



Motivation and drives in bottom-up developments in natural hazards management: multiple-use of adaptation strategies in Austria

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Losses from extreme hydrological events, such as recently experienced in Europe have focused the attention of policymakers as well as researchers on vulnerability to natural hazards. In parallel, the context of changing flood risks under climate and societal change is driving transformation in the role of the state in responsibility sharing and individual responsibilities for risk management and precaution. The new policy agenda enhances the responsibilities of local authorities and private citizens in hazard management and reduces the role of central governments. Within the objective is to place added responsibility on local organisations and citizens to determine locally-based strategies for risk reduction. A major challenge of modelling adaptation is to represent the complexity of coupled human-environmental systems and particularly the feedback loops between environmental dynamics and human decision-making processes on different scales. This paper focuses on bottom-up initiatives to flood risk management which are, by definition, different from the mainstream. These initiatives are clearly influenced (positively or negatively) by a number of factors, where the combination of these interdependences can create specific conditions that alter the opportunity for effective governance arrangements in a local scheme approach. In total, this study identified six general drivers which encourage the implementation of flood storages, such as direct relation to recent major flood frequency and history, the initiative of individual stakeholders (promoters), political pressures from outside (e.g. business companies, private households) and a strong solidarity attitude of municipalities and the stakeholders involved. Although partnership approach may be seen as an 'optimal' solution for flood risk management, in practice there are many limitations and barriers in establishing these collaborations and making them effective (especially in the long term) with the consequences that rhetoric may not be matched by reality.

Key words: catchment; land use management; flood risk management; partnership; power dynamics