Structure and needs of global loss databases about natural disaster

Markus Steuer

Munich Re, Germany (msteuer@munichre.com)

Global loss databases are used for trend analyses and statistics in scientific projects, studies for governmental and nongovernmental organizations and for the insurance and finance industry as well. At the moment three global data sets are established: EM-DAT (CRED), Sigma (Swiss Re) and NatCatSERVICE (Munich Re). Together with the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP) started a collaborative initiative in 2007 with the aim to agreed on and implemented a common "Disaster Category Classification and Peril Terminology for Operational Databases". This common classification has been established through several technical meetings and working groups and represents a first and important step in the development of a standardized international classification of disasters and terminology of perils. This means concrete to set up a common hierarchy and terminology for all global and regional databases on natural disasters and establish a common and agreed definition of disaster groups, main types and sub-types of events. Also the theme of georeferencing, temporal aspects, methodology and sourcing were other issues that have been identified and will be discussed. The implementation of the new and defined structure for global loss databases is already set up for Munich Re NatCatSERVICE. In the following oral session we will show the structure of the global databases as defined and in addition to give more transparency of the data sets behind published statistics and analyses. The special focus will be on the catastrophe classification from a moderate loss event up to a great natural catastrophe, also to show the quality of sources and give inside information about the assessment of overall and insured losses.

Keywords: disaster category classification, peril terminology, overall and insured losses, definition