thomas FINK (Thomas.fink@bmlrt.gv.at), Federal Ministry for Agriculture, Regions and Tourism

France: Ms. Alison EVANS (Alison.evans@onf.fr), Office National des Forêts RTM

WPMMW Secretariat: Ms. Yuka MAKINO (yuka.makino@fao.org), FAO Team Leader “Water and Mountains”

I. Critical themes

WG2 “Hazards and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in Mountains” mainly dedicates its work to the interrelationship between forests, water and natural hazards occurring in mountainous regions. Within this dimensional focus, critical themes addressed by WG2 include:

- Risk resilience and capacity building
- Maintenance of structural protection measures: ensuring the functionality under life-cycle conditions
- Hazard zone mapping for efficient prevention work with special consideration of forests
- Exchange and standardisation in the field of natural disasters and risk management
- DRM in relation to the green economy and forest-watersheds
- Management and silviculture techniques in high natural hazardous risk sites
- Alternative torrent control activities in a changing regime
- Impact of torrent control activities on riparian ecology and solutions
- Structured exchange on hazard zone mapping
- Forest fire connected to mountain watersheds
- Management of snow avalanches, shallow landslides and protection forest

II. Main Activities to date

WG2 has organised several workshops over the last years. The events took place in two phases. The first phase from 2014-16 focussed on exchanging experience and knowledge on natural hazards and mitigation measures.

The second phase from 2016- 19 examined on-site case studies and practical DRM issues, where participants worked in international teams.

2014: Workshop on *Hazard zone mapping and integration of protective functions of forests*; in Sixt-Fer-à-Cheval – France

2015: Workshop on *Woody debris in Alpine rivers and torrents*; in Salzburg, Austria

2017: Workshop on *Sediment and woody debris transport regulation in torrential catchments: case study of an Alpine Torrent*; in Argentine, France

2018: Workshop on *Effect of forest and check dams on water surface, bedload input and debris earth flow in Alpine watersheds*; in Traunkirchen, Austria

2019: Workshop on *Effect of forest and check dams on water surface, bedload input and debris earth flow in Alpine watersheds*; in Grésivaudan Valley, France

2020: no physical workshop due to the outbreak of Covid-19.

The outputs of the workshops are available at: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/89331/en/>

The third phase is coordinated together with the next host country 2021 Turkey.

III. Outcomes and services of WG2

Being a network of experts from natural hazard research, national forest services and forest management, the WG2 partners prepare and offer the following outcomes and services:

Products:

- **Baseline publications**, e.g. survey of natural disasters and DRM by implementing offices in Europe;
- **DRM Training material** for practitioners in mountain watersheds;
- **Information material** on the products and services provided by the WPMMW WG2 to the EFC and member states;

Services:

- **Policy advice** and arrangement of **expert consultations** to the EFC and member countries related to DRM (target groups: governments, municipalities, civil society, research organisations);
- Development of **DRM strategies** together with the EFC and member countries
- Regular **Workshops and trainings** provided and organized with the EFC and member countries (i.e. summer trainings in a forestry school) for forest management and DRM in mountain watersheds (target groups: e.g. forest services, civil servants, universities, torrent control services, public, media)

IV. Lead and potential partner countries

WPMMW members have confirmed Austria and France to coordinate WG2 activities.

In the past, Switzerland, Germany (Bavaria), Italian Alpine provinces and Turkey have regularly and actively participated at the meetings of WG2.

Potentially, all EFC member countries with a mountainous topography may find the workshops and trainings useful and helpful. For instance, countries in the Caucasus, the Carpathian region, Scandinavia, the Dinaric Arch and Pyrenees could benefit from the exchange of best practices on DRM and forest management in mountain watersheds.

The WG is open to all EFC member countries and partners, who can propose own activities for the WG or participate in planned activities.

V. Potential partner organizations

The WG is open to all EFC member countries and nominated focal points. Moreover, potential collaboration partners are:

- Alpine Convention (PLANALP)
- EFI MED
- EFI MOUNTFOR
- Forest Europe
- INTERPRAEVENT
- ISDR
- IUFRO
- Research Institutes
- SLF (Davos)
- UNFF
- Universities

VI. Work plan

	Activity	Responsible institution
A	General activities	
A.1	Approval of WG2 strategy and work plan	WPMMW; EFC
A.2	Dissemination and network strategy	Steering Committee; WG Lead countries; WPMMW Secretariat;
A.3	Reporting to the Steering Committee	WG Lead countries
A.4	Reporting to the WPMMW Biannual Session	WG Lead countries
B	Publications / training material	
B.1	Information material for WPMMW and WG2 products and services	Flyers have been created by the Secretariat; all WPMMW members may distribute the information material
B.2	Preparation of training material for forest and DRM in mountain watersheds, to be used and disseminated in trainings and workshops;	Reports of training workshops are uploaded by the organiser to the WPMMW website; Training material should continue to be a priority and disseminated by issuing organisations
B.3	Baseline publication on protective forest, DRM and water relations – in different climatic regions in Europe;	Coordinated under the umbrella of WPMMW by Austria and FAO Secretariat
B.4	Publication and recommendations from previous WG2 workshops;	France and Austria with support of WPMMW Secretariat
B.5	Preparation of draft guidelines for different natural hazards	
C	Trainings / workshops / seminars	
C.1	Field visits of good practices in management of forests concerning water, forests and DRM;	
C.2	Organization of annual trainings, workshops and seminars; dissemination of training material; Focus on transferring practical skills	Different forest training centres in Italy, Turkey, and Austria
C.2.1	Good practice in hazard and risk mapping;	
D	Interagency collaboration	
D.1	Closer cooperation with i.e. EUSALP and PLANALP networks and Carpathian Convention	Austria, Ministry; future leads of the working groups.

VII. Potential resources and funding

- WG activities should be supported under the general commitment of the EFC and EFC-WPMMW member countries. WPMMW representatives and WG2 partners should therefore liaise with the EFC representative of the respective country for support of WPMMW activities.
- Lead countries and active partners offer the organisation and facilitation of activities and products.
- Travel and accommodation costs must be covered by delegates and sending institutions.
- Lead partners offer covering publication costs.
- Innovative funding mechanisms and joint funding proposals for activities to third parties is considered.