



Effective online-information on flooding: Experts and governmental authorities in support of stakeholders' needs

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Governmental authorities are challenged to minimize impact of natural hazards on vital societal functions. Critical issues to alleviate effects of extreme run-off events in river basins are the coordination of institutions involved but foremost the communication with stakeholders. Communication of short- and long term flood-relevant information needs to move stakeholders (lay and expert public) to intended actions.

Our research is oriented to identify priorities and information needs for two groups involved: users (foremost lay stakeholders) and writers who provide online information (experts, officials of governmental administration, and webmasters). We aim to assess the potential to optimize online information systems to support flood preparedness strategies and early warning during crisis through the following lead questions:

- (1) In which way are data presented? Does the document sustain readers' attention?
- (2) Which mode is most appropriate for the distribution of information?
- (3) What kind of information is relevant for the public on a local or regional level?
- (4) How to improve the understanding of flood-risk-related data for stakeholders?

We will present answers to these questions based on a pilot study in context with the BMBF-funded research activity "Risk Management of Extreme Floods" (RIMAX). The focus is on information for stakeholders' use before, during and after a flood event. The main criteria for the evaluation of official flood web pages are content, presentation of data (focus on GIS maps), and access to these data; furthermore, we consider the criteria readability and legibility. In a next step, we plan to validate the evaluation criteria chosen; i.e. we will interview stakeholders living in regions that differ in exposure to run-off events.