



# ADRC Highlights

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➤ **39th Session of the ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee held in Manila, Philippines**

The 39th Session of the ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee (TC), sponsored by the Government of the Philippines, was held in Manila from 4 to 9 December 2006. The session was attended by approximately 100 participants from 14 member countries of the TC, as well as observers from several agencies in Indonesia, the UN-ISDR, and the ADRC. Representatives from UN/ESCAP and WMO were also in attendance. The session aimed to review the progress made on the committee's program, to determine priority activities to be undertaken in 2006 and beyond, and to identify the support required to implement those activities.

Highlights of the session included the transfer of the TC Secretariat from the Philippines to Macao, China, and the development of the TC Strategic Plan 2007-2011. The following Key Results Areas (KRAs) were identified in the TC Strategic Plan: (1) reduce loss of life from typhoon-related disasters, (2) minimize typhoon-related social and economic impacts, (3) take advantage of the beneficial effects of typhoons (such as reservoir operations), (4) improve typhoon-related disaster risk management in various sectors, (5) strengthen the resilience of communities to typhoon-related disasters, (6) improve the capacity to generate and provide accurate, timely, and understandable information on typhoon-related threats, and (7) enhance the TC's effectiveness and international collaboration.

The TC and its working groups will make major strides in accomplishing these KRAs, and the TC Strategic Plan will provide a roadmap for improving people's quality of life in the future.

ADRC Researcher Mr. Shingo Kochi explained the ADRC's role in disaster reduction focusing on its accomplishments in 2005-2006, its priority agenda for 2007, the Total Disaster Risk Management (TDRM) Approach, and the promotion of the GLIDE numbering system to improve information sharing on disasters. For more information, contact Mr. Kochi ([kochi@adrc.or.jp](mailto:kochi@adrc.or.jp)).

➤ **ADRC Visiting Researcher's Report**  
□ **Ms. Altanchimeg Shaazan from Mongolia**

Global climatic changes, global warming, and human activities are resulting in increased pollution, environmental degradation, and increases in the number and frequency of natural hazards in Mongolia. Studies show that approximately 70% of the territory of Mongolia is affected by desertification, that the water level in settled areas has dropped by about 4 meters over the last 60 years, and that about 200 springs and 120 lakes have dried up within the last 10 years. Forests cover only 8.1% of the total territory of

Mongolia, but over the last 25 years, more than 1.6 million hectares of forest have been lost due to forest fires, the timber industry, and destruction by parasite infestations.

Every year Mongolia experiences 20-30 climatic and water-related hazardous natural phenomena in Mongolia, one-third of which turn into disasters. Annually these disasters cause an estimated 5-7 billion tugrik (USD 4.3-6 million) in damages in the agricultural sector. At the same time, the number of events is increasing. These include fires, earthquakes, human, animal, and plant contagious diseases, the spread of destructive rodents, and industrial accidents.



Given this, the Government of Mongolia has established a fundamental goal of strengthening the country's disaster management capacity. The Law on Disaster Protection was approved by the Parliament on 20 June 2003, and the National Emergency Management Agency of Mongolia (NEMA) was subsequently established on 7 January 2004. NEMA is the result of a merger of the State Board for Civil Defense,

the Fire Fighting Department, and the State Reserve Agency.

According to the Law on Disaster Protection, NEMA is a specialized organization responsible for implementing the state disaster protection policy and enforcing laws, as well as for conducting activities nationwide. More than 3,000 full-time staff work in the emergency management department and divisions, the specialized rescue unit, sub-units, reserve branches, and fire units in the 21 aimags (administrative units) and the capital city.

In accordance with the Government Action Plan, NEMA will work to strengthen the national capacity to cope with disasters by expanding international cooperation and relationships in the field of emergency management. Mongolia has been working as a member of the ADRC since 1999 and is an active participant in organized activities.

I am the second official from Mongolia to take part in the Visiting Researcher Program. This is a great opportunity for me, and by extension NEMA, to learn the international best practices in disaster management and to acquire the advanced theoretical and practical knowledge that Japan has developed in this field. My research focuses on risk and vulnerability assessments.

Since arriving in Japan, I have participated in the International Forum on Tsunamis and Earthquakes and have learned a great deal. I am confident that my stay with the ADRC will be very fruitful and will provide many opportunities for me to gain invaluable information on disaster management.