



IFRC Commitments for the Climate Action Summit

Preventing climate and weather-related hazards from becoming disasters

The Climate Action Summit 2019¹ aims to mobilize political and economic energy at the highest levels to advance climate action. Consultations leading to the Summit as well as within the context of the Global Commission on Adaptation² are demonstrating need for increased support to resilience and adaptation, including improved disaster risk reduction, and in particular scaling up early warning systems that lead to effective early (anticipatory) action in the most at-risk communities. This paper is IFRC's intended contribution to these processes.

Why the focus on preventing disasters?

- § Over 3100 climate and weather-related disasters (e.g. extreme rainfall, storm surges, drought, etc. have been recorded over the last 10 years, close to one every day, affect 1.9 billion people³.
- § These climate and weather-related risks are on the rise, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, increasing the urgency to respond and adapt.

Why early warning and early action?

Time and time again, we fail to take action on disasters that we see coming. While advances in science, technology and inter-institutional coordination mean that it is often possible to anticipate an extreme event and take action, there has been limited investment in ensuring information reached people and communities in high-risk areas. We can save countless lives and livelihoods if we invest in ensuring at-risk communities have access to timely, high-quality, and easily understandable climate information together with the resources to act.

What are the opportunities for accelerated action?

We have the opportunity now to scale-up the ability of governments and communities to take early action and reduce risks ahead of extreme weather events, substantially reducing mortality, human suffering and economic impact of disasters, with a focus on making the "last mile" the first mile.

This can be done through:

- § Scaling up effective early warning systems that are specifically linked to early action plans and backed up by financial resources to ensure anticipatory action in vulnerable communities.
- § Significantly increasing financing and coordination mechanisms for anticipatory action (including forecast-based financing).
- § Strengthening and linking national climate change and disaster regulatory frameworks.

¹ For more information see: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/>.

² The Global Commission on Adaptation is a group of world leaders that together seek to accelerate adaptation action, elevate the political visibility of adaptation and focus on concrete solutions. The Commission is led by Ban Ki-moon, Bill Gates, and Kristalina Georgieva, convened by 19 countries and guided by over 30 commissioners, including the IFRC Secretary General. One GCA "action track" focusses on preventing disasters. For more information see: <https://gca.org/global-commission-on-adaptation>.

³ IFRC, *World Disasters Report 2018*, <https://www.ifrc.org/en/publications-and-reports/world-disasters-report/>.



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

§ Focusing on a hidden killer: Scaling up heatwave early warning systems and action so that millions more people are covered by new or improved heatwave early warning systems, connected to longer-term risk management frameworks.

IFRC aims to:

1. Double the reach of our Climate-smart Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) programming to 100 million people in 2020, including supporting the development of early action plans for relevant hazards in vulnerable communities, seeking to ensure marginalized and vulnerable groups receive alerts and early warnings and can act on these, including supporting ecosystem-based DRR and Nature Based Solutions (NBS) in vulnerable communities that are critical to reduce disaster risks and support livelihoods;
2. Play a central role in implementation of the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership and the Global Commission on Adaption Action Track on Preventing Extreme Weather Events from becoming Disasters, scaling up coverage of the most vulnerable people by improved early warning systems, including heat-wave warning systems and early action funds to support millions of people. Specifically, we will:
 - Work with initiatives investing in early warning, such as the CREWS initiative, on a country by country basis, to ensure early warning services respond to user needs and that early warning investments lead to early action.
 - Scale up forecast based financing from 20 to 40 countries in the next five years.
3. Scale up existing work on supporting the review and development of national disaster management regulatory frameworks to support 50 countries in aligning their disaster risk management (including through nature-based solutions) and climate adaptation laws, policies, mechanisms and/or plans.
4. In line with its 2019 Environmental Policy, IFRC will comprehensively improve its environmental performance within two years. This will include avoiding adverse environmental impacts through green responses, while continuing to strengthen community resilience and climate-smart disaster risk reduction (DRR).

We invite partners – governments, donors, institutions, civil society and private sector actors – to join with us to support the Risk-informed Early Action Partnership initiative, the Global Commission on Adaptation Action Track on Preventing Extreme Weather Events from Becoming Disasters, and other important initiatives promoting resilience and adaptation. Most importantly, we invite you to work together with us to scale up action and make these goals a reality.