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Interactive comment on “How useful and reliable are disaster databases in the context of climate and global change? A comparative case study analysis in Peru” by C. Huggel et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

Received and published: 22 July 2014

Dear Editor, dear Authors,

This is a well-structured and fairly well written MS on a comparative analysis of three different disaster databases in Peru. The authors detect considerable differences in the contents of the databases namely in the number of reported events, and the “rate” of affected population. The study suggests that a database has to be carefully evaluated before it is applied in a study and that the selection of a database strongly depends on the temporal and spatial scales of interest. The conclusion that reporting criteria in for any database should be clearly defined and the documentation strategy improved is important but also something that has been stated many times in previous studies.

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Furthermore, study results show limited changes in event occurrence in two regions of Peru. However, I am not sure if solid statements can actually be made regarding damage occurrence and damage parameters, given the considerable inaccuracy of the applied databases.

All in all this is an interesting descriptive study that will be of interest to the natural hazards community (and should be published) mainly in the fact that damage databases will only improve – especially in developing countries – if they are thoroughly investigated and their data applied.

The MS is adequate in length although rather on the long side for a case study. Especially the discussion section is in some places repetitive and a bit too long for the limited number of statements made.

I suggest the authors thoroughly address all the specific comments and technical details listed below. Given the large number of minor comments, and a few comments with a more “major” character, I suggest that the paper be accepted pending moderate revisions.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<http://www.nat-hazards-earth-syst-sci-discuss.net/2/C1657/2014/nhessd-2-C1657-2014-supplement.pdf>

Interactive comment on Nat. Hazards Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 2, 4331, 2014.

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