Plinius Conference Abstracts,
Vol. 11, Plinius11-206, 2009
11th Plinius Conference on Mediterranean Storms

Lost in Translation: Communications of Natural Hazards Research by Physical Scientists

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Financial losses due to natural hazards have increased dramatically over recent years, placing an increasing strain on national and global resources, particularly those in developing areas of the world. The number of scientists and amount of resources committed to natural hazards has also increased, as is illustrated by the surge of scientific conferences and groups worldwide that have a natural hazards focus. Here we reflect briefly on four key issues facing the science community with respect to the natural hazards community: **(i) Communication between natural and social scientists; (ii) Interdisciplinary approaches to research; (iii) Knowledge to practice; (iv) Uncertainty**. For each of these four major areas of immediate concern, which we recognize have been broadly addressed by other bodies (e.g., the ProVentium Consortium), we discuss the issue from our perspective as physical scientists. We conclude: (i) Wider integration and discussion between physical and social scientists is essential, supported by realistic analyses of the approaches used and their efficacy in different contexts; (ii) That although interdisciplinary research between physical scientists in a given field (e.g. landslides, earthquakes) and those in a cognate area (e.g. mathematics, statistics, biology) is laudable, more efforts are needed to increase actual exchange of knowledge between the groups (vs. a bolt on approach to one group working in isolation of the other); (iii) There continues to be a need to find new and innovative ways to exchange information between the science and practitioner communities, increasing the speed and quantity of knowledge that finds its way to practice; (iv) More, better funded, and larger concentrated efforts are urgently needed on the communication of scientific uncertainty from scientists to non-scientists.