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Special Issue “Building social capacities for natural hazards: an emerging field for research and practice in Europe”

Article: “Goal-oriented networks and capacity building for natural hazards – examples from the Dresden region”

Final Author Comments (09/08/2013)

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1 Main action to improve the paper

First of all, I want to thank the two anonymous referees of the NHESSD paper „Goal-oriented networks and capacity building for natural hazards – examples in the Dresden region“ for their very helpful critical comments on the paper.

The submitted NHESSD paper has been written primarily from the empirical viewpoint of comparing two network cases with the help of concepts from network management research. The comments of the referees help to place the paper into a wider perspective on capacity building for natural hazards. The referees made clear that some substantive improvements of the paper are necessary.

The author proposes *one main action* to consider the comments of the referees (*further actions* are proposed below through referring to specific statements in the comments of the referees):

Renewing the conceptual framework of the paper with regard to social capacities for natural hazards and applying this framework to the case studies to rewrite the conclusions.

Based on the different parts of the paper, this main action can be decomposed as follows:

Sub-action „Writing a new sub-section for the conceptual Chapter 2“: The author will add the new sub-section „Analyzing networks in the context of capacity building for natural hazards“ to Chapter 2. The new sub-section will be used to consider the literature on social capital, disaster reduction, and climate change adaptation (e. g., Comfort et al. 2010, Pelling 2011). The sub-section also refers to the literature about concepts of the management cycle (as used in other papers of the NHESS Special Issue about social capacities). This helps to clarify that the term „goal-oriented network“ does not refer to operative management (or event management) for dealing with natural hazards. Furthermore, the distinction between „episodes“, „governance processes“ and „governance cultures“ (e.g., Benz & Fürst 2002, Healey 2007) helps to clarify that „goal-oriented networks“ may be interpreted as „episodes“. In contrast, the term „network capacities“ (e.g., Kuhlicke et al. 2012) primarily refers to (long-term) „governance processes“ that may be analyzed empirically through longitudinal comparative case studies.

Optional development of a new figure to visualize the new framework: It would be useful to visualize the new conceptual framework through developing a new figure. Therefore, the author reviewed some conceptual models in the network and network management research (e.g., Provan & Milward 1995, Simonin 1999, 598, Van den Bosch et al. 1999, 554, Ansell & Gash 2007, 550, Sandström &

Carlsson 2008, 516). The author will try to work out a figure to visualize the new conceptual framework.

Sub-action „Reworking the case studies, especially the summaries, in Chapter 3“: Based on the new sub-section in Chapter 2, the author will rework the case studies in Chapter 3, especially the sub-sections about the case study summaries. This should help to clarify the specific contribution of each case study to understand, analyze and improve the linkage between networks and network capacities. However, the author seeks to retain the descriptive and explanative orientation of the paper. Normative questions of capacity building for natural hazards are touched as far as possible within this overall orientation of the paper.

Sub-action „Reworking Chapter 4: Conclusions“: Based on the new sub-section in Chapter 2 and new case study summaries in Chapter 3, the author reworks the conclusions in Chapter 4 with regard to interpreting the findings of the paper in the context of a wider perspective on social capacities for natural hazards. The existing second conclusion may become a part of the conceptual Chapter 2 on goal-oriented networks. This leaves room for a new conclusion about the significance of the findings in the context of building social capacities for natural hazards.

Implementing the proposed main action leads to a substantive change in the conceptual framework of the paper. The new framework should help to clarify the meaning of the paper in the context of social capacities for natural hazards. As one referee suggested, this does not necessarily change the case descriptions, but clarifies why and in which respect these cases are relevant for social capacities and capacity building for natural hazards (the more theory-oriented „study aspect“ of *case studies*, Yin 2009).

2 Further actions based on comments of referee #2

Action: In Chapter 2, the author will develop a table that compares „goal-orientation“ and „goal-directedness“ as features of whole networks to clarify the difference of the two features and their relevance for network development (e.g., heuristic approach to „goal orientation“, „goal-directedness“ and „network effectiveness“ as different phases in network development).

Action: The term „network size“ may have different meanings. Reworking the paper is an opportunity to clarify that the term „network size“ in the paper means „number of nodes“ (Hanneman & Riddle 2011, 342).

Action: The meaning of the term „national government“ has to be clarified. To avoid confusion, the author will use institutional terms and their translations.

Action: The author plans to provide a table in Chapter 3 that summarizes the main findings of the two case studies with regard to the conceptual categories of Chapter 2.

Action: Referee #2 made some very useful comments about the conditions of network emergence and goal setting in general and in the two examples in the Dresden region in particular. Based on the new conceptual framework in Chapter 2, the author will elaborate on the goals of the two network examples in the Dresden region with regard to social capacities for natural hazards.

Action: Referee #2 also pointed to the interesting task of comparing the two examples with further network cases that can be understood as „bottom-up initiatives“ that are initiated, organized and financed mainly by regional and local actors. The author shares this research interest. However, a systematic comparison would require a *new comparative case study project* and, therefore, remains a task for the future. The author will refer to this important task in the conceptual framework and the outlook of the paper.

3 Further actions based on comments of referee #3

Action (p. 1054): The author will rework the introduction of the paper to avoid overgeneralized statements about the high relevance of networks in the context of capacity building for natural hazards. The research object of the paper „goal-oriented networks“ will be introduced to avoid confusion with other types of networks (e.g., „social networks“, „intraorganizational networks“, Van Wijk et al. 2003, 431).

Action (p. 1058): Referee #3 criticized that the assumed connection between „large network“ and „high expectations with regard to the network output“ needs further causal elaboration, especially with regard to alternative conditions of high expectations (e.g., trustworthiness of a network). This argument points to a more complex understanding of the relations between „starting conditions“, „processes“ and „output“ of networks (e.g., Ansell & Gash 2007). Against the background of such an understanding, the author will provide more information in the case studies about the assumed relationship between network size and expectations of network actors.

Action (p. 1060): Based on the new conceptual framework in Chapter 2, the author will clarify at the beginning of presenting the case studies in Chapter 3 why the two examples of goal-oriented networks in the Dresden region are interesting examples of capacity building for natural hazards.

Action (p. 1073): Reworking Chapter 4 about conclusions is part of the *main action* to improve the paper (see above). The comments of the referee help to shape the new framework about „goal-oriented networks and capacity building for natural hazards“ (e.g., the relationship between network structures, sensemaking, goal-directedness and social capacities).

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