



Great Forecast - Poor Outcome

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Despite great advances in the science of forecasting and related technologies, and the fact that most short-range forecasts and warnings of severe weather have a very reasonable degree of accuracy now, people still find themselves in difficulties and are still caught “unawares” when a severe weather situation arises. This happens not only in developing countries but also in developed ones. Sometimes the unfortunate outcome of this situation is loss of life, and at other times it is the massive disruption to the everyday lives of the population and huge losses to the economy. The presentation examines the episodes of heavy snowfall in Europe in winter of 2018 and the disruptions caused in parts of the UK and Switzerland despite very good forecasts and warnings of the severity of the snowfall. It also considers the case of some developing countries where despite good forecasts the outcomes were disastrous, and asks why does this happen? What is the missing element in translating those good forecasts to relevant and appropriate actions on the part of the recipients? How should the society be engaged more, since clearly simply “informing” people of the hazardous weather does not always catch the attention of the public and authorities. Some suggestions are offered on how to engage more effectively with society in an effort to achieve “Good Outcomes from Great Forecasts”.