



Rainfall Induced Natural Disaster in Central America, a challenge for Regional Risk Management

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Rainfall induced natural disasters rank first among all natural disasters in Central America. According to the records of the EM-DAT international database, 248 out of 486 disasters registered in Central America were disasters triggered by rainfall invents, in countries like Belize and Honduras, rainfall-induced natural disasters, mainly floods and landslides, account for more than 90% of the total number of casualties as well as the economic damage of all the disasters. Due to the natural conditions of the Central American Isthmus, precipitation events often struck more than one country at the time, for example Hurricane Mitch in 1998 affected the entire Central American region causing more than 18,000 casualties.

In this context, the Central America countries have been working on joint programs and policies aiming transboundary cooperation and management of natural disasters, a clear example of this effort is CEPREDENAC which is the intergovernmental body with the mandate of promoting activities, projects and programs towards reduction of the risks to disasters in order to avoid loss of life and economic assets in the Central America, however, transnational management face several challenges that fall mostly in the political, economical and technical areas. In this paper we described and analyzed the rainfall induced natural disasters, their impacts and the inherent management challenges in the Central American context.

Key words: Central America, Natural Disasters, Risk Management, International Cooperation