Dear Reader,

We are very pleased to introduce to you the first newsletter of the Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre. The Knowledge Centre aims at strengthening the interface between science and policy to increase the resilience of the European Union to disasters, both within Europe and globally.

In the past two decades, over 200 million people have been affected by natural disasters each year. In the European Union natural disasters have caused over €100 billion in economic losses since 2002. The Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted in 2015 marks a global momentum for disaster risk management and resilience-building. Promoting a more systematic science-policy interface will strengthen the contribution of disaster risk management to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, and will help maintain our competitive edge through the prevention of economic loss and damage.

Building resilience to disasters requires innovative technologies, tools and methods – from models and risk assessment methodologies to early warning systems, from new materials for resilient infrastructures to methods for loss data accounting – as well as the effective use and uptake of the vast amount of existing and future knowledge and research results. The Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre will continue to grow and sustain itself as a point of reference in the EU to improve the use, access, exchange and uptake of knowledge so vital for the management of disaster risks and emergencies and the strengthening of resilience at European level and beyond.

The importance of the Knowledge Centre is not limited to the world of emergency relief and prevention: the communities in research and science, migration and home affairs, environment, climate action, critical infrastructure and beyond will benefit from this cross-cutting initiative.

We wish you an enriching read and look forward to building together an ever-stronger science-policy interface for disaster risk management!

Florika Fink-Hooijer
Stephan Lechner


Stephan Lechner is Director of the JRC’s Institute for the Protection and Security of the Citizen of the European Commission.

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The Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) a new initiative of the European Commission (Joint Research Centre – JRC; Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection – ECHO, Climate Action – CLIMA; Environment – ENV; Migration and Home Affairs – HOME; Research and Innovation - RTD). The DRMKC is aimed to enhance EU and Member State resilience to disasters and their capacity to prevent, prepare and respond to emergencies through a strengthened interface between science and policy. The Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Knowledge Centre pursues three main pillars:

- improving science-based services through partnerships
- improving the use and uptake of research and operational knowledge
- advancing science and technology in disaster risk management (innovation)

Among its first activities, the Knowledge Centre will offer Member States technical advice on risk assessment methodologies, while consolidating scientific networks on related disaster risk management matters.

**BENEFITS FOR DRM COMMUNITY**

Wide, multinational, cross-discipline network of scientists and practitioners. Newsletter on latest scientific developments including comprehensive event list. Benefits for the various groups:

**Scientist**

Identify future priorities for research by contributing to the flagship report on Science for Disaster Risk Management in the EU

Participate in multi-disciplinary cross-border scientific partnerships and turn your research into operational services and policy advice

Offer expertise to civil protection and disaster risk management authorities

**Practitioner**

Receive situation awareness and analysis for EU and global disasters

Join a Community of Users, collaborating with colleagues from other Member States to interface with researchers, without missing out on results

Access tested innovative solutions for crisis management and practical advice on adoption of new research and technology

**Policy Makers**

Discover good practice and science-policy interfaces in other countries or disciplines

Get an overview of research funding in disaster risk management
On 24-25 November 2015, the First Scientific Seminar of the Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre (DRMKC) was held in London, co-organized by the UK Met Office and the European Commission. The seminar gathered around 100 scientists, practitioners and officials from Member States and international organisations.

The seminar focused on discussing the Role of science in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) in the following main topics:

**Risk Assessment at National, EU and global level**

Within Europe, the importance of scientific-based scenarios and probabilistic modelling approaches in undertaking Risk Assessments and for harmonised cross-border Risk Assessment was recognized. The role of scientific-based scenarios in assessing Risk Management Capabilities was also discussed (deadline for EU Member States in 2018). Increased collaboration among public authorities, scientific communities and the private sector can support the understanding of different policy needs, improving also the policy application of research products.

**Early Warning Services for Floods, Extreme Temperatures and Health**

Science plays a central role in adding value to the forecast process used to provide alerts and warning information. In addition, science is playing an increasing role at national and regional level in providing expert interpretation of warning information and in communication of the expected hazard impacts to decision makers and to the general public. The best way to communicate the uncertainty of the forecasts remains an important issue in view of the requirement to implement the authoritative single voice alerting paradigm.

**Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (SFDRR) 2015-2030**

The importance of Science is well acknowledged in the SFDRR, where the translation of scientific information into concrete activities is required (e.g. to measure progress for achieving Sendai targets). To achieve these goals, support from Member States is needed. A main event in which to discuss the science-based roadmap is the UNISDR S&T Conference planned for 27-29 January 2016.

Full summary:

Interview with Mathilda Buijtendijk (MB) and Sladjana Cemerikic (SC), Dutch Ministry of Security and Justice, during the European Council Working Party on Civil Protection (PROCIV) Workshop on “Building bridges to enhance resilient infrastructures”, 12-13 January 2016 in The Hague.

**What are the key challenges you will tackle during your EU presidency?**

(SC) We chose “Resilience of Critical Infrastructures” because of its importance for the Netherlands and we will focus on cost-effectiveness which is very high in both our priorities and those of the Commission. We will emphasise prevention which has not been very high in the PROCIV working group agenda.

**How is complex science communicated in a useable way to practitioners and policy makers?**

(MB) For policy makers all science can be complex. It takes time to speak each other’s language and we must bridge these two worlds. We need objective threat and risk assessment, independent and not politically guided. We managed it by creating an independent “Analyst Network”, who advise the Cabinet Office via the ministries.

**What are the main outcomes of the first presidency meeting “Building Bridges to Enhance Resilient Infrastructures” held on January 12/13?**

(MB) Five themes emerged: 1. A Common Framework to share information and knowledge. 2. Cooperation between public and private entities. 3. Training exercises. 4. A coordinated risk assessment. 5. Communication with the public and other member states.

**Pick one piece of expertise of the Netherlands that you would like to contribute to other member states.**

(MB) Flood prevention as the Netherlands is very experienced in this area and shares this with others. Also Critical Infrastructure Protection; it’s part of our culture and we have a lot of expertise.

**What is the key event you see in 2016?**

(SC) The DG Conference, 2-3 June 2016 in Amsterdam. We will present the results of discussions on flood prevention and the results of this workshop.

Full interview:
http://goo.gl/lh9Op2
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Upcoming Events

27-29 January, Geneve
UNISDR S&T Conference
The conference will discuss how the science and technology community can best support the implementation of the SFDRR 2015-2030.

01-04 February, Geneve
OCHA Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week: Effective Preparedness and Response
The 2nd annual meeting of the Consultative Group will bring operational and service-oriented response and preparedness networks together on the basis of shared, practical challenges that cannot be solved by any singular network or organization.

07-08 February, Rome
Kick-Off Meeting of the European Parliament Project (ARISTOTLE) for Early Warning Systems
The DRMKC Pilot Project to provide EWS advice in support of the ERCC in the monitoring activity (ARISTOTLE Project) has been launched and the first activities of the large Partnership of Institutions are starting.

29 February, Brussels
Community of Users (CoU) on Disaster Risk and Crisis Management meeting
The meeting is for planning the activities for 2016

06 April, Sevilla
Annual EFAS partner meeting
Annual Meeting of the European Floods Awareness System (EFAS) partners. They will provide feedback on the EFAS performance, discuss and vote on future developments and receive training related to flood forecasting.

1 March
State of Science in DRM Report 2017: call for authors
The report will present the state of science in DRM. The narrower purpose is to show practical use of scientific knowledge in DRM actions in Europe.

14 March,
ECHO Call for Prevention and Preparedness projects in the field of civil protection and marine pollution - deadline for the submission proposals.
The objective of the Call is to select projects which support and complement the efforts of participating states and eligible third countries in prevention and preparedness in civil protection and marine pollution focusing on areas where a common European approach is more appropriate.

17-22 April, Wien
2016 European Geoscience Union Forum
The EGU General Assembly 2016 will bring together geoscientists from all over the world to one meeting covering all disciplines of the Earth, planetary and space sciences.

16-20 May, Istanbul
Understanding Risk (UR) Forum
Fourth biennial conference of the UR Community, will provide a place for showcasing emerging best practices, forming nontraditional partnerships, learning about the field, and advancing innovation to better understanding disaster risk.

29 February
Launch of the European Network of Crisis Management Laboratories (ENCML) Experiments
Experiments and activities are going to be launched, to strengthen the response and collaboration among participating laboratories in all phases of Crisis Management through distributed exercises.

1 March
Launch of DRMKC Support Systems
Member States are being activating the DRMKC Support Services aimed at brokering available expertise and good practice within EU with specific needs of a Member State.

More events

Details and links on these events are available on the website.

Submit your event and see more events on the DRMKC website: drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/overview/Events.