

Call for Papers for a Special Issue of Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences (NHES)

**“Building Social Capacities for Natural Hazards:
An Emerging Field for Research and Practice in Europe”**

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Call for papers

Building capacities for natural hazards is a topic which is increasingly gaining relevance not only for so-called developing countries but also for European welfare states which are increasingly and continuously challenged by the negative social, economic and ecological impacts of natural hazards. As European countries have so far been considered as the capacity builders; the idea that it is necessary to build capacities in Europe itself is rather a recent one and implies that there is also a lack of capacities on the part of contemporary European societies. Yet, while the concept of capacity building is referred to in various policy documents, the scientific discussion still needs to evolve.

This NHES Special Issue wants to pay particular attention to *social* capacity building; this encapsulates activities which pay particular attention to actors involved in natural hazards management (residents, local communities, organisations in charge etc.). The purpose of the NHES Special Issue is to offer a forum to different views and conceptualisations of social capacity building and to structure this emerging field of research and practice by identifying different types of social capacities, different approaches to building and enhancing these capacities as well as providing concrete practices from across Europe. These contributions might stem from a broad range of research and policy initiatives with a central focus on more established concepts in risk and hazard research such as:

- Risk governance (e.g. how is the risk governance landscape in Europe, but probably also in other parts of the world, changing and what implications does this have for building capacities of communities and/or organisations?);
- Risk perception (e.g. how does people’s risk awareness influence their capacities to adapt to and cope with natural hazards?)
- Social vulnerability (e.g. how are people’s capacities influencing their vulnerability? which social capacities are addressed by organisations, for example, in vulnerability assessments),
- Risk communication (e.g. which forms of communication seem particularly relevant for developing social capacities, and how are they addressed by whom?)
- Risk education (e.g. how can we develop social capacities in the long term by starting at a young age?) and,
- Resilience (e.g. how should adaptive capacities as well as learning capacities of individuals, communities and organisations be developed?)

The NHES Special Issue intends to stimulate and document scientific discussion and science-policy exchange in this area of research and practice and will therefore cover the aforementioned thematic topics. We particularly welcome papers discussing practical examples and good (or poor) practices of social capacity building in different regions across Europe as well as papers that focus on different hazards (e.g. floods, droughts, alpine hazards etc).

Procedure

Before preparing a paper, please send an abstract (of 500 words maximum) to the guest editors. In due course you will receive a reply whether we consider the abstract as suitable for this Special Issue. We will only consider abstracts with a clear reference to social capacity building (cf. also www.caphaz-net.org). Please send your abstract to christian.kuhlicke@ufz.de and annett.steinfuehrer@vti.bund.de by **Friday, 8 June 2012**. We will send out letters of acceptance until the end of June 2012. The final paper needs to be submitted to NHESS between July 2012 and November 2012.

Further Information about NHESS

Natural Hazards and Earth System Sciences (NHESS) is the interdisciplinary, open access journal of the European Geosciences Union (EGU) dedicated to the publication of original research on natural hazards: <http://www.natural-hazards-and-earth-system-sciences.net/index.html>

NHESS is an open access, web-based journal. This allows papers to be published on the web very quickly, following acceptance. This implies that, special issues are “virtual pages” that list all the papers covering the same topic, handled by the guest editors, and submitted to the same special issue. When an individual paper is accepted, it is published as a regular paper and also listed in a specific special issue web page. Papers are hence published soon after they are accepted. Since NHESS is an open access journal, it requires authors to pay a service charge based on the number of manuscript pages submitted. See in more detail http://www.natural-hazards-and-earth-system-sciences.net/submission/service_charges.html

NHESS offers different schemes for the type of papers (research articles, review articles, brief communication etc.) that can be submitted and published. Detailed information on this subject is available at http://www.natural-hazards-and-earth-system-sciences.net/submission/manuscript_types.html

Further instructions on the preparation of the manuscript can be obtained at the following website: http://www.natural-hazards-and-earth-system-sciences.net/submission/manuscript_preparation.html