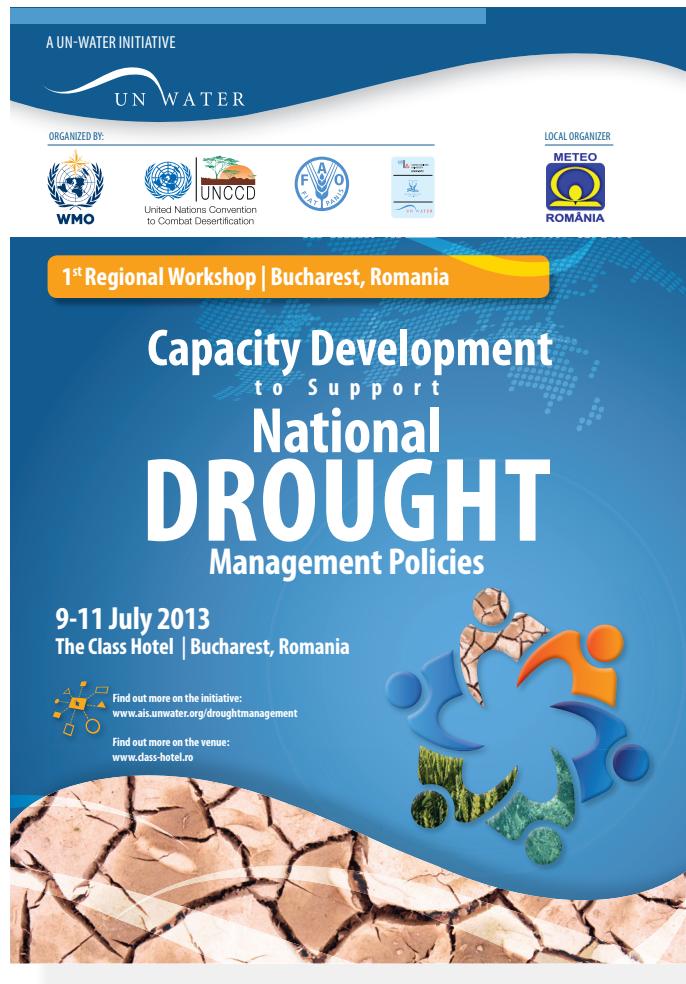


# 1<sup>ST</sup> REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT NATIONAL DROUGHT MANAGEMENT POLICIES

9-11 JULY 2013  
BUCHAREST, ROMANIA



ORGANIZED BY:



United Nations Convention  
to Combat Desertification



LOCAL ORGANIZER:





## BACKGROUND OF THE INITIATIVE

Given the far-reaching nature of droughts and their dramatic impacts on food security, social stability, environment and the economies at large, several United Nations agencies within the context of UN-Water approached the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) to start a new multi-year capacity development initiative: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Secretariat and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

Acknowledging that the impact of droughts can be significantly reduced through proactive and risk-based drought management policies and practices, this initia-

tive aims to move countries from emergency and recovery strategies, which regulate disaster response after droughts have taken their toll, to risk-based strategies.

At the occasion of the High-level Meeting on National Drought Policy (HMNDP) held in March 2013 in Geneva, the involved agencies launched and signed the Framework of Cooperation for the initiative, presented by the Chair of UN-Water, Michel Jarraud. Throughout 2013 and 2014, workshops will be held in the following regions, with an international wrap-up workshop in 2014:

- Eastern Europe
- Asia-Pacific
- Africa
- Latin America and the Caribbean





## THE FIRST REGIONAL WORKSHOP

After the kick-off in Geneva, Romania was selected to be the location of the first regional workshop for Eastern Europe, with the National Meteorological Administration of Romania as the host institution, based on Romania's expressed interest and the capacity of its organization to host the workshop as defined in a signed Framework of Cooperation.

The Eastern European regional workshop was held from 9-11 July 2013 in Bucharest. The three-day workshop was attended by 24 participants from 10 countries in the Eastern European region: Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia and Turkey.

In the opening session, two high level Government authorities, Ms. Elena Dumitru, Secretary of State at

the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change and Dr. Ion Sandu, Director General of the National Meteorological Administration of Romania, gave opening statements. Dr. Donald Wilhite, a Professor at the University of Nebraska, USA and book series editor for 'Drought and Water Crises' presented the key note on 'Risk-based national drought policy: background, challenges and opportunities'.

The following session was dedicated to presentations and discussions of country reports by the participants from the 10 countries. Most of the countries were represented by 2-3 participants from diverse ministries, reflecting the interdisciplinary nature of drought. The country reports assessed the state of the national drought management practices of the respective countries. Preparing the country reports





in advance provided participants from the same countries an opportunity to work together ahead of the workshop, creating a network among different ministries.

At the core, the initiative is based on the proposed elements in the Compendium on National Drought Policy (Sivakumar et al., 2011, p. 128-135), which are the result of an expert meeting held in July 2011 in Washington D.C. These experts developed a set of key elements of national drought policy under the following three areas: i) Drought Monitoring and Early Warning Systems; ii) Vulnerability Assessment and Impacts; and iii) Emergency Relief and Response. As situations vary significantly from country to country, no prescriptive or stringent set of elements of a national drought policy was defined, but rather a set of elements guiding the policy development in each country's individual and specific situation.

The workshop's thematic presentations were structured in line with these three key elements. Topics covered included 'Drought monitoring and early warning systems', 'Vulnerability and risk assessment', 'Drought preparedness, mitigation and responses' and 'Action plan towards developing drought management policies'; each thematic presentation was followed by extended round table discussions in breakout groups.

**The UN-Water Members engaged in this initiative were represented by Dr. Mohamed Bazza (Senior Land and Water Officer, FAO); Dr. Robert Stefanski (Chief of Agricultural Meteorology Division, Climate and Water Department, WMO) and Dr. Jamal Annagylyjova (Programme Officer, UNCCD). UNW-DPC, as the main organizer of event, was represented by its two Programme Officers, Dr. Daniel Tsegai and Dr. Jens Liebe.**





## WORKSHOP OUTCOMES AND FOLLOW-UP

The sessions assessed various thematic areas such as the importance of monitoring drought, the steps on drought vulnerability and risk assessment and the typologies of different drought risk management measures including drought preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. More importantly, participants were introduced to the generic 10-step process of formulating drought policies.

**The workshop achieved its goal in that it**

- 1) raised the understanding of the participants in terms of the needs and strategies for national drought policies and preparedness plans that place emphasis on risk management instead of crisis management;**
- 2) established scientifically sound, comprehensive and integrated understanding on drought early warning systems, vulnerability and risk assessment preparedness;**
- 3) created networks to enhance knowledge and information sharing; and**
- 4) promoted institutional coordination at the national and sectoral level to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of measures to address drought.**

Finally, the cost of inaction on drought and the economics of drought were highlighted and cost effectiveness of risk-based drought management strategies when compared with the cost of disaster response was underlined.

**The outcomes and experiences of this first regional workshop in the NDMP initiative will be carried through to the regional workshops in other regions throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean in 2013 and 2014. The results of all regional workshops will feed into the final international wrap-up workshop, to be held in 2014. Further results will be included in various reports and other publications, as well as the initiative's online platform:**

[www.ais.unwater.org/droughtmanagement](http://www.ais.unwater.org/droughtmanagement)