

Interactive comment on “Brief Communication: Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction – success or warning sign for Paris?” by J. Mysiak et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

Received and published: 25 January 2016

This paper needs improvement of the English to correct misuse of tenses, dangling clauses, errors of usage and misuse of verbs.

Abstract: "In March 2015, a new international blueprint for disaster risk reduction (DRR) has been adopted in Sendai..." - was adopted (past definite)

Page 2, lines 11-12: "2015 has the potential to mark a key milestone" - please do not start sentences with figures.

Page 2, lines 14-15: "At the same time there is a growing risk of further inaction if no political agreement can be found." - This presupposes that international conventions are necessarily the motor of action. The authors need to ask - and answer - the
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question of to what extent countries need to be coerced into taking action on DRR and CC.

Page 3, lines 23-26: "The global annual average economic losses from natural hazards to the built environment alone, as estimated in the 2015 edition of the Global Assessment Report (UNISDR, 2015), would rank 36th in the list of countries sorted by their nominal GDP." - What does this mean? It is incomprehensible.

Page, 4, lines 5-6: "Since 2005, the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA, 2005–2015) provided guidance" - has provided guidance

Page 4, lines 21-22: "Vainly, as it turned out." - this is a clause, not a sentence.

Page 4, lines 24-25: "...stretched out until late hours on the last conference day, and presented to the relatively small audience of participants that remained to learn the outcomes." First, this does not explain why negotiations were so protracted, which was mainly because countries with few resources did not want the non-binding SFDRR to be tied to the binding negotiations on emissions and climate change. Secondly, the fact that few people remained at the end of the negotiations is misleading: there was no shortage of audience, it was merely the middle of the night.

Page 5, lines 15-16: "Disappointingly none of the targets specifies a quantitative degree of progress to be made." - That was never the purpose of treaties such as the SFDRR, but UNISDR literature makes it clear that it was intended to be worked out separately and after the SFDRR had been inaugurated. To quote a UNISDR publication "UN organizations have increased their accountability by adopting a single set of indicators to measure progress as they accelerate and mainstream disaster risk reduction into their operations." - If the SFDRR had contained targets they would have been unrealistic because of the complexity of the problems and the differences in disaster risk around the world, and also the differences in countries' risk reduction capacities.

Page 6, lines 2-3: "the ten years over which the countries' progress will be judged."

- The SFDRR applies over 15 years. This paragraph is not correct or meaningful because it ignores the separate process that the UN is using to develop indicators of progress. See: <https://www.unisdr.org/archive/45961> "Work starts on Sendai indicators".

Page 6, lines 11-12. "DRR progress will be accounted through collective assessments of all countries." - This was not true for the Hyogo Framework and will not be true for the SFDRR.

In this paragraph, the authors seem to have confused the working of the SFDRR with carbon trading arrangements.

Page 6, lines 21-22: "better coordination of disaster risk activities with development, civil protection, and other sectorial policies" [sectoral] - I wouldn't exactly call development a 'sectoral policy'.

Page 8, section 4: Rather than simply lamenting that the SFDRR is not like the climate convention, the authors of this piece would do well to consider why that is so. Establishment of international liability for disasters is fantasy, especially if one accepts the 1983 'radical critique' on the primacy of vulnerability.

In my view, there are two main reasons why this paper presents an unsatisfactory view of the SFDRR. First, it ignores the collateral work which is intended to operationalise the treaty, for example work on the creation of databases and indicators, and their subsequent application in particular countries. In that sense, it mistakes the fundamental nature of the SFDRR: it is a framework, not a statute to be applied or a standard to be achieved. Secondly, the paper contains no critique or evaluation of the fact that the UN process is 'top-down'. This is important, as two very comprehensive independent evaluations of the Hyogo Framework were carried out at the local level (in 2009 and 2011). They concluded that it had had little impact at the local scale.

Finally, if the SFDRR must be evaluated in the light of the climate convention, the

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first thing to do should be to recognise the functional differences between the two instruments.

Interactive comment on Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 3, 3955, 2015.

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