

# **Engaging humanitarian and development organisations in addressing the risks of climate change**

## **The Red Cross Experience**

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*Madeleen Helmer*

*Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre*

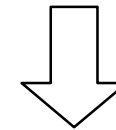
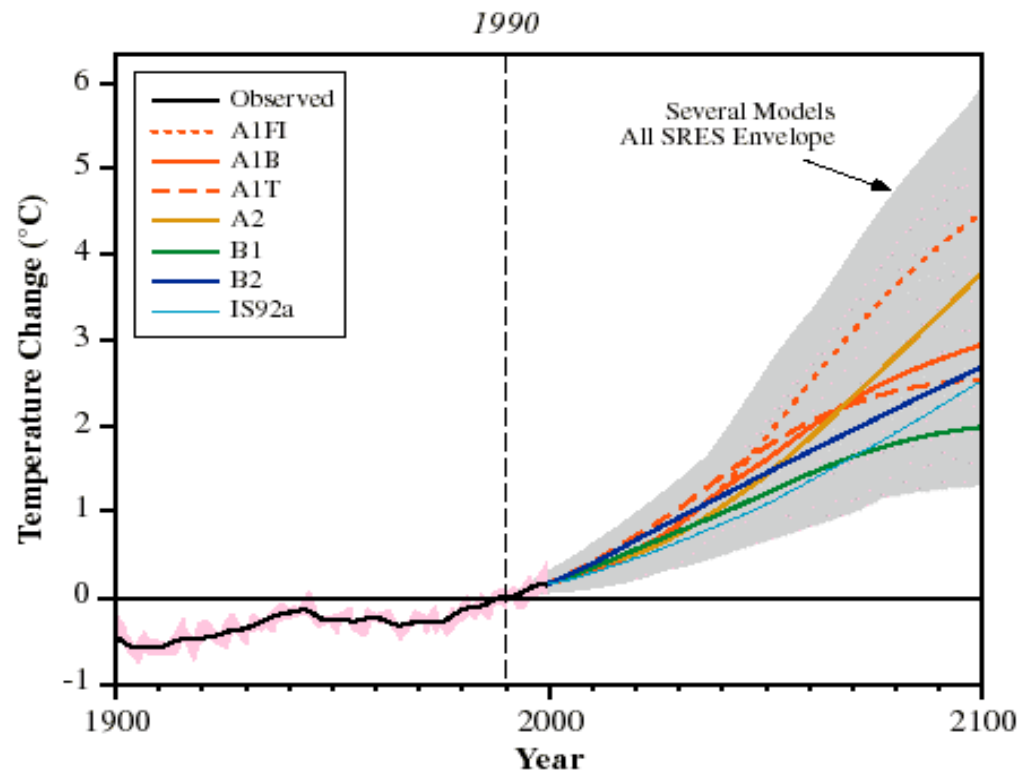
*SBSTA-side event 19 May 2005*

## The start: COP 6, November 2000, The Hague

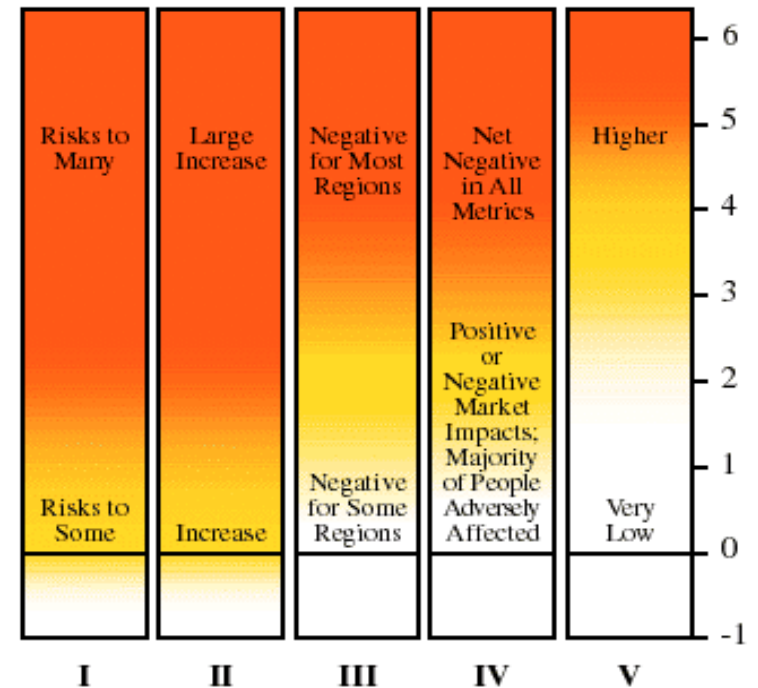
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# Risks of climate change



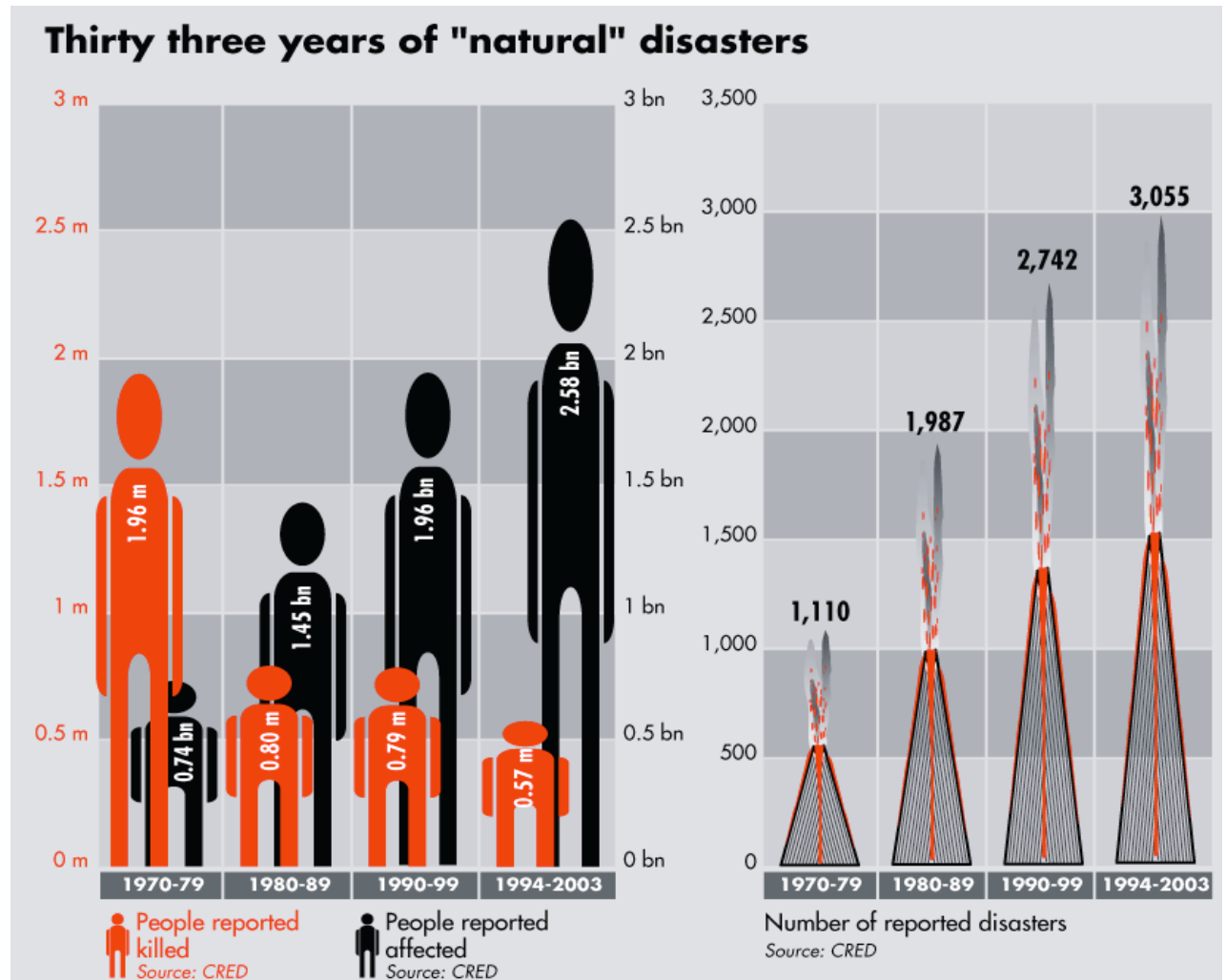
*Reasons for Concern*



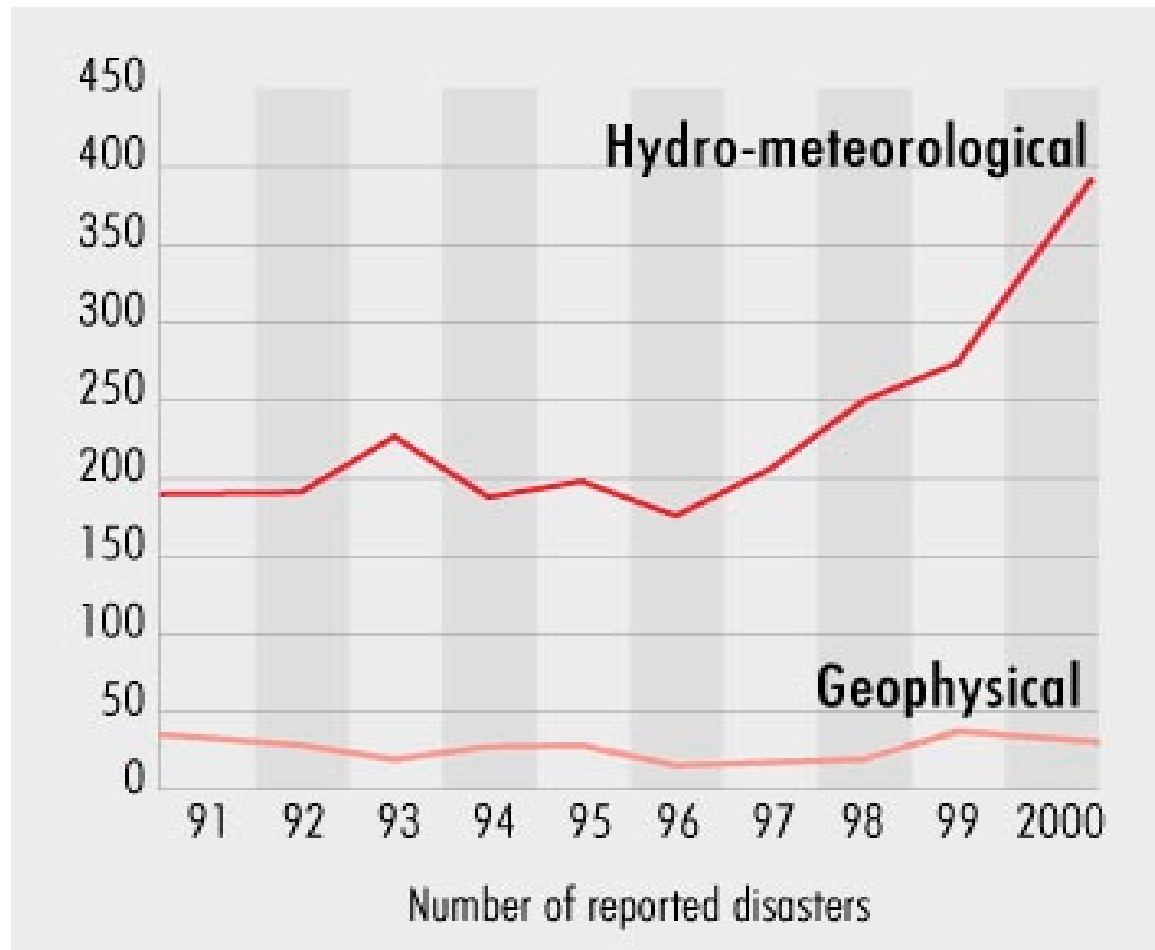
- I Risks to Unique and Threatened Systems
- II Risks from Extreme Climate Events
- III Distribution of Impacts
- IV Aggregate Impacts
- V Risks from Future Large-Scale Discontinuities

- Disasters nearly triple since 1970s
- Numbers affected more than triple
- Deaths drop 70% since 1970s

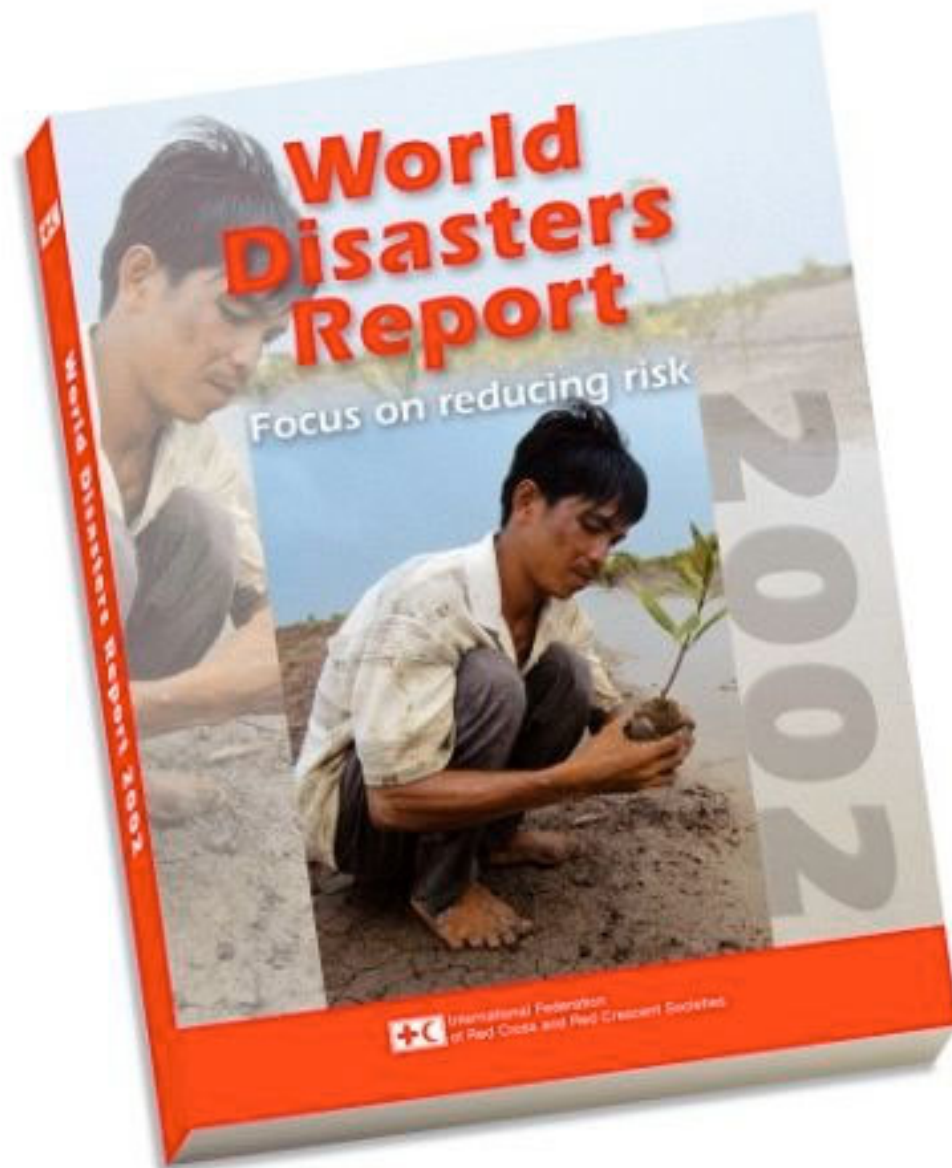
Source: Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, Belgium (CRED)



## Increase of reported natural disasters is weather related



2001: 364  
2002: 382  
2003: 308



## International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 2-6 December 2003

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- **Agenda for Humanitarian Action:**
- *“States are strongly encouraged to prioritize and provide resources to implement comprehensive disaster risk reduction measures, including measures to address issues relating to climate change and variability.*
- *National (Red Cross and Red Crescent) Societies will increase their cooperation with states and experts in the area of climate change in order to limit the potential negative impact on vulnerable populations. In doing so they may draw on the recommendations outlined in the report ‘Preparedness for Climate Change’ as requested by the Plan of Action of the 27th International Conference in 1999.”*

## **Seven steps to climate risk reduction**

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- Preliminary climate risk assessment
- Assess priorities and plan follow up
- Raise awareness
- Establish and enhance partnerships
- Highlight climate-related vulnerability with other actors
- Document and share experiences and information
- Advocacy: shape the global response to climate change

## **Disaster management and climate change**

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Climate change not (yet) a topic for most of the actors in the humanitarian community, because:

- New issue, no infrastructure to absorb it
- Other urgent issues (conflicts, HIV/AIDS)
- Environmental connotation
- Difficult to translate the climate uncertainties into action

## The Netherlands experience

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2002: draft report Poverty and Climate change

- Informal discussion platform (Ministries, Research institutes, a few NGOs)
- Main NGOs not interested (other priorities - MDGs, trade, HIV/Aids –
- Exception: Protestant Churches (‘Climate plan’)
- 2004: Unique opportunity: the National Lottery, a coalition on Climate change of more than 35 environment, nature, humanitarian and development organisations.

## First conclusions

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- Climate risk reduction is the entry point for cooperation between the humanitarian, development and environmental actors
- This is necessary and possible at ALL levels (international, national, local and community level)
- Climate change related events could be the trigger for change.
- Climate risk reduction strategies and programmes have to be embedded in and beneficial to ongoing programmes.