



WORLD  
RESOURCES  
INSTITUTE



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contact:**

Michael Oko, WRI, Tel. + (202) 729-7684; [moko@wri.org](mailto:moko@wri.org)

Nick Nuttall, UNEP, Tel. + 254 (0) 733632755; [nick.nuttall@unep.org](mailto:nick.nuttall@unep.org) (Nairobi)

Sebastian Naidoo, UNDP, Tel. + (212) 906-6202; [sebastian.naidoo@undpaffiliates.org](mailto:sebastian.naidoo@undpaffiliates.org)

Robert Bisset, World Bank Group, Tel. + (202) 458 5191; [rbisset@worldbank.org](mailto:rbisset@worldbank.org)

## **Climate Change Demands New Decision-Making Strategies by National Leaders, Says New Report**

*WRI, UNDP, UNEP and World Bank release major report: Decision Making in a Changing Climate*

WASHINGTON (OCTOBER 18, 2011)— In light of recent extreme weather events, as well as long-term disruptions related to climate change, a major [new report](#) calls for different approaches to decision making by national leaders. The report, entitled *Decision Making in a Changing Climate*, explores challenges and offers recommendations for national-level government officials to make informed and effective decisions to respond to the changing climate. The report, produced by the World Resources Institute, UNDP, UNEP, and the World Bank, is the latest edition of the influential *World Resources Report*.

“Climate change is a vast, complex, and urgent issue for national leaders. What’s clear beyond doubt is that the decisions leaders make today will have a profound effect on their countries’ ability to find real, lasting solutions to adapt to this global crisis,” said **Manish Bapna**, Interim President, the World Resources Institute. “This report provides decision makers with concepts and information they need – drawn from real world experiences – to make smart choices and ensure that decision making is effective and durable in the light of these challenges.”

The challenges of climate change are made clear by the array of recent extreme weather events from massive droughts in the Horn of Africa to record rainfall in the United States to wildfires in Brazil. According to global insurance company, Munich Re, there were more than 950 natural disasters in 2010, 90 percent of which were weather related, costing a total of at least \$130 billion.

“Climate change is not solely an environmental issue. It is an issue that needs to be taken into account in order to ensure that human development is sustainable over the long term” said **Olav Kjørven**, Director of the Bureau for Development Policy at UNDP. “Governments must start now to incorporate climate risks into plans and policies across all sectors, including urban development, coastal planning, agriculture, water and forestry management, and electricity production.”

Drawing on input from over 100 experts in over 35 countries, the report includes 12 case studies of innovative, real world responses to climate change, such as wildfire management in Brazil, information sharing on agriculture in Mali and glacial flood management in Nepal. These countries demonstrate how some are rising to the challenge of adapting to climate change.

Yet, adaptation efforts worldwide are still failing to meet the challenge.

**-MORE-**

## **DECISION MAKING RELEASE- ADD ONE**

“Under present trends, the livelihoods of millions of farmers in Africa, and other people around the world, could be lost due to shifting hydrological patterns, higher temperatures and more extreme weather events,” said **Andrew Steer**, World Bank Special Envoy for Climate Change. “This doesn’t need to happen. Good policies for climate resilience and low-carbon development can be put in place at reasonable cost. The good news is that many developing countries in Africa and elsewhere are taking action to do just that.”

The report identifies key challenges to decision making, including:

- While the pace of climate change is accelerating, there is great uncertainty about how some impacts—such as changing precipitation patterns and sea level rise — will unfold around the world;
- Climate change impacts will not play out on a level playing field; some people are more vulnerable than others; and
- Climate change demands tough, but transformational changes, especially when faced with choices between short-term and long-term allocation of resources.

The report offers a suite of tools and recommendations for national-level policy makers. These include: tailoring adaptation efforts to address uneven vulnerability among populations, incorporating strategies to balance both short- and long-term policy objectives, and planning for uncertainty and a longer time horizon when making decisions. Important considerations include: early and ongoing public engagement, access to information, effective institutional design, allocation of resources, and appropriate policy tools.

"National, regional and local governments, businesses, and civil society are already making decisions to make the transition to a climate resilient, low-carbon future and build the green economies of the twenty-first century," says **Kaveh Zahedi**, Coordinator of UNEP’s Climate Change Program. “This report shows that smart adaptation investments, such as those in climate resilient agriculture in China, mangrove restoration in Vietnam, and watershed management in Rwanda, deliver multiple benefits from food security to coastline protection to improved energy supply and ultimately help build the resilience of communities that are most vulnerable to climate change.”

*Decision Making in a Changing Climate* is the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the *World Resources Report*, a series that has been published over a 25 year period.

The full report, including the executive summary, individual case studies, and expert papers, can be found here: <http://www.worldresourcesreport.org>.

###

*The World Resources Institute* is a global environmental think tank that goes beyond research to put ideas into action. WRI works with governments, companies, and civil society to build solutions to urgent environmental challenges. [www.wri.org](http://www.wri.org)