

# Plenaries of the Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 (MTR SF)

## Overview of the MTR SF Plenaries

The Plenaries of the **Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 (MTR SF)** provide States and non-State stakeholders the opportunity to engage in a moderated exchange and discussion to:

- take stock of progress in implementing the framework since adoption,
- examine changes in context and new emerging issues since 2015, and those expected in the period to 2030,
- examine renovations to risk governance and risk management that can accelerate and amplify actions pursuing the achievement of the outcome and goal of the Sendai Framework, and risk-informed regenerative and sustainable development.

The Plenaries form a central part of the consultations of the MTR SF to be included in a report on the MTR SF, which will inform a **high-level meeting of the General Assembly in New York on 18 and 19 May 2023**. As mandated by the General Assembly (76/204), the meeting will adopt a concise and action-oriented **political declaration** to renew commitment and accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework. The outcome of the MTR SF can also inform the quadrennial review of the SDGs at the ECOSOC **High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development** in July of 2023; the **SDGs Summit** and the **UN Secretary General's Summit of the Future**, at the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly in September 2023; and the **global stocktake of the Paris Agreement (GST)** at COP28 in November 2023.

The three MTR SF Plenaries will take place over two days in hybrid format<sup>1</sup> and inform the outcome of the Global Platform 2022. Presided over by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Host Government, MTR SF Plenary sessions are open to all registered participants of the Global Platform 2022, and are guided by the Concept Note of the MTR SF, the Guidance for Member States, and the Guidance for Stakeholders, which can be accessed [here](#).

To explore the themes of the three MTR SF Plenary sessions, visit [the Agenda](#).

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<sup>1</sup> The MTR Plenaries will take place simultaneously in-person and online

## Background to the Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework

With climate breakdown and the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrating the consequences of a failure to better understand and manage risk, and with the achievement of the goals and outcomes of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in jeopardy, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) decided<sup>2</sup> to hold a “*midterm review of the implementation of the Sendai Framework 2015-2030*” (MTR SF).

A retrospective and prospective stocktaking and review exercise, the MTR SF will assess progress made, examine challenges experienced in preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk, explore context shifts and emerging issues, and so identify renovations to risk governance and risk management able to contend with 21<sup>st</sup> century challenges. It will explore aspects of the integration of risk reduction into development, humanitarian, and climate action, allowing the re-examination and redress of our relationship with risk.

Through consultations and review by States and other stakeholders, the **MTR SF** will “assess progress in integrating disaster risk reduction into policies, programmes and investments at all levels, identify good practice, gaps and challenges and accelerate the path to achieving the goal of the Sendai Framework and its seven global targets by 2030”<sup>3</sup>.

States recognised that “the Sendai Framework....provides guidance relevant to a sustainable recovery from COVID-19 and [...] to identify and address underlying drivers of disaster risk in a systemic manner”<sup>4</sup>.

The recommendations of States and non-State stakeholders seek to amplify and accelerate action in all sectors and at all scales through to 2030 and beyond, in pursuit of the outcomes and goals of inter alia the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement, and risk-informed sustainable and regenerative development.

As both a retrospective and prospective exercise, the MTR SF process aims to:

- Prompt deep reflections in the COVID reality on how we understand the systemic nature of risk, our relationship with it, and how we can reduce disaster risk and loss.
- Support integrated partnerships and actions that harness what we know and what we do, to shape how we choose, interact and decide.
- Build collective and relational intelligence to establish new ways of knowing risk and new forms of collaboration that mean risk governance and management mechanisms and approaches are no longer overwhelmed.
- Develop policy options, and new modalities of implementation through recommendations for Governments and other stakeholders to accelerate realisation of the goal and outcome of the Sendai Framework and risk-informed sustainable development.

Consultations and review will generate critical analysis to assist countries and stakeholders develop recommendations for prioritised, accelerated and integrated international, national and local cooperation and action in the period 2023 to 2030, and to initiate nascent thinking on possible international arrangements for risk-informed sustainable development beyond 2030.

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<sup>2</sup> UNGA Resolution [A/RES/75/216](#) of 29 December 2020

<sup>3</sup> idem

<sup>4</sup> idem

## The Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework Plenaries

The Midterm Review of the Sendai Framework Plenaries (MTR SF Plenaries) will be moderated in-person and online discussions.

### Co-Chairs:

- **Mami Mizutori**  
Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction

and

- **The host Government**  
(@ Ministerial-level; to be announced)

The MTR SF Plenaries will be held<sup>5</sup> on:

- Thursday, 26 May from 14:00 – 16.30
- Thursday, 26 May from 16:30 – 19:00
- Friday, 27 May from 14:00 – 16:30

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<sup>5</sup> All times WIB+07

## MTR SF Plenary Theme

### MTR SF Plenary 2:

Beyond natural hazards – operationalising the expanded scope of the Sendai Framework.

#### Summary:

This Plenary will speak to the multi-hazard, systemic nature of risk with which governments, the private sector and other stakeholders must contend if the outcomes and goals of the Sendai Framework, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement – among other frameworks, conventions and agreements – are to be realised.

Through the lens of Paragraph 15 of the Sendai Framework, which makes clear the imperative to take measures to better understand, govern and manage risk in all its dimensions – whether environmental, biological or technological, and well beyond a focus on natural hazards – the Plenary will explore measures taken, and measures required to realise this scope in policy objective at all scales and in all domains.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis, as well as *inter alia* degrading marine ecosystems, rising morbidity and mortality due to air pollution, water scarcity or armed conflict, demonstrate that governments are critically under-prepared to tackle the systemic nature of risk and the cascading impacts of environmental, economic, and political crises. Such impacts are contributing to a steady decline in national wealth – not least among the LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS where fiscal space is constrained, and debt burden is growing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proved a timely reminder of the increasingly interconnected and interdependent nature of socio-ecological and technological systems that we inhabit. It is a warning, of how our decisions, our actions and inactions have consequences that cascade through sectors, geographies, scales and time; at unprecedented speed and magnitude.

It also shows how societies and communities are not only interconnected globally through political, economic and social systems, but also through the earth's biophysical life-support systems (ecosystems), the built environment, and increasingly through the digital world (the infrastructure for which extends into outer space).

While this constantly evolving situation exacerbates common vulnerabilities, it also creates opportunities for collective action, including through meaningful engagement of communities and constituencies. This situation has highlighted the urgency to employ the full scope of Paragraph 15 in how we assess risk, how risk is governed and policy determined, in how risk management approaches and methods can be effective in building resilience for societal development and resilience synchronised with, *inter alia*, the biosphere, the built environment and rapid changes in technology.

## Context

The COVID-19 pandemic and the converging discourse on climate resilience has validated the decision of States and non-State actors to include a more comprehensive framing of risk in the Sendai Framework – the scope of which includes man-made (or human-induced) hazards and risks, in addition to natural hazards. The Framework emphasises existing realities of *inter alia* the anthropogenic drivers of risk creation and propagation, and places human behaviour and choice at the centre of risk reduction.

While still insufficiently addressed, this is contributing to a wider integration of risk reduction perspectives in global, regional and national policies that intersect with, among others, environment, natural resource management and biodiversity, and initial deliberations on reimagining health systems policy. However, and despite existing or growing knowledge of such threats, exposure to imminent and emerging hazards and risks are often disregarded within disaster risk reduction approaches, which often remain limited to natural (and to some extent, more recently biological) hazards, and blind to the full range of global catastrophic or existential risk scenarios.

It is imperative to avoid over-reliance on linear and simplistic models of framing when shaping policy frameworks and interventions to deal with the broadened scope of risks and hazards, instead incorporating systems-based approaches that better account for interlinkages, overlaps, trade-offs, and tipping points.

Left unaddressed, these interactions can create new risks, and entrench and amplify existing risks. While trying to address the interconnected and systemic nature of risk, it is essential to meaningfully capture local processes and perspectives of understanding risk and the lived experiences of communities.

This leads to the discussions about coherence in understanding and redressing risk across various frameworks and agreements that address different but linked issues. As highlighted in the *UN Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2019 (GAR 2019)*<sup>6</sup>, a risk-based discourse can be the connecting tissue between all agendas, including for example *the 2030 Agenda* and *Addis Ababa Action Agenda for Financing for Development*, *the New Urban Agenda*, *the Paris Agreement*, *the Global Compact for Migration*, *the Convention on Biological Diversity*, and the forward-looking disposition of *Our Common Agenda*.

## Broadening the Conversation

GAR 2019<sup>7</sup> stressed that extreme changes in ecological and social systems are happening now, across multiple dimensions and scales more quickly than previously thought.

The *Global Environmental Outlook 6*<sup>8</sup> report highlights that the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution has endangered the ecological foundations of human society and the natural systems that support other species and provide invaluable ecosystem services, while at the same time their linkages result in cascading risks that compromise the possibility of progress against most, if not all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

<sup>6</sup> UNDRR (2019), *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction*, Geneva, Switzerland, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). eISBN: 978-92-1-004180-5 <https://gar.undrr.org/>

<sup>7</sup> idem

<sup>8</sup> UN Environment (2019), *Global Environment Outlook – GEO-6: Summary for Policymakers*. Nairobi. DOI 10.1017/9781108639217. <https://www.unep.org/resources/assessment/global-environment-outlook-6-summary-policymakers>

In addition, the *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019* (GSDR)<sup>9</sup> stresses the need to transform key areas of human activity, which could otherwise lead to systems failure (including in respect of planetary boundaries, food, energy, consumption and production, and continuing maladaptive development in urban spaces) and increase resilience to economic shocks and disasters caused by natural and man-made hazards, through active implementation of the Sendai Framework.

It further stresses the fundamental and urgent need to change the perception of the relationship between people and nature from humans *and* nature, to humans *as part of* nature. Further, without a significant reduction in inequalities between and within countries, any progress of the last two decades risks being undone.

Finally, the *Our Common Agenda* report<sup>10</sup> highlights the need to do things radically differently in order to avoid existential and catastrophic risks created as a result of human activity.

These messages are clear: we must move beyond incrementalism; we must act systemically and now. This includes creating the conditions for a shift in perceptions to enable a better understanding of the systemic nature of risk (as explored in GAR 2022).

## Questions

1. What progress has been observed since 2015 in addressing the full scope of hazards and risks of the Sendai Framework in:
  - a. Evolving risk assessment?
  - b. Renovations to risk governance (at the national, regional and global levels)?
  - c. Innovations in method and approach in contending with the full scope of hazards and risks?
2. What types of risks and hazards are excluded from the contemporary policies aimed at reducing risk and building resilience? Give specific examples.
3. What steps can be taken to include biological, environmental and technological hazards and risks in risk-informed sustainable and regenerative development?
4. What types of institutional arrangements can be put in place at the global, regional and national levels to operationalise policy and action frameworks that align with the full scope of hazards and risks of the Sendai Framework?
5. What tools and capacities must national governments be equipped with to help them expand the scope of their work?

<sup>9</sup> Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*, (United Nations, New York, 2019).  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/gsd2019>

<sup>10</sup> United Nations (2021), *Our Common Agenda – Report of the Secretary-General*. ISBN: 978-92-1101446-4.  
<https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/>