

Algeria's Historical and Legal Strategy for Addressing Disaster Risks: Evolution and Sustainable Development

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Received: 03/02/2026 Accepted:08/05/2026 Published: 19/09/2026

Abstract

This article examines Algeria's strategy for addressing disaster risks in light of the legal and institutional developments that have characterized the system for disaster prevention and response. It aims to highlight the role of the legal framework in shifting from post-disaster intervention to a proactive approach based on forecasting, prevention, vigilance, and early warning. It also highlights the main general rules and standards relating to prevention, prevention and intervention plans, and building and urban planning regulations applicable to disaster-prone areas. It further examines intervention mechanisms, crisis management, and the continuity of essential services during disasters. In addition, it sheds light on the recovery and rehabilitation phase, support for affected persons, and the restoration of economic and social activities.

The article concludes that Algeria has achieved significant progress in its legal and institutional framework for addressing disasters. However, the effectiveness of this strategy remains dependent on the implementation of legal provisions, enhanced coordination among the various authorities, and the provision of the necessary human, technical, and financial resources. Its success also requires the development of early warning systems, digitalization, and the adoption of modern technologies in order to ensure the protection of lives and property and achieve sustainable development.

Keywords: Disasters; Vigilance; Prevention; Plans; Sustainable Development.

Introduction

In light of global developments in the field of preparedness for disaster¹ risk² reduction and the emergence of new developments on the international scene that may threaten human lives, infrastructure, and vital resources, the highest authorities of the State enacted **Law No. 24-04 of 26 February 2024 on rules for the prevention, intervention, and reduction of**

¹ A disaster is a serious disruption in the functioning of a community or society on a large scale, resulting from hazardous events that cause human, material, economic, or environmental losses and impacts and requiring the activation of an emergency response plan.

² Risk refers to a process, phenomenon, or human activity that may cause loss of life, serious injury, or other adverse health effects, property damage, social or economic disruption, or environmental degradation

disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development³. This law embodies a transition from the concept of disaster management to that of disaster risk management.

In recent years, Algeria has experienced several disasters, particularly forest fires and floods, which required intervention by State institutions and cost the public treasury more than **DZD 35 billion⁴**.

This Law was adopted in order to address the shortcomings previously existing under **Law No. 04-20⁵**, particularly with regard to strategic vigilance, which constitutes a proactive mechanism for forecasting and enables the issuance of early warnings⁶ in order to prevent significant losses, whether of life or property. It also seeks to ensure consistency with the **Paris Agreement on Climate Change⁷**, the **Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015⁸**, and the implementation of the outcomes of the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030⁹**, with the participation of 186 countries, including Algeria, under which seven global targets and four priorities for action were established.

The rules governing the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development¹⁰ constitute a comprehensive system initiated and led by the State, supported by scientific bodies, and implemented by public institutions, public authorities, and local authorities, each within the scope of its respective competence, in consultation with public and private economic operators and with the involvement of civil society.

The rules governing the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks aim to prevent and address the effects of such risks on human settlements, their activities, and their environment, with a view to preserving development and heritage and safeguarding them for the benefit of future generations.

³ Law No. 24-04 of 26 February 2024 on rules for the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 16, 6 March 2024.

⁴ Behloul Sofiane, "Activation of the Strategic Vigilance System as a Mechanism for Reducing Disaster Risks," Dirassat Journal, No. 160, December 2024, published on the website of the General Directorate of National Security: www.dgsn.dz.

⁵ Law No. 04-20 of 25 December 2004 on the prevention of major risks and disaster management within the framework of sustainable development, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 84, 29 December 2004.

⁶ Early warning refers to the set of capacities required to produce and disseminate timely and useful warning messages that enable, in the event of a threat, appropriate and timely preparedness and action to protect against and reduce the risk of harm or losses.

⁷ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), The Paris Agreement, adopted at COP21, Paris, 12 December 2015.

⁸ United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 18–22 January 2005.

⁹ United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Sendai, Japan, 18 March 2015, 32 p.

¹⁰ Sustainable development is a concept aimed at reconciling sustained social and economic development with environmental protection by integrating the environmental dimension into development in order to meet the needs of present and future generations.

Pursuant to **Article 5 of the same Law**, in order to enable human settlements, the activities they accommodate, and their environment in general to be integrated into sustainable development objectives, the rules governing the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks must be based on the **precautionary principle**. Under this principle, uncertainty resulting from the lack of updated scientific and technical knowledge shall not constitute grounds for delaying the adoption of effective and proportionate measures aimed at preventing any risk threatening persons, property, and the environment in general, at an economically acceptable cost.

Under **Article 7 of Law No. 24-04**, the Algerian legislator established a number of strategic objectives for the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks, including reducing the number of deaths resulting from disasters; reducing the number of persons affected by disasters; limiting direct economic losses resulting from disasters in relation to gross domestic product; reducing disruptions to basic services and damage caused by disasters to critical infrastructure, including health and educational institutions, by strengthening their resilience; as well as improving citizens' access to early warning systems and information relating to disaster risks.

The Law also establishes the **principle of interconnectedness**, which takes into account, when identifying and assessing the effects of any hazard or vulnerability, the interaction and aggravation of risks resulting from their simultaneous occurrence ¹¹.

The **principle of preventive and corrective action at source as a priority** requires that, to the greatest extent possible, and through the use of the latest technologies and at an economically acceptable cost, vulnerability factors be addressed first before adopting any other measure.

The **principle of participation** requires that every citizen have the right to access information concerning the hazards and risks threatening them, information relating to the associated vulnerability factors, as well as all relevant arrangements.

The **principle of integrating new technologies** requires that technological developments be monitored and incorporated whenever necessary in order to perform the relevant tasks in the most effective manner.

In light of the foregoing, the following research question arises:

To what extent is the strategy adopted by Algeria to address disaster risks effective within the framework of sustainable development?

This study adopts an **analytical approach** to examine the new legal provisions governing the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development. It also relies on a **descriptive approach** to examine the provisions applicable to each type of disaster risk.

In order to comprehensively address the subject, the study is divided into two sections. The **first section** examines mechanisms for preventing disaster risks, while the **second section** is devoted to mechanisms for intervention and recovery in addressing disaster risks.

¹¹ Simerabet Chahrazed, "Developments in Prevention and Protection from Disaster Risks under Law No. 24-04," Human Rights and Public Liberties Review, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2025, p. 438.

Section One: Mechanisms for Preventing Disaster Risks

In order to examine the mechanisms for preventing disaster risks, this section is divided into two subsections. The first addresses the general rules and standards applicable to various disaster risks, while the second examines the provisions specific to each risk.

Subsection One: General Rules and Standards Applicable to Various Disaster Risks

The prevention of disaster risks and the reduction of their impacts have become among the most important priorities imposed by rapidly changing environmental, climatic, and urban developments, given the human, material, and environmental losses caused by such risks and the disruptions they create in the continuity of essential public facilities and services. Accordingly, the Algerian legislator has sought to establish a legal framework based on prevention, anticipation, and forecasting rather than merely intervening after a disaster has occurred.

In this context, **Law No. 24-04**, relating to the rules applicable to disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development, establishes a set of general rules and standards aimed at reducing vulnerability and enhancing the capacity to anticipate and address risks through the adoption of vigilance and early warning systems, the development of awareness, training, and communication programmes, as well as the establishment of general prevention plans adapted to the nature, scope, and potential impacts of each risk.

The legislator further strengthened this framework through the executive decrees issued in 2025, particularly **Executive Decree No. 25-132**, concerning the procedures for preparing, amending, updating, and implementing general disaster risk prevention plans, and **Executive Decree No. 25-195**, concerning the procedures for preparing and implementing the national communication and information strategy and training, education, and scientific research programmes in the field of disaster risks.

Accordingly, the examination of these rules and standards requires, first, consideration of the rules relating to vigilance, early warning, and awareness for disaster risk prevention, followed by an examination of general prevention plans and building and urban planning regulations for addressing disaster risks.

First Subsection: Rules on Vigilance, Early Warning, and Disaster Risk Prevention

Most countries around the world seek to develop early warning systems by activating strategic vigilance mechanisms. Over the past two decades, the world has witnessed numerous disasters that have resulted in a significant increase in the number of victims and the destruction of infrastructure and vital facilities, particularly in the services sector. Early warning systems constitute a proactive mechanism based on monitoring any indicator that may signal the occurrence of a disaster capable of threatening societal security, with the aim of preventing or reducing losses ¹².

The State organizes an annual awareness and training programme on disaster risks for local authorities, various stakeholders, and civil society.

¹² Tout, F., Rebouh, N., Dinar, H., Benzid, Y., & Zouak, Z. (2025), "Evaluating Algeria's Approach to Major Risk Prevention and Disaster Response," *Journal of Geography, Politics and Society*, Vol. 15, No. 1, p. 53.

The State also establishes and implements the national communication strategy relating to disaster risks. The procedures for preparing and implementing this strategy were determined by **Executive Decree No. 25-195 of 13 July 2025**¹³. In this capacity, the State oversees the development of communication methods and the promotion and support of any media campaign or activity relating to disaster risks¹⁴.

Pursuant to **Article 20 of the Law**, a general prevention plan shall be established for each risk and approved by decree. It comprises the rules and procedures aimed at reducing vulnerability to risks that may result in the occurrence of one or more disasters and preventing their consequences.

Article 21 of Law No. 24-04 establishes vigilance as a strategic principle for monitoring any potential risk and forecasting its occurrence before it happens. This relies on stored information that is periodically and continuously updated and verified whenever necessary, in addition to the national early warning system for citizens through various media.

Strategic vigilance is defined as a process of searching for, collecting, and managing information and subsequently processing it in order to control the environment and make timely decisions. Such vigilance is based on the real-time and continuous storage of incoming information, together with permanent monitoring of the environment. Operational coordination is achieved through an information-activation mechanism implemented by institutions responsible for monitoring and updating information in order to forecast any potential disaster before its occurrence, based on the monitoring of risk indicators. Accordingly, strategic information management contributes to the timely adoption of appropriate decisions.

The general prevention plan for each risk is prepared on the basis of information collected from various public administrations and relevant partners concerning disaster risk prevention and mitigation. Such information must enable each general prevention plan to identify the following:

- The **national vigilance system**, through which, according to appropriate and relevant criteria, continuous monitoring of the development of the risks and hazards concerned is organized, and recorded information is assessed, analysed, and evaluated in order to ensure a proper understanding of the relevant risks and improve the assessment of their occurrence and activate warning systems.
- The **national warning system**, which enables citizens to be informed of the possibility or imminent occurrence of risks or disasters. This national warning system must be structured according to the nature of the relevant risks or disaster hazards at three levels: national, local, and site-specific.
- **National or local simulation programmes**, which enable the prevention arrangements relating to the relevant disaster risk to be examined and developed.

¹³ Executive Decree No. 25-195 of 13 July 2025 specifying the procedures for preparing and implementing the national strategy for communication and information, as well as training, education, and scientific research programmes in the field of disaster risks, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 49, dated 28 July 2025.

¹⁴ Articles 11 and 12 of Law No. 24-04, cited above.

- Verification of the quality, suitability, and effectiveness of prevention measures; informing and preparing the population concerned; and identifying the institutions, bodies, and reference laboratories responsible for monitoring and warning against disaster risks and the procedures applicable thereto.

The general disaster risk prevention plan must also include:

- The system adopted, where appropriate, to assess the significance of the risks and hazards concerned.
- Identification of the areas, wilayas, and municipalities characterized by vulnerability according to the magnitude of the relevant risks when they occur.
- Measures implemented in the field of prevention and reduction of vulnerability according to the relevant disaster risk, including the classification of measures relating to human settlements and land use according to the significance of the risks and the degree of vulnerability of the area, wilaya, or municipality concerned.

Each general disaster risk prevention plan shall identify the areas subject to easements and areas where construction is prohibited because of disaster risks, as well as the measures applicable to existing buildings.

Pursuant to **Article 24**, without prejudice to the legislative and regulatory provisions applicable to construction, development, and urban planning, construction undertaken by natural or legal persons is strictly prohibited, due to disaster risks, in particular in the following high-risk areas:

- Areas characterized by active seismic faults, lands subject to geological hazards, protection zones surrounding industrial areas, hazardous industrial units, or any industrial or energy facility involving a major risk;
- Land through which hydrocarbon or water pipelines or energy transmission lines extend;
- Flood-prone land, riverbeds and riverbanks, and areas located downstream of dams below the flood-risk level;
- Areas where construction is prohibited and areas subject to easements.

Second Subsection: General Disaster Risk Prevention Plans and Urban Planning and Building Regulations

Pursuant to **Article 25 of Law No. 24-04**, the sectors responsible for preparing, amending, updating, and implementing general disaster risk prevention plans, as well as the relevant procedures, shall be determined by regulation.

In implementation of this provision, **Executive Decree No. 25-132 of 27 April 2025**¹⁵ was issued, determining the procedures for preparing, amending, updating, and implementing general disaster risk prevention plans. This Decree repealed **Decree No. 85-232 of 25 August 1985** relating to disaster risk prevention.

¹⁵ Executive Decree No. 25-132 of 27 April 2025 specifying the procedures for preparing, amending, updating, and implementing general disaster-risk prevention plans, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 27, dated 4 May 2025.

First: Content of General Disaster Risk Prevention Plans

A general prevention plan shall be prepared for each disaster risk and shall include all rules and procedures aimed at reducing vulnerability to risks that may result in disasters and preventing or limiting their consequences for persons, property, and the environment.

General disaster risk prevention plans shall be prepared on the basis of data, statistics, and information collected from public administrations and relevant partners concerning disaster prevention and risk mitigation.

Such data, statistics, and information enable each general prevention plan to establish:

A national vigilance system, through which, according to appropriate or relevant criteria, continuous monitoring of the development of the risks concerned is organized, together with the collection, analysis, and assessment of recorded information, thereby enabling:

- A proper understanding of the risks concerned;
- Improved capacity to forecast their occurrence;
- Activation of warning systems.

A national warning system enabling citizens to be informed of the possibility or imminence of disaster risks. This system must be structured according to the nature of the relevant disaster risks at three levels: national, local, and site-specific.

National or local simulation programmes, which enable:

- The examination and development of mechanisms for preventing the relevant disaster risks;
- Ensuring the quality, suitability, and effectiveness of preventive measures;
- Informing and preparing the population concerned;
- Identifying institutions, bodies, or reference laboratories responsible for vigilance regarding disaster risks and related procedures.

The general disaster risk prevention plan must also identify:

- The system adopted, where appropriate, for assessing the significance of the relevant disaster risks;
- The areas, cities, villages, and sites characterized by vulnerability according to the significance of the relevant disaster risks;
- Measures implemented in the field of prevention and vulnerability reduction according to the relevant disaster risks, including the classification of measures relating to human settlements and land use according to the significance of the risks and the degree of vulnerability of the area, city, village, or site concerned.

Each general disaster risk prevention plan must also identify areas subject to easements and areas where construction is prohibited because of disaster risks, as well as measures applicable to existing buildings.

Second: Procedures for Preparing, Amending, Updating, and Implementing General Disaster Risk Prevention Plans¹⁶

¹⁶ Articles 9 to 14 of Executive Decree No. 25-132 of 27 April 2025 specifying the procedures for preparing, amending, updating, and implementing general disaster-risk prevention plans.

A committee for the general disaster risk prevention plan shall be established within the ministry responsible for preparing the plan. The committee is responsible for monitoring the preparation, amendment, updating, and implementation of the general disaster risk prevention plan.

The committee, chaired by the minister responsible for preparing the general disaster risk prevention plan or his representative, shall comprise representatives of the sectors concerned with the relevant disaster risk. The committee shall establish monitoring indicators for the general disaster risk prevention plan, as well as an annual programme for its assessment.

General disaster risk prevention plans shall be approved by executive decrees, with a validity period of **ten (10) years**. In the event of amendment or updating, the validity period shall be calculated from the date of the latest amendment or update.

Subsection Two: Provisions Specific to Each Risk

Article 3 of the Law identifies disaster risks. Their number has increased from ten risks under Law No. 04-20 to eighteen risks under Law No. 24-04. This classification may be divided into two categories.

The first concerns the separation of certain risks from one another, namely the distinction between earthquake risks and geological risks, as well as between desertification and drought risks, which have become separate from climatic risks.

The second concerns the emergence of new risks, namely **space risks, coastal erosion, sea-level rise, cyber risks, biotechnology risks, and locust risks** ¹⁷.

First Subsection: New Developments Concerning Risks Previously Covered by Law No. 04-20

This subsection examines risks regulated under the previous Law and the developments concerning their legal provisions.

1. Provisions on the Prevention of Earthquake Risks

Pursuant to **Article 26 of the Law**, the general earthquake risk prevention plan shall, in particular, classify all areas exposed to such risks according to their significance, with a view to providing appropriate information, organizing the restructuring of facilities, and relocating human settlements. The general earthquake risk prevention plan must take into account the results of risk studies and accurately identified seismic zones in the field of urban planning and development ¹⁸.

Additional measures may also be provided for monitoring and assessing the vulnerability of buildings, facilities, and strategic structures constructed before the adoption of seismic-resistant standards or in accordance with outdated standards, with a view to rehabilitating them.

Article 28 identifies the ministerial sectors responsible for conducting a comprehensive survey of infrastructure, strategic facilities, and structures constructed before the enactment of seismic-resistant standards. Accordingly, the ministers responsible for housing, public works, and water resources shall each, within their respective fields, prepare and implement a

¹⁷ Benouar, D., & Benmokhtar, A., "Risk Governance for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Algeria," *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, Vol. 16, pp. 58–70 (2025), p. 65.

¹⁸ Ministry of the Interior, Local Authorities and Transport, Disaster Risk Profiles, available at: <https://interieur.gov.dz/vers-une-strategie-integree-de-grc/> , accessed le 15/09/2026.

programme for assessing the vulnerability of buildings, facilities, and strategic infrastructure constructed before the introduction of seismic-resistant standards or in accordance with outdated standards, with a view to strengthening them.

2. Provisions on the Prevention of Geological Risks¹⁹

The general geological risk prevention plan shall, in particular, classify all areas exposed to such risks according to the significance of the risk, with a view to providing appropriate information, organizing the restructuring of facilities, and relocating human settlements.

With regard to areas exposed to geological risks, particularly landslides, underground cavities, soil swelling and shrinkage, and soil erosion, the general geological risk prevention plan must take into account the results of geological risk studies in urban planning and development.

3. Provisions on the Prevention of Flood Risks

Pursuant to **Article 31**, the general flood risk prevention plan shall, in particular, classify all flood-prone areas according to the significance of the risk, with a view to providing appropriate information concerning this phenomenon and organizing the restructuring of facilities and relocation of human settlements.

Land-use, subdivision, or building permits shall, under penalty of nullity, identify all works, developments, pipeline networks, or corrective structures intended to reduce flood risks and ensure the safety of persons and property.

The general flood risk prevention plan must also include:

- A national flood-risk map showing all areas exposed to flooding, particularly riverbeds and areas located downstream of dams threatened by this risk in the event of dam failure;
- Reference risks for a period of at least 100 years;
- A map of exposed assets and stakes;
- The reference elevation for each area declared to be flood-prone, with the relevant areas being subject to minimum easements and construction prohibitions pursuant to Article 24.

4. Provisions on the Prevention of Extreme Climatic Risks

Article 33 addresses extreme climate change-related risks and amends Article 26 of Law No. 04-20 by separating desertification and drought risks from them and adding heat waves and cold waves.

Risks relating to strong winds, heavy rainfall, sandstorms, snowstorms, heat waves, and cold waves constitute extreme climatic risks within the meaning of this Law.

The general prevention plan for extreme climatic risks classifies areas exposed to each extreme climatic risk according to its significance, with a view to providing information and adopting appropriate preventive measures.

The plan also identifies:

- Areas exposed to each of the risks referred to in Article 33;
- Vigilance arrangements for monitoring the development of each of these risks;

¹⁹ Articles 29 and 30 of Law No. 24-04, cited above.

- Measures to control urban development by complying with standards enabling resistance to such risks;
- Renewal and expansion of national meteorological forecasting networks;
- Assessment of health risks associated with such hazards in order to reduce population vulnerability.

5. Provisions on the Prevention of Forest Fire Risks

The general forest fire risk prevention plan shall include:

- Classification of forest areas according to the forest fire risks that may occur;
- Identification of population settlements in forest areas, together with appropriate building systems and construction materials;
- Identification of forest routes, firebreaks, water points, and monitoring points within a geographic information system.

This demonstrates the effective role of the **Geographic Information System (GIS)** in identifying routes within forest areas, firebreaks, water supply areas, and monitoring and surveillance centres.

6. Provisions on the Prevention of Industrial and Energy Risks²⁰

The general prevention plan for industrial and energy risks shall include, in particular, all rules and procedures applicable to specific facilities, particularly mines, quarries, and facilities or installations for the production, processing, and transportation of energy, especially hydrocarbons.

The general prevention plan for industrial and energy risks also establishes rules and procedures for preventing and reducing risks leading to explosions, gas emissions, and fires, as well as risks associated with the handling of materials classified as hazardous on the basis of the technical studies required under the applicable regulations.

The plan also identifies the industrial establishments and facilities concerned, together with monitoring arrangements and procedures for implementing the general prevention plan for industrial and energy risks.

7. Provisions on the Prevention of Radiological and Nuclear Risks

The general radiological and nuclear risk prevention plan shall be prepared on the basis of an inventory and analysis of anticipated radiological and nuclear risks throughout the national territory.

The general prevention plan identifies, in particular, all rules and procedures applicable to the prevention of events and accidents giving rise to such risks, in accordance with Articles 40 and 41 of Law No. 24-04.

8. Provisions on the Prevention of Risks Affecting Human Health

Pursuant to **Article 42 et seq.**, the general prevention plan for risks affecting human health identifies, in particular, diseases posing a risk of infection or epidemics, as well as a map of wilayas, municipalities, and vulnerable areas exposed to such risks and preventive and mitigation measures in the event of exposure.

²⁰ Articles 36 and 37 of Law No. 24-04, cited above.

For diseases posing a risk of infection or epidemics, the general prevention plan also identifies the health institutions responsible for adopting diagnostic and preventive measures.

9. Provisions on the Prevention of Risks Affecting Animal and Plant Health

The general prevention plan for risks affecting animal and plant health identifies, in particular:

- Diseases posing a risk of animal infection or epidemics, particularly zoonotic diseases transmitted from animals to humans;
- Diseases and harmful organisms subject to plant quarantine;
- A map of wilayas, municipalities, and vulnerable areas exposed to such risks;
- Preventive and damage-mitigation measures in the event of exposure.

The plan also identifies, with regard to diseases posing a risk of animal infection or epidemics, the health institutions responsible for adopting diagnostic and preventive measures, pursuant to Articles 44 and 45 of Law No. 24-04.

10. Provisions on the Prevention of Air, Marine, or Water Pollution Risks

A specific subsection concerning air, marine, or water pollution risks has been added. Such a prevention plan was not included in Law No. 04-20.

Articles 46 et seq. of Law No. 24-04 provide that the general prevention plan for air, marine, or water pollution risks shall identify, in particular, the various potential sources of air, marine, or water pollution, as well as maps showing the vulnerability of ecosystems and populations to such risks.

The general prevention plan also identifies measures for protecting persons and ecosystems exposed to such risks.

11. Provisions on the Prevention of Risks Associated with Large Human Gatherings²¹

provides that the general prevention plan for risks associated with large human gatherings shall identify preventive measures applicable to institutions and places accommodating a significant number of persons, particularly major educational institutions, large mosques, stadiums, land or railway transport stations, ports, major airports, beaches, and other public places requiring special preventive measures.

further provides that the general prevention plan for risks arising from large human gatherings shall identify all human resources and material means that must be mobilized to ensure the safety of such gatherings, according to the type of facility or place and the nature of the gathering.

Second Subsection: New Risks Introduced by Law No. 24-04

The emergence of new risks, particularly climatic and cyber-technological risks, has rendered Law No. 04-20 inconsistent with certain international agreements to which Algeria has acceded, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework. It was therefore necessary to strengthen the legal and institutional framework by introducing new provisions, as follows:

²¹ Articles 48 and 49 of Law No. 24-04, cited above.

1. Provisions on the Prevention of Space Risks

Two new Articles, **38 and 39**, were introduced under this Law to establish the general prevention plan for space risks. The plan identifies the various space risks and the areas concerned, as well as mechanisms for organizing prevention in relation to such risks in order to mitigate their effects on persons and property and the environment.

2. Provisions on the Prevention of Desertification Risks

Desertification risks were separated from extreme climatic risks under Law No. 24-04.

Article 50 provides that the general desertification risk prevention plan shall include a national desertification map according to each ecological region, classification of areas exposed to desertification according to their degree of sensitivity, and vigilance procedures for monitoring the development of desertification.

Article 51 further provides that the general desertification risk prevention plan shall identify all preventive measures or protection requirements applicable to areas exposed to such risks.

3. Provisions on the Prevention of Drought Risks

Drought risks were separated from extreme climatic risks under Law No. 24-04.

Article 52 confirms that drought has become a concern and priority for the State in order to ensure food security within the national three-dimensional strategy, alongside energy security and health security.

The general drought risk prevention plan identifies measures aimed at improving the resilience of territories at all national and local levels to drought risks, ensuring food, health, and water security, and mitigating the effects of drought, particularly on populations, public health, the economy, agriculture, livestock farming, and forests. It also seeks to strengthen the resilience of ecosystems and biodiversity in order to reduce the impact of drought.

Article 53 further provides that the general drought risk prevention plan shall identify, in particular, monitoring and assessment indicators for:

- Climatic drought;
- Agricultural drought resulting from insufficient water resources and adversely affecting plant and animal production;
- Hydrological and hydrogeological drought, where surface and groundwater resources reach abnormally low levels.

4. Provisions on the Prevention of Coastal Erosion and Sea-Level Rise

This risk was introduced by **Article 54 of Law No. 24-04**.

The general prevention plan for coastal erosion and sea-level rise shall identify, in particular:

- Assessment of the retreat of the coastline and sea-level rise;
- Maps showing the distribution of affected coastal human settlements and infrastructure;
- Assessment of seawater intrusion into coastal aquifers;
- Vulnerable areas exposed to these risks;
- Measures to be adopted, particularly with regard to the use and occupation of coastal land.

5. Provisions on the Prevention of Cyber Risks

The legislator expanded the scope of disaster risks to include cyberattacks. Of particular significance is the prevention of the effects and consequences of cyber risks provided for in **Article 55**, which legally formalizes the proactive measures adopted by the highest authorities of the State²² in implementation of the President of the Republic's commitment to achieving digital transformation and generalizing the use of information and communication technologies, particularly within public service administrations, and improving the governance of the economic sector.

This was reflected in **Presidential Decree No. 20-05 of 20 January 2020**²³, concerning the establishment of a national information systems security framework, as amended and supplemented by **Presidential Decree No. 25-298 of 10 November 2025**²⁴.

The general cyber-risk prevention plan shall identify, in particular, the various types of threats that may be encountered, the bodies and institutions exposed to such risks, and the security measures to be adopted to prevent them.

6. Provisions on the Prevention of Locust Risks

Article 56 provides that the general locust risk prevention plan shall establish the national map of areas exposed to locust risks, procedures for activating campaigns to monitor locust populations and movements, and mechanisms for continuous coordination among the sectors concerned.

7. Provisions on the Prevention of Biotechnology Risks

This risk was introduced by **Article 57**, emphasizing the need to protect human, animal, and plant health by qualifying personnel and enhancing their capacities to implement the relevant measures, as well as strengthening mechanisms for monitoring the cross-border movement of biological organisms.

The general biotechnology risk prevention plan shall include, in particular:

- Border control mechanisms for any movement of living modified organisms;
- Measures to prevent the effects of transboundary movements of living modified organisms on biodiversity, taking into account risks to human, animal, and plant health;
- The use of living modified organisms in contained facilities;
- A programme for strengthening the capacities of institutions responsible for monitoring living modified organisms.

Any use of biotechnology in the control, production, or transportation of living modified organisms shall be subject to a risk assessment concerning human health, biodiversity, and the environment.

Section Two: Mechanisms for Intervention and Recovery in Addressing Disaster Risks

²² Benaoumeur, Sidali, "The Impact of Legislative Instruments for Disaster Risk Reduction on Sustainable Development According to Law No. 24-04," *Law Studies Review*, Vol. 13, No. 1, 2026.

²³ Presidential Decree No. 20-05 of 20 January 2020 concerning the establishment of a national information systems security framework, *Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria*, No. 4, dated 26 January 2020.

²⁴ Presidential Decree No. 25-298 of 10 November 2025 amending and supplementing Presidential Decree No. 20-05, *Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria*, No. 80, dated 30 November 2025.

The Algerian legislator did not limit itself to establishing prevention plans but also adopted intervention plans to be activated in the event of a disaster, which will be examined in the first subsection. It also introduced specific measures for the post-disaster recovery phase, which will be examined in the second subsection.

Subsection One: Specific Intervention Plans

In order to address disasters, **Law No. 24-04 of 26 February 2024**, containing rules for the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development, established specific intervention plans.

Specific intervention plans are established to determine special intervention measures in the event of disasters, with the aim of protecting industrial facilities and structures.

In addition to specific intervention plans, operators of industrial facilities and hydrocarbon transportation pipelines must prepare an **internal intervention plan** specifying, for the facility concerned, all risk prevention measures, particularly warning and alert systems, relevant technical studies, the resources mobilized for this purpose, and the procedures to be implemented when a disaster occurs²⁵.

Every industrial facility must also undergo a vulnerability²⁶ assessment concerning disaster risks before being commissioned and operated.

First Subsection: Conditions and Procedures for Preparing and Approving Intervention Plans

In implementation of Articles 73 and 76 of Law No. 24-04 of 26 February 2024, **Executive Decree No. 25-63 of 28 January 2025**²⁷ was issued, establishing the conditions and procedures for preparing, implementing, and managing intervention plans in the field of disaster risks.

The Decree aims to determine the conditions and procedures for preparing, implementing, and managing specific intervention plans and internal intervention plans in the field of disaster risks. Pursuant to Article 29, it repealed the provisions of **Executive Decree No. 15-71**²⁸ of **11 February 2015**, determining the conditions and procedures for preparing and approving specific intervention plans for facilities or structures, as well as **Executive Decree No. 09-335**²⁹ of **20 October 2009**, determining the procedures for preparing and implementing internal intervention plans by industrial facility operators.

²⁵ Assiakh, Samir, "Updates on the Disaster Risk Prevention Law within the Framework of Sustainable Development for the Year 2024," *Journal of Legal and Political Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 2, 2025.

²⁶ Vulnerability refers to the degree to which populations and property are exposed to risks, including the existence of conditions relating to physical, social, economic, or environmental factors or processes that weaken the resilience of such populations and their property.

²⁷ Executive Decree No. 25-63 of 28 January 2025 determining the conditions and procedures for preparing, implementing, and managing intervention plans in the field of disaster risks, *Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria*, No. 07, 5 February 2025.

²⁸ Executive Decree No. 15-71 of 11 February 2015 (repealed) specifying the conditions and procedures for preparing and approving special intervention plans for facilities or structures, *Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria*, No. 9, dated 18 February 2015.

²⁹ Executive Decree No. 09-335 of 20 October 2009 (repealed) specifying the procedures for preparing and implementing internal intervention plans by operators of industrial facilities, *Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria*, No. 60, dated 21 October 2009.

For each identified disaster risk, specific intervention plans, pursuant to **Article 74 of the Law**, aim to analyse risks, anticipate supplementary warning arrangements where necessary, implement the specific measures required to control the effects of disasters, and inform citizens of the measures adopted at the relevant facilities.

Under **Article 2**, a specific intervention plan is a document defining all prevention measures and the organization and coordination of relief operations in the event of a disaster risk affecting an industrial facility or structure, with the objective of protecting persons, property, and the environment.

The specific intervention plan aims to address risks arising from the industrial facility or structure itself that may lead to a disaster, as well as disaster risks, regardless of their nature, that may affect industrial facilities or structures and have consequences for human health, property, and the environment.

The following industrial facilities and structures are subject to specific intervention plans:

- Classified establishments subject to environmental protection requirements where the risk assessment indicates that the effects of the risks may extend beyond the boundaries of the facility or industrial structure and may cause damage to persons, property, or the environment;
- Surface-water storage structures where the risk assessment indicates that the effects may extend beyond the boundaries of the structure and cause damage to persons, property, or the environment;
- Facilities dedicated to the transportation of hydrocarbons and gas through pipelines;
- Facilities and structures relating to hydrocarbon activities.

With regard to industrial zones, the specific intervention plan covers all industrial facilities and structures, including hydrocarbon and gas transportation pipelines and facilities and structures relating to hydrocarbon activities located within the industrial zone.

The territorially competent **Wali** shall, by decision, establish the list of industrial facilities and structures subject to a specific intervention plan, on the proposal of the committee referred to in Article 14.

The **internal intervention plan** is a document defining the procedures for planning and managing interventions and rescue operations in the event of an accident occurring within an industrial facility or structure, together with the resources mobilized for this purpose. It identifies all prevention measures applicable to the relevant facility or industrial structure, particularly warning and alert systems and related technical studies.

The internal intervention plan applies to industrial facilities and hydrocarbon transportation pipelines which, because of the risk of fire, explosion, or the release of toxic substances, may pose risks to workers, populations, property, and the environment.

First: Conditions and Procedures for Preparing Intervention Plans

Intervention plans shall be prepared by the operator of the facility or industrial structure on the basis of a vulnerability assessment for specific intervention plans and disaster risks concerning the facility or industrial structure, and a risk assessment for internal intervention plans.

These assessments shall determine, as appropriate, the degree of vulnerability to risks or the degree of risk that may affect industrial facilities or structures, as well as the measures necessary to ensure their capacity to respond to such risks.

The vulnerability and risk assessments shall be carried out at the expense of the operator of the industrial facility or structure, who shall engage study offices accredited by the State in accordance with the applicable regulations.

Intervention plans shall be prepared by qualified State institutions or study offices accredited by the State, in accordance with a model established by a joint decision of the minister responsible for the interior, the minister responsible for industry, and the minister responsible for the environment. Such plans must be based on scientifically substantiated and convincing studies and documents.

For hydrocarbon and gas transportation facilities and pipelines, as well as facilities and structures relating to hydrocarbon activities located within an industrial zone, the specific intervention plan for the zone shall be prepared jointly by the body responsible for managing the industrial zone and the operators.

Qualified State institutions and bodies shall provide all documents and information necessary for preparing intervention plans.

Second: Conditions and Procedures for Approving Intervention Plans

A committee responsible for approving draft intervention plans shall be established by decision of the Wali at the level of each wilaya.

The committee must decide on the request for approval of the draft intervention plan within a maximum period of **three months** from the date on which the application is submitted. If this period expires, the draft intervention plan shall be deemed approved.

The committee may request amendments to the intervention plan or a supplementary study. In such a case, the aforementioned period shall begin from the date of submission of the amended draft intervention plan. The powers and operating procedures of the committee shall be determined by decision of the territorially competent Wali.

After approval of intervention plans, a copy shall be sent to the operators of the industrial facilities or structures and to the stakeholders responsible for implementing them. A copy of the specific intervention plan shall also be sent to the municipalities concerned and to neighbouring wilayas where the effects of the relevant risks may extend to the territories of such wilayas.

Second Subsection: Procedures for Implementing, Evaluating, and Updating Intervention Plans

First: Procedures for Implementing and Evaluating Intervention Plans³⁰

Workers at the facility or industrial structure must be informed, trained, and made aware of the risks associated with operating the equipment of industrial facilities or structures and using technical equipment and procedures, as well as their consequences and the measures to be adopted in the event of an accident. They must also be consulted during the preparation of intervention plans, which shall be made available to them.

³⁰ Articles 18 and 24 of Law No. 24-04, cited above.

In the event of an industrial accident, the operator shall activate the internal intervention plan, manage internal operations, inform the Civil Protection services, and provide them with all information concerning the accident in real time, particularly:

- The circumstances of the accident;
- The equipment, materials, and/or hazardous substances or solutions responsible for the accident;
- Emergency measures taken;
- Available data for assessing the effects of the accident on persons, property, and the environment.

The Director of Civil Protection at the wilaya level shall immediately inform the Wali of the situation and provide information concerning the accident in order to enable the necessary measures to be taken, where appropriate, to provide medical care to victims and protect persons, property, and the environment.

If the intervention resources of the facility or industrial structure are insufficient to deal with the accident, the operator shall request the intervention of the Civil Protection services, which shall immediately assume management of the operations and inform the Wali for the purpose of activating the specific intervention plan where appropriate.

The provincial Director of Industry or Energy, as applicable, shall:

- Collect the necessary information through investigations in order to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the accident;
- Prepare an accident report and submit it to the Wali, who shall in turn forward it to the minister responsible for industry or the minister responsible for energy, as applicable, and to the minister responsible for the relevant sector;
- Prepare recommendations concerning future prevention and intervention measures.

The specific intervention plan shall be activated by the Wali in the following cases:

- The occurrence of a disaster as defined in the specific intervention plan;
- Where it is established that the resources of the internal intervention plan are insufficient to deal with the accident.

An annual programme of simulation exercises for specific intervention plans shall be established and approved by the committee in consultation with the operator of the facility or industrial structure concerned.

The operator must also conduct simulation exercises for the internal intervention plan in order to assess its effectiveness. Such exercises must be conducted **at least twice a year**.

Each time an intervention plan is activated, and after each simulation exercise, the committee shall prepare an evaluation report concerning its implementation. The territorially competent Wali shall send the report to the minister responsible for the interior, the minister responsible for the environment, and the minister responsible for the sector concerned with the industrial facility or structure.

Second: Procedures for Updating Intervention Plans

Pursuant to **Article 26**, intervention plans shall be reviewed for the purpose of updating them at the request of the Director of Environment or the Director of Industry of the wilaya, as well as in the following cases:

- At the initiative of the operator where modifications are made to the facility or industrial structure, storage area, or the nature and quantities of hazardous materials or solutions that may have significant consequences;
- After each simulation exercise;
- Following the occurrence of a disaster risk;
- In the event of a change in the list of stakeholders and their duties;
- In the event of a change in the relevant legislation or regulations.

The minister responsible for industry or the minister responsible for energy, as applicable, shall maintain, within an information system, a database containing information relating to accidents that have occurred throughout the national territory, their causes, the measures adopted, and the lessons learned, in order to enable institutions, bodies, and economic operators to use such information to update and improve operational measures for addressing disaster risks.

The procedures for implementing this provision shall be determined by a joint decision of the minister responsible for the interior, the minister responsible for industry, and the minister responsible for energy.

Operators of industrial facilities and structures already in operation on the date of issuance of this Decree and which do not have intervention plans must bring their situations into conformity with its provisions within a period not exceeding one year from the date of its entry into force.

Operators of industrial facilities and structures that were not in operation when this Decree entered into force may not commence their activities until their intervention plans have been approved by the committee.

It should be noted that the legislator strengthened the applicable penalties under **Article 86 of Law No. 24-04**. Any person who violates Articles 75 and 76 of the same Law shall be punished by imprisonment for a period ranging from **six months to two years** and a fine ranging from **DZD 300,000 to DZD 500,000**. In the event of recidivism, the penalty shall be doubled.

Likewise, pursuant to **Article 87**, a legal person violating Articles 75 and 76 shall be punished by a fine ranging from twice to five times the maximum fine prescribed for a natural person under Article 86. In addition, the court may prohibit the legal person from carrying out the activity for a period not exceeding five years. Inspection reports relating to the offences provided for shall have evidentiary value unless rebutted by contrary evidence.

Subsection Two: Introduction of Specific Measures for the Recovery Phase

The measures applicable during the post-disaster recovery phase include, in particular, ensuring the continuity of essential facilities, assisting affected persons in returning to normal life, ensuring the resumption of economic activities, and providing psychological support and health services to all persons in need thereof.

Article 81 provides that, during the post-disaster phase, measures must be taken to prevent the potential occurrence of new disaster risks, taking into account, in particular, the principle of **building back better and rehabilitation**.

Pursuant to **Article 84**, the State may provide financial or in-kind assistance to disaster victims in accordance with the applicable legislation and regulations.

First Subsection: Establishment of an Intersectoral Committee Responsible for Assessing Disaster Damage

Article 82 of Law No. 24-04 provides that, at the end of the post-disaster phase, an intersectoral committee shall be established within the ministry responsible for the interior to assess the damage caused by the disaster and propose the necessary recommendations for building back better and rehabilitation.

In implementation of this provision, **Executive Decree No. 25-61³¹ of 28 January 2025** was issued, determining the functions, composition, and operating procedures of the intersectoral committee responsible for assessing disaster damage.

Pursuant to **Article 2 thereof**, the committee shall be established at the end of the post-disaster phase and shall be responsible, in particular, for:

- Collecting technical information concerning the disaster from competent institutions, particularly information relating to vulnerability and aggravating factors associated with the disaster risks that occurred, including through digital platforms;
- Preparing an assessment of the losses and damage caused by the disaster;
- Preparing a detailed report on the financial estimates of the losses and damage resulting from the disaster;
- Examining requests submitted by the Walis concerning the financing of operations, particularly those relating to the rehabilitation of public facilities and equipment enabling public services to resume operation;
- Proposing recommendations for building back better and rehabilitation following disasters.

Second Subsection: Preparation of a Specific Plan for Managing Rubble, Debris, and Other Waste Resulting from the Disaster

Pursuant to **Article 83 of Law No. 24-04**, a specific plan for managing rubble, debris, and other waste resulting from the disaster shall be prepared after each disaster.

In implementation of this provision, **Executive Decree No. 25-62³² of 28 January 2025** was issued, determining the procedures for preparing the specific plan for managing rubble, debris, and other waste resulting from disasters.

³¹ Executive Decree No. 25-61 of 28 January 2025 determining the functions, composition, and operation of the intersectoral committee responsible for assessing damage resulting from disasters, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 7, 5 February 2025.

³² Executive Decree No. 25-62 of 28 January 2025 determining the procedures for preparing the specific plan for managing rubble, debris, and other waste resulting from disasters, Official Gazette of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, No. 7, 5 February 2025.

For the purposes of this Decree, disaster waste means materials, objects, debris, and any other substances that have become unfit for consumption or unusable in their existing condition and that may potentially affect human health, the environment, and public health.

Without prejudice to the legislative and regulatory provisions relating to the management of different types of waste, the specific disaster waste management plan aims, in particular, to establish an effective system for managing disaster waste and preventing health and environmental risks resulting from such waste.

The disaster waste management plan must include, in particular:

- Classification and estimation of the quantity of disaster waste;
- Prevention procedures and identification of the authorities responsible for managing such waste, as well as analytical laboratories;
- Communication, information, and awareness measures;
- Establishment, organization, and management of disaster waste collection points;
- Monitoring and control of disaster waste treatment operations;
- Rehabilitation of disaster waste collection points³³.

The plan shall also establish the implementation timetable and identify the actors responsible for its implementation.

The specific disaster waste management plan shall be prepared according to a model established in advance by a joint decision of the minister responsible for the interior and the minister responsible for the environment. When a disaster occurs, the disaster waste management plan shall be prepared taking into account the nature of the disaster and field data.

Following a disaster, a committee responsible for preparing the specific disaster waste management plan shall be established at the level of the wilaya concerned. Members of the committee shall receive specialized training in disaster waste management.

Conclusion

Following this analytical study of the main provisions of **Law No. 24-04**, containing rules for the prevention, intervention, and reduction of disaster risks within the framework of sustainable development, it is evident that the Algerian State has addressed many of the shortcomings existing under **Law No. 04-20**, which had been the subject of extensive discussion among the various sectors and stakeholders before the draft was submitted to the Algerian legislator.

Findings of the Study

- The new Law emphasizes the importance of the strategic vigilance system and early warning system, both of which can make a significant difference in disaster prevention, intervention, and risk reduction.
- The Law renews the national disaster risk management strategy through monitoring, vigilance, and forecasting emergency situations before their occurrence, as well as through capacity-building supported by research and training centres and simulation systems. Furthermore, the transition from ten risks under Law No. 04-20 to eighteen risks under Law

³³ Articles 2, 3, and 4 of Executive Decree No. 25-62, cited above.

No. 24-04 confirms the importance attached to sustainable development, one of whose foundations is sound planning to address any risk capable of threatening societal security, preserve national assets, and build a resilient society capable of avoiding the serious consequences of disasters.

- The identification of financing mechanisms and increased investment in prevention and forecasting contribute to improved governance through a clear allocation of responsibilities and tasks, enhanced intersectoral coordination, and greater involvement of civil society.
- The Law establishes the concept of prevention and intervention and strengthens resilience instead of relying solely on the concept of disaster management.
- The possibility of establishing sectoral or multisectoral institutions, committees, and structures through regulatory instruments.
- The introduction of a final phase dedicated to post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation, reconstruction, ensuring the continuity of essential facilities, ensuring the resumption of economic activities, and providing psychological support and health services to all persons in need.
- The strengthening of criminal provisions and the establishment of safer mechanisms, conditions, and rules governing urban planning and land use.
- Improved preparedness for emergencies through technology and digitalization, together with raising public awareness concerning disaster management and responses to emergency situations.
- The Law contains eleven references to implementing decrees. Ten of them have been completed, while only six implementing decrees have so far been issued.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, a number of recommendations may be proposed with a view to strengthening the effectiveness of Algeria's strategy for addressing disaster risks:

- Strengthen the effective implementation of **Law No. 24-04** and its implementing regulations, while establishing clear mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of its provisions and assessing their results at both national and local levels.
- Develop strategic vigilance and early warning systems through the use of modern technologies, artificial intelligence, geographic information systems, and data analysis in order to improve the capacity to monitor risk indicators and forecast disasters.
- Activate general prevention plans at the local level and directly integrate them with land-use and urban planning schemes in order to prevent urban expansion in areas exposed to floods, seismic and geological risks, and other hazards.
- Strengthen supervision of construction and existing facilities in disaster-prone areas, giving priority to assessing the vulnerability of strategic facilities and essential infrastructure and rehabilitating them according to modern standards.
- Intensify simulation and training exercises and ensure that they are not treated as merely formal procedures, while using the results of each exercise or actual incident to update and improve intervention plans, particularly given that the regulatory framework requires periodic exercises for internal intervention plans.

- Develop the strategy relating to emerging risks, particularly cyber risks, space risks, biotechnology risks, coastal erosion, and sea-level rise, as these risks require specialized technical and scientific expertise.
- Strengthen the digital dimension of disaster management by interconnecting databases and digital platforms among the various authorities, thereby enabling real-time information exchange during the prevention, intervention, and recovery phases.
- Implement the principle of **building back better and rehabilitation** following a disaster, so that the recovery phase does not merely seek to restore the previous situation but also aims to address the vulnerability factors that contributed to aggravating the consequences of the disaster.
- Develop a periodic evaluation system for the national strategy using quantitative and qualitative indicators measuring reductions in human and economic losses, the preparedness of facilities, the effectiveness of early warning systems, and the speed of response.
- Allocate adequate financial and technical resources to prevention, given that investment in prevention and vulnerability reduction is less costly than relying solely on financing intervention, compensation, and reconstruction operations after a disaster.

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