

7 April 2009

Natural Disasters:**6 Apr: Italy Earthquake**

An earthquake of magnitude 5.8 Richter (6.7 magnitude according to U.S. Geological Survey) occurred at 3:32 am local time hit central Italy on Monday night. The epicentre was located in L'Aquila Province. It is estimated that the earthquake may have caused serious damage to between 3000 and 10.000 buildings and until this moment (11.30 Brussels time), 27 casualties are reported. Based on first estimates of the Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC) of the Community Civil Protection Mechanism (CCPM), this figure may rise to about 100 casualties and between 300 and 400 people could be injured. The rescue of people, as well as the assessment of the situation, is ongoing.

<http://eupolitics.einnews.com/news/italy-earthquake>

<http://eupolitics.einnews.com/news/silvio-berlusconi-earthquake>

<http://eupolitics.einnews.com/>

2 Apr: Thousands isolated by floods on Australia's eastern coast

Heavy rains along the country's east coast had left nearly 4,000 people isolated. "About 3,870 residents in Kalang valley, Thora and Darkwood and parts of Bellingen have been isolated since Tuesday (March 31) night and are likely to be cut off. The floods sparked by once-in-a-century rains, as some have described, have led officials to declare at least four areas along the northern coast of New South Wales (NSW) state disaster zones. Coffs Harbor recorded up to 17.3 inches (440 mm) in 24 hours and Nambucca received 27.6 inches (700 mm) in 48 hours, CNN reported. According to NSW emergency workers, no fatalities have been reported thus far. Neighboring Queensland state has also experienced heavy rains and strong winds, which have triggered flooding, blocked roads and caused power outages. Extreme weather has affected the continent in the past few months, with a series of cyclones triggering floods in the north and drought conditions and high temperatures in southeastern Victoria state triggering the worst wildfires in Australia's history, which claimed the lives of more than 170 people.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7978390.stm>

<http://www.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/asiapcf/04/01/australia.floods/>

http://www.straitstimes.com/Breaking%2BNews/World/Story/STIStory_357777.html

http://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/news/article.cfm?c_id=2&objectid=10564951

1 Apr: Blizzards and storms to hit southern China this month

Chinese meteorologists warned that more blizzards and thunderstorms will hit southern China this month. "The weather conditions ahead are not optimistic for farmers," the official Xinhua news agency reported Zhai Panmao, the director of China's Meteorological Administration's (CMA's) forecast services and disaster mitigation department, as saying. According to Xinhua, April is a crucial month for cultivating rice and follows the worst drought in 50 years in northern China, which has affected 40 percent of the country's wheat harvest. According to Xinhua, although grain officials have said that the country's grain stocks remain secure despite the drought, meteorologists are concerned that disasters might spread to southern parts of the country, where farmers are expected to soon begin planting rice. According to CMA figures, wind and hail storms swept through 14 provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions so far this year and caused US\$102 million (700 million yuan) in direct economic losses. The head of the CMA, Zheng Guogang in February warned that more sandstorms would hit the north this spring. According to Xinhua, CMA statistics show that natural disasters caused economic

losses amounting to 2.8 percent of GDP from 2001 to 2008. In February, China declared a drought emergency in its central and northern regions, covering eight provinces. The eight affected provinces are Hebei, Shanxi, Anhui, Jiangsu, Henan, Shandong, Gansu and Shaanxi. According to officials, almost four million people are suffering from water shortages and the drought is affecting millions of acres of crops.
<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/MSAO-7008QM?OpenDocument&rc=3&cc=chn>

Disease outbreaks & surveillance updates

4 Apr: South Pacific: Flu epidemic hits South Pacific island of Tokelau

In the remote South Pacific islands of Tokelau, health authorities from New Zealand and Tokelau's officials are working together to contain an influenza-like outbreak that has affected more than one in every ten people on the country's three atolls, the Pacific Islands Report said. Spread over three atolls, Tokelau has about 1,500 residents and around 150 people have been reported to have contracted the illness. Children have been most affected by the disease, while only four have been hospitalized, the BBC attributed media reports as saying. The influenza strain has caused symptoms of fever, malaise and muscle aches, according to Dr. Fran McGrath from New Zealand's Ministry of Health. Due to the outbreak, public gatherings have been cancelled, schools have been closed, sick people have been advised to stay home and hand washing has been reinforced.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7973531.stm>

<http://www.pidp.org/pireport/2009/March/03-31-02.htm>

2 Apr: China: Hepatitis C infects 64 after tainted blood transfusions

At least 64 people have been infected with the potentially deadly liver disease, hepatitis C, after receiving transfusions from blood collected illegally. Police have since arrested Li Changhe, the director of a Chinese hospital, under the suspicion of illegally collecting and providing blood at the hospital in southwestern Guizhou province.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/02/world/asia/02beijing.html?ref=asia>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7979251.stm>

<http://www.cbc.ca/world/story/2009/04/02/china-hepatitis-infected-hospital>

2 Apr: Polio outbreak in Nigeria spreads to polio-free countries

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that polio had spread out of Nigerian borders, re-infecting six neighboring countries that previously had eliminated the disease, Reuters said. Efforts to wipe out the disease globally was set back after new Nigerian outbreaks of polio surfaced and spread to eight neighboring countries during the second half of 2008. Reuters reported the CDC's weekly report as saying, "despite accelerated efforts, polio cases increased 26 percent, from 1,315 cases in 2007 to 1,655 in 2008. This increase primarily resulted from an increase in Nigeria from 285 cases in 2007 to 801 cases in 2008. <http://uk.reuters.com/article/healthNewsMolt/idUKTRE5315W920090402>

2 Apr: More than 5,000 people infected with dengue fever in Argentina

A dengue outbreak in Argentina is worsening and at least 5,154 have been sickened and five have died. Argentina's northern provinces of Chaco, Salta and Catamarca, are the areas worst hit by the epidemic. Media reported about 2,900 cases in Chaco, while Salta and Catamarca had 1,040 and 939 cases respectively. With the abundance of cases, local hospitals said their medical services could not handle the large number of people infected with dengue fever. Most of the infections have been found primarily along the country's northern border with Paraguay and Bolivia attributing the dengue outbreak as being linked to an epidemic in neighboring Bolivia, which has registered 51,000 cases.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-04/03/content_11124152.htm

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/LSGZ-7OHK2E?OpenDocument>

http://www.etaiwannews.com/etn/news_content.php?id=907499&lang=eng_news&cate_img=316.jpg&cate_rss=news_Health

1 Apr: Two-year-old boy confirmed as Egypt's 61st case of H5N1 bird flu

State news agency Middle East and North Africa (MENA) reported that a two-year-old Egyptian boy had contracted the H5N1 bird flu virus, increasing the number of confirmed cases in Egypt to 61, Reuters reported. Egypt remains the hardest hit country by bird flu than any other country outside of Asia and recently has seen a spike in bird flu cases with six new human infections. According to health ministry spokesman, Abdel Rahman Shahine, the boy, from the northern province of Beheira, was believed to have been infected with the virus after coming into contact with diseased birds. Egypt is one of the few countries affected by bird flu that does not compensate farmers when poultry is destroyed, though experts say it is the best way to ensure rapid detection of new outbreaks. The H5N1 bird flu virus has infected at least 410 people in 15 countries, killing 254 of them. Outbreaks have forced the culling of more than 300 million birds in 61 countries in Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe. In Egypt, 23 have lost their lives after coming into close contact with infected domestic birds in a country where an estimated 5 million households depend on domestically raised poultry as a main source of food and income. Experts fear a global pandemic that could kill millions if the virus mutates into a form that easily transmits from human to human.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/healthNews/idUKTRE5306HZ20090401>

1 Apr: National response has significant impact on slowing Zimbabwe cholera epidemic

The severe cholera epidemic that has plagued Zimbabwe since August 2008 continues to slow down as heavy rains not only contribute to its deceleration, but also provide fresh water to Zimbabweans, Voice of America (VOA) reported. However, medical sources in the country say there remains a lot to be done to establish sustainable sources of clean drinking water across the country. Residents in the capital, Harare, and other cities are doing their part by collecting rainwater, which is relatively safer than the water available from local wells or even municipal supplies coming from the tap. Heavy rains late in the rainy season have washed away disease-carrying contaminants that the initial rains carried into water sources.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/Zimbabwe/2009-04-02-voa40.cfm>

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/Zimbabwe/2009-03-30-voa59.cfm>

30 Mar: Laos: Illegal imports put northern Laos at risk for a bird flu outbreak

The Lao newspaper, Vientiane Times, reported that many areas in the northern Phongsaly province of Laos were at risk of contracting the H5N1 bird flu virus due to local people continuing to illegally bring in poultry and eggs from neighboring countries. Because people can walk or drive across and participate in casual trade of poultry easily at border areas without established checkpoints, provincial authorities have a difficult time identifying when and where there is a virus outbreak, Xinhua news agency reported provincial Livestock and Fisheries Deputy Head Somnith Keoboun-ngune as noting. Since 2004, several bird flu outbreaks have struck Laos with the most serious one occurring in 2007 when two human fatalities were confirmed in the capital city, Vientiane, and northern Vientiane province.

http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-03/30/content_11101047.htm

Events & Training:

SEASC 2009 call for papers: Organisers of the 10th South East Asian Survey Congress (4-7 August, Bali) have issued a call for papers. The Technical Committee is seeking original papers describing new research, development and technology in all areas of geospatial information. The conference theme is Integrating Geoinformation Islands. The deadline for abstracts is 28 April. <http://www.seasc2009.org>

10th Asian Urbanisation Conference: The 10th Asian Urbanisation Conference will be held from 16-19 August at the University of Hong Kong. Conference themes include GIS-related applications, urban population change, sustainable development, transport and urban governance. It is being organised by the non-profit private research organisation, Asian Urban Research Association.

<http://www.hku.hk/asia2009/>

Laserscanning 2009: The deadline for abstracts for Laserscanning 2009 (1-2 September, Paris) has been extended to 15 April. This ISPRS workshop is dedicated to the processing and the analysis of point clouds generated from active airborne and terrestrial sensors. It will focus on new data, methodologies, algorithms and applications, as well as new sensor-driven calibration techniques.

<http://laserscanning2009.ign.fr>

IDRC Chengdu 2009: The next International Disaster and Risk Conference (IDRC) will be held in Chengdu city of Sichuan province in China from July 13th to 15th, 2009. The IDRC Chengdu 2009 will provide a strategic platform for summarizing and discussing the successful experiences that all countries deal with catastrophes, so as to promote the capacity building that copes with disasters. The IDRC Chengdu 2009 will focus on "Wenchuan earthquake, the path forward - capacity building is the key for the integrated disaster and risk management and for sustainable development".

http://www.chengdu2009.org/pages_new.php/Topics-and-themes/600/1/581/

TCDM Second International Roundtable: TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, Mumbai, India, 25 - 26 April 2009- EXPLORING HUMAN SECURITY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Invites paper abstracts within the following themes for presentation and discussion at the Roundtable:

1. The Efficacy of the Human Security Framework: Critical Perspectives on Human Security
2. The Relationship between Human Security and Ecological Security
3. Human Security with reference to Indigeneous Communities
4. Psychosocial Care, Community Support and Human Security
5. Global Governance and Human Security
6. Case Studies of Successful or Failed Attempts at Institutionalizing Human Security
7. The Connection between Human Security and Disaster Risk Reduction
8. Human Security and Armed Conflict
9. The implications of Human Security for International Humanitarian Intervention
10. Human Security and the international crises of finance and food-prices.
11. Human Security and Gender Concerns
12. Role of Media in Enhancing Human Security

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News:

4 Apr: Improving lives of landmine survivors: Australia will provide \$2.4 million for prosthetics and the rehabilitation of Iraqi landmine survivors and other victims of conflict. This assistance through the UNDP builds on our existing support for mine clearance activities across Iraq, through which more than 9.4 million square meters of land has been cleared. It will continue to prevent injuries from landmines and other explosive remnants of war, and help and support survivors. Australia will also donate 10 Australian-made landmine detectors to the United Nations in Nepal to help clear 45 minefields across the country and reduce the risk of death and disability. <http://www.asmmag.com/newsletters/55>

Information Resources:

GIS, GNSS, Surveying, Mapping, Satellite Imagery and related technologies updates:

Sichuan Earthquake Atlas: The Ministry of Science and Technology, the State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, and the State Development and Reform Commission have cooperated in the production of an atlas of the Sichuan Earthquake. The document contains 215 pages of maps. The maps cover 38 themes organised into eight chapters. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1622>

Observing crustal movement in China Trimble has been selected by the China Earthquake Administration to supply GNSS continuous operating reference station receivers for a project to build a crustal movement observation network in China. The formation of the network comes after the Sichuan Earthquake reminded Chinese authorities of the dangers presented by crustal movement. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1619>

Vexcel sells to Asia: Vexcel Imaging, GmbH – Microsoft’s photogrammetry division – has announced a recent flurry of sales of its UltraCam large and medium format digital aerial mapping cameras. Shanghai Tephys Optoelectronics in China, Shinhan in Korea, and the land administration authority in Uzbekistan have all acquired systems. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1601>

Gartner ranks GIS for utilities: US IT researcher Gartner has released a research note that rates the suitability of GIS offerings for the utilities market. The report puts ESRI products in the top of five slots. Autodesk, GE Energy (smallworld) and Intergraph rate in the second, and Bentley and PBBI in the third. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1623>

Satellites measure sea surface roughness: In Britain, the Centre for Earth Observation Instrumentation is supporting a revolutionary project aimed at developing a prototype instrument capable of measuring the sea surface roughness and soil moisture content. Both of these are expected to interact strongly with 1.5 GHz navigation signals broadcast from satellites. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1597>

Surveying in underground mines: New automation techniques are reducing the time lag in survey coverage and freeing up surveyors to attend to more of the statutory and regulatory issues. Gijima Ast has introduced a new system that incorporates software called Mine Markup, a Leica 1200 total station and a rugged tablet PC. It allows operators to visualise and interact safely and accurately with the working area. <http://www.asmmag.com/features/1618>

GeoEye-1 for Google Earth: GeoEye Inc. in the US has begun the delivery of imagery to Google, for use in the Google Earth virtual globe. The imagery has sub-metre resolution. It is sourced from GeoEye-1, Geoeye’s latest satellite. GeoEye says all the imagery was acquired in the last 60 days. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1592>

SuperMap expands to Libya and Portugal: SuperMap Software Co. in Beijing has signed agreements with Green Line Centre in Libya and Geosfera in Portugal. Under the terms of the agreements, GLC will

distribute SuperMap's GIS software in Libya, Egypt and Sudan. Geosfera will distribute it in Portugal. GLC will be SuperMap's second African distributor. <http://www.asmmag.com/news/1621>

Worldview imagery for CRISP Centre for Remote Imaging, Sensing and Processing at the National University of Singapore has signed an agreement with DigitalGlobe. The agreement grants CRISP direct access to high-resolution imagery from DigitalGlobe's WorldView constellation. With the launch of Worldview-2 later this year, the constellation's collection rate will total 2 million square km per day. <http://media.digitalglobe.com/index.php?s=43&item=161>

ESRI Virtual Earth: The Environmental Systems Research Institute and Microsoft Corporation have signed an agreement under which ESRI's ArcGIS 9.3.1 will be provided with connectors to Microsoft's Virtual Earth. The deal is significant because it gives ArcGIS users immediate access to a layer of imagery anywhere on the globe. <http://www.esri.com/agolwhatsnew>

ExpressMaps for emergency response: Spot Image and Infoterra are launching an online service to deliver detailed basemaps covering 75 per cent of the Earth's land surfaces. This service creates basemaps at a scale of 1:50 000, which can be delivered electronically to users within 6 hours. It is aimed at first responders in crisis management situations. <http://www.express-maps.com/>

Leica Cyclone II Topo 1.1: Leica has released Cyclone II Topo 1.1 for creating topographic maps from laser scan data. Version 1.1 is twice as fast as the previous version. It offers expanded SmartPick automation to automatically find 'lowest', 'highest' or 'ground' points and can also automatically export line, point and text data to industry standard DXF format. http://www.leica-geosystems.com/corporate/en/ndef/lgs_360.htm?id=2007

SuperPad 3.0 Beta: SuperGeo will release a beta version of SuperPad 3.0 in April. SuperPad is a GIS for small format devices. This new version will have several new buttons on its toolbar. Designers have made it possible for users to customise the toolbar since the small display size of the user's device may not be able to fit all the buttons on a single screen. <http://www.supergeotek.com/news.aspx?Type=Product&ID=428>

Optech ILRIS-HD Scanner: Optech Incorporated has introduced the ILRIS-HD as its flagship model. This latest addition to its range of ILRIS laser scanners features an increased laser repetition and true measurement rate of 10 kHz. The company says the ILRIS-HD offers four times the speed for data collection, high-accuracy survey modes and rapid survey modes. <http://www.optech.ca/i3dprodline-ilris3d.htm>

FME 2009 Supports OSM: Safe Software has introduced read support for the OpenStreetMap format into FME 2009. It uses OSM-defined conventions for converting data primitives into representations within a schema for any user-selected output format. Users can also define their own schema and conventions for interpreting OSM data, to allow more flexible manipulation of OSM datasets. <http://www.safe.com/aboutus/news/2009/128/index.htm>

Discussion Forum: Save lives - make hospitals safe! Save lives. Make hospitals safe in emergencies. World Health Day 2009 focuses on the safety of health facilities and the readiness of health workers who treat those affected by emergencies. Health centres and staff are critical life-lines for vulnerable people in disasters - treating injuries, preventing illnesses and caring for people's health needs. They are

cornerstones for primary health care in communities meeting everyday needs, such as safe childbirth services, immunizations and chronic disease care that must continue in emergencies. Often, already fragile health systems are unable to keep functioning through a disaster, with immediate and future public health consequences. http://platform.grforum.org/pages_new.php/World-Health-Day-2009/583/1/%20

Web Resources: Dialogue on Climate Change Adaptation for Land and Water Management

Water and land management are among the areas most critically affected by climate change and at the same time of fundamental importance to poverty reduction and the livelihoods of (vulnerable) families and communities. This is why water and land are the central elements of the climate change dialogue process. www.landwaterdialogue.um.dk/

Web Resources: Gender and Disaster Network

The Gender and Disaster Network is an educational project initiated by women and men interested in gender relations in disaster contexts. It is one of the first web presences to advocate for gender mainstreaming in disaster risk reduction using the World Wide Web www.gdnonline.org.

For archived DRM updates:

ADPC Website:

<http://www.adpc.net/v2007/IKM/EVENTS%20AND%20NEWS/DISASTER/2008/DISASTER-NEWS-2008.asp>

Note: The information has been collated from publicly available information. Although the sources are deemed reliable, request cross checking before referencing. To subscribe or unsubscribe, please drop a mail to adpc@adpc.net.

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