THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Royal Society Statement for the Global Platform, May 2013

With a successor to the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) due in 2015, considerable attention must be given to developing more guidance, principles and tools on how good practice in disaster risk management is achieved. Moreover, the Advisory Group established to lead the development of the post-2015 framework has also called for greater scientific input, stating as one of its key messages:

'Evidence-based knowledge about the need for and benefits of disaster risk reduction is both poor and underutilized. We need to encourage and find mechanisms that apply knowledge and scientific evidence in policy and decision-making.'[1]

The Royal Society is a self-governing Fellowship of many of the world's most distinguished scientists drawn from all areas of science, engineering, and medicine. The Royal Society's Science Policy Centre provides independent, timely and authoritative scientific advice to UK, European and international decision makers. The Science Policy Centre is soon to launch a new major policy study examining human resilience to climate change and climate-related disasters. Following the HFA's lead in linking disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and following the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Special Report on Managing the Risk of Extremes and Disasters (IPCC/SREX[2]), this project will examine these (at times) distinct policy arenas collectively.

More specifically, this project will examine **ecosystem-based approaches** to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction. Such approaches are gaining increasing attention internationally, and the project's aim is to critically evaluate the evidence base relating to them. The overarching question is:

How can human resilience to climate change, climate extremes and climate-related disasters be promoted through maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services?

In addressing this question, the project will also investigate the following:

- Which ecosystem-based approaches work and which do not?
- What are the appropriate spatial and temporal scales for these approaches?
- What are the constraints?
- What are the biophysical and socio-economic trade-offs?
- What are the distributional consequences?
- What is the evidence and how robust is it?

The project will be led by an expert working group, with a report to be published in late 2014. It will deliver recommendations on the potential role of ecosystem services in building human resilience to climate change and climate-related disasters, and how their contribution can be maximised.

This project is intended to inform and influence international policy frameworks such as the HFA, as well as the UNFCCC whose Parties identify the HFA as a pillar of their efforts to adapt to climate change. The Royal Society is keen to scale up its engagement with the HFA and the development of its successor, and to learn more about the most effective ways of providing scientific input.

For further information, please see our project web pages which will be updated regularly:
http://royalsociety.org/policy/projects/resilience-climate-change/

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[1] http://www.preventionweb.net/posthfa/documents/External-Key-messages-Post-HFA-Advisory%20Group.pdf

[2] http://ipcc-wg2.gov/SREX/images/uploads/SREX-All_FINAL.pdf