

Commission provides €5 million for disaster preparedness activities in Mozambique, Madagascar, Malawi and the Comoros

The Commission has extended the scope of its disaster risk reduction programme (DIPECHO) to countries in the south-west Indian Ocean region, with a new decision for €5 million. The funds will be channelled through the Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO) under the responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel.

"This is an important step in supporting communities that are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters," said Commissioner Michel. "Mozambique, Madagascar, Malawi and the Comoros all suffer the serious effects of tropical storms that develop in the Indian Ocean. Experience shows that many lives can be saved if people know what precautions to take and how to react when the disaster strikes. This type of action is especially important in a context of rising food prices and climate change."

This first DIPECHO Action Plan in Africa will provide funds for disaster preparedness in areas of the four countries most threatened by natural hazards, and where coping mechanisms are inadequate. Various types of action can be supported including practical training in disaster response for community groups and institutions, early warning systems, public information campaigns and small-scale infrastructure works.

Implementation of projects should begin in October 2008, before the onset of the next cyclone "season".

The Commission currently funds disaster preparedness interventions in six other areas of the world – the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Central Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia.

For more information:

http://ec.europa.eu/echo/funding/opportunities/proposals_en.htm