

# Implementing international agreements for disaster risk reduction requires institutional changes

## Why did we undertake this study?

There is global consensus that disaster risk reduction requires changes to the governance systems surrounding disaster risk, sustainable human development, and climate risk management. International agreements signed in 2015 provide a framework to facilitating and supporting these necessary changes in public policy and administration. How to maximize the value of these agreements in creating a transformative agenda requires an investigation into its current use by governments.

## How was it done?

Surveys and interviews with practitioners in local, provincial or state, and federal governments in Canada and Australia were conducted between 2019 and 2020. Questions targeted how international agreements have changed and challenged current perceptions, arrangements, and practices related to disaster risk reduction.

## What did we find?

Overall, international agreements are being underutilized:

1. There is a dominant view in Canada and Australia that international agreements reflect global principles for disaster risk reduction, sustainable human development, and climate risk management.
2. The agreements themselves do not necessarily account for national or local contexts given their global nature.
3. While there is an opportunity to use these types of agreements more meaningfully in the future, significant behavioural and institutional changes are needed at all government levels to contextualise and integrate the agreements into policy and practice.

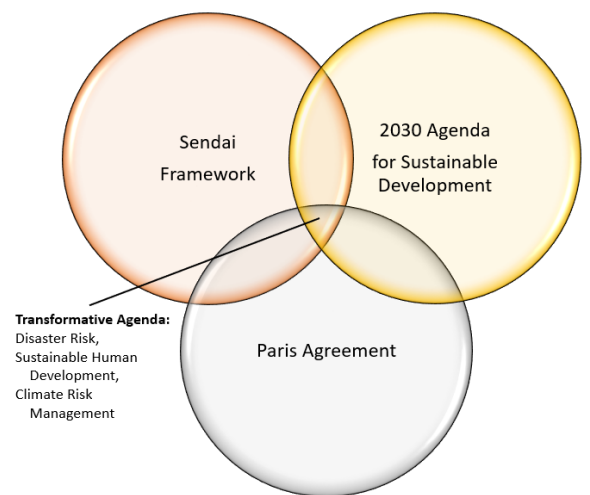


Figure 1: The importance of approaching disaster risk reduction more holistically

## What are the implications?

Transforming disaster risk management requires that the connections between international agreements and public policies are fully realized by those negotiating the agreements and those responsible for its implementation. This must involve greater recognition by all governments that the principles espoused in these agreements have value to national and local disaster risk reduction. Recommended actions include: expanding stakeholder engagement processes in the lead up to future agreements; being more proactive in linking existing and future policies and programs with the principles and requirements set out in this international agenda; and more effectively communicating the value of these international agreements to local and regional governments.

## Want more information?

The full paper is available from: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2022.102999>

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## Coastal Governance: Embracing Vulnerability and Change

