

**Terms of Reference (ToR)**  
**of the Scientific Committee of the Research Programme**  
**‘Integrated Research on Disaster Risk - addressing the challenge of natural and human-induced environmental hazards’**

On the basis of the report “A Science Plan for Integrated Research on Disaster Risk: addressing the challenge of natural and human-induced environmental hazards” developed by the ICSU Planning Group on Natural and Human-induced Environmental Hazards and Disasters, it has been decided to establish a ten-year, internationally integrated, multidisciplinary, all-hazards research programme, whose objectives are the scientific characterization of natural and human-induced hazards, vulnerability and risk; understanding decision-making in complex and changing risk contexts; and reducing risk and curbing losses through knowledge-based actions. The programme is founded on the recognition that disaster prevention and mitigation are critical dimensions of the global poverty reduction agenda, and an integral part of development efforts.

The Scientific Committee of the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk Programme (SC-IRDR) is appointed jointly by the International Council for Science (ICSU) and the International Social Science Council (ISSC). Members are normally appointed for a period of three years, renewable once.

The SC-IRDR shall consist of a Chair, a Vice-Chair and no more than ten/twelve additional members, serving in their personal capacity and appointed on the basis of their standing in the international scientific community and their commitment to the strategic objectives of the Programme. The membership of the Committee shall also aim to include, as far as possible, a balanced representation of relevant disciplines in the natural, social and engineering sciences, with due regard given to regional and gender balance. The Chair, Vice-Chair and ordinary members of the SC-IRDR will be selected by mutual agreement between ICSU and ISSC and appointed jointly by the two organizations. In addition, each sponsor will appoint an *ex officio* member. The Chair may invite additional persons to attend sessions for specific agenda items as necessary.

The SC-IRDR may establish and convene working groups, whose membership shall be decided upon by the Committee.

**ICSU Secretariat**

5 rue Auguste Vacquerie, 75116 Paris, France

Tel: +33 (0) 1 45 25 03 29, Fax: +33 (0) 1 42 88 94 31, E-mail: [secretariat@icsu.org](mailto:secretariat@icsu.org), [www.icsu.org](http://www.icsu.org)

Prof. Deliang Chen, Executive Director

**ISSC Secretariat**

UNESCO House, 1 rue Miollis, 75732 Paris Cedex 15, France

Tel: +33 (0) 1 45 68 48 60, Fax: +33 (0) 1 45 66 76 03, E-mail: [issc@unesco.org](mailto:issc@unesco.org), [www.unesco.org/nqo/issc/1\\_about/1\\_introduction.htm](http://www.unesco.org/nqo/issc/1_about/1_introduction.htm)

Dr. Heide Hackmann, Secretary-General

In performing its functions, the SC-IRDR shall be supported by an International Programme Office.

The Committee shall work closely with all relevant national and international organizations actively engaged in disaster risk assessment and mitigation. In particular, the Programme shall interact with members of the ICSU and ISSC families, as appropriate.

The SC-IRDR shall meet at least twice a year.

The specific tasks of the SC-IRDR are:

- (a) To further define the inter-disciplinary scientific strategy and determine its specific objectives and priorities; this will involve, through an extensive consultation process, the continued identification and exploration of the major programmes and projects that exist in the field of natural and human-induced hazards and disasters and, where appropriate, the conclusion of agreements as to how they might become components of IRDR.
- (b) To develop, and keep under continuous review, an implementation plan for the Programme in close consultation with potential research partners, and to ensure that the plan develops in such a way as to make optimal use of available resources;
- (c) To establish and implement a mechanism for the design, guidance, development and oversight of the Programme;
- (d) To facilitate the exchange of information among the scientists participating in the Programme and the natural and human-induced hazards and disaster community in general, as well as relevant scientific institutions and agencies at the national and international levels;
- (e) To promote the goal and objectives of the Programme, its deliberations and achievements through development of capacity building and outreach programmes in order to attract and form a new generation of individuals at all levels that can address natural and human-induced hazard and disaster issues, and to capture the interest of the general public and decision-makers in the importance of risk reduction for human well-being and sustainable development;
- (f) To work with appropriate organizations, including the Global Terrestrial and Ocean Observing Systems (GTOS and GOOS) and the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) to ensure the development of sustained monitoring and enable continuous observations relating to natural and human-induced hazards;
- (g) To convene sessions of an Open Consultative Forum to which all stakeholders will be invited. The Forum will serve as a consultative process for expressions of views on the Programme development, as a platform for dialogue among the various stakeholders and as a venue for exchange of information on Programme implementation. The Forum shall be convened at least once per year, preferably in conjunction with a major international disaster and risk event;

- (h) To raise additional funds for the planning and coordination activities, including activities of any working groups that the SC-IRDR may wish to set up, and to assist in convincing national and international funding bodies to fully support the research activities of the Programme; and
- (i) To provide oversight and guidance to the activities of the International Programme Office of IRDR.

The SC-IRDR shall report annually to the Executive Board of ICSU and the Executive Committee of ISSC on programme organization and implementation, and to the executive heads of both organizations following each of the Committee's meetings.

*Approved by the ICSU Executive Board at its 99th Meeting, 25 October 2008,  
Maputo, Mozambique  
and the ISSC 27th General Assembly, 26 November 2008, Cape Town, South Africa*