



KULTURisk

Knowledge-based approach to develop a cULTURE of Risk prevention

newsletter

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Why KULTURisk?

The world has recently suffered a number of natural disasters. The extreme consequences of these catastrophic events have highlighted that risk prevention still needs to be improved to reduce human losses and economic damages. Hence, it is essential to investigate and disseminate the benefits of prevention measures compared to traditional post-disaster recovery. KULTURisk is a 4.4 million research project

conceived under the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Commission. The project officially started on the 1st of January 2011 by a consortium formed by 11 partners of 6 European countries. The main goal of the project is to develop a culture of risk prevention in Europe and demonstrate its advantages over traditional post-disaster recovery approaches.

KULTURisk will develop a culture of risk prevention and demonstrate its advantages over traditional post-disaster recovery approaches.

Kick-off meeting

The Kick-Off meeting of the KULTURisk project took place in Delft, The Netherlands, on 26th-28th of January 2011. The first day started with a welcome speech by UNESCO-IHE Deputy Director Joop de Schutter, who introduced the institute. Then, Giuliano Di Baldassarre, the



"Modern society has distinct advantages over those civilizations of the past that suffered or even collapsed for reasons linked to water. We have great knowledge, and the capacity to disperse that knowledge to the remotest places on earth. We are also beneficiaries of scientific leaps that have improved weather forecasting, agricultural practices, natural resources management, disaster prevention, preparedness and management...But only a rationale and informed political, social and cultural response – and public participation in all stages of the disaster management cycle – can reduce disaster vulnerability, and ensure that hazards do not turn into unmanageable disasters"

Kofi Annan
Message on World Water Day
2004

KULTURisk Coordinator, gave a general introduction to the project, which was followed by a number of presentations given by the representatives of the partner institutions: Dimitri Solomatine (UNESCO-IHE), Roberto Ranzi (University of Brescia), Florian Pappenberger (European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts), Mitja Brilly (University of Ljubljana), Matthias Buchecker (Swiss Federal Institute), Pierpaolo Campostrini (Consorzio Ricerche Laguna), Antonio Marcomini (University of Venice), David Demeritt (King's College London), Michele Ferri (Alto Adriatico Water Authority), Paul Bates (University of Bristol), Gero Michel (Willis Limited) and Peter Salamon (EC - Joint Research Centre). These representatives exposed how their expertise



assists the KULTURisk tasks. The morning of the second day was committed to find synergies among the partners with respect to the defined Work Packages. To this end, a series of presentations and discussions were carried out. At the end of the morning the KULTURisk group actively participated in a fruitful plenary discussion. Other issues, such as website, next workshops, PhD and researchers exchanges, were also discussed. During the afternoon of the second day the actions for the next 6-12 months were presented, followed by a

general discussion in which special attention was given to the data availability of the case studies and the role of the stakeholders. The day finished with an integration dinner.

During the last day, administrative issues, actions and recommendations were presented by Gaetano Casale (UNESCO-IHE). After that, the first General Assembly (GA) meeting took place. The GA consists of the Project Coordinator (PC), all WP leaders and one representative (member) from each participant's institution. The GA discussed actions and administrative issues in view of the results of the plenary discussion. Discussions about of Advisory Committee members and Scientific Advisory Board were carried out as well.



Joint EFAS & KULTURisk meeting

The second event of the KULTURisk project was carried out jointly with the Annual European Flood Alert System (EFAS) in Stresa, Italy on 12-13 April 2011. The meeting was split into two days - the first day was dedicated to EFAS and the second to early warning systems

in general as part of the KULTURisk project. The aim of the two days was to foster exchange of information on flood forecasting, but also from cross-cutting disciplines such as flash floods, landslides, coastal floods, weather forecasts, civil protection and others.



An exercise about the communication of probabilistic forecasts, very relevant for KULTURisk, was carried out during the EFAS training. The objective of the exercise was to understand the preferences and dislikes of the communication between forecasters and users of Hydrological Ensemble Prediction Systems (HEPS). The outcome of the working groups will be summarised in a paper and communicated to all participants. More information can be found in the EFAS website. Day 2 started with a series of lectures explaining the aims of the KULTURisk FP7 project (G. Di Baldassarre, UNESCO-IHE), a research study on how probabilistic weather forecasts

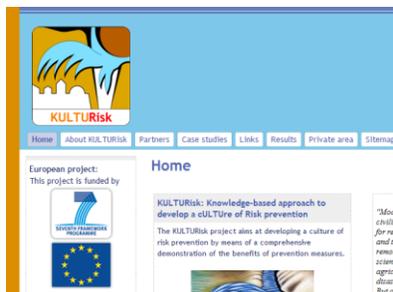


could be communicated in an optimized way (L. Stephens, UK Met Office), and an introduction to coastal early warning systems with the example of the UK (A. Hibbert, National Oceanographic Centre). Lecturers tried to focus on the cross-cutting issue of communicating uncertainty in early warnings where suitable. The perception of early warnings from a civil protection point of view (S. Luebbert, BBK) and the economic evaluation of natural hazards (J. Mysiak, Fondazione ENI) were two interesting, non-common topics that added value to the workshop. Afterwards, other participants presented their work related to early

warning systems in general in a poster session. An overall of 13 posters were exhibited covering topics such as specific examples of operational early warning systems, evaluation of short-term deterministic forecasts, combination of multi model forecasts, flash flood ensemble warning, assimilation of snow cover data in flood early warning systems, decision support systems etc. Sálvano Briceño (UN/ISDR) stressed during the plenary discussion that besides early warning systems we should consider rising risk awareness in the society, so that people become less vulnerable to natural disasters. One of the relevant conclusions of this event for KULTURisk is that recipients of early warning information should be considered part of the warning system. This implies that the needs and responses of the population must be examined.

KULTURisk website

In order to communicate the KULTURisk news, events and products, the KULTURisk website has been launched. It includes a description of the project, a summary of partner institutions and the experts involved, a description of the case studies where the methodologies will be developed and tested, a list of



relevant links and a page where the KULTURisk deliverables of public access will be published. A link to the KULTURisk Private Area is also included, where the team members can find working and administrative documents, minutes of meetings and presentations given at events. The private area is used also for publishing internal and final reports in order to be reviewed by the team and encourage constructive discussions. Visit www.kulturisk.eu.

News and upcoming events

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On 23-25 November 2011 the EGU Leonardo Conference will take place in Bratislava, Slovakia. It will focus on processes, patterns and predictions of floods in 3d. The conference will be co-organised with the COST ES0901 FLOODFREQ and EU FP7 KULTURisk projects. More information:

<http://www.eguleonardo2011.flood.sk/en>.

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By the end of the month of June 2011, the first set of deliverables will be submitted to the European Commission. These deliverables focus mainly on reviewing national and international policies in risk prevention, existing risk assessment methodologies, economic costing of loss damages, methodologies of structural and non-structural measures, early warning systems in Europe and risk communication.

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KULTURisk partners

The Netherlands: UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education. ***Italy:*** Consorzio Ricerche Laguna (CORILA), University of Brescia, Alto Adriatico Water Authority. ***Slovenia:*** University of Ljubljana. ***Switzerland:*** Swiss Federal Institute. ***United Kingdom:*** King's College London, University of Bristol, Willis Limited. ***Belgium:*** EC - Joint Research Centre

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