



SESSION SUMMARY

Session Title: Greening Recovery: The Case of the 2018 Kerala Floods

Session Type: Thematic session

Date and Time: 14 May 2019, 2:00-3:30 PM

Key Speakers and Agencies:

Moderator

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The objective of the session on Green Recovery: The Case of the 2018 Kerala Floods was to introduce the audience to the nature of the recent disasters in Kerala and to discuss the recovery from various angles, including environment and inclusion. The panelists reflected upon the impact of floods of August 2018 and the exemplary resilience shown by Kerala as a community. The experts also shared the impact of human interventions on ecology that led to the disaster. The points which were highlighted were:

- Risk informed land use planning which is fundamental to sustainable reconstruction
- Promoting the construction of Eco-Safe roads and green infrastructure (such as road side vegetation and coastal green belts) a very cost-effective means of increasing resilience against the impacts of hazard events
- Including integrated water resources management, such as “Making Space for Water” for a more sustainable approach to reducing disaster risk, especially in the low lying Kuttanad Area. Eg: Kattakada village in Trivandrum district
- Gender sensitive and inclusive approach for disaster management in a patriarchal society such as Kerala still remains a hurdle. The goals of a truly inclusive system may be achieved only by involving the marginalized community in decision making process
- Response of media during all phases of disaster was significant in bringing together the community and administration
- There needs to be a paradigm shift in the approach towards building construction post floods where ‘habitat agenda’ should be read along

with Sendai Framework. 'People Centered' approach with appropriate technology and materials needs to be followed. Building back critical infrastructure creatively with cultural sensitivity should also be the focus during rebuilding Kerala

- 'Chekkutty', the symbol of resilience of Kerala was presented in the session. Chekkuttys are cloth dolls made by volunteers from the soiled clothes of Chendamangalam Handloom industry which were sold widely and brought back revenue in order to revive the industry altogether.

The following recommendations were put forward in the session:

1. Inclusiveness is critical to any reconstruction effort, this includes ensuring that the role of women is taken seriously in any sustainable reconstruction efforts and not just an add on because it is required
2. Investing in green infrastructure and integrated water resources management can be cost-effective approaches and should be considered in all recovery and reconstruction efforts
3. The positive role that social media and youth groups can play during- and in the aftermath of disasters may be documented and imbibed in the system.

Follow up actions include collaboration on new project: "Up-scaling community resilience through ecosystem-based management". The project will bring together UN Environment and the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority along with other partners to collaborate in creating replicable models for increasing disaster resilience among the most vulnerable.

PHOTO FROM THE EVENT:

