

## AGRICULTURAL RISK AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT POLICY

(Adapted from the Agricultural Development Policy for Kwa-Zulu Natal)

### 10.9 AGRICULTURAL RISK AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

During the current century there has been a sharp global increase, in both the frequency and severity of disasters around the world. According to the UN Global Report, Reducing Disaster Risk: Challenge for Development (2004) it is reported that, globally, the last decade saw the demise of more than one and half million people as a result of global natural disasters. According to the National Agricultural Disaster Risk Management Plan (2008), the South African government had spent an approximated R6.5 billion as a result of agricultural disasters generated by prolonged cold spells, drought, floods and fires.

There are several reasons that have been offered for the increase in incidences of disaster, such as inclement weather, advancing technology, unplanned urbanization, poor agricultural practices, human conflict and various other environmental and social disturbances. Recently KwaZulu-Natal has been particularly prone to disaster, which has had adverse effects on its farming communities and the general provincial economy. The massive agricultural potential of the province has been undermined by various agricultural disasters which have left farmers devastated.

Disasters are a global phenomenon; nevertheless their impact and frequencies are most pronounced in countries that have limited means to prepare and prevent disaster incidents; placing already vulnerable sectors of society under greater pressure.

Even more concerning is the limited ability of the State and its various agencies to adequately mitigate disasters. The main challenge has been the issue of timely coordination of government efforts to prevent and limit the occurrence of disasters, owing to various problems. The absence of clear

definitions of the roles and responsibilities of various spheres of Government, insufficient capacity of government agencies coupled with poor integration of civil society into effective disaster management, have constrained government response to disasters. The absence of a comprehensive departmental Disaster Risk Management Policy and the concurrent challenges of insufficient financial, human and material resources have all contributed to poor disaster risk management in the province.

The Department has attempted to address these challenges by establishing a departmental Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component. The Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component coordinates disaster management at various levels and helps promote cross-sectoral/branch/discipline disaster management activities. However, the Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component has operated without a guiding policy since their establishment. To address this situation the Department has seen the urgent need to develop a comprehensive policy that responds to the threat of disaster risks on provincial citizens and the environment. This policy aims to clearly demarcate roles and responsibilities for all involved role players in addressing disaster risk management. The implementation of the policy is not a separate discipline but an approach to solving problems which will enhance disaster management by harnessing skills and resources across stakeholder institutions. Therefore, a key element of the policy is to augment the resources and capabilities of existing entities and build new capabilities wherever necessary.

#### 10.9.1 POLICY RATIONALE

Section 24 of the Constitution (Act 108 Of 1996) of the Republic of South Africa enjoins the state to ensure sound environmental management to prevent adverse effects on people and the environment. It stipulates that "Everyone has the right to have the environment protected, for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources, while promoting justifiable economic and social development." Accordingly, the state developed the Disaster Management Act (2002) which stated that each provincial organ of state indicated in the Disaster Management Framework must establish and implement a framework for disaster management for its functional area in the province, in order to implement an integrated and uniformed disaster risk management approach.

The Policy Framework for Disaster Risk Management in South Africa (2005) advocates a "coherent, transparent and inclusive policy on disaster

management appropriate for the republic as a whole" also imposes responsibility on the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to be the lead agent in disaster risk management, in coordination with relevant national, provincial and local government stakeholders. The National Department of Agriculture, Forestry's and Fisheries in fulfilling the Act's obligations has prepared the Draft Agricultural Disaster Risk Management Plan. The objectives of the plan include "prevention and reduction of agricultural disaster risks; mitigation of impacts; preparedness for effective response to disasters, minimisation of loss and property damage; and quick recovery from the impacts".

The Disaster Risk Management Policy is therefore required to ensure that the institutional capacity and enabling environment to which the Disaster Management Act and National Framework refer, exists. In compliance with the prevailing disaster management legislation and policies, informed by constitutional imperatives, it is incumbent upon the Department to fulfil its legislative mandate by developing a disaster risk management policy to protect the province and its people from adverse risks and disasters. It is this rationale that informs the Department's endeavour to develop a policy that will serve as the blueprint which governs the Department's strategies and plans, addressing disaster risk management in the province.

#### **10.9.2 Policy Purpose**

The thrust of disaster risk management is to establish an integrated and coordinated framework for the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, to promote disaster prevention, reduction, risk mitigation, emergency preparedness, rapid and effective response to disasters and post disaster rehabilitation and recovery.

#### **10.9.3 Strategic Objectives**

The 2005 Policy Framework for Disaster Risk Management in South Africa explicitly states that "disaster management should not be construed as a line function. Instead, it is a management facility, whose purpose is to create an enabling environment for the promotion and implementation of integrated disaster risk reduction measures and the development of institutional capacity to provide improved preparedness and response and recovery services". In line with that provision, it is the intention of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development: The strategic objectives will be following:

- To establish sound institutional arrangements for a coordinated and effective disaster mitigation, response and recovery regime
- To integrate disaster risk management into sustainable development programmes and policies, to ensure a holistic approach to disaster management
- To reduce the risk of disasters in both the agricultural and the environmental sector
- To strengthen capacity for relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery from disasters
- To ensure the development of partnerships and organizational arrangements with and between government agencies, civil society, development partners, communities and other stakeholders
- To enhance the use of knowledge, education, training, innovation and information sharing to build safe and resilient societies
- To ensure priority and requisite institutional capacities for disaster risk management at all levels

#### 10.9.4 PRINCIPLES

The following are the principals on which the Disaster Risk Management Policy is founded:

- o **Integrating disaster risk management into development planning:** Disaster prevention and preparedness should be an integral part of every development policy, plan, strategy etc. in the Department
- o **Equity:** Disaster relief must be provided in an equitable and consistent manner
- o **Multi-hazard Approach to Disasters:** This policy provides for all types of agricultural and environmental disasters that may be reasonably expected to occur in the province
- o **Sustainable and continuous approach:** The Department will improve systems and institutionalize capacity building measures to minimise the adverse effects of disasters
- o **Preventative approach:** The thrust of the departmental strategy is to mitigate disasters as a first measure.

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- o **Multi-Disciplinary and integrated approach:** Disaster risk management is a multi-disciplinary process involving stakeholders from both within and outside the Department. Disaster risk management is a concurrent shared responsibility which requires the fostering of partnerships between various stakeholders and co-operative relationships between the different spheres of government, the private sector and civil society. Furthermore, disaster risk management is an interdepartmental process, wherein each sphere of government plays a unique role and performs a specific set of responsibilities in the process.

#### 10.9.5 SCOPE OF APPLICATION

The policy, principles and provisions will apply to all individuals and Directorates within the Department, as well as all stakeholders within and outside government, including all communities of the KwaZulu-Natal Province.

#### 10.9.6 THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT'S DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's policy for disaster risk management seeks to establish disaster prevention and mitigation as the core principles of disaster management. Furthermore, the departmental policy seeks to introduce a disaster risk management approach that assures prompt and rapid disaster response and recovery in instances of disaster.

This policy serves as a guiding document that seeks to inform the Department's strategy in preparing, preventing and responding to disaster risk management. It is not in itself an operational plan, but an overarching policy document that will inform operational plans and procedures that the Department formulates in mitigating disaster risks.

In this regard, the Disaster Risk Management Policy will focus on the following pillars:

- Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation
- Response Mechanisms in the Event of a Disaster
- Post Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation
- Disaster Risk Governance and Institutional Support

### 10.9.7 Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation

The Department recognizes that whilst it is important to provide timely and appropriate post disaster relief, it is equally crucial that efforts are made to tackle the longer term challenges associated with disaster risk reduction. In this regard departmental Disaster Risk Management will include community participation; training and awareness campaigns, research and strategic relationships, and planning as key elements to realizing the intentions of this policy.

#### 10.9.7.1 Community Participation

Disasters occur in communities, thus the involvement of communities in disaster risk management strategies is imperative. Therefore the Department shall ensure that there is inclusion of community representation in disaster management project teams.

This policy recognizes three categories of community volunteers that can participate in disaster response and recovery operations, namely:

- o **Units of volunteers:** individuals, groups or organizations that already have specialised skills or are willing to be trained in disaster risks reduction
- o **General volunteers:** individuals who only want to assist during the disaster without being affiliated to any organized formation
- o **Spontaneous volunteers:** individuals that informally participate in disaster management on humanitarian grounds without any formalized form

Further to community volunteers, the department will engage and involve other stakeholders i.e. organised agriculture, traditional authorities, NGOs, commodity organisations etc.

#### 10.9.7.2 Training

The Department together with the National and Provincial Disaster Management Components will develop a capacity building plan for relevant stakeholders at provincial and regional levels to be equipped with the necessary body of knowledge to be able to efficiently and expediently handle all issues surrounding disasters.

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Also, the Department in partnership with non-governmental organizations and National Disaster Risk Management Centre shall take active steps in training office staff, institutional staff and local volunteers in disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

#### **10.9.7.3 Research and Strategic Relationships**

- There is seen to be a lack of useful data, information management, funding, and skills and knowledge with regard to disaster management in South Africa, and the rest of the continent, which have resulted in a lag in the capacity to undertake comprehensive research on environmental hazards and natural disasters, or to apply the knowledge and implement appropriate technologies to mitigate disasters.
- The Department, therefore, aims to continuously engage research institutions to obtain vital information and contemporary disaster risk management techniques and tools.
- Furthermore, the Department shall seek creative ways to raise awareness about disaster risk management, including engaging educational institutions as potential strategic partners in this endeavour.

#### **10.9.7.4 Disaster Risk Management Plan**

In terms of the Disaster Management Act, each provincial organ of state indicated in the National or Provincial Disaster Management Framework, such as the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, must formulate a Disaster Risk Management plan clearly indicating its roles and responsibilities in the Framework for Disaster Risk Management; its contingency strategies in case of a disaster and its capacity to fulfil the inherent legislative mandates. This plan will give effect to the provisions of this policy upon its formulation. The Disaster Risk Management plan will be based on the following principles:

- The Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component is responsible for the preparation of a comprehensive disaster risk management plan, through a participatory process involving all relevant stakeholders.
- Once the plan is completed and approved, a copy shall be sent to the Provincial Disaster Management Centre and the National Disaster Management centre.

- o Failure to comply with the prescription to submit the plan will be reported to the provincial legislature by the relevant MEC.
- o The plan shall be regularly reviewed and updated and relevant authorities and stakeholders must be regularly notified of any alterations.
- o The plan will be informed by the disaster risk profile of the province. The Agricultural Risk and Disaster management unit in consultation with all relevant stakeholders is responsible for establishing a disaster risk profile of the province.

#### **10.9.8 Response Mechanisms in the Event of a Disaster**

In the event of a provincial disaster as defined in Section 23, (5) (a) of the Disaster Management Act of 2003, the Premier of the Province, after consultation with other Executive Members, particularly the Agriculture and Rural Development, and Co-operative Governance MECs, may declare a disaster as stipulated in Section 41 of the Act. (See Appendix 1: Broad Principals on ARDM Processes):

#### **Declaration**

In order to declare a disaster, the Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component is too immediately to do the following activities:

- o Initiate efforts to assess the magnitude and severity or potential magnitude and severity of the incident or emergency
- o Inform the National Department of Agriculture of the incident and the initial assessment of the potential magnitude and severity of the incident
- o Request the confirmation of the declaration of an agricultural disaster in writing subject to the incident meeting the criteria for declaring a disaster in terms of Section 23, (5) (a) of the Disaster management Act (Act 57 of 2002).
- o Alert Disaster Risk Management role players in the province who may be of assistance
- o Initiate the implementation of any contingency plans and emergency procedures that are applicable



#### 10.9.9 Response

In terms of the Disaster Management Act, and the subsequent Framework for Disaster Risk Management, the Department of Cooperative Governance & Traditional Affairs is the primary state organ responsible for the overall co-ordination and management of disasters in the province. Thereafter, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is the primary state organ responsible for agricultural disasters in the province. Thus in the event of a disaster within its mandate, the Department shall adhere to the following sequence of events:

- Activate appropriate response plans that have been developed and adopted by the Department.
- Put in place a proper chain of command structure, which will serve as a nodal body for all disaster management activities and coordination mechanism that covers all entities responsible for implementation.
- Conduct rapid inter-agency assessment to ascertain the level of damage caused by the disaster and give advice on appropriate response mechanisms.
- Disseminate daily warnings and other emergency information to the public and other stakeholders, for effective communication amongst agencies to avoid duplication of efforts.
- Ensure that specialist experts and institutions with the necessary expertise are mobilized to provide assistance during a disaster. Their operations will be in accordance with disaster management plans and will be supported by local authorities.
- Provide maximum security to its own premises by the departmental Security Services to deter anti-social behaviour and looting during the disaster.
- Assist the community to repair or reconstruct damaged infrastructure and essential services, with the private sector and development partners, so as to reinstate this infrastructure to working order.
- Distribute appropriate relief measures, including funds, to address emergency situations and assist victims of disaster.
- Establish a database consisting of a comprehensive repository of information, which includes contact address of institutions, capacities,

resources and people, and that shall be maintained and made easily accessible, with a quick reference to a provincial disaster database.

- o Conduct post relief assessment and circulate the report to National, Provincial, Regional and District disaster management committees to share the experience in providing relief to disaster victims and to address the needs of victims who may have not been captured during the initial relief scheme.

#### **10.9.10 Post Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation**

The purpose of the provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's intervention is to maintain farming activity by the community through protection of critical resources in order to ensure affordable food of good quality, job and financial security and prevention of erosion of farmers' collateral. The policy objectives will be carried out through the machinery of the state as well as with the aid of other stakeholders.

##### **10.9.10.1 Recovery and Rehabilitation**

- o While a preliminary damage assessment is carried out during the emergency phase, a thorough, detailed assessment should be conducted before commencing reconstruction and rehabilitation activities.
- o The relevant regional, district and local authorities shall initiate detailed inter agency/ sector/branch/discipline assessments at their respective levels, for damages sustained to services, infrastructure, agriculture and health assets in the affected regions.
- o The Department shall provide the necessary assistance to help the affected to restore damaged infrastructure, as per approved conditions.
- o The Department shall provide relief funds/assistance to affected farmers (subject to affected farmers own) to a maximum of the assessed value of 90% for small scale farmers, 80% for medium scale farmers and 70 % to large scale farmers, Budget depending (See 9.3.2.2.1)
- o The local authorities, in consultation with the people affected and under the guidance of the Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component shall determine relocation needs, taking into account criteria relevant to the nature of the disaster and the extent of damage.

- The Department will facilitate reconstruction and rehabilitation projects and ensure they take into account the overall development plans for the province.
- Reconstruction & rehabilitation projects are fairly resource intensive. Therefore the ARDM component shall submit a project proposal on rehabilitation and risk reduction projects for approval and funding. Such funds will be raised by the Department in collaboration with the Provincial & National government, depending on the availability of resources, supported by international agencies and other development partners. The Department shall advocate and enable others to raise funds for disaster mitigation plans.
- The funds raised from funding agencies are usually accompanied by stringent disbursement and usage restrictions. It is therefore important for the Office of the Chief Financial Officer to monitor the disbursement of such funds to ensure that no agreements are breached during project implementation.
- The Department shall formulate appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms in all its interventions.

#### **10.9.11 Funding for Disaster Risk Management**

##### **10.9.11.1 Operational Budget**

- The Department shall allocate an operational budget for disaster risk management in the Province.
- The management of the budget resides under the authority of the Chief Financial Officer in line with the Provincial Treasury Guidelines and PFMA.

##### **10.9.11.2 Emergency Funding**

- In the case of a declared disaster, the Chief financial Officer shall approve the release of funds from Treasury to the concerned region/sector/branch/discipline and agencies for the implementation of response, relief, rehabilitation and post-disaster reconstruction purposes of no more than 2% of the department's annual budget as guided by Section 16 of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) Act 1 of 1999..

- The Department shall ensure that flexible procedures and systems within the confines of relevant legislation are put in place to expedite the disbursement of funds, deployment of personnel, logistics and other resources needed to save lives and property.
- The Department shall establish a Disaster Risk Fund Disbursement procedure that shall be approved by the MEC KZN DARD on the recommendation of the Accounting Officer and the Chief Financial Officer.
- The Chief Financial Officer shall also develop processes and procedures to manage disaster grants and donations consistent with PFMA.
- Together with the Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component, the **Chief Financial Officer shall facilitate and monitor reconstruction and rehabilitation** efforts in terms of project timelines, processes, funds, deployment and benefits to the affected communities.

#### 10.9.12 Disaster Risk Governance and Institutional Support

Disaster risk management is not a line function but it is a management facility whose aim of to create an enabling environment for the promotion and implementation of integrated disaster risk reduction measures and the development of institutional capacity to provide improved preparedness and response and recovery services.

The Department, therefore, requires sufficient institutional capacity and expertise to respond timely and effectively to the impact of disaster incidents, especially to those impacting on communities with limited resources.

##### 10.9.12.1 Committees and Forums

The Department shall establish the following committees/forums (see Appendices 2 – 4 for Terms of Reference):

- o Technical Task Team
- o the Early Warning Committee
- o and the Provincial Agricultural Disaster Risk Management Advisory Forum

##### 10.9.12.2 Mutual Assistance and Regional Co-Operation

- In accordance with the Disaster Management Act 57 of 2002, and other relevant legislation, the Department shall cooperate with all organs of state and spheres of government.
- The Department shall enter into mutual agreements with other spheres of the public and private sectors, should such be deemed expedient.
- The Department shall enter into regional co-operation with other provinces and specified neighbours consistent with the provisions of the Policy Framework for Disaster Risk Management in South Africa (e.g. KZN and Mpumalanga; Lesotho, Swaziland and Mozambique). At provincial and municipal level, co-operation and co-ordination efforts must be supported by cross-boundary mutual assistance agreements (i.e. between provinces, between provinces and municipalities and between municipalities), and by creating partnerships within each sphere of the private sector and NGOs, through memoranda of understanding.
- All agreements between the Department and other provinces and countries must be ratified by the MEC KZN DARD.

#### **10.9.13 Monitoring and Evaluation**

- The Department shall institute measures to monitor the implementation of this policy and the inherent Disaster Risk Management plan.
- The Department shall devise mechanisms to solicit feedback from disaster risk management personnel and stakeholders in the province to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of this policy and its plan.
- In line with the intentions of this policy the Department shall review its Disaster Risk Management plan annually.
- The Department is responsible for the review of the Disaster Risk Management plan.
- All sections captured in the Framework of Disaster Risk Management should provide inputs into the review of the plan.
- In revising the plan, the Department shall take cognisance of other disaster risk management stakeholders plans in all spheres of government.
- The reviewed annual plan shall be approved by the Head of Department.

#### 10.9.14 DUTIES OF THE DEPARTMENT

- In terms of the Disaster Management Act, the Department is responsible for establishing capacity with regards to disaster risk reduction and response and recovery. The following responsibilities must be undertaken by the departments:
- The Department shall take the lead in the enactment of the legislation on disaster risk management.
- The Department shall ensure the participation and cooperation of the department's Regional offices, as well as Local and District Municipality offices, in every aspect of disaster risk management. This shall embrace disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness and response.
- Directorates and components in the Department shall develop their directorate's Disaster Risk Management plans in collaboration with the Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component.
- The Department together with the National and Provincial Disaster Management Centre will develop a capacity building plan for disaster managers at provincial and regional level, to be equipped with the necessary body of knowledge to be able to efficiently and expediently handle all issues surrounding disasters.
- The Department, in partnership with non-governmental organizations and National Disaster Management Centre, shall take active steps in training office staff, institutional staff and local volunteers in disaster risk reduction and management.
- The Department must specify in the Disaster Risk Management plan all focal persons at managerial level, in each of the regions, districts and head office, who shall report at coordination meetings the progress and activities of the directorate they represent.
- The Departmental Security Manager shall ensure that head office/ regional/ district management includes safety and security measures as part of disaster risk reduction for its personnel and premises.
- The Department shall establish a comprehensive information network to enable timely collection of hazard-related information as well as rapid dissemination of relevant information and warning, to enable authorities to make informed decisions regarding potential disasters.

- o The Department must provide funds for the establishment of this information network to realize the intentions of this policy and expedite the feasibility assessment for and development of this network.
- o The Department shall ensure compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment protocols in all aspects of disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes.
- o The Department shall engage the private sector with the aim of eliciting their participation in disaster management. The Department must clarify the envisaged role of the private sector and the nature of their participation in disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery, before engaging them.

#### 10.9.15 Operational

The function of the Department's disaster risk management resides with the Agricultural Risk and Disaster Management component. Therefore as the custodian of this function, this component in terms of this policy is responsible for:

- o Identifying agricultural and environmental risk, vulnerability and hazards, particularly agricultural settlements that are disaster prone, and subsequently take appropriate steps to address the threats to the endangered settlements to mitigate potential disaster;
- o Lead the coordination and facilitation of all issues pertaining to disaster risk management in the Department;
- o Champion the incorporation of disaster risk reduction strategies into all departmental development plans and strategies. This includes specifying guidelines for civil construction, land use and planning. The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development line functions must also develop clear guidelines on epidemics and flooding.
- o Lead collaborations with the public sector, Provincial Disaster Management Centre, Non-Government Organizations, Local and District Local Municipality Councils; organized agriculture, the agricultural fraternity at large and local communities. Disaster Risk Management to be co-ordinated through establishing joint standards of practice between the Department and relevant role players;

- o Continuously apprise senior management, the MEC KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and other relevant state organs about disaster concerns in the province.
- o Advise departmental management about any request for assistance from disaster risk management stakeholders
- o In conjunction with like-minded institutions; develop an early warning system (including emergency communication mechanisms) for reporting, evaluating and disseminating early warnings on a 24-hour basis, to ensure that threatened communities are able to respond appropriately and take risk-avoidance measures when a disaster occurs, or is threatening to occur, in their areas;
- o Embark on extensive disaster awareness campaigns throughout the Province; and
- o Develop a comprehensive Disaster Risk Management plan through a participatory process involving all relevant stakeholders. The plan shall be revisited through consultative meetings and will be updated to make it reflect existing circumstances;
- o Facilitate the development of response and recovery plans, to ensure rapid and effective response to disasters that occur or threaten to occur, and to reduce the effects of those disasters that could not be prevented or predicted.

### 10.13 FORMAL POLICY APPROVAL

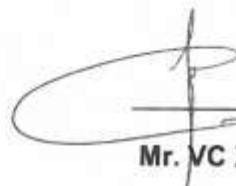
This policy is approved for implementation with effect from 1 March 2015 and replaces all other Policies on Agricultural Development issued before this date.



**Ms GJ Majola**

**Acting HOD**

**Date:** 2/2/2015



**Mr. VC Xaba**

**Hon. MEC**

**Date:** 05/02/2015