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# RELEASE

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## **European Commission allocates 1 million euro in humanitarian aid for victims of floods in Aceh and North Sumatra**

**The European Commission (EC) has adopted a €1 million humanitarian aid decision for the victims of floods that struck the north of Sumatra at the end of December. The aid provided will support 70,000 persons affected by the floods. The funding will be channelled through the EC Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), under the responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel.**

The EC took this humanitarian aid decision to provide relief assistance to an estimated 70,000 people in areas very difficult to access, in the inner highlands. The EC humanitarian response will mainly focus on the provision of drinking water, rehabilitation of water and sanitation systems, support to logistics and emergency restoration of livelihoods. The access to some isolated areas is still extremely problematic and logistics is an important issue. Ensuring transport of relief items is a priority and will need some emergency rehabilitation of roads and bridges. The emergency restoration of livelihoods also appears to be a priority, since in some areas up to 100% of cultivated fields have been washed away by the floods or covered by mud. The geographical areas targeted through these operations are the ones that received less assistance so far and those not targeted by other donors.

Between 17 and 23 December 2006, heavy downpours flooded vast areas of Sumatra in the provinces of Aceh and North Sumatra. The same areas had already been hit in early December by three earthquakes with magnitudes of between 4.9 and 6.1 on the Richter scale.

The landslides that resulted filled the rivers with debris and vegetation causing them to burst their banks when the torrential rains struck. This led to disastrous floods which brought widespread destruction to basic infrastructure such as roads and bridges. The floods also heavily affected domestic and public water and sanitation facilities, health centres and schools, as well as agricultural land. Up to 300,000 people were displaced, 6,500 houses were completely destroyed and around 88,000 houses damaged.

ECHO's field offices in Banda Aceh and Jakarta have been and are monitoring the situation closely. Aid will be implemented by partners with strong capacity and an established presence in the region.

The EC's humanitarian aid department is also involved in Indonesia through its disaster preparedness programme (DIPECHO).

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**More information on ECHO :**

[http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm)

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