



The ‘Mountain Risks’ research project: challenges in risk governance.

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The ‘Mountain Risks’ Project intends to develop an advanced understanding of how mountain hydro-geomorphological processes behave and to apply this knowledge to long-term cohabitation with such hazards. The objective of this poster is to present the issues addressed by the project on mountain risk governance.

Risk governance principles will be assessed to find a coherent way of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity, as well as creating resilient communities facing mountain risks. In view of the given differences between cultures and socio-economic settings in addition to individual factors, good risk governance should focus on common procedural requirements for different phases of risk governance, taking into account the state-of-the-art of both the Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA) and the relevant aspects of risk perception and political systems and constraints. Hydro-geomorphological events are often undervalued by the authorities and the general public largely due to their lack of awareness of such a hazard, which frequently occurs alongside more publicised events like flooding and earthquakes. Therefore, more effective risk management measures, as well as advances in knowledge transfer are required, which must incorporate the lessons learnt from prior disasters.

To adopt risk management strategies for use in each EU member state, the following principles will be carefully considered: (1) using the same methodological techniques for QRA recognised as legitimate and fair by the stakeholders, (2) empowering and involving stakeholders appropriately and making decision-makers more accountable to them, (3) creating the conditions for stakeholders to consider the relevant scientific evidence to meet their needs in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, (4) producing

practical decisions and strategies, flexible and open to revision with time, (5) evaluating and monitoring the consequences of decisions, taking into account the stakeholders view to readjust decisions if necessary and (6) evaluating the actual information needs in view of the decision-making process.

On the basis of this, the 'risk governance' theme of the project will address the following actions:

- Incorporate the lessons learnt from past disasters within the management;
- Identify legal aspects, risk cultures and insurance possibilities;
- Communicate the information, educate the practitioners and the population, and involve all stakeholders in the decision-making process;
- Establish practical thresholds for acceptable and tolerable risks;
- Provide a framework for the use of geo-information at all levels and define the potentiality of modern visualization tools.

These actions will be applied on highly documented case studies, located in five European countries (France, Italy, Swiss, Germany and Spain) where mountain hazards are currently evident.