

Storm Surges Congress, Hamburg, Germany
13–17 September 2010
SSC2010-182
© Author(s) 2010



The French Storm Xynthia: What feedback can we give about such a disaster in the field of vulnerability management?

B. Guézo

Centre for Studies on Urban Planning, Transportation and Public Facilities (CERTU), France
(bernard.guezo@developpement-durable.gouv.fr)

There were *Lothar* and *Martin* in december 1999, also *Klaus* in January 2009. If Xynthia, the 12th February 2010, was more localised in the Atlantic front, it was much more dramatic. The storm, bringing about a submersion in the Charente Maritime and Vendée coasts, did 53 casualties in one night, most people drowned in their house. Xynthia was not only a storm but also it resounds as a « seism ». It shows coast urbanisation vulnerabilities as a difficult question to the future.

A few months after this natural disaster, the most expensive in human lifes since many decades in France, we need replacing this event in it's context : territorial and urban in one hand, administrative and historical in an other hand. We will present its consequences reinforcing the governmental action in the field of flooding prevention and crisis preparedness. Moreover, for the next decades, local policies should have to take account vulnerability as a true componant of territorial policy-making. To conclude, we will discuss about methological approaches of vulnerability development as a challenge for the future of natural risk management on urban areas