

Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

4 March 2004, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., White House Conference Center, Eisenhower Room

Names of absent members are indicated in italics.

Officers

Helen Wood (NOAA), Chair
John Filson (USGS), Vice-Chair for Science
Margaret Lawless (FEMA), Vice-Chair for Policy

NSTC Liaison

Gene Whitney (OSTP)

Working Group Chairs

International Working Group

Larry Roeder (State), Co-Chair
Fernando Echavarria (State), Co-Chair
Larry Weber (NSF), Co-Chair

Earth Observation Task Group

Rosalind Helz (USGS), Chair

Grand Challenges Task Group

Priscilla Nelson (NSF), Co-Chair
Noel Raufaste (NIST), Co-Chair

Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Rosalind Helz (USGS), Co-Chair
Steve Ambrose (NASA), Co-Chair

Designated Representatives

CDC *Josephine Malilay*

DHS/FEMA *Margaret Lawless*

DOD Earnest Paylor

EPA Peter Jutro

FERC Dan Mahoney

HUD *John Kennedy*

NASA Steve Ambrose

NIST *Shyam Sunder*

Noel Raufaste (alternate)

NOAA Helen Wood

NRO *Keith Fennell*

NSF Priscilla Nelson

OMB

Erin McCartney, Gary

Reisner, & Jason Freihage

OPHS *Eric Noji*

OSTP Gene Whitney

State Fernando Echavarria &
Larry Roeder, Jr.

USACE *Michael O'Connor*

USCG *Ernesto Montijo*

USFS *Susan Conard*

USGS *John Filson & Tim Cohn*

Other Attendees

NASA

Shahid Habib

NGA

Peter Rinkleff

NIST

Noel Raufaste

NSF

Larry Weber

NOAA

David Green

John Gaynor

Nathalie Valette-Silver

Rick Ohlemacher

NRC

Bill Anderson

Bob Hamilton

Patricia Kershaw

Secretariat

Dori Akerman

Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions
10:05 Approval of Meeting Minutes
10:10 Report from the Chair
10:20 Report from the OSTP Liaison
10:30 International Working Group
10:45 Earth Observation Task Group
11:00 Discussion with Representatives from the National Academies
11:15 Discussion of the SDR Grand Challenges
11:55 Close and Next Actions

Handouts

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes (February 2004)
- Draft Contribution to Dr. Marburger's Memo
- International Working Group Meeting Notes
- World Conference on Disaster Reduction Announcement and Draft Cable
- Global Disaster Information Network Announcement, Agenda, Reception Invitation
- Earth Observation Task Group Notes and Materials
- Grand Challenges Task Force Notes and Materials
- Rand Report, "Assessing Federal Research and Development for Hazard Loss Reduction."
- SDR Report, "Reducing Disaster Vulnerability Through Science and Technology"
- SDR Member Contact List
- SDR Website Access Sheet

I. Call to Order

SDR Chair Helen Wood called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and led a round of introductions.

II. Approval of Minutes

Members approved the 5 February 2004 meeting minutes.

III. Summary of Discussion

A. Report from the Chair

Helen Wood outlined the two key accomplishments for the SDR this year as set forth in the SDR FY2004 Annual Operating Plan: (1) The creation of a framework for disaster reduction research and development priorities; and, (2) The inclusion of the disaster reduction message in the U.S. Implementation Plan for the Group on Earth Observations (GEO).

She acknowledged the work of the Grand Challenges team, noting that the ultimate intent of this exercise is to create a useful document addressing Federal opportunities for investment in disaster reduction. The document will create a roadmap for the next decade of investment in disaster reduction, though it also will be available in time to frame the FY2007 budget discussions.

Ms. Wood also reported on the recent meeting of the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) in Cape Town, South Africa. Representatives of thirty-five countries adopted the proposed framework document which highlights disaster reduction as a major societal benefit of improved inter-governmental collaboration, coordination, planning and implementation in the area of Earth observations. The next GEO milestone is the ministerial meeting now called GEO II (Tokyo, Japan, 25 April 2004) at which the ministers will consider the implementation plan. Between now and then, four individuals representing the United States, Japan, the European Union, and South Africa must draft the implementation plan that acknowledges that observations alone are not enough and that the work of GEO is not to develop models, or to do research or to make decisions, but that those pieces must be combined to achieve improved decision-making.

John Gaynor asked whether there was any sort of prioritization for observations. Ms. Wood answered that there is prioritization, but there is no determination of an optimal mix for a particular purpose. Priscilla Nelson asked if the GEO teams were addressing information security concerns. Peter Jutro asked which types of information security she meant: quality assurance or protection of physical access? Priscilla Nelson clarified her response, noting concern about the sensitivities of the various types of data, especially when trying to make all pieces available in a complex system at the same time. Helen Wood responded that there is a data policy dialog in process and that it is designed to press for full and open access to data for all nations participating in the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS).

B. Report from the OSTP Liaison

Every year, the Directors of the White House Offices of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and Management and Budget (OMB) co-author a memorandum for the heads of executive departments and agencies entitled, "Interagency Research and Development Priorities." This year, Dr. Kathie Olsen, OSTP Associate Director for Science, will send a letter to the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources (CENR) chairs requesting inputs from the various CENR subcommittees to the FY2006 memorandum. Dr. Whitney noted that SDR members drafted a response last month and that he will convey that response to the appropriate people.

Dr. Whitney also announced that the FY2004 SDR re-vetting letters were sent to heads of agencies on 1 March 2004. The Secretariat sent copies of the letters to the current SDR members via e-mail and handed out hard copies of the letters in the meeting.

C. International Working Group

Larry Roeder, Jr. reported on the recent work of the International Working Group, noting that the last meeting included discussions of the upcoming Global Disaster Information Network (GDIN) conference (26-29 March 2004), the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (18-22 January 2005), and the impact of export controls on research (as managed by the Treasury's Office of Foreign Asset Control).

Mr. Roeder distributed copies of the GDIN conference agenda and invited members to a GDIN reception on the evening of 25 March 2004. He also distributed a draft cable clarifying the U.S. agenda requests for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. He asked SDR members to submit suggestions and recommendations no later than 12 March at 5 p.m. ET. Mr. Roeder noted that the wording in the cable is meant to influence, not constrict. He also cautioned members to be careful in their agenda recommendations as the conference planners are interested in linking climate change to increased disasters, a theory with which the U.S. Government does not agree. One to two representatives of the U.S. Government will go to conference preparatory committee meetings later this year and will have the opportunity to add still more items to the conference agenda.

Tim Cohn asked about the level of people who will be attending the meeting. Assistant secretaries and below are invited, though some countries still may choose to send ministers. The United States is adamant that no legally-binding agreements issue from this meeting. Instead, the purpose of the conference is to have an opportunity for all interested parties to meet and to advance the thinking in the disaster management community.

Fernando Echavarria reported that Prvoslav Davinic, National Coordinator of Working Table III of the Stability Pact for South East Europe, formally invited appropriate U.S. Government officials and scientists to participate in "The First Mediterranean Conference on Satellite Observation of Earth/Remote Sensing," which will be held in Belgrade on 21-23 April 2004. The idea for the conference originated in 2002 as part of discussions in the Stability Pact Secretariat related to the Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Initiative. According to Davinic, this initiative is designed to help countries in the region to cope with the consequences of man-made (terrorism) or natural disasters. The U.S. Government is a major donor to this group and the U.S. Ambassador has been approached repeatedly with requests to participate. Dr. Echavarria invited SDR members to recommend appropriate participants from their agencies, if any.

The International Working Group will meet again on 16 March 2004 and will discuss the following three issues, among others: (1) GDIN Conference; (2) Impact of Export Controls on Scientific Cooperation; and (3) Preparations for World Conference on Disaster Reduction. The Secretariat will send additional meeting details by e-mail when they become available.

Action:

- Secretariat will send a copy of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction cable to members.
- Members will send their inputs on the World Conference on Disaster Reduction cable to Larry Roeder (roederla@state.gov, 202-647-5070) by 12 March 2004 at 5 p.m. ET.

- Members will recommend participants in “The First Mediterranean Conference on Satellite Observation of Earth/Remote Sensing to Fernando Echavarria (echavarriafr@state.gov, 202-663-2395) by 12 March 2004 at 5 p.m. ET.

D. Earth Observation Task Group (EOTG)

Dr. Rosalind Helz reported on the work of the Earth Observation Task Group (EOTG), noting that the EOTG has received wide acknowledgement for the work accomplished to date. The Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction is the only CENR subcommittee that has submitted completed contributions to the Interagency Working Group on Earth Observations (IWGEO) and the IWGEO task group leaders have distributed the EOTG’s work nationally and internationally.

She also noted that the charts still do not accurately represent the issues related to sea ice. Helen Wood recommended that sea ice be included in the coastal hazards section and Nathalie Valette-Silver volunteered to coordinate with Bruce Hicks and Dr. Helz to support this.

Dr. Helz outlined the changes in the IWGEO U.S. National Plan outline and the addition of a new chapter for disaster reduction. Referring to materials included in the meeting packets, she spoke briefly to the drafts of Chapters 2 and 4 as completed by the IWGEO. She agreed that Chapter 4, the disaster reduction chapter, requires additional information and editing by the SDR and the Earth Observation Task Group. Members who are interested in updating this chapter may participate in the process by joining the next teleconference of the Earth Observation Task Group. Dr. Helz will schedule the teleconference and will share details with the Secretariat for distribution to all SDR members.

Actions:

- Peter Jutro will supply contact information to Rosalind Helz (rhelz@usgs.gov, 703-648-6086).
- Nathalie Valette-Silver will supply two contacts to Rosalind Helz (rhelz@usgs.gov, 703-648-6086), one for sea ice and one for oil spills.
- Members will comment on the Implementation Plan outline and Chapter 2 by writing Rosalind Helz (rhelz@usgs.gov, 703-648-6086).
- Rosalind Helz and the EOTG members will write a first revision of Chapter 4 of the U.S. implementation plan and will share it with members.

E. Grand Challenges Discussion

National Academies representatives Patricia Krenshaw, Bill Anderson, and Bob Hamilton joined the conversation to discuss opportunities for additional interaction between the SDR and the National Academies. Bob Hamilton began by speaking to the history between the entities, noting the integral relationship between the National Academies, the Disasters Roundtable, and the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction. He reminded members that the Roundtable cannot make recommendations and that the purpose of Roundtable is to bring in speakers to present their opinions. These opinions can be distilled and used for the Subcommittee’s purposes, but cannot become Academy recommendations. Dr. Hamilton also suggested the members look for a process that contributes to the overall process of priority setting.

Bill Anderson spoke to the work of the Disasters Roundtable Steering Committee, the policy-making body for the Roundtable, which includes representatives from several agencies. According to Dr. Anderson, one way to strengthen the relationship between the Subcommittee and the Roundtable is to increase the participation of Federal agencies on the Steering Committee. He also invited everyone

present to the 22 June 2004 Disasters Roundtable on Public Health and Disasters. For additional information about the Disasters Roundtable, visit <http://dels.nas.edu/dr/>.

Tim Cohn noted that the Roundtable is an excellent venue for discussions of Subcommittee topics and other problems the SDR is asked to address. He amplified Dr. Anderson's message related to Steering Committee participation, noting that it is critical to have as many Federal agency participants and outside experts involved in the process as possible.

Grand Challenges leaders Priscilla Nelson and Noel Raufaste reported on the recent activities of the Grand Challenges special focus group, reminding members that the purpose of the activity is to identify the ten-year national investment priorities for research and development related to disaster reduction. Noel Raufaste recounted the discussions in the February 27, 2004 meeting and acknowledged all members for participation in the meeting and for submitting Grand Challenges. Priscilla Nelson also acknowledged the work completed to date, though reminded members that there still is more work to do. Helen Wood noted that the charge to the Grand Challenges team is to be a voice in identifying priority areas for investments. This includes noting opportunities and barriers to these Grand Challenges and looking for ways to effectively engage the broader communities and other elements.

Bob Hamilton wondered if the publication of the document coincident with the publication of the FY2007 budget means the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will need to sign off on the report. Helen Wood reminded members that the OMB has to sign off on the document no matter what the content is, and that this is a ten-year outlook without budget numbers. It must be relevant to the FY2007 budget and the links to the FY2007 budget must be shown, but we are creating a long-term roadmap. Much is expected of this group and we must rely on our experience and the collected wisdom within agencies.

Gene Whitney clarified the process, adding that mechanisms already exist for dealing with next year's individual budget concerns. In fact, that is part of the concern: Each year, all of the agencies enter annual reaction mode even though the annual requirements tend to be the same. Now is the time to look forward. The purpose of the Grand Challenges exercise is to look into the next ten years and from that future construct the context for short-term activities. We must not enter reaction mode, but instead we must set the future research and development priorities for the Federal government. At this point, we cannot think about whether we can afford to pay for this. Though important, that is merely a filter and one we will apply later. Our job is to identify what the Nation needs from the Federal research and development enterprise.

Members commented on the PowerPoint presentation summarizing the work accomplished over the last two months. Nathalie Valette-Silver noted that the Phase 1 promise for 2015, "In 2015, there exist models of the physical and chemical processes and the relevant interconnections thus facilitating greater comprehension of disasters," is missing a reference to the biological processes.

Priscilla Nelson suggested that it is now appropriate to add additional opportunities for the discovery of new information into the process. This may include an off-site, additional dialogue, and other opportunities for discussion and idea generation. She reminded members that there is more than one way to frame this process and the result. For example, the SDR could expand this conversation and make it a topic of the September Disasters Roundtable. Helen Wood noted that the purpose of the Roundtable is to have discussion of overall Grand Challenges objectives, not to facilitate a reaction to the Grand Challenges work created by the Subcommittee. Bob Hamilton agreed, though added that

regardless of which outlets for discussion are selected, it is critical to develop a structure or an agenda for a proposed Roundtable as soon as possible so that the appropriate people are included.

Members unanimously agreed that there is more to discuss, and that the discussion should occur in the next meeting of the Subcommittee. The 1 April 2004 meeting of the SDR will begin at 9:30 a.m. ET in order to accommodate a complete conversation.

Actions:

- Tricia Kershaw will send a one-page statement on the National Academies Disasters Roundtable to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will circulate the statement to all members.
- The April meeting of the SDR will be held on 1 April 2004 and will extend from 9:30 a.m. until 12 p.m. ET.
- Gene Whitney will clarify the Federal Advisory Committee Act guidelines related to this effort.
- SDR members will make comments and suggest additions to the Grand Challenges meeting notes and PowerPoint summary by sending comments to Priscilla Nelson (pnelson@nsf.gov, 703-292-7018) and Noel Raufaste (noel.raufaste@nist.gov, 301-975-6062). Priscilla and Noel also will send an e-mail with additional information and opportunities for participation.

IV. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m. ET.

V. Agenda Items and Other Communications with the Subcommittee

Please send proposed agenda items and any other items intended for distribution to the full Subcommittee to Dori Akerman (dori@grs-solutions.com) by March 24, 2004.

VI. Contact Information

SDR Leadership

Helen Wood, Chair, 202-482-6120, helen.wood@noaa.gov
John Filson, Vice-Chair for Science, 703-648-6715, jfilson@usgs.gov
Margaret Lawless, Vice -Chair for Policy, 202-646-3027, margaret.lawless@dhs.gov

International Working Group

Larry Roeder, Jr., Co-Chair, 202-647-5070, roederla@state.gov
Fernando Echavarría, Co-Chair, 202-663-2395, echavarríafr@state.gov
Larry Weber, Co-Chair, 703-292-7240, lweber@nsf.gov

Remote Sensing Applications Working Group

Rosalind Helz, Co-Chair, 703-648-6086, rhelz@usgs.gov
Steve Ambrose, Co-Chair, 202-358-0851, sambrose@hq.nasa.gov

Earth Observation Task Group

Rosalind Helz, Chair, 703-648-6086, rhelz@usgs.gov

Grand Challenges Task Group

Priscilla Nelson, Co-Chair, 703-292-7018, pnelson@nsf.gov
Noel Raufaste, Co-Chair, 301-975-6062, noel.raufaste@nist.gov

Secretariat

Dori Akerman, 703-560-7448, dori@grs-solutions.com

VII. Future Meetings

The SDR meets on the first or second Thursday of every month from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET in the Eisenhower Room of the White House Conference Center:

2004

April 1, 2004 (Note: This meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m.)

May 6, 2004

June 3, 2004

July 8, 2004

August 5, 2005

September 9, 2004

October 7, 2004

November 4, 2004

December 2, 2004

VIII. Summary of Actions

Topic of Discussion	Action	Lead(s)	Date Due
III.C. International Working Group	Secretariat will send a draft copy of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction cable to members.	Secretariat	5 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.C. International Working Group	Members will send their inputs on the World Conference on Disaster Reduction cable to Larry Roeder (roederla@state.gov, 202-647-5070) by 12 March 2004 at 5 p.m. ET.	Members, Larry Roeder, Jr.	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.C. International Working Group	Members will recommend participants in "The First Mediterranean Conference on Satellite Observation of Earth/Remote Sensing to Fernando Echavarria (echavarriafr@state.gov, 202-663-2395) by 12 March 2004 at 5 p.m. ET.	Members, Fernando Echavarria	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.D. Earth Observation Task Group	Rosalind Helz and the EOTG members will write a first revision of Chapter 4 of the U.S. implementation plan and will share it with members.	Rosalind Helz	10 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.D. Earth Observation Task Group	Members will comment on the implementation plan outline and Chapter 2 by writing Rosalind Helz (rhelz@usgs.gov, 703-648-6086) and copying the Secretariat (dori@grs-solutions.com, 703-560-7448).	Members, Rosalind Helz	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.D. Earth Observation Task Group	Peter Jutro will supply contact information to Rosalind Helz (rhelz@usgs.gov, 703-648-6086).	Peter Jutro, Rosalind Helz	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.D. Earth Observation Task Group	Nathalie Valette-Silver will supply two contacts to Rosalind Helz (rhelz@usgs.gov, 703-648-6086), one for sea ice and one for oil spills.	Nathalie Valette-Silver, Rosalind Helz	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.E. Grand Challenges Discussion	The Secretariat will invite Bill Hooke, Bob Hamilton, Bill Anderson, and Tricia Kershaw to the April SDR meeting	Secretariat	1 April 2004 9:30 a.m. ET
III.E. Grand Challenges Discussion	SDR members will make comments and suggest additions to the Grand Challenges meeting notes and PowerPoint summary by sending comments to Priscilla Nelson (pnelson@nsf.gov, 703-292-7018) and Noel Raufaste (noel.raufaste@nist.gov, 301-975-6062). Priscilla and Noel also will send an e-mail with additional information and opportunities for participation.	Members, Priscilla Nelson, Noel Raufaste	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.E. Grand Challenges Discussion	Tricia Kershaw will send a one-page statement on the National Academies Disasters Roundtable to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will circulate the statement to all members.	Tricia Kershaw, Secretariat	12 March 2004 5 p.m. ET
III.E. Grand Challenges Discussion	The April meeting of the SDR will be held on 1 April 2004 and will extend from 9:30 a.m. until 12 p.m. ET.	Members	1 April 2004 9:30 a.m. ET
III.E. Grand Challenges Discussion	Gene Whitney will clarify the Federal Advisory Committee Act guidelines related to this effort.	Gene Whitney	1 April 2004 9:30 a.m. ET