

Interactive comment on “Communication strategies to address geo-hydrological risks: the POLARIS web initiative in Italy” by P. Salvati et al.

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The paper presents a valuable approach of citizen participation into disaster management. The paper properly recognises the contemporary dimension of participation, which is communication of the appropriate event and connected intervention. However, the relationship between participation and communication is not properly explained with the sociological background. For a solid view on the sociology of disasters I would recommend the studies by Plapp (or Kunz-Plapp), some of them in NHESS. Some of them refer to flooding.

A proper communication is influencing the perception of risk, and this is also a link I miss in the paper. Also, some studies on risk perception from a psychology background are done by the team around Armas, from which those by Nenciu (Posner) on flood,

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available in Natural Hazards recently. Also Krebich published in NHESS and elsewhere on perception of flood and how it leads to measures in Germany. Myself I presented the sociology background of participation and communication for earthquakes in NHESS.

From the scientific content I would be interested how the citizens interact, if they are just foreseen with information (first step of participation, see my article) or if they can provide information, ex. through mobile devices, as designed in several EU projects for continuing the information gathering after the project end. Recently ESRI started a MOOC of teaching creating story maps which do not require programming knowledge. It seems to me that only the blog section is bottom up. However, what differentiates communication and participation is how citizens can engage more than perceiving. Can they contact the civil protection to organise to bring sand bags for example? In Bernburg in 2013 I assisted to successful prevention of flood damage despite flood due to citizen engagement. (I attach the photo of protection, which was effective, in Halle on the same river Saale the dam broke) Over the information of citizen, citizens must become active to do constructive participation, not only protest in case what unlikely events and perception. Is this development foreseen in the future for the product if not already existing?

I hope this helps to improve the paper.

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Fig. 1. flood prevention through citizen intervention in Bernburg 2013