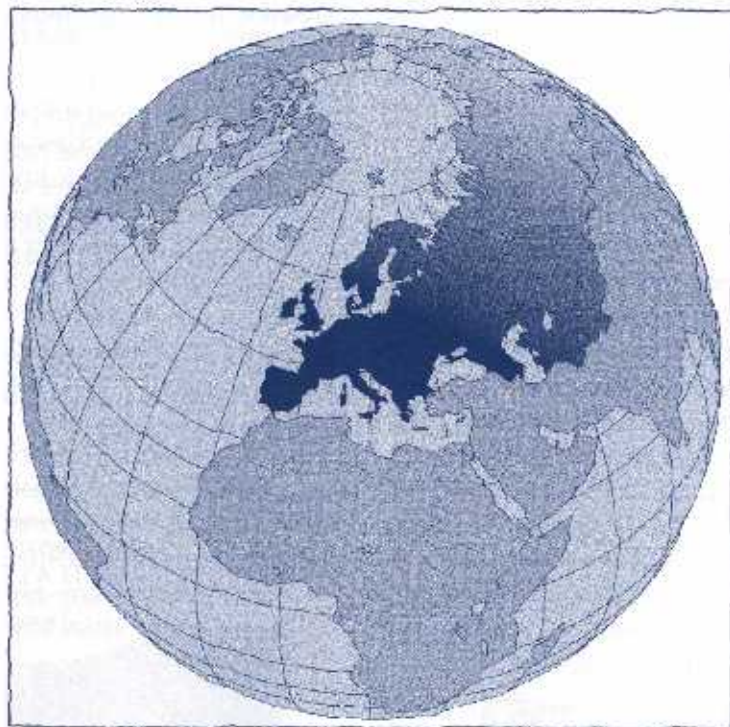


E U R O P E



ARMENIA

The Armenian National Survey of Seismic Protection produced a booklet for children on earthquakes, in cooperation with UNICEF, and launched it on 8 October 1997. This booklet was inspired from Learning About Natural Disasters, produced by the IDNDR Secretariat for the 1995 World Disaster Reduction Campaign.

BULGARIA

At least four television and radio programmes focused on IDNDR and articles were published on the subject of prevention of natural disasters. Bulgarian National Radio ran a two-hour programme on the 1997 water theme on 8 October. This was very effective as listeners could 'phone-in' and talk to civil protection authorities.

In 1997 two agreements to co-operate more closely were signed between the Civil Protection department and companies responsible for managing dam and irrigation systems.

Flood protection exercises in May 1997 resulted in up-dated planning. In November, the Fourth National Conference on Science Support for Disaster Prevention took place and included discussions on water-related hazards.

In 1998, the Bulgarian National Crisis PR Organisation participated in both the UN World Disaster Reduction Campaign and in the Internet Conference as part of their own Crisis Management Programme.

http://www.bg400.bg/vev25_06/index.htm

CZECH REPUBLIC

At the beginning of 1997, IDNDR was not represented in this country but flooding in Moravia in July triggered the creation of the Czech National IDNDR Committee. A symposium was held at the ASRT's centre in Kharga, New Valley. In addition to scientific exchanges, it emphasised the necessity of increasing public awareness and involving the media.

The floods which inundated the Czech Republic in 1997 highlighted the role of the media in natural disasters and gave the authorities, the public (and the press itself) an interesting insight into the media's capacity to perform in such events.

The 1998 theme "the Role of the Media in Disaster Prevention" was therefore of particular interest in the country.



FRANCE

The prevention of natural disasters in France was promoted with a series of events held over a period of months in 1998.

Seminar: "10 Years After, From Memory to Risk Management"

On 14 October 1998, the observance of the National Day for Major Risks focused on the commemoration of the worst floods which the city had experienced on 3 October 1988. The seminar was organised by the city of Nîmes, the French Minister for Land Use Planning and Environment, regional authorities such as the Regional Direction for Environment, the General Council of Gard, the French Institute for Urban Risks Prevention and Management, the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), the fire brigade and the Hospital of Nîmes.

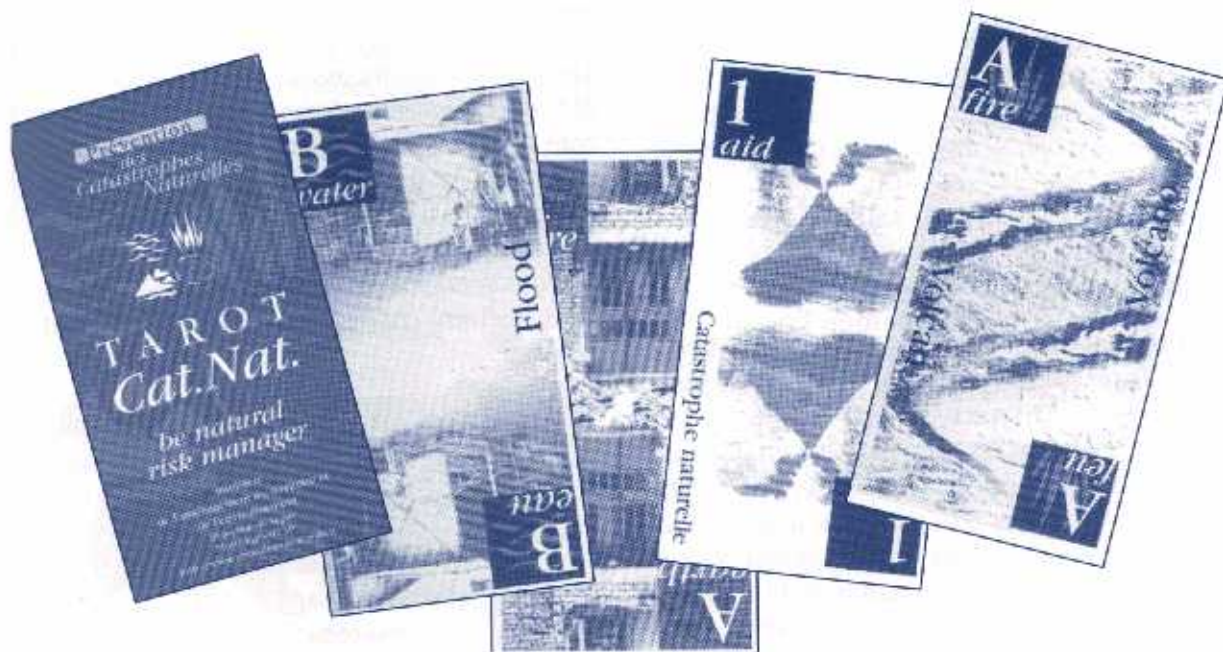
Participants discussed various aspects of risk reduction, in particular for water-related risks, the role of insurance, emergency city plans, financial constraints, the needs of local communities at risk and information/communication policies for disaster reduction.

Speakers included local and national authorities in charge of risk management, experts and journalists.

Second European Conference on Risk Prevention

From 14 to 16 October, the Second European Conference on Risk Prevention took place in Niort, a city in France which is the cradle of the largest mutual insurance companies. Some 800 participants from 23 countries world-wide attended the conference, which was organised by the European Centre on Risk Prevention, an organisation created in 1997 at the initiative of the insurance companies based in Niort.

The meeting took place under the auspices of the IDNDR with the support of the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the French Ministry for Land Use Planning and Environment. It was organised in conjunction with the Council of Europe FORM-OSE Seminar attended by representatives of 27 European universities. A member of the IDNDR Scientific and Technical Committee participated in the meeting.



The participants emphasized that early warning is effective only to the extent that policy makers at national level authority have the will, and make a sustained commitment of resources that will establish protective measures. In all these respects, the importance of training was stressed, as was the requirement to provide

Impulse aus Potsdam zur Frühwarnung vor Naturkatastrophen

Teilnehmer aus 86 Ländern tagen auf dem Telegrafenberg

POTSDAM (PN/CS.) Über 300 Wissenschaftler und Praktiker aus 86 Ländern tagen von heute an bis zum 11. September auf dem Potsdamer Telegrafenberg über die Frühwarnung vor Naturkatastrophen. Bundesaußenminister Klaus Kinkel (FDP) eröffnete als Schirmherr die Konferenz. Wie Prof. Rolf Emmermann, Vorstand des geologischen Geoforschungszentrums (GFZ) bekanntgab, werde am Ende eine „Potsdamer Deklaration“ zum Schutz vor Naturkatastrophen verabschiedet.

„International IDNDR-Conference on Early Warning Systems for the Reduction of Natural Disasters EWC 98“ – so der offizielle Titel der Tagung. Das Kürzel IDNDR steht für „International Decade for the Reduction of Natural Disasters“, zu der die Generalversammlung der Vereinten Nationen das letzte Jahrzehnt dieses Jahrhunderts einwählt. Von der Potsdamer Konferenz wird eine kritische, interdisziplinäre Bestandsaufnahme des Standes von Frühwarnsystemen bei Klima- und anderen Naturkatastrophen erwartet. Daß die „aktuellen Frühwarnsysteme sehr begrenzt sind, darüber sind sich Wissenschaftler und Politiker weitgehend einig. Kinkel nannte die bessere Koordination des Katastrophenrisikomanagements eine zentrale Aufgabe der Außenminister.“ Dabei sprach er auch das Oderhochwasser von 1997 an, aus dem Jahren gezogen werden mußten. Die Teilnehmer der Konferenz waren vom brandenburgischen Umweltminister zu einer Exkursion in das Oder-Naturkatastrophengebiet eingeladen worden. „Umweltminister Matthäus Platzeck erwähnte dabei, daß man mit Polen in Verhandlung stehe, um das Hochwassers-Frühwarnsystem künftighin zu verbessern.“

„Wir müssen in der Natur unsere Fähigkeiten machen“, sagte Kinkel und Brandenburgs Umweltminister Matthäus Platzeck (SPD) sprach in seiner Grußwort von der „Verantwortung der Menschheit, die Natur mit der Technik untertan machen zu können. Vielmehr müsse sich der Mensch an die Natur anpassen.“

„IDNDR-Direktor Philippe Boulle verwies darauf, welche große Bedeutung bei Erdbebenkatastrophen wenige Minuten Vorwarnzeit haben können. Fünf Minuten können schon ausreichen, daß sich die Menschen in Sicherheit bringen können. Die Erdbebenvorhersage gehört zu den speziellen Forschungsschwerpunkten des Potsdamer GFZ. Daher habe es zunächst verwundert, als Vorstand Prof. Emmermann sagte: „Erdbeben kann man nicht vorhersagen.“ Doch der Geoforscher erklärte den scheinbaren Widerspruch. Zwischen Erdstöße und Katastrophenort eines Bebens bestehen oft große Entfernungen, und es dauere einige Minuten, bis die verheerenden Auswirkungen eintreffen. Überregionale Beobachtungen und ein schneller Datenaustausch seien daher „unendlich wichtig. Erste Verträge gebe es dazu mit der Türkei, dem Schwerpunktfeld deutscher Erdbebenforschung, und mit Armenien. Mit Georgien, Syrien und Israel werden Gespräche über eine Zusammenarbeit geführt.“

Im Potsdam betonte Prof. Rolf Emmermann, daß gewissermaßen die Frage der geophysikalischen Katastrophenforschung hier wurde, im Jahrhundertende der erste Seismograph entwickelt. Hier wurden auch zum ersten Mal Alarmglocken in der Forschung eingesetzt.

was organised by the German IDNDR Committee in Potsdam on 8 October on the theme of the Campaign "Water, too much, too little." Participants reviewed ways in which Germany is facing water-related disasters and where prevention capacities can be strengthened.

In 1998, Germany celebrated 14 October 1998 by opening the Global Fire Monitoring Center (GFMC) in Freiburg. The GFMC was inaugurated to the public at the FAO consultation on public policies affecting forest fires, on 28-30 October, 1998

From 7 to 11 September in Potsdam, the German IDNDR Committee organised a national workshop bringing together journalists, disaster prevention experts, representatives of disaster control agencies and communication researchers

The aim of this workshop was three-fold:

- Identifying communication problems with respect to disaster and disaster preparedness coverage.
- Fostering communication between journalists and disaster experts on one hand, and between communication researchers and communication practitioners on the other hand.
- Exploring possibilities of cooperation between disaster control and aid agencies and the media.

It was agreed that there is a need to associate disaster information with current events; and that journalists should be provided opportunities to interview and photograph interesting and competent people who are able to express themselves well in front of a microphone

Journalists present at the meeting suggested that a network of reporters specialising on disaster prevention and mitigation should be initiated. The goal of such a network would be to aid professional communication among the journalists themselves but also to facilitate the

resources for ongoing training activities, public education and the development of both technical and operational capabilities essential for early warning

Following recurrent flooding of the Rhine River and the 1997 flooding of the Oder, a Congress



KLAUS KINKEL und Matthias Platzeck (links) beim Eröffnung der Konferenz zum Thema von Frühwarnsystemen bei Naturkatastrophen

Foto: Thomas Thoma

communication between disaster prevention agencies and the media. This workshop was a positive attempt to improve the mutual understanding of journalists and disaster prevention experts.

HUNGARY

In observance of the 1998 World Disaster Reduction Day, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the IDNDR Secretariat co-sponsored a seminar in Budapest from 12 to 14 October on "Public Information: Interaction between the Media and Government Administrations in Crisis Management and the Impact on the Public".

The meeting was organised by the Ministry for Civil Protection of Hungary and brought together policy makers from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Western Europe and the United States, public information specialists and representatives of the media. The meeting identified key areas for improving the exchange of information and professional linkages between the public sector and the media before, during and after crises such as natural disasters.

ITALY

In 1998, Italian members from the International Task Force and Coordinating office of the "Servizio Volontario Giovanile - Unità Ausiliaria Protezione Civile" celebrated the World Disaster Reduction Day, on October, 14, by organising a round table on Natural Disaster Prevention and Media, at the University of Caserta. The following issues have been discussed: Landslide Region Campania, Province Salerno and Caserta.

Afflicted Areas:

Sarno - Quindici - San Felice a Cancellio.

Members of the media invited included:

Il Mattino, Corriere di Caserta, Il Giornale di Caserta, Roma, La Repubblica, Corriere del Mezzogiorno, Telealternativa, Telegiornale, Canale Dieci, Telecapri, Rai Tre and Canale Cinque Mediaset.

MOLDOVA

In 1997, this country celebrated World Disaster Reduction Day with many lively events. The theme of the Day was highlighted in 8,297 classroom lectures, 492 lectures to medical personnel and patients, 10 articles published in national newspapers and magazines, and media publicity. A book entitled "Calamities in the Republic of Moldova" was published in 1997. A "Child Protection Day" was organized in 912 schools.

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POLAND

On 23 November 1998, the Office of the President of Poland organised a seminar in Warsaw on "Media and Natural Disasters" in line with the IDNDR Disaster Reduction Campaign for 1998 Natural Disaster Prevention and the Media.

Following opening addresses by President Kwasniewski and the Director of the IDNDR Secretariat, the participants of the meeting, which included decision-makers from the governments of Poland, the Czech Republic and other countries, as well as representatives of local and international media, sought to begin a constructive dialogue on appropriate interaction between the media and government sanctioned sources of information in times of crises.

The floods in Poland, Czech Republic and Germany in 1997 and the devastating impact of mis-information disseminated by the media during the crisis prompted the government to organise this meeting. This represented the first in a series of meetings to address this important issue in Poland.

PORTUGAL

Since 1992, the National Service for Civil Protection (SNPC) has been engaged with an intensive public awareness and information campaign on disaster prevention and civil protection objectives. This has focused on self-protection and safety measures to be adopted by the population before, during and after various emergency situations.

The SNPC and the National Water Institute ran a symposium with 200 experts (technical, political, communications) and issued a press

"Media" são fundamentais para avisar as populações

A COMUNICAÇÃO social constitui a via mais rápida e eficaz no aviso das populações sobre a ocorrência de catástrofes naturais. Mas o papel dos "media" passa também por uma vertente didáctica quando mostram a realidade dos factos.

A opinião foi expressa pelo meteorologista Costa Alves, mas a prática também o confirma, se foi a comunicação social que alertou os agramados da proximidade do fenómeno tropical "Joanne" ou do furacão "Ivan", foram igualmente os "media" que levaram os portugueses a reconhecerem os perigos da destruição de casas por causa de fortes chuvas, alertas das tempestades de Dezembro de 1997.

Avisar em caso de ocorrência e divulgar para "ensinar a prevenir" são dois papéis fundamentais dos órgãos de comunicação social na abordagem desta questão, tema que estará em debate na terça-feira no Serviço Nacional de Protecção Civil (SNPC) por ocasião do Dia Internacional para a Prevenção das Catástrofes Naturais.

O dia designado pelas Nações Unidas refere-se à segunda quarta-feira do mês de Outubro, mas as celebrações em Portugal foram antecipadas um dia devido ao programa de actividades previsto.

Para combater "a atitude fatalista de que os seres humanos nada podem fazer contra as catástrofes", a ONU lançou o Decénio Internacional para a Prevenção das Catástrofes Naturais (1990-2000), definindo um tema em cada ano. 1998 é dedicado à "Prevenção das Catástrofes e os Órgãos de Comunicação Social", tendo o seminário organizado pelo SNPC adoptado a temática "A Prevenção começa com a Informação".

Apesar da "eficiência, rapidez e facilidade" dos "media", há ainda arestas a limar no que respeita ao aproveitamento das suas virtualidades, defendeu Costa Alves.

Para o meteorologista, que trabalha permanentemente no SNPC, as regiões locais são ainda pouco exploradas na divulgação de informação necessária nos casos de emergência.

Necessário também, segundo Costa Alves, é promover um debate entre os vários meios envolvidos nas situações de crise — Protecção Civil, Instituto de Meteorologia, Instituto Nacional de Água e Agência de Comunicação Social — no sentido de fazer "um encontro entre profissões" e dialogar sobre as relações entre as mesmas. "Os jornalistas não são nossos críticos", salientou o meteorologista.

Lusa

release. On October 1, 1997 the National Information System on Hydrological Resources (SNIRH) was connected to Internet at <http://www.inag.pt/snirh>

In 1998, it was agreed that the role played by the national, regional and local media - TV, radio and press - must be encouraged to disseminate press releases and articles on civil protection events and programmes. A Seminar on the theme Natural Disaster Prevention and the Media took place in Lisbon on October 13, 1998, under the presidency of the Secretary of State for the Interior, responsible for safety politics in Portugal

The seminar was articulated in two sessions:

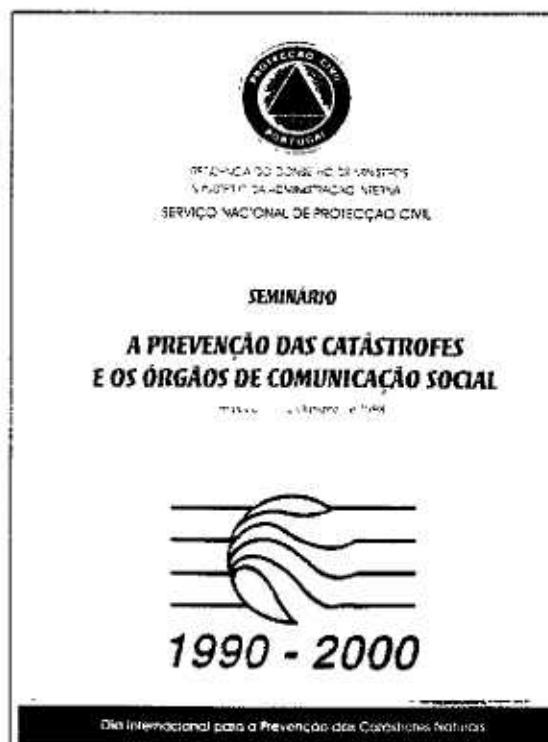
- Session I: Public Information - Expectations and Requirements
- Session II: Public Information - Disaster Management and the Media

The presentations in each session were made by top press managers and journalists from the main national media. During the public debates following the sessions, suggestions were made for follow up events. 150 people participated.

UKRAINE

The Ministry of Emergencies and Affairs of Population Protection (from the Consequences of the Chernobyl Catastrophe) requested the IDNDR to send material on Natural Disaster Reduction and early warning systems for use with other events planned for 1998 World Disaster Reduction Day.

A video and a radio programme were sent to the Ministry of Emergencies and Affairs of Population Protection, and this material was used by mass media for the commemoration of the Chernobyl Disaster



UNITED KINGDOM

On the 1997 theme of 'Water...too little ...too much', five presentations were made for schools in London, Manchester, Cardiff, Glasgow and Belfast. The speakers addressed a number of issues based on the theme, for example: in Cardiff, Professor Geoffrey Petts spoke on 'Environmental Impacts of Water Resources Schemes Green Solutions for a Dry World?'; in Belfast, Mr Duncan Faulkner spoke on 'River Floods: Where Do We Put the Water'; in Glasgow, Dr. Andrew Black and Miss Helen Houghton-Carr spoke on 'Flood Hazards-New Ways of Coping with an Old Enemy'; in Manchester, Dr Kevin Tilford spoke on 'The Flood Hazard. Control, Forecast, Warn'; and in London Professor Scott Steedman spoke on 'Disasters Unlimited.' Attendance was good with nearly 1,000 attendees, and some good press and local radio coverage

In 1998, the second Exeter Seminar on "Communicating Technologies" took place at the University of Exeter on 17 November. Organised by the Housing and Hazards Group, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), it gathered academics from the University of Bangladesh, Oxford and Exeter, representatives of NGOs, professional engineers and builders. In line with the 1998 campaign theme, the debate centred around hazard-resistant building information and ways in which the message could be effectively disseminated

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*The presentation of the 1998 Sasakawa Award in Geneva.
From left to right: Prof. Wang Ang-Sheng from the Chinese Academy of Science, Mr Duo Ji Cai Rang, Minister of Civil Affairs, China, winners of the award, Mr Sergio Vieira de Mello, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr Philippe Boullé, Director IDNDR.*