

World Tsunami Awareness Day Side Event

'Inclusive preparedness planning'

Monday 5 November 2018

17.00-17.45h

Background

Over the past 100 years, 58 tsunamis have claimed more than 260,000 lives, or an average of 4,600 deaths per disaster. This level of fatalities surpasses that of any other natural hazard.

The highest number of deaths was in the Indian Ocean tsunami of December 2004. It caused an estimated 227,000 fatalities in 14 countries, with Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand hardest-hit.

In the Pacific region, Papua New Guinea marked the 20th anniversary this year of a tsunami which killed up to 2,700 people.

To promote a global culture of tsunami awareness, the United Nations General Assembly in 2015 designated 5 November as World Tsunami Awareness Day.

To mark the occasion of World Tsunami Awareness Day at the ISCRAM Asia Pacific 2018 conference, a side event will explore the importance of **Inclusive preparedness planning**.

The date for the annual commemoration was chosen in honour of the Japanese story of "Inamura-no-hi", meaning the "burning of the rice sheaves". During an 1854 earthquake a farmer saw the tide receding, a sign of a looming tsunami. He set fire to his entire harvest to warn villagers, who fled to high ground. Afterwards, he built an embankment and planted trees as a buffer against future waves.

Tsunamis affect different people differently. In particular, the needs and capacities of vulnerable groups such as persons living with disabilities, children and older people, are often not taken into account as part of overall disaster risk management efforts.

The side event will emphasize the importance of inclusion, which is the overarching theme for this year's World Tsunami Awareness Day.

Running order

This side event aims to:

1. Raise awareness of particular needs and vulnerabilities of persons living with disability, children, older people and others in the face of tsunami risks;

2. Offer observations/ recommendations for improving tsunami risk management through greater consultation and engagement with vulnerable groups

The session will run as follows:

- **Introduction, video & overview** – Andy McElroy Pacific Region Head for the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) (10 mins)
- **Understanding tsunamis** – Graham Leonard Volcanologist & Natural Hazards Scientist GNS Science (10 mins)
- **The blue line to safety** – Dan Neely Community Resilience Manager Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office (WREMO) (10 mins)
- **Q&A**