



Public understanding of geoscientific topics

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Geoscientific topics and their consequences for the society are becoming more and more important for our daily life. Natural hazards such as flood and storm or the consequences of the climate change are urgent tasks and great challenges we have to tackle. Cascading natural hazards or environmental risks, can't be evaluated as single events by one scientific discipline, they rather need the expertise of different experts. The same applies for slowly progressive processes such as the climate change and its different aftereffects.

More than ever politicians, decision makers, but also the public are asking for comprehensive background information and data to discuss activity options and to develop sustainable solutions. The improvement of public knowledge about science, their assets and drawbacks, chances and risks is getting crucial.

To paint a comprehensive picture of different factors, correlations and dependencies the pooling of expertise is required. Thus eight research centres of the research field "Earth and Environment" of the Helmholtz-Association, Germany's largest scientific research organisation are currently building up a knowledge platform. Scientists of different disciplines will provide background information and explain their latest findings in an understandable way. Infographics, maps and animations will be applied to simplify and interpret complicated facts and findings.

In addition to the web presence target group-specific products and activities will be organized. To meet the expectations of the different stakeholders an intensive dialog is aspired: round table discussions, exhibitions in museums and public places, tweeds are envisaged.

In the beginning the partners will concentrate on the topics "consequences of the climate change", "pollutant dispersion" and "natural hazards/meteorological extreme events".

The project is called Earth System Knowledge Platform (ESKP) coordinated by the German Research Centre for Geosciences (GFZ) and the Helmholtz Centre Geesthacht, Centre for Materials and Coastal Research (HZG). Further participating centres are: the Alfred-Wegener-Institute for Polar and Marine Research (AWI), the German Aerospace Center (DLR), the Research Centre Jülich (FZJ), the Helmholtz-Centre for Ocean Sciences (GEOMAR), the Karlsruher Institute for Technology (KIT) and the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ).

The webpage will be accessible at www.eskp.de.