



**FIRST SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR OF
THE KNOWLEDGE CENTRE ON DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT:
SCIENCE FOR POLICY AND OPERATIONS**

24-25 November 2015, Central Hall Westminster, London

CONCEPT NOTE

A key on-going challenge for science-based decision making in disaster risk management is to close the gap between available scientific analysis supporting prevention, preparedness and response measures, and the effective use scientific information to trigger such actions. As disasters become more frequent and severe, increasing the resilience to crises and disasters requires the continued development of innovative technologies, tools and methods to manage disaster risk and emergencies, such as risk assessments and early warning systems. Another big challenge is to capitalise on the wealth of existing knowledge and to improve the use and accessibility and uptake of research results for operational activities. The Knowledge Centre for Disaster Risk Management sets out to promote the interface between science, policy and early warning systems by promoting networks and partnerships and knowledge exchange. It aims to facilitate access to and uptake of research developments and results; and supporting the development capacities and new technologies, in particular within Member States.

The assessment of risks, which is at the basis of the disaster risk management cycle, is an important element to improve our understanding of risks and contribute towards more risk-informed policies at all levels. Within the EU, countries carry out risk assessments at either national or appropriate sub-national level and are exploring, with support from the Commission, how to better understand common risks on regional and European scales, and how and where to apply common risk assessment methods. Globally, the assessment of risks is increasingly recognised as a key aspect to reduce the risk of disasters and contribute to the resilience of communities, as reflected in the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The Sendai Framework addresses the need for science to play a bigger role in the reduction of disaster risks, by contributing to better understanding of risks at local, national and global levels. Science will support the implementation of the new framework by consolidating our knowledge of risks, supporting risk assessment processes, the recording of loss data and enhancing early warning systems. Preparing for impending high impact events, early warning services provide the most effective mechanism to assist emergency and first responders to

either put in place contingency measures to reduce expected impacts, or to more efficiently manage the immediate response to affected regions. Science input to early warning modelling systems, and expert science interpretation of warning information are a major contribution to national civil protection. Similar use is made of science by regional and humanitarian response communities, but not always using consistent interpretation and advice of early warning information. The Knowledge Centre through this seminar aims to share experiences between national, regional and humanitarian responder communities to understand how to more effectively and efficiently mobilise finite resources during the preparedness and immediate response phases of disaster risk management. In this context, this scientific seminar aims to bring together scientists, policy-makers, first responders and private sector stakeholders to exchange on science's contribution to key dimensions of disaster risk management that are risk assessment and early warning. This event follows in the footsteps of previous workshops of the JRC and UK Met Office on “Bridging the gap between science and operations” of 2012 and 2014. Building on the outcomes of these seminars, discussions will address the contributions of science to risk assessment processes and the latter input to policy-making; investigate the importance of science for national disaster preparedness, regional centres and humanitarian response communities; and finally explore how to best implementing the recent Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, in light of the forthcoming UN Science and Technology conference next year.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

- The seminar aims to gather around 100 inter-disciplinary experts on early detection, forecasting, warning and risk assessment of natural disasters, in both fields of civil protection and humanitarian aid. The target audience includes scientists, practitioners and policy-makers at national, regional and international levels, as well as first responders, and private sector representatives.
- The seminar will cover the progress made since the two previous workshops, and include sessions addressing risk assessments for policy and improving coordination and consistency of advice from, and interaction between, early warning systems. Specifically, it will examine how global, regional and national processes are changing to harness the latent potential of methodologies to assess disaster risk, and assess how contributors are using the best science advice and interpretation to improve efficiency and effectiveness of resource planning and mobilisation.
- A first outcome should be a list of recommendations for developing disaster risk assessments used in policy decisions at global, regional and national level, working towards common methods and tools at all three levels and in light of the implementation of the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- The secondary outcome should be a list of recommendations for early warning information for effective and efficient planning and preparedness, with details of the current gaps, as well as how and by whom this work can be done.
- Finally, the seminar should draw some concrete conclusions to feed into the upcoming UN Science and Technology conference, held in Geneva in January 2016, which will focus on the contributions of science and technology for the implementation of the Sendai framework for DRR.

STRUCTURE

The seminar will be divided into three sessions plus a round table, as follows:

- Session 1: Review and Progress (24 November 2015, morning)
- Session 2: Risk Assessment (24 November 2015, afternoon)
- Session 3: Early Warning Services (25 November 2015, morning)
- Session 4: Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (25 November 2015, afternoon)
- Session 5: Conclusions (25 November 2015, afternoon)

REGISTRATION & MORE INFORMATION

The meeting website is available at the address below. Please register online using the registration system. Deadline is 25 September 2015.

<http://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/knowledge/Meetings/Meeting-2015>