

Enhancing Synergies

for Disaster Prevention

in the European Union

The ESPREsSO Project

www.espressoproject.eu

Newsletter December 2017



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Dear Colleagues,

the ESPREsSO project aims at contributing to a new strategic vision to approach disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, thereby opening new frontiers for research and policy making.

To achieve this goal, the project structure is built upon the central role of three main challenges to be addressed in order to propose ways to identify relevant gaps and overcome the boundaries among different topics:

- Integrating Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)
- Integrating Science and Legal/ Policy issues in DRR and CCA
- Improving national regulations to prepare for trans-boundary crises

Having in mind the Sendai Framework 2015-2030 and the EU Action Plan, as well as the implication within UCPM legislation improvement, ESPREsSO aims at contributing to a new strategic vision on risk reduction in Europe and promoting new ideas on what should be a future roadmap and agenda for natural hazard research in the next 10 years.

ESPREsSO is currently starting the preparation of the main outputs of the project: a Vision Paper on future research priorities in the EU within the context of above mentioned three challenges, gathering inputs from the scientific community and relevant stakeholders and networks in the field of DRR and CCA (such as UNISDR EU and national platforms, IPCC, Disaster Risk

Management Knowledge Centre - DRMKC, Community of Users - CoU, but also representatives from the civil protection, civil society etc.) through a series of networking initiatives.

The last six months of the project provided a number of unique opportunities to achieve an important progress towards the expected goals and a significant engagement of EU and international communities involved in DRR and CCA research and policymaking. In this period, ESPREsSO team attended several conferences, workshops, discussions and meetings in order to disseminate the projects' activities and to get feedback on the key topics, to be included in the final reports.

Listed below are the events and meetings attended:

- **ICLEI Resilient Cities** - Bonn, Germany, 04-06/05/2017
- **UNISDR - Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction** – Cancun, Mexico, 22-26/05/2018
- **Joint Webinar with ERA4CS and PLACARD projects.** A participatory webinar for researchers, practitioners and climate service providers and purveyors working on DRR, 01/06/2017
- **Climate Chance World Summit** - Agadir, Morocco, 11-13/09/2017
- **Webinar with CLARA project** - Market intelligence and experience (speakers from Climate-KIC for Mediterranean, MARCO project, Oasis Loss Modelling Framework and Hub), 26/09/2017

The networking activities brought up positive feedback regarding the progress of work, with particular regard to the consistency with the global vision of DRR and CCA issues, the relevance in the context of the societal, political and environmental issues in the EU, as well as the alignment towards strategic governance needs and science-policy interface frameworks (following the main international agreements such as SDGs, Sendai Framework for DRR, Paris Agreement, New Urban Agenda, etc.). Links

with CCA and DRR communities have been positively improved, also thanks to the joint activities carried out with other EU projects (ERA4CS, PLACARD and CLARA).

Further networking activities are planned for the upcoming months, in particular:

- **Official side event at the 7th International Conference on Building Resilience** - Bangkok, Thailand 27, 29/11/2017
- **JRC 2nd International Workshop on Modelling of Physical, Economic and Social Systems for Resilience Assessment** - Ispra, Italy, 14-16/12/2017
- **IPCC Cities and Climate Change Science Conference** - Edmonton, Canada, 05-07/03/2018

In this newsletter, an overview of the outcomes from the first ESPREsSO Think Tank (TT1) is presented. The TT1, focusing on “Improved integration of DRR and CCA policies” through the game scenario exercise RAMSETE, specifically developed within the project, took place in Berlin in October.

With the participation of the main stakeholders involved, TT1 has revealed interesting opportunities in identifying gaps at different levels (research, institutional, conceptual) regarding links between CCA and DRR. Stakeholder discussions have revealed interesting perspectives about the ways to integrate the two domains, highlighting at the same time key issues and obstacles, pointing out key areas where significant effort to achieve more effective synergies in the future is still needed.

The 1st ESPREsSO Think Tank

On the 12th October 2017, the 1st ESPREsSO Think Tank was held in Berlin at the Scandic Hotel. The topic of interest for this meeting was the 1st ESPREsSO Challenge ‘Improved integration of DRR and CCA policies’. While the links between CCA and DRR may seem obvious, given the expected (and experienced) increase in extreme-weather-related disasters, there are still significant gaps between them at the conceptual, institutional and research activities levels. The aim of this meeting was therefore to bring together stakeholders from both communities. By means of a scenario exercise called **RAMSETE (Risk Assessment Model Simulation for Emergency Training Exercise)** and the analysis of the participants’ interactions and decisions, it should be found out where such gaps may exist. In connection with further discussions with the participants, concepts were developed to help overcome these problems.

RAMSETE

RAMSETE is more of a planning exercise, rather than an operational one. However, as we are concerned with the interactions between stakeholders and the

reasons for their decisions as opposed to the decisions themselves, it may be said that it is the ‘journey’ rather than the ‘destination’ that is our main concern.

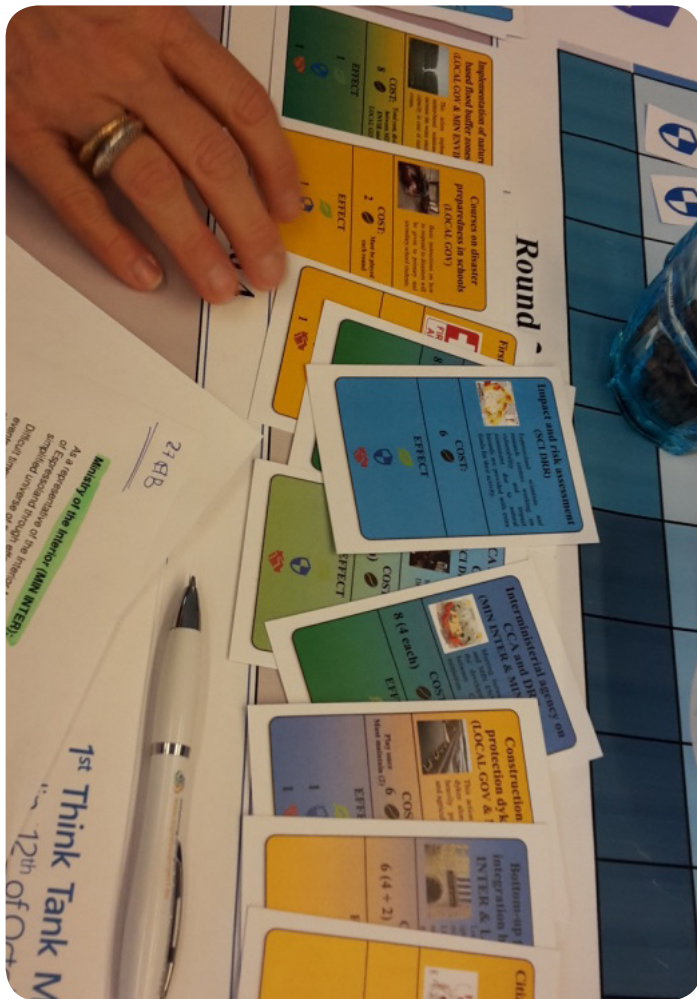
The aim for the participants of the RAMSETE session (each time this exercise is run during a think tank, it will be adapted to suite the issues surrounding the specific ESPREsSO challenge) was to increase the well-being and social cohesion of the citizens of the fictional European island nation of the Grand Duchy of Espressoland. This must be achieved by making the best use of an allocated budget for increasing the CCA and DRR capacity of the island.

The exercise, which was run simultaneously by several groups, consisted of teams of 5 participants. Each participant had a specific role, namely Ministry of the Interior, who was responsible for DRR, the Ministry of the Environment who was responsible for CCA, local government who dealt more with the implementation of many measures at the local level, and scientists responsible for research and information provision about DRR and CCA. The exercise recreated divisions and boundaries between these groups and as part of it, the participants needed to make decisions that required them to invest in



Introduction of the RAMSETE (Risk Assessment Model Simulation for Emergency Training Exercise), presented by Giulio Zuccaro, AMRA

Source: L. Booth, ETHZ



Materials for the exercise: Action cards and Coffee beans as currency (Source: L. Booth, ETHZ)

actions that broke down such barriers and encourage interactions and collaborations.

The exercise was divided into so-called rounds, each representing 5 years. During this time, the participants had to invest their budget to undertake whatever actions are deemed appropriate for the required DRR and CCA activities. This was done by playing 'action cards' which listed a specific activity, dependent upon the role of the player, and which was expected to contribute positively to the reduction of disaster risk and to the nation's adaptation to climate change. These actions resulted in scores measured in units of DRR capacity (or shields), CCA capacity (leaves) and social well-being and cohesion (handshakes). Naturally, the budget could not permit all possible actions to be undertaken, hence, this was where the interactions between the different roles was critical. Information was provided to the participants prior to the round covering the next 5 years, and after decisions

made and cards played, the events of the previous 5 years were revealed and the participants final scores (after deducting for the events) were determined.

The Scenario Exercise

Overall, the exercise proved to be a great success, with the discussions during and after the rounds very open and energetic. While there were some suggestions and criticisms made about the game's mechanics (and which were welcomed by the ESPRESSO team), the game was generally positively received, even by some participants who were not themselves 'game players'.

One of the more interesting features that arose included the recognition during the first round that there needed to be greater synergies between all parties, particularly between CCA and DRR scientists and between the ministries of the interior/environment. Such interactions were purposely limited during the first round in the hope that this would be identified, which it appears to have been. Overall, the participants enjoyed the interactions, with a great deal of bargaining between players (especially the local government, who frequently needed the ministries to support their actions) taking place. While some limitations in the game design were recognized, as well as some over simpli-

fications, in general, the participants believed it to be a reasonable representation of the real world.

One feature of the exercise that was especially fruitful was that after the cards had been played, scored tallied and prior to the next round, the participants were called to discuss their own decisions, to justify them, and to consider how they should have played differently, or where they were successful. The discussions were carried on during the sessions after lunch, and were conducted in a very open and positive manner. The experience of this think tank therefore has raised the ESPRESSO team's hopes for further success in the coming think tanks.



Participants discussing further steps during the exercise (Source: L. Booth, ETHZ)

Summary of the Feedback Round

Stakeholder discussions revealed some interesting perspectives on the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

In small groups the stakeholders provided key insights, with discussions focusing on how CCA and DRR are distinguished, the barriers to CCA/DRR integration and what could be done to achieve more effective synergies in the future. A few key discussion points are summarised here.

Often DRR actions are taken reactively, following a disastrous event. However, under such circumstances time is of the essence, decisions must be made quickly and frequently there is no time to consider addressing CCA in such hastily made plans. Stakeholders highlighted a need to respond to events with long-term actions as well as short-term actions. Continuous collaboration and dialogue between CCA and DRR communities would open the gates for this and ensure information is available to make decisions in a timely manner. A more proactive, rather than reactive approach, is required to 'building back better'.

Not only is collaboration key, but several stakeholders indicated the need for collaborations to be multidirectional. Alliances and collaborations between CCA and DRR communities are clearly required for horizontal integration. Not only this, but collaboration needs to take place within respective communities, between scientists, practitioners and government. Of particular interest was the transfer of information from scientists to practitioners. It was indicated that scientific information should be made more accessible to practitioners, particularly climate change information. Presenting information in context for specific sectors (e.g. water sector) would be more effective for instilling action. Vertical integration between the national and the local level is also of importance. National frameworks need to be viable for translation to the regional level where strategies are implemented to meet regional needs. National frameworks were cited as being difficult to maintain because of the diversity between regions.

Political implications were also a hot topic for discussion. Competing political agendas mean the integration of CCA and DRR is not a priority for many, with economic interests taking precedence. Political viewpoints can shape whether an activity is viewed as either CCA or DRR and influence funding. In some instances, projects may be posed as including climate change, simply to make the project suitable for climate change funding streams, a case that has been seen in Germany.

An overarching agreement was that there is a need to consider the needs of society and for greater involvement of citizens and civil society organisations. Indigenous, local knowledge is valuable and should be made use of, for example, in risk assessments. Political, social and cultural issues all need to be understood in order to fully assess the complexity of CCA and DRR and find a way forward. Sustainable development is an interconnected issue and one recommendation was that sustainable development should be brought into play alongside CCA and DRR in integration attempts.

Stakeholders were engaged and enthusiastic about finding ways to synergize CCA and DRR, however they also highlighted some key issues and made clear there is still significant work to be done. Surely, these fruitful discussions will provide a basis on which to identify key areas for future action.

Conclusion and further prospects

The first Think Tank has been an opportunity to further strengthen the synergies between ESPRESSO team and stakeholders involved, thanks to an active participation to the activities carried out in Berlin. Significant gaps between conceptual, institutional and research activities regarding the integration of DRR and CCA domains have been identified, together with interesting focus area to promote the needed integration.

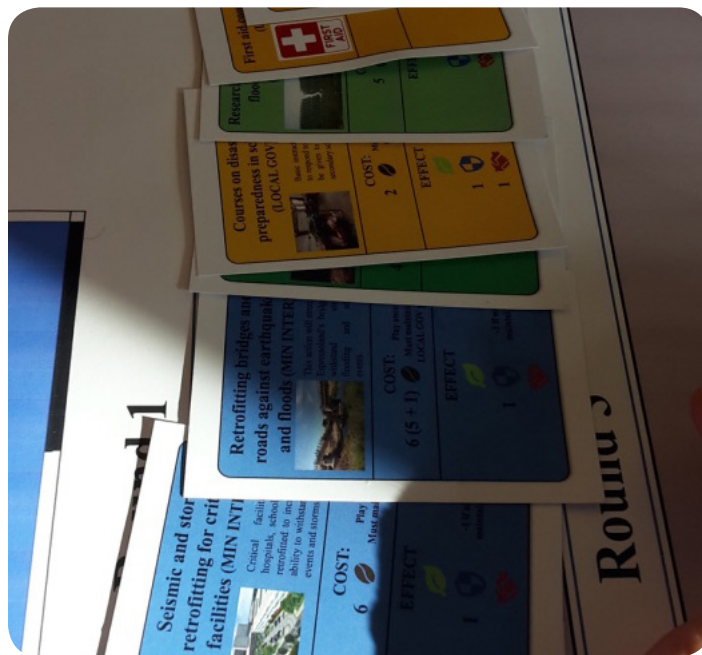
Further prospects can be summarised as followed:

- combination of short term and long term vision in assessing vulnerabilities, risk/impact and mitigation/adaptation potential;
- improved collaboration and communication between CCA and DRR communities;
- enabling of a “proactive” rather than “reactive” approach to decision- and policy-making;
- multidirectional and horizontal collaboration among practioners, scientists, communities, government;
- transfer of accessible information from scientists to practitioners;
- vertical integration of governance actors between local and national level;
- greater involvement of citizens and civil society organisations;
- building synergies between CCA and DRR agendas through common legal and funding frameworks;

In this context, it is clear that political, social and cultural issues need to be better investigated and understood, at global, national and local level, in order to fully link and connect CCA related issues with DRR programmes, and find a way forward.

ESPRESSO Vision Paper and Guidelines, currently under preparation, will reflect the suggestions and in-

dications from the SFs and TTs, as well as inputs from the scientific community and relevant stakeholders engaged, so to support the European Commission in addressing the key areas to be funded within the next Framework Programme.



Actions cards of RAMSETE (Source: L. Booth, ETHZ)

ESPRESSO Questionnaire

Contribute to our questionnaire and help us to explore ESPRESSO's three pillar project challenges:

- 1) Integrating Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction
- 2) Science-Practice-Policy interface
- 3) Management of trans-boundary crises

Based on ESPRESSO's challenge reports and interviews undertaken for the project so far, we have identified several areas for closer discussion within the above outlined challenges and we would like your help in trying to qualify the issues surrounding them, helping us pinpoint more accurately where improvements can be made and how. We will explore each Challenge in the next 3 sections of the questionnaire.

Your contribution will help inform our Think Tanks, research outputs and activities over the next year. Based on these efforts, of which your input will form a critical part, we will produce as a major output of the project our Final Project Vision Paper in late 2018, a copy of which we will forward to you in thanks for your efforts.

ESPRESSO Questionnaire: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LVDBCXC>

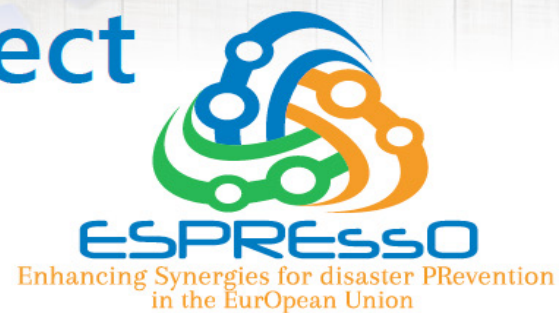
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Get involved!

Are you interested in getting involved? Do you want to join us for a workshop, a stakeholder meeting or be part of the network?

Send an email to: info@dkkv.org

Imprint:

Deutsches Komitee Katastrophenvorsorge e.V. (DKKV)

German Committee for Disaster Reduction

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