**Sustainable and Disaster-resilient Development in Vulnerable Countries**

**Context:** The degradation of ecosystems – such as forests, wetlands, coastal and marine systems, and drylands – is a major driver of disaster risk and a key component of disaster vulnerability. Conversely, the impacts of disasters on vulnerable communities can be lessened with improved ecosystem management. This approach is known as Ecosystem-based Approaches to Disaster Risk Reduction or Eco-DRR.

**Objective:** Between 2013 and 2016, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), in partnership with the European Commission, implemented Eco-DRR demonstration projects in the countries of [Afghanistan](https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/mountain-partners-afghanistan), [Democratic Republic of the Congo](https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/river-partners-democratic-republic-congo), [Haiti](https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/coastal-partners-haiti) and [Sudan.](https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/wadi-partners-sudan)The goals of the interventions were: to improve ecosystem management to boost local resilience to disasters and lessen climate change impacts; to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness of the Eco-DRR approach; and to enhance local and national capacities to integrate Eco-DRR in national and local development planning.

**Facts & Figures**

* A national training course on Eco-DRR reaches 300 participants, mostly from government ministries
* Approximately 50 universities worldwide deliver a post graduate course on Eco-DRR
* 300 faculty members from 200 academic and teaching institutions trained
* Massive Open Online Courses attracts 17,000+ participants from 183 countries

**Results:** In **Afghanistan**, Eco-DRR is now included in climate change adaptation and resilience projects under the newly established Afghanistan Resilience Consortium. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nLzDdoS0fmQ>

In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, Eco-DRR was incorporated into the Action Plan of the Lukaya River Basin Users Association for the period 2016-2021, and there is donor interest in supporting related agroforestry action. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lXjPEsu6jPM>

In **Haiti**, Eco-DRR is integrated into the country’s nascent protected area management framework, and UNEP helped to facilitate Inter-American Development Bank funding of US$4 million to the Ministry of Tourism. [https](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CLauren%5CDesktop%5CUNEP-IISD%5CDEVCO%5CCase%20Studies%20Final%5Chttps)[://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eThpDsywyzc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eThpDsywyzc)

In **Sudan**, disaster resilience was incorporated into the establishment of the Water Forum in the State of North Darfur. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsX_Nv6LZzY>

Building on the success of this project, UNEP received additional funding from the European Commission to scale up and mainstream Eco-DRR approaches in its focus countries. The agency has also mobilized additional funding from the Government of Norway for regional activities and partnership building.