

DEVELOPING NATIONS BEAR THE BRUNT OF EXTREME WEATHER



Haiti, the Philippines and Pakistan were the countries that suffered the most due to extreme weather events in 2012, according to the Global Climate Risk Index released yesterday at the UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw, Poland.

The 2012 events that hit these countries and, so explain their high ranking were Hurricane Sandy in Haiti, Typhoon Bopha in the Philippines, and severe monsoon flooding in Pakistan.

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Muhammad Irfan Tariq, Pakistan's climate change division

Most of the top 50 most vulnerable positions are taken by developing nations, with almost all South Asian countries listed there.

The index was prepared by a research and advocacy organisation based in Germany called Germanwatch, which works in the areas of sustainable development and environment.

Pakistan, ranked third, has been among the three most-affected countries worldwide for three consecutive years.

“We have lost almost US\$15 billion to floods and droughts in the last three years and we need billions more to adapt to the changing climate,” said Muhammad Irfan Tariq, the director-general of Pakistan's climate change division during the launch of the index.

“Can anybody imagine how a country will possibly rebuild itself from such huge catastrophes as Typhoon Haiyan or the 2010 Pakistan flood?” he asked.

The report states that, although single extreme events cannot be attributed solely to climate change, it is an important factor in increasing the odds of the occurrence and intensity of these events.

The report “reconfirms that developing countries are hit the hardest by extreme weather events”, said Sönke Kreft, team leader of international climate policy at Germanwatch.

The Germanwatch index also ranked the countries worst affected by extreme weather events between 1993 and 2012.

Honduras topped the list, followed by Myanmar, Haiti, Nicaragua and Bangladesh.

According to the report, in the last 20 years, more than 530,000 people died as a direct result of almost 15,000 extreme weather events and losses of more than US\$2.5 trillion occurred worldwide.

Source : <http://www.scidev.net/global/disasters/scidev-net-at-large/developing-nations-bear-the-brunt-of-extreme-weather.html>