



**Operational Aspects of Providing and Receiving International  
Environmental Emergency Assistance  
Discussion Paper  
Rosersberg Initiative Working Group  
Tunis, 3-5 December 2007**



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EU/AG/RIWG.8  
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English only

## **1. Purpose**

This document proposes ideas and questions regarding the facilitation of the uptake of good practice for provision and receipt of international environmental emergency assistance, for discussion at the 3-5 December 2007 meeting of the Rosersberg Working Group. It is intended to be read in the context of other background documents prepared for this event. It is based on recommendation from the 7<sup>th</sup> Advisory Group of Environmental Emergencies (AGEE) meeting held in June 2007.

The objective of Thematic Area Three is to document and disseminate good practice for provision and receipt of international environmental emergency assistance. As part of this, a review of lessons learned from previous disasters where assistance was requested and received will be undertaken by a consultant in 2008, leading to the development of good practice guidance material on provision and reception of multilateral assistance.

## **2. Goals of the RIWG meeting**

The “Break-out” Sessions in Thematic Area Three will be run in a participant’s centred format, in a brain-storming fashion conducive to encouraging discussions and the expression of views, experiences and expertise.

Centre to all discussions on different sections of Thematic Area 3 should be what can actually be accepted as ***functioning well, what doesn’t and why, and what can we do to improve things.***

In the RIWG meeting, the participants are expected to give ideas, advice and guidance on the basis of their experience and knowledge. Key points shall be noted and a final resume (recommendations) for each of the following headings developed. The recommendations will serve the consultant (JB) to identify key areas and plan the consultancy for 2008 on ***“Operational aspects of providing and receiving international environmental emergency assistance”***

## **3. Discussion Topics**

### ***Discussion Topic I – Case Studies***

- Are there any incidents of experience of incidents/emergencies with the provision/reception of international assistance for environmental emergencies (stand alone or as secondary effects of natural disasters) in the participants countries/regions? The participants are expected to describe what went well and what didn't, together with the identification of barriers which prevented smooth operations (e.g. customs; lack of reception and delivery protocols, unfamiliarity with requesting procedures etc). These are to be of a "Brief description in nature" worthy of in-depth study by the Consultant.
- Could the participants identify major environmental emergencies where international assistance could have proved crucial but was not requested, listing some of the reasons why this never materialised?

***Discussion Topic II - Knowledge of Existing Systems for the provision/reception of international assistance***

- Are there any standard arrangements/systems (public or private sector initiatives e.g. PDVSA Venezuela's arrangements for response to off-site chemical emergencies) in the respective country/region of the participants for the provision/reception of international assistance for environmental emergencies,
- If so can participants provide us with a brief outline (to be further studied by the Consultant)? The response details should focus on:-
  - Technical information over the telephone.
  - Advise on-site (chemical expert deployed to the scene)
  - Human and material resources deployed on-site

***Discussion Topic III - Operations Centres for Environmental Emergencies***

- Can the participants identify Operations Centres (Information Retrieval Centres) for Environmental Emergencies in their country which handle the response to Environmental Emergencies and are involved in the provision of and/or request for international assistance?
- Under which Ministries/Governmental Agencies do such centres work?
- Is knowledge of the existence/capacity of these centres widely disseminated abroad?

***Discussion Topic IV- Classification of Environmental Emergencies***

- Are the participants aware of any system/methodology in their own country to classify Environmental Emergencies based on type of incident; geographical location; actual or potential impact etc?
- Would a Classification System (e.g. Level I, II or III or perhaps local, national regional level emergency) be helpful in determining the type of assistance likely to be required? And should this be reflected in the Joint Unit Assistance Request Report?

- Does the existing Notification/Request Form for International Assistance meet the needs of both potential recipients and providers of assistance? How this Form could be improved/changed? (Please see attached Form).

***Discussion Topic V -National Focal Points for Environmental Emergencies***

On the basis of the RI National Focal Points (NFP) for Environmental Emergencies Concept Note (EU/AG/RIWG.8), which has been circulated to the participants as part of the meeting documentation, and which sets out draft ToRs which would be required for ant NFP to execute his/hers functions, the following questions should be addressed and discussed by the participants:

- Are there any comments or suggestions or additions regarding the NFP for Environmental Emergencies Concept Note? Can such system work, is there specific positive or negative examples?
- Do such or similar NFPs already exist in the participants' countries? If so, how do they work? What is the experience of countries with their NFP?
- Can the participants identify the competent national body(ies) responsible for the provision/reception of international assistance in the event of an Environmental Emergency?
- What steps should be taken to establish an efficient network/system of NFPs at the global level?