Geophysical Research Abstracts
Vol. 13, EGU2011-8464-1, 2011
EGU General Assembly 2011

MOVE: the new Earth Sciences Museum of Vesuvius Observatory (Naples, Italy)

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The Vesuvius Observatory is the oldest volcanological observatory in the world. It was founded in 1841 by the King of the Two Sicilies, Ferdinand II of Bourbons, in order to study the volcanic activity of Vesuvius, for the early warning of the population. The historical site of the observatory is an elegant neo-classical building, strategically located on a hill, at an elevation of 608 m a.s.l. It hosts a permanent exhibition in which the visitors are introduced to volcanism and related hazards, the monitoring systems of active volcanoes, and the history of Mt. Vesuvius and its Observatory. The exhibition is visited by a public of about 10.000 people per year, mainly composed of students from both Italy and other countries. The MOVE project (Museo dell'Osservatorio VEsuviano) has been thought up with the aim of greatly improve the potential to communicate Earth Science, by implementing and expanding the old exhibition with new spaces, new exhibits and new multimedia and interactive technologies. The third millennium is the age of images: a true bombing of images, coupled with winning sounds, in fact is at the base of the modern advertising strategies, which are aimed at reaching as much people as possible. The same concept lies at the origin of MOVE, whose primary objective is to widely disseminate the knowledge on volcanic and seismic phenomena, their related hazards, and the geological background that links these phenomena to the evolution of the Earth. An exhaustive, rigorous and up to date information has the chance of reaching a wide range of people if it is transmitted in a snappy and fascinating way. In doing so, the most recent computer technologies can greatly improve the quality, flexibility and effectiveness of the Museum communication power, through the realization of an extraordinary exhibition idea that allows technologic, scenographic, and innovation primacy. The MOVE project provides the integration between conventional and innovative exhibitions, by implementing the wonderful collections of rocks and minerals, old books, historical instruments and paintings, with computer graphics reconstructions, HD and 3D documentaries on Earth Sciences topics, scenographic decors reproducing in virtual and increased reality volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and their effects on the environment, interactive dioramas showing the evolution of the Neapolitan volcanoes, multimedia systems of communication to guide the visitors throughout the exhibition, digitalizing of old books and documents for the creation of a virtual library, aimed at sharing the huge cultural heritage of the Vesuvius Observatory. Mt. Vesuvius is by far the most famous volcano in the world, and its impact on the surrounding areas and human civilization has been very strong throughout the centuries. It is visited by thousands of people every year and is still active and looming over a wide and densely inhabited area. As the MOVE project configure itself as a very innovative and powerful teaching tool, it has to be regarded as an irreplaceable instrument of civil protection. Infact the MOVE project acts to improve the knowledge about the workings of Neapolitan volcanoes, their state of activity and the monitoring system of the Vesuvius Observatory - INGV, contributing to the mitigation of volcanic risk by increasing the population awarness about the threat posed by these volcanoes. Training the new generations to a culture of the risk, ultimately, generates the conditions for a correct land-planning and management, and a sustainable development of the territory.
MOVE has been approved by the local Government of the Campania Region and is presently included in the waiting list for the financial support.