

## HUMAN DIMENSIONS PILOT PROJECT

First meeting of the Steering Committee of Human Dimensions.  
Buenos Aires, October 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> 2001.  
Report

by  
Silvina Solman, Matilde Rusticucci

The aim of this meeting was to prepare a proposal on Human Dimensions of Floods in the Rio de La Plata basin to be submitted to the Research Program of the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDMHA) request.

Participants :

Argentina: Dra. Claudia Natenzon, Dra. Silvina Solman, Dra. Matilde Rusticucci, Dra. Graciela Caputo, Lic. Alejandra Celis y Lic. Mara Bartolomé.

Brazil: Dra. Luci Hidalgo Nunes

Uruguay: Ing. Diego Piñeiro (\*)

Paraguay: Ing. José Luis Ávila Rodas.

During the meeting, a proposal was discussed, and the main topics considered were:

**Study of institutional management of catastrophic floods in the Rio de la Plata basin. Case studies in Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay and Argentina.**

**Project objectives:**

The general objective is to analyze the institutional management of disasters and to contribute to elaborate integrated mitigation plans associated to catastrophic floods related to El Niño events in selected case studies over the Rio de la Plata basin. Specific objectives include:

- a) Survey of environmental, social and economical impacts produced by floods.**
- b) Analysis of institutional disaster management.**
- c) Social vulnerability assessment of populations affected by floods.**
- d) Evaluation of the effectiveness of the communication and use of flood forecasts by decision makers.**
- e) Development of disaster management strategies to mitigate flood risk.**

**Study design**

The identification of the most affected areas by floods will be performed based on a socio-demographical characterization of the basin, leading to a selection of specific case studies. Four target areas are currently envisioned: (a) Northern Uruguay, near the Uruguay River, (b) the middle and lower Paraguay River basin in Paraguay, (c) the high Paraná basin and the Pantanal wetlands in Brazil, and (d) the middle and low Paraná river basin in Argentina. In each of these locations, an interdisciplinary team will address all the proposed objectives. A comparison of management effectiveness among the case studies selected will be made in order to account for different responses and experiences and to design a suitable mitigation plan for the region. Early and frequent interaction with stakeholders (which will take various shapes, such as individual meetings with key informants and workshops) will guarantee that the information produced by the project be relevant and useful for decision- and policy-making. The teams involved in this pre-proposal already are collaborating in various ongoing projects supported by the Inter-American Institute for Climate Change Research (IAI) covering issues such as the hydrological and climatic characterization of the Plata basin and the compilation of a natural disaster data base. Other ongoing projects focused on social vulnerability will also bring a baseline to undertake this study.

**PI** : Dra. Claudia E. Natenzon (PIRNA, FFyL, UBA, Argentina)

**Co-Pi's:**

Matilde Rusticucci, Dto. Cs.de la Atm. y los Oce., UBA, Argentina.

Silvina Solman, CIMA (CONICET-UBA) / Dto. Cs. De la Atm. y los Oce., UBA, Argentina.

Jose Luis Avila Rodas (Facultad de Ingeniería, U.N. de Asunción, Paraguay).

Roger Monte Domec (Facultad de Ingeniería, U.N. de Asunción, Paraguay).

Lucas Chamorro (Facultad de Ingeniería, U.N. de Asunción, Paraguay).

Luci Hidalgo Nunes (Instituto de Geociencias, U. E. de Campinas), Brasil.

Diego Piñeiro, Dto. de Sociología, FCS, Univ. de la República, Uruguay.

María Carla Rodriguez, CENTRO, Argentina.

Guillermo Podestá, University of Miami, RSMAS, Miami, USA.

Andrea Ray, NOAA, USA.

**Collaborative Institutions**

Universidad de Buenos Aires, Argentina.

•CIMA- CONICET/ UBA, Argentina.

•Universidad de la República, Uruguay.

•Universidad de Campinas, Brasil.

•Universidad Nacional de Asunción, Paraguay.

•CENTRO, Argentina

**Government Institutions**

-Argentina, SIFEM y/o Dirección de Protección Civil

-Brasil CESP (Cía de Electricidad) y Defensa Civil Estatal.

-Uruguay: ...

-Paraguay: CEM-Comité de Emergencia Nacional.

A letter of intent was submitted. Nevertheless, other alternative supporting sources are being evaluated.