

Evidence for Policy in Disaster Risk Management Summer School 2023

The Evidence for Policy in DRM School is a unique event where policymakers and scientists meet and together develop skills in using evidence for creating policy solutions - and leading thinkers and practitioners producing science and policy around risk reduction, preparedness and response engage closely with participants through participatory, interactive masterclasses.

The objective of the School is for participants to gain new knowledge on how to better integrate scientific evidence into policy-making:

- Scientists will learn how to better communicate and visualise their results, tackle uncertainty and align their projects with policy needs.
- Policymakers will learn how research can support policy, which science can be relevant to their field, where to find it and how to interpret it, and what can be expected from researchers.

Each participant will have the possibility to attend two masterclasses during the School.

List of Masterclasses

I. Managing available information on climate and weather changes

In order to manage climate and weather risks, as well as the connected social and economic consequences, two things are necessary: first, better understanding the state of the climate and how it has been and will be affecting countries; and second, where to find and how to use available information produced by scientists who observe these phenomena.

This Masterclass will provide participants with basic scientific information relating to the state of the climate worldwide and its predicted changes; illustrate what type of options are available, their added value and limitations; and discuss the interpretation and use of the relevant climate and weather information for action in disaster risk management.

II. Understanding and applying foresight in disaster risk management

While there is increasing awareness about the complexity of disaster risks, including their rapidly changing nature, foresight processes are yet to be fully understood and integrated into disaster risk assessment and management.

This Masterclass aims to fill this gap by examining the concept of foresight and its application to disaster risk management. The Masterclass will particularly focus on how to translate foresight into tools that can be readily understood and put into use by decision-makers. It will reflect, more broadly, on how foresight can contribute to building a sustainable, continuous

relationship between scientific experts and decision-makers, in lieu of shorter-term and essentially reactive interactions.

III. Is technocracy the solution to the science-policy gap?

The recent emergence of the "scientisation of policy advice" (Christensen, 2018) and the growing inclination of scientific advisors to assume positions of political leadership have become prevalent trends in contemporary society.

This Masterclass aims to provide an in-depth examination of the increasing utilisation of scientific expertise in the decision-making process, with specific reference to current issues such as the ongoing pandemic and the pressing issue of climate change. The Masterclass will analyse various practices, procedures, and governance structures that have been implemented within the science-policy nexus over time and at different levels, with a particular emphasis on assessing the strengths and limitations of recent technocratic tendencies in relation to the potential risks of democratic erosion.

IV. Science advocacy: developing a behavioural and risk communication approach that fits democratic societies

This Masterclass will provide participants with an in-depth understanding of the theoretical and practical instruments of "Science Advocacy". Against the backdrop of multiple and intertwined systemic risks (related, e.g., to weather, health, peace and security, etc) the need to engage in effective "science advocacy" is of utmost importance to better understand what kind of activities could be put in place to mobilise civil society towards demanding policy makers to give proper consideration to scientific advice.

Designing effective "Science Advocacy" actions requires a deeper understanding of the dynamics of science and risk communication, which indeed focuses on developing a behavioural and communication approach that fits a democratic society. In this frame, the contribution of behavioural science and communication science will be explored, also in light of the lessons learned in connection with recent crises (such as the COVID-19).

V. Understanding the role of International Disaster Law for Scientists and Policymakers

The norms of International Disaster Law (IDL) and the relevant international bodies in this field provide the legal and institutional framework for developing disaster risk reduction and preparedness strategies and actions. The applicable framework is a complex patchwork of international, regional, sub-regional and national norms, as well as several non-binding soft law instruments.

This Masterclass will provide participants with a deeper understanding of the linkages among these different layers of obligations, with due consideration being given to national perspectives and implementing practices. With the aid of case-studies and reflecting on recent lessons learned, participants will better understand the concrete influence of IDL on the science-policy interface, and explore new and creative avenues to implement disaster risk

reduction policies that are adequately informed by available science, within the given legal framework.

VI. Understanding the Economics of disaster risk management and its valorisation

Effective disaster risk management requires the integration of scientific evidence across several fields and disciplines into practical policymaking. In this process, the procedures of public finance management and the mapping of budgetary constraints should be merged with state-of-the-art scientific assessments of the risks and opportunities linked to disaster prevention, management, and relief. This Masterclass will leverage key academic studies along with socio-economic and natural disaster data to provide participants with a better understanding of the economics of disaster management and with operative tools to evaluate the short and long-run economic impacts of natural disasters as well as the social and economic benefits of investments in this area.
