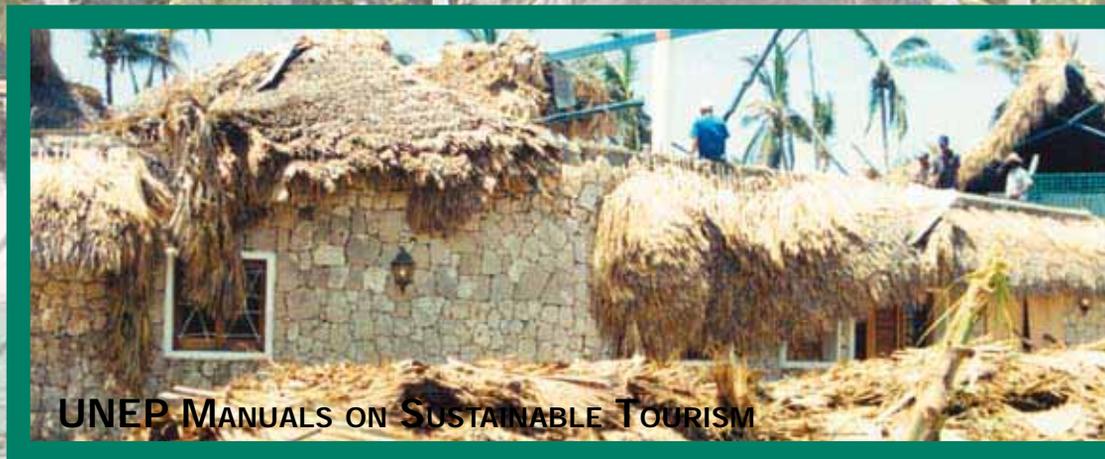




# DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FOR COASTAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

*A Practical Guide for Decision Makers*

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME



UNEP MANUALS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



International Strategy for  
Disaster Reduction



**CAST**

Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism

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# Disaster Risk Management For Coastal Tourism Destinations Responding to Climate Change

**A Practical Guide for Decision makers**



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## Foreword

The sustainability of coastal tourism destinations depends partly on their ability to adapt planning and management practices to the impacts of climate change and also to increase their ability to effectively manage natural disasters.

Scientific evidence suggests that climate change will exacerbate weather-related disasters that will be not only more frequent but also more powerful and consequently will put coastal tourism destinations in an almost constant state of alert.

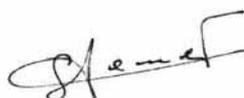
When sudden disaster strikes, rescuers often have only a short time-sometimes no more than 24 hours-in which they can expect to find survivors. Disaster experts refer to these 'golden hours', meaning the initial period when a rapid response capability is vital, and when preparedness (or lack of it!) can make all the difference. Experience has shown, time and again, that it is local people who are best placed to save lives and to coordinate the return to normality. It is the degree to which people are prepared for disasters that determines how vulnerable or resilient their community will be.

Responding to this challenge UNEP in cooperation with the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST) developed this practical handbook to support coastal tourism destinations to prepare and respond to natural disasters. The handbook has the following objectives:

- ✓ increase the operational capacity of local communities in coastal tourism destinations to respond in emergencies caused by natural disasters;
- ✓ support the adaptation efforts of these communities to climate change; and
- ✓ reduce the impacts of natural disasters to local communities in coastal tourism destinations

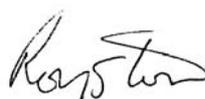
The handbook provides disaster managers, local and municipal and community planners, as well as other stakeholders in the tourism sector with a practical guidance on how to better prepare for disasters in coastal destinations.

By using this handbook we hope that coastal destinations will be able to mainstream sustainability into their tourism planning and management process and will be ready to better respond to natural disasters, thus creating better tourism destinations for all.



**Sylvie Lemmet**

Director  
UNEP - DTIE



**Sir Royston O. Hopkin KCMG**

Chairman  
CAST

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## Table of Contents

Foreword  
Acknowledgements  
Table of Contents  
Glossary  
Executive Summary

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>15</b>
1.1	Purpose of the Handbook	15
1.2	Target Audience	17
1.3	Organization and Content	17
<b>2</b>	<b>CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTERS AND TOURISM</b>	<b>19</b>
2.1	Climate Change Impacts on Tourism	19
2.2	Tourism as a contributor to economic development	21
2.3	Tourism Destinations at Risk	22
2.4	Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies	24
2.5	Small Island Developing States (SIDs)	26
<b>3</b>	<b>DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORKS AND APPROACHES</b>	<b>29</b>
3.1	Introduction	29
3.2	The Disaster Management Cycle	29
3.3	The UNISDR Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)	33
3.4	Regional Tourism Industry Approaches to Disaster Risk Management	33
3.5	National and Local Level Frameworks	36
3.5.1	The Bahamas Islands, Caribbean	36
3.5.2	Phuket Island Province, the Kingdom of Thailand	37
3.6	Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL): An International Initiative and Local Preparedness Framework	39
3.7	Conclusions	42
<b>4</b>	<b>MANAGING DISASTER RISKS AT COASTAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS: Community Organization, Risk Assessment and Evaluation</b>	<b>45</b>
4.1	Introduction	45
4.2	Establishing a Coordinating Group	46
4.2.1	Activities and Priorities of the Coordinating Group	48
4.2.2	Factors facilitating or hindering this task	49
4.3	Assessing Coastal Tourism Risks	49
4.3.1	Natural Hazard Identification and Prioritization	51
4.3.2	Determining the Level of Exposure of a Tourism Destination	53
4.3.3	Evaluating Risk Reduction Options	59

<b>5</b>	<b>DEVELOPING THE DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLAN</b>	<b>63</b>
5.1	Introduction	63
5.2	Plan Development Process	63
5.2.1	Assessing Local Preparedness and Response Capability	64
5.2.2	Organizing the Plan Writing Team	66
5.2.3	Engaging Stakeholders and the General Public	66
5.2.4	Plan Approval	66
5.2.5	Continuous Review Process	67
5.3	Essential Elements of a Comprehensive Preparedness Plan	67
<b>6</b>	<b>IMPLEMENTING THE PREPAREDNESS PLAN</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1	Introduction	73
6.2	Testing the Disaster Preparedness Plan	74
6.2.1	Organizing and Preparing for Exercises	75
6.2.2	Conducting Simulation Exercises	76
6.2.3	Revising and Updating the Preparedness Plan	77
6.3	Capacity Building	78
6.4	Public Outreach and Education	81
6.5	Conflict Resolution	82
<b>7</b>	<b>ACHIEVING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE</b>	<b>85</b>
7.1	The Imperative for Disaster Risk Reduction	85
7.2	Mainstreaming Disaster Risk	87

## Appendices:

- A: Guidance on Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Assessment
- B: Shelter Assessment Model
- C: Checklist for Risk Reduction Options
- D: Additional Guidance for Writing Disaster Preparedness Plans
- E: 15 Actions to Develop a Disaster Preparedness Plan for a Coastal Tourism Destination

## **GLOSSARY<sup>1</sup>**

### ***Capacity***

A combination of all the strengths and resources available within a community, society or organization that can reduce the level of risk, or the effects of a disaster. Capacity may include physical, institutional, social or economic means as well as skilled personal or collective attributes such as leadership and management. Capacity may also be described as capability.

### ***Climate Change***

The slow variations of climatic characteristics over time at a given place. Usually refers to the change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is, in addition to natural climate variability, observed over comparable periods.

### ***Disaster***

A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society causing widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses which exceed the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources.

### ***Disaster Risk Management***

The systematic process of using administrative decisions, organization, operational skills and capacities to implement policies, strategies and coping capacities of the society and communities to lessen the impacts of natural hazards and related environmental and technological disasters. This comprises all forms of activities, including structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) adverse effects of hazards.

### ***Disaster Risk Reduction***

The conceptual framework of elements considered with the possibilities to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks throughout a society, to avoid (prevention) or to limit (mitigation and preparedness) the adverse impacts of hazards, within the broad context of sustainable development.

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