The National Drought Mitigation Center, based in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, was established in 1995 to help reduce vulnerability to drought. The Center works with states and tribal governments across the United States and with national governments around the world to develop better drought risk management strategies related to monitoring, early warning, and planning. The NDMC also maintains an extensive website with resources for monitoring, assessing impacts, planning, and K-12 education. http://drought.unl.edu

National Drought Mitigation Center Works Globally

The National Drought Mitigation Center, based at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, has had a strong international component since it was established, building on the earlier success of the International Drought Information Center. The Center:

• Regularly consults for United Nations agencies such as the World Meteorological Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and others.

• Works in multi-national collaborations. The Center is part of efforts to build the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), launched at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and by the Group of Eight. Mike Hayes, the Center’s director, helped organize the Global Drought Information System Workshop in Frascati, Italy, in 2012. Others from the NDMC were also involved. Mark Svoboda, who heads the Center’s Monitoring program area, is an external advisory board member for the European Union’s project, “Fostering European Drought Research and Science-Policy Interfacing (Drought R&SPI),” which met in March 2012 in Valencia, Spain.

• Worked with the European Commission on MEDROPLAN to develop drought preparedness guidelines for the countries in the Mediterranean region.

• Works with other regional and national drought and climate centers. Don Wilhite, founding director of the NDMC, served as a consultant to help establish a Drought Management Center for Southeast Europe, hosted by Slovenia. Cody Knutson, who heads the NDMC’s Planning and Social Science program area, serves on the Advisory Committee of the Indian Centre for Climate and Societal Impacts Research in Ahmedabad, India, providing recommendations for the creation of the center and ongoing research activities.

• Welcomes visiting scientists and students from around the world, recently including China, Japan, India, Ethiopia, Australia, the Netherlands and the Czech Republic.

• Conducted activities on six of the world’s seven continents between 2005 and 2011. That includes making presentations, consulting and conducting workshops on drought monitoring and planning in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Israel, Jordan, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey.
Monitoring

National Drought Mitigation Center climatologists are contributing to improving drought monitoring around the world.

Svoboda spearheaded development of a manual to help countries around the world implement drought monitoring using the Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) as the global standard for monitoring meteorological drought, at a World Meteorological Organization workshop in Lincoln, Nebraska, USA, in 2009. The NDMC also participated in follow-up workshops on hydrological and agricultural drought indexes.

The Center has distributed the SPI to more than 150 scientists in 60 countries around the world, and conducts training as needed.

U.S. Drought Monitor authors at the NDMC collaborate with Canadian and Mexican authors to produce the North American Drought Monitor every month. The Center regularly works with international colleagues on how a state-of-the-art monitoring system such as the U.S. Drought Monitor could be implemented in other countries.

The Center has had a long-time collaboration with a group of scientists in the Czech Republic and Austria to enhance understanding of drought and soil climates, climate change and climate variability. Hayes is on the Scientific Advisory Board for a large climate change-related project taking place in the Czech Republic called CzechGlobe, and attended the board’s first meeting in May 2012 in Mikulov.

Planning

The Center shares its policy and planning expertise globally through workshops, presentations and publications.

The NDMC led a workshop in Ankara, Turkey, in April 2011 for that country’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, sponsored by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Knutson participated in a week-long FAO training workshop on drought preparedness and management near Menemen, Turkey, in 2010, in collaboration with Turkey’s International Agricultural Research and Training Center. The workshop provided training on drought monitoring, risk assessment, management and planning to senior-level representatives from 12 countries in the Near East. In 2010, Knutson helped present a drought workshop for Iraqis, held in Jordan, in cooperation with UNICEF and UNESCO. In 2009, Knutson was one of three U.S. scientists who presented a workshop to water, agriculture and climate managers from Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Territories, organized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Foreign Agricultural Service and sponsored by the Multilateral Working Group on Water Resources, part of the official U.S. Middle East Peace Process.

Tsegaye Tadesse, NDMC climatologist, is part of an interdisciplinary team from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln that is establishing community-level partnerships with organizations and institutions in Ethiopia.


Learn more: http://www.drought.unl.edu/International.aspx