

Natural disaster and measures needed to reduce them

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Abstract

The paper presents the importance of cooperation in natural disaster reduction identified through the work we started in 2016, by organising the Forum dedicated to the International Day for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction, benefiting from a valuable mix of experts from academia, universities, government, as well as experts from the European Union and around the world, including SMEs and civil society. In recent years there has been an increase in the frequency of risk factors threatening the life and health of the population, the environment and national heritage values, as well as the emergence of new risk factors, generated in particular by radical climate change and the diversification of economic activities using, producing and trading hazardous substances/materials. The main focus was to obtain information and draft measures and steps that need to be taken in order to achieve sustainable development and environmental sustainability. The activity identified the need to create a permanent advisory council to discuss all events and solutions that prove reliable in the event of natural and other disasters.

Keywords: natural disaster, sustainability, climate changes, cooperation.

1. Introduction

In accordance with resolution 44/236 of 22 December 1989 and resolution 56/195 of 21 January 2002 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, the second Wednesday in October was designated as the International Day for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction as a means of promoting a global culture of disaster reduction – including disaster prevention, mitigation and preparedness.

In 2015, the United Nations set the International Day for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction on 13 October each year.

This global event raises awareness every year of the effects that natural disasters can have.

Climate change is of interest to all. It affects almost every socio-economic sector, from agriculture to tourism, from infrastructure to health. It impacts on strategic resources such as water, food and energy. They slow down and even threaten sustainable development, and certainly not only in developing countries.

The cost of inaction is high and will become even higher if we do not act immediately and decisively.

National security may be endangered by serious geophysical, meteorological or related phenomena or dangerous human activities.

The year 2023 began with the most devastating earthquake in Turkish history, followed by similar events in Romania, then Syria, Italy, devastating fires in Greece and unprecedented storms in Bulgaria.

The European Union stressed that due to climate change, extreme events, which have led to emergencies, will intensify and multiply further.

2. Results and discussions

The efforts and measures to combat climate change should be strengthened both in the Union and globally.

The European Union Solidarity Fund has been established to respond to major natural disasters and to express European solidarity with disaster-stricken regions in Europe. The Fund was created in response to the severe floods in Central Europe in the summer of 2002. Since then, it has been used for 107 natural disasters such as floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and droughts. The Fund has also been mobilised for 20 interventions in response to health emergencies.

The effects of climate change are increasingly visible in Romania and internationally, and the most important challenge we face today is to stop climate change from getting worse. The “Ecological Initiative and Sustainable Development Group” Foundation has set up the first national and international forums on sustainable development, sustainability and environmental protection. The meetings organised over the years have raised interest in collaboration at civil society, academic and socio-political levels.

In 2007 we presented to the Romanian public the documentary by former US Vice President Al Gore, “An Inconvenient Truth”, which won the Nobel Prize. At the same time as the presentation of the documentary, the book with the same title was launched in Craiova.

On 17 May 2010, the GIEDD Foundation welcomed Lester Brown, President and Founder of the World Watch Institute and the Earth Policy Institute, two global, not-for-profit, service-based climate change research organizations, as the first person in the world to advocate for the introduction of the concept of an eco-economy in 2001, in the book *Eco-Economy: Building a future for the Earth*.

More than ever we are concerned about the global evolution of climate change. In this regard, we in Romania have also tried in recent years, each individual, each organisation, each governmental institution, to join forces to become capable of informing the population and civil society in good time.

Every year, The “Ecological Initiative and Sustainable Development Group” Foundation, together with the Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences “Gheorghe Ionescu Sișești”, National Institute for Research and Development in Earth Physics, since 12 October 2016, we have organized the Forum dedicated to the International Day for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction, benefiting from a valuable audience of specialists from academia, universities, government, as well as experts from the European Union and around the world, including SMEs and civil society [1].

The need to attract European fundable projects and the benefits of developing the earthquake monitoring network were identified, as well as the need to develop strategic partnerships in documenting and training the specialists of today and tomorrow.

Romania's National Recovery and Resilience Programme (a mechanism created at EU level) as a financial instrument can provide public investment solutions until 2026 – the total financial allocation for Romania is €29.2bn and has over €14m in grants and €14.9bn in loans. Regional clusters have been part of the consultations and decisions taken for a predictable future, resilient to undesirable naturally occurring events.

It was also identified the need to create an advisory council to bring to the attention of the authorities the necessary measures to protect, inform and take action in the event of an earthquake or any other natural disaster and the importance of permanent collaboration of all decision-makers [2].

3. Conclusions

Climate change is an imminent threat to the world we live in, but we can all do something to combat it and build a better future. Risk reduction is about ensuring that natural hazards have a low destructive impact on lives, livelihoods and communities, which is achieved by building resilience, reducing risks and vulnerabilities. This is the responsibility of both authorities and individual citizens to work towards a world free from loss due to natural disasters by developing effective strategies that identify and reduce the potential causes of disasters, ensure rapid response in support of those threatened and ways to recover from them.

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References

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