

# Strengthening New Zealand's disaster risk governance

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The Sendai Framework (United Nations 2015 agreement on disaster risk reduction and resilience) sets four priorities, the first two of which pose significant challenges for most countries:

Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk;

Priority 2: Strengthening risk governance to manage disaster risk.

The following summary points form a recommendation for New Zealand:

- ▶ Create a national vision that recognises
  - disaster risk as a systemic and critical issue of potential loss
  - the opportunities and co-benefits of a prevention focus
- ▶ Underpin the vision with principles of participation, transparency and accountability
- ▶ Develop a policy framework, with policy objectives and recommendations (covering concepts, legislation, roles, reporting, financing, leadership, stakeholders, and information) to serve as a guidance tool and integrator [refer to Dr Reid Basher draft proposal]
- ▶ Mainstream and integrate DRR across all sectors
- ▶ Foster multi-hazard and multi-sector understanding and practice
- ▶ Develop a robust, coherent national strategy that interfaces with local strategies/plans
- ▶ Ensure coherence across and address gaps in national and local legislative and policy frameworks - “give force to comprehensive DRR” (Basher)
- ▶ Strengthen institutional frameworks at national and local levels, including compliance mechanisms
- ▶ Establish national loss database (see Japanese model)
  - establish formal data collection programme
  - support standards, technical tools, risk analysis services
- ▶ Embed risk assessment for risk-informed decision-making, across public and private sectors (especially for planning, development and investment)

- ▶ Implement a whole-of-government approach
  - place emphasis on planning, development, and investment mandates
  - define roles and responsibilities
  - formalise upgraded mechanisms for coordination across government
  
- ▶ Make DRR visible in government - give it a brand and a face
  - a Chief Risk Officer model?
  - a national independent authority?
  
- ▶ Design a systematic monitoring and reporting, including to Parliament that
  - meets international requirements (indicators)
  - includes a formal annual report on national risk status
  - incorporates an oversight mechanism
  - institutionalises debate on progress
  
- ▶ Make risk information widely available and understandable
  - foster public scrutiny and engagement
  - improve public websites
  - publish risk assessment results
  - encourage community education and awareness
  - provide media training
  
- ▶ Establish country-wide coordination mechanisms
  - create national, regional, local and special interest platforms
  - empower platforms by law to coordinate and report
  
- ▶ Ensure multi-stakeholder effort; establish multi-party national platform; comprising
  - business as full partner
  - ministries
  - local authorities
  - community
  - science
  
- ▶ Finance DRR through a coordinated and supported national portfolio of funding mechanisms
  
- ▶ Set NZ-inc targets. (For example, China suffers 1/3 world earthquakes, and has target of annual losses not exceeding 1.3% of GDP)
  
- ▶ Most importantly, expect proactive leadership in government with high level visible champion(s)

[Sources: Priorities 1 and 2 of Sendai Framework; UNISDR; Dr Reid Basher; E Longworth]