

Meeting Minutes of the Subcommittee on Disaster Reduction

03 May 2007, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., New Executive Office Building Room

Italics indicate absent members. "T" indicate members participating via teleconference.

Officers

David Applegate (USGS), Chair
Margaret Davidson (NOAA), Vice-Chair

NSTC Liaison

Gene Whitney (OSTP)

Working Group Chairs

International Working Group
Ralph Braibanti (State), Chair

Infrastructure Task Group

Joy Pauschke (NSF), Chair

Earth Observations Working Group

Steve Ambrose (NASA), Co-Chair
Tim Battista (NOAA), Co-Chair
Bruce Quirk (USGS), Co-Chair

Resource Impacts Task Group

Susan Conard (USFS), Chair

Designated Representatives

BLM Ronald Huntsinger
CDC *Mark Keim*
DHS Bruce Davis
DHS/FEMA *David Maurstad*
DHS/USCG Suzanne Strohl
(T)
DOD *Al Johnson*
DOE *Patricia Hoffman*
DOT Sheila Duwadi
EOP / OSTP Gene Whitney

EPA *Peter Jutro*
HUD *David Engel*
NASA Steve Ambrose
NGB Daniel Bochicchio
NIH Allen Dearry (T)
NIST Jack Hayes
Noel Raufaste
NOAA *Margaret Davidson*
NSF Joy Pauschke

OPHS *Sven Rodenbeck*
State *Ralph Braibanti*
Fernando Echavarria
USACE *Barbara J. Sotirin*
USAID *Peter Morris*
USDA / USFS Susan Conard
USGS David Applegate
Paula Gori (T)

Other Attendees

DOE David Salem
DOI/BLM John Haugh
EPA Stephen Clark
FEMA Craig Wingo (T)
FWS Bob Adamcik
NASA Shahid Habib

NOAA John Gaynor
Nell Codner
Nathalie Valtte-Silver
Chad McNutt
John Morrisroe

Secretariat Allison Kilcourse
Emily Wallace
State Paul Birdsall
Jordan Muller
USACE Dimitra Syriopoulou
USDA Victor Cole

Agenda

10:00 Welcome and Introductions
10:05 Approval of Meeting Minutes
10:10 Report from the Chair
10:20 Report from the NSTC Liaison
10:30 Working Group Reports
11:00 Discuss ISDR Global Platform Meeting
11:15 Presentation-Climate Change Science
Program
11:55 Close and Next Actions

Handouts

- Agenda
- April Meeting Minutes
- Plenary Statement
- Climate Change Plan
- Journal

I. Call to Order

SDR Chair David Applegate called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

II. Summary of Discussion

A. Report from the Chair

Dr. David Applegate (USGS) began by discussing SDR coordination with the USGEO Ministerial Task Group and the disaster topic offered for the GEO Ministerial Meeting focused on tsunamis.

The April 20th CENR meeting was very climate-oriented because the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Associate Director for Science, Dr. Sharon Hays, led the U.S. delegation for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group one and two reports and Dr. Bill Brennan gave a presentation from the Climate Change Science Program.

Dr. Applegate thanked the SDR members who responded positively to his request for contributions for the SDR Secretariat. He will follow up with specific information about how to transfer the funds.

B. Report from the NSTC Liaison

Dr. Whitney began by recapping the journey of the Grand Challenges Implementation Plan documents, OMB staff changes, and OMB comments on the documents. In short, OMB is still weighing their options and has not approved the document for publication.

Dr. Applegate reminded Dr. Whitney that the Next Big Disasters document is still in the clearance process and inquired when we could proceed to CENR clearance. The document is currently on Sharon Hays' desk. Dr. Whitney responded that the document may be overcome by events and that the group should concentrate on the "here and now," which is hazards and climate. Dr. Applegate acknowledged and reminded Dr. Whitney that the document is being cleared at OSTP's request and Dr. Whitney agreed to check on the status.

On the topic of Next Big Disasters, Dr. Bruce Davis (DHS) announced that the federal government is currently simulating some disaster scenarios. Dr. Steven Ambrose (NASA) discussed a hurricane simulation wherein the eye passes over Rhode Island. Col. Bochicchio (NGB) mentioned a "nuclear attack" scenario occurring on May 10th and the Mid-America Earthquake Center (MAEC) is conducting earthquake simulations. Dr. Bruce Davis (DHS) suggested that SDR request the subsequent scenario reports (known as "after action reports") for an examination of science and technology deficiencies.

Dr. Whitney reminded the group to concentrate on the science and technology aspect of these simulations and not the humanitarian response. Dr. Bob O'Connor (NSF) reminded members that science does include social science.

C. Discuss ISDR Global Platform Meeting

Mr. Paul Birdsall (State) briefed the members on the upcoming ISDR Global Platform meeting in Geneva, Switzerland on June 5-7, 2007. He reported that the meeting would raise risk reduction awareness, share practices on this topic, and guide the ISDR on implementation by assessing progress on the Hyogo Framework. There will also be discussions on whether a global or regional stage is the best setting for future discussions. The meeting is very ambitious; 18 to 35 side events have been scheduled and 25 percent of expected countries will have cabinet-level participation. There has been very good funding that will allow G77 countries to travel to and participate in the event. The U.S. delegation will include OSTP, USGS, NOAA, FEMA, and State; participants must register for the delegation by May 15, 2007.

There will be a support group meeting next week in Geneva to finalize the meeting planning. Day one will concentrate on high level dialogue; they will invite speakers to post their statement on the internet prior to the meeting. Day two will have workshops on the panels; they will discuss who will be involved, adapting and preparing for climate change, and provide a Benefit Cost Analysis. Day three will discuss the way forward on implementing the Hyogo Framework. Sir John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator for the United Nations, is likely to attend.

A draft plenary statement was provided with the meeting materials. SDR members should provide their comments to Emily Wallace by 5:00 p.m. EDT on May 11, 2007.

Dr. Fernando Echavarria (State) requested that the Secretariat circulate a copy of the U.S. National Platform with the meeting minutes.

D. Presentation - Mary Glackin, Climate Change Science Program

The intent of the presentation was to give an overview of the Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) and highlight strategic plans. A goal of the CCSP is to start a dialogue between the two CENR subcommittees. The Chair (Secretary of Energy), the Vice Chair (Secretary of Commerce), and the Executive Director (OSTP director) meet every two to three months and report to the Interagency Working Group on Climate Change Science and Technology. Ms. Glackin commented that the group is renewing its commitment to decision support and communication. The CCSP is currently discussing how the change of climate extremes impacts disasters. Mr. John Gaynor (NOAA) noted that Report 3.3, Climate Extremes, will be available for public comment this summer and suggested SDR comments could be valuable to the CCSP. Ms. Glackin agreed and will look for other areas where SDR can provide expert comments.

It was noted that some impacts are regional and will need regional solutions (i.e., 2.2 Carbon Cycle).

Mr. Steve Clark (EPA) noted that heat waves and heavy rain are problems that only become disasters when the infrastructure is overloaded which leads to loss of life.

Ms. Glackin stated that USGEO could draw a line around the societal benefit area of disasters and draw together several CENR subcommittee working groups and Mr. Chad McNutt offered some direct contact information.

Dr. Applegate requested further information on the structure for the assessment reports, which Mr. McNutt will supply.

Dr. Susan Conard (USFS) noted that 4.4 Adaptation discusses mitigation, which is an important SDR topic.

Dr. Whitney commented that we need to dispel myths about areas where climate change is or is not creating an impact. Dr. Applegate countered that it is important to improve resilience regardless of the cause.

Ms. Glackin will provide current report drafts to SDR so the Subcommittee can see the state of the science and discuss science and technology steps that will help to mitigate disaster.

Further information about the CCSP can be found online at climatescience.gov.

III. Working Group Reports

Earth Observations Working Group

Mr. Steve Ambrose (NASA) reported that a rewrite of the Grand Challenge Earth Observations white paper is available for SDR member comment by Friday, May 11th.

Dr. Applegate mentioned the issue of data policy and the fact that many countries want to make money on their weather data and capability. He also asked about the decadal surveys. Steve Ambrose answered that a response is on the way including real costs and the need to balance with a moon-Mars mission.

Infrastructure Task Group

Dr. Joy Pauschke (NSF) reported that the group met last month. She requested authors for 3-4 page write-ups on the Grand Challenge areas; they already have the assistance of the DOT, DOE, and USACE. They need volunteers for the EPA, Public Health Services, Telecommunications, Emergency Services, DHS, chemicals, and banking and finance.

Dr. Whitney reminded us of the spectrum of risk between natural disasters and terrorist disasters. Although there is an overlap, it is important for SDR to stay on the natural hazards side.

Col. Bochicchio asked about how we classify pandemics and Dr. Whitney acknowledged that this is a difficult area because it is a public health issue and a slow-onset disaster. This is where we benefit greatly from our interaction with the CDC and NIH.

Resource Impacts Task Group

Dr. Susan Conard (USFS) stated that the group had met four times since January but they were still settling membership and defining their mission statement. They are looking at the Grand Challenges Implementation Plans to find areas where resource impacts were developed and where were lacking. A discussion about how to define a natural resource followed. Susan Conard noted that the group could benefit from better agency coverage (specifically the DOI). The goal of RITG is to have a report to SDR by the end of the fiscal year.

IV. Close and Next Actions

The next SDR meeting will be on Thursday June 7th in the New Executive Office Building (located at 725 17th Street, NW).

V. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

VI. 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 New Executive Office Building (contact the Secretariat to facilitate building entry):

June 7, 2007	September 6, 2007	November 1, 2007
July 19, 2007	October 4, 2007	December 6, 2007

VII. 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 Emily Wallace (ewallace@grs-solutions.com).

VIII. Contact Information SDR Leadership

David Applegate, Chair, 703-648-6715, applegate@usgs.gov
Margaret Davidson, Vice Chair, 843-740-1220, margaret.davidson@noaa.gov
Gene Whitney, NSTC Liaison, 202-456-6081, gwhitney@ostp.eop.gov

International Working Group

Ralph Braibanti, Chair, 202-663-2330, braibantirl@state.gov

Earth Observations Working Group

Steve Ambrose, Co-Chair, 202-358-0851, sambrose@nasa.gov
Tim Battista, Co-Chair, 301-713-3028 x171, tim.battista@noaa.gov
Bruce Quirk, Co-Chair, 605-594-6040, quirk@usgs.gov

Secretariat

Emily Wallace, 703-560-7448, ewallace@grs-solutions.com

IV. Summary of May Actions

Action	Lead	By When
Circulate U.S. National Platform	Secretariat	Complete
Review and submit any comments on ISDR plenary statement to the Secretariat (ewallace@grs-solutions.com)	SDR Members	May 11
Review and comment on the Earth Observations white paper	SDR Members	May 11