

United Nations General Assembly

Topic: Droughts

October 12, 2014

I. Background

Currently, there have been an increase of droughts all around the world. Droughts lead to other serious environmental issues, such as fierce wildfires, water shortages and restrictions, and agricultural losses. It has been estimated that droughts are the world's costliest natural disasters and affect more people than any other disasters. The drought affect all climatic regions and change, which continuously increases the intensity, frequency, and duration of the drought. No efforts have formulated and implements in regards to the drought management policies. In most cases, the usual approach was done in the short-term, such as providing aid in the form of food and medicine.

The cause for these droughts are debated, but many believe the cause to be related to climate change. Climate change, however, is not an immediately fixable issue. As such, responding to droughts has become a more long-term issue. The shift between this long-term planning and the traditional short-term planning for droughts has been difficult. There have been calls to make some sort of long-term response for droughts, but there have been no major decisions reached.

II. Bloc Positions

In Asia, droughts begin to intensify slightly in Russia and India. In North China, drought may lower the corn harvest for the first time since 2009. Southeast Asia is facing its worst drought in almost 20 years, causing food insecurities, and hurting the production of palm-oil, an important export of the area. In Africa, drought remains entrenched in Madagascar and the equatorial region. In Somalia, drought conditions have led the government to an urgent call for aid, including food, water, and medication. In East Africa as a whole, over 400,000 people have been displaced as a result of famine caused by drought. In North America, drought remains mainly focused on the West where large wildfires have developed. In South America, drought remain consistent around the equator. In Brazil, drought continues and the states has called for rationing water immediately. Throughout South America, lack of water has caused forest fires, emergency rationing, and even clashes between factions in Colombia. In Europe, drought remains largely steady, although relatively minor. In Australia, drought continues mainly in the East.

II. UN Involvement

With a combination of UNEP and UNDP, focus on the bettering development of how to handle this situation. Furthermore, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) jointly established a UN-Water Capacity Development Initiative to support National Drought Management Policies. The initiative was launched among the

international community regarding the High-level Meeting on National Drought Policy (HMNDP) in Geneva on March 12, 2013. It will be followed by a series of regional workshops in several drought-prone regions of the world throughout 2013 and 2014 and a final wrap-up conference in late 2014.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) launched the Regional Drought Mechanism in 2013. It uses satellites to monitor droughts, and provides training to drought stricken areas. It has proved effective in the areas it has been deployed. It is, however, limited to Afghanistan, Cambodia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

III. Questions to Consider

1. Have current methods in dealing with droughts been successful ?
2. What drought management policies can be formulated and implemented in the long-term?

IV. Grading

- Creativity in Solutions
- Participation and Cooperation
- Public Speaking with Solid Ideas and Details
- Reflection on International Views