

Feedback on flood risk management

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For several years, as floods were increasing in South of France, local communities felt deprived to assume their mission of protection and information of citizens, and were looking for assistance in flood management.

In term of flood disaster, the fact is that physical protection is necessary but inevitably limited. Tools and structures of assistance to anticipation remain slightly developed. To manage repeated crisis, local authorities need to be able to base their policy against flood on prevention, warnings, post-crisis analysis and feedback from former experience.

In this objective, after 3 years of test and improvement since 2003, the initiative Predict-Services was developed in South of France: it aims at helping communities and companies to face repeated flood crisis.

The principle is to prepare emergency plans, to organize crisis management and reduce risks; to help and assist communities and companies during crisis to activate and adapt their emergency plans with enough of anticipation; and to analyse floods effects and improve emergency plans afterwards.

With the help of Meteo France datas and experts, Predict services helps local communities and companies in decision making for flood management.

In order to reduce risks, and to keep the benefits of such an initiative, local communities and companies have to maintain the awareness of risk of the citizens and employees. They also have to maintain their safety plans to keep them constantly operational. This is a part of the message relayed.

Companies, Local communities, local government authorities and basin stakeholders are the decision makers.

Companies and local communities have to involve themselves in the elaboration of safety plans. They are also completely involved in their activation that is their own responsibility. This applies to other local government authorities, like districts one's and basin stakeholders, which participate in the financing community safety plans and administrative district which are responsible of the transmission of meteorological alert and of rescue actions.

In the crossing of the géo-information stemming from the space technology, communication, meteorology, hydraulics and hydrology, Predict-services brings help to local communities in their mission of protection and information to the citizens, for flood problems and helps companies to limit and delete operating losses facing floods.

The initiative, developed by BRL, EADS Astrium, in association with Meteo France, has been employed and is functioning on cities of south of France, notably on Montpellier, and also on the scale of catchment area (BRL is a regional development company, a public private partnership controlled by the local governments of the Languedoc-Roussillon Region).

The initiative has to be coordinated with state services to secure continuity and coherence of information.

This initiative is developed in dialogue with State services as Météo France, the Ministry for the interior, the Ministry for ecology and the durable development, the Regional Direction of the Environment (DIREN), the Central service of Hydrometeorology and Support to the Forecast of the Floods (SCHAPI) and service of forecast of rising (SPC).

It has been successfully functioning for 5 years with 300 southern cities from South West to South East of France and notably Montpellier and Sommières, famous for its flood problems on the Vidourle river where no human loss was to regret and where the economic impacts were minimized.

Actually developed in cities of South of France, this initiative is to be developed nationally and very soon internationally. Thanks to the efficiency of its method, this initiative is also developed in partnership with insurance company involved in prevention actions.

After more than 100 events observed and analysed in South of France, the experience gained, allowed PREDICT Services to better anticipate phenomena and also to better manage them.

The presentation will expose the feedback of this initiative and lessons learned on risk management.