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Vulnerability $\neq$ Vulnerability – the need for an interdisciplinary framework for vulnerability analysis in risk assessments

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Vulnerability is a crucial part for risk assessments considering people, objects and systems to a wide variety of potential damaging impacts. The concepts of vulnerability that exist in the various scientific communities, such as climate change, disaster management, development or economic and policy analysis research groups, have been developed in parallel for their specific purposes and within their particular context. Hence, they vary with respect to the meaning of vulnerability and the approach to describe and measure vulnerability, which leads to incompatibilities and misunderstandings in interdisciplinary working groups.

At the same time the evidence is growing that global warming causes an increase of number and intensity of natural hazards and might result in environmental change that will threaten development achievements of the past. The adaptation to the various forms of climate change impact and in particular the regional and local planning procedures required to reach aspired adaptation goals raises the demand for interdisciplinary research and a generally applicable framework for vulnerability assessments.

This presentation summarises latest approaches aiming at the development of such an all-comprising vulnerability framework. Besides the dimensions of vulnerability (social, institutional, physical, economic etc) special consideration is given to the spatial scale and the temporal aspects of vulnerability. Particular emphasise is put on the potential to develop applicable and measurable indicators for local and regional

planning purposes. In this context the objectives of the FP7 project MOVE (Methods for the Improvement of Vulnerability Assessment in Europe), due to be kicked off in spring 2008, will be presented.

Within MOVE an interdisciplinary research group will test vulnerability assessment methodologies amongst others in a test study area in South Tyrol. The presentation will point out the major gaps between existing natural hazard related vulnerability and risk assessment research and the requirements of the local authorities for tools and methodologies to allow them to develop climate change adaptation strategies and to keep decision makers informed.