

# The importance of communicating and sharing relevant data on water- and risk-related issues

Summary of the results of the workshop  
held in Padua (Italy) on April 5<sup>o</sup> 2016







# The Vajont disaster

- No communication
- No risk awareness (in decision makers)
- Real situation hidden to the population in name of economic interests
- The result: around 2000 victims (and 900 billions € damages)





# Nowadays

- Times are changed
- Easier access to information
- Need –by Law obligations and by willingness of Public Administrations- of sharing informations
- Maybe less knowledge of the territory as cultural heritage of local communities vs more scientific expertise and technical skills

# Communication and participation in water and risk management sectors

- 3 relevant EU directives on public involvement and participation in the sector:
- 2000/60/EC «Water Framework Directive»
- 2007/60/EC «Flood Directive»
- 2007/2/EC «Inspire Directive»
- Public participation fundamental in plans preparation
- The INSPIRE Directive aims to create a European Union spatial data infrastructure for the purposes of EU environmental policies



# The public workshop

- The workshop on «The importance of communicating and sharing relevant data on water- and risk-related issues » was planned in the mandate 2015/2016 of the Water Platform
- Organized in Padua (Italy) on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2016
- Organization and agenda in close cooperation with PLANALP

## Workshop agenda

### *“The importance of communicating and sharing relevant data on water- and risk- related issues”*

- 14:00 - 14:25 - Welcome greetings *C. Stefani (Director of Geosciences Department of University of Padova), P. Angelini (Italian Head of Delegation to the Alpine Convention), N. Surian (University of Padua)*
- 14:25 - 14:40 - Introductory speeches *C. Wanger, R. Rocco (Presidents of the Platform “Water management in the Alps” of the Alpine Convention) and M. Patek (President of the Platform “Natural Hazards” of the Alpine Convention)*
- 14:40 - 16:15 - Communication and participation processes in the 2000/60 and 2007/60 directives’ implementation  
*R. Hornich (Austria, Land Steiermark) - Communication and public participation in the implementation of the Flood Directive  
A Rimböck (Germany, Bavarian Environment Agency) - Communication and participation processes: examples from Bavaria  
M. Ferri (Italy, Eastern Alps District Authority) - Communication and public participation in the implementation of the Flood Directive: examples from the North East Italy*
- 16:15 - 17:20 - Practical cases of data representation and communication  
*J. Papez (Slovenia, Hidrotehnik Vodnogospodarsko podjetje d.d.) - Slovenian “eWater” portal and national LIDAR data distribution project  
C. Schilling (Austria, Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management) - WISA - Water Information System Austria  
C. Alessandrini (Italy, ARPA Emilia Romagna - ISPRA) - The Italian Hydrologic Information System  
P. Ronco (Italy, University of Padua) - Issue in communicating risk in the KulturiskeU Project*
- 17:20 - 18:15 - Data comparability and open data: the INSPIRE Directive implementation  
*M. Napolitano (Italy, Fondazione Bruno Kessler Trento) - Open data for a growing society  
G. Menduni (Italy, Fondazione Politecnico di Milano) - The “Italia Sicura” open data*

18:15 - 18:40 - Discussion

18:40 - 19:00 - Conclusions

# The reasons of the interest on the topic

- Communication as a key to a successful risk-reduction
- Risk-communication can improve risk-perception of the public
- Differences between expert risk assessment and non-expert risk-perception can lead to problems in risk-management (e.g. acceptance of measures)





# National level (some examples)

- WISA – Water Information System Austria
- HIS – Hydrological Information System in Italy
- E-Water in Slovenia



# Basin's scale (some examples)

- Concrete examples of participatory processes in Flood Directive's implementation from:
  - Steierkmark (Austria)
  - Bavaria (Germany)
  - Eastern Alps District (Italy)
  - Kulturisk Project (case study in Zurich)

# Open data

We can define the open data as: data that anyone can access, use and share, and they are a means to an end and not an end in itself.





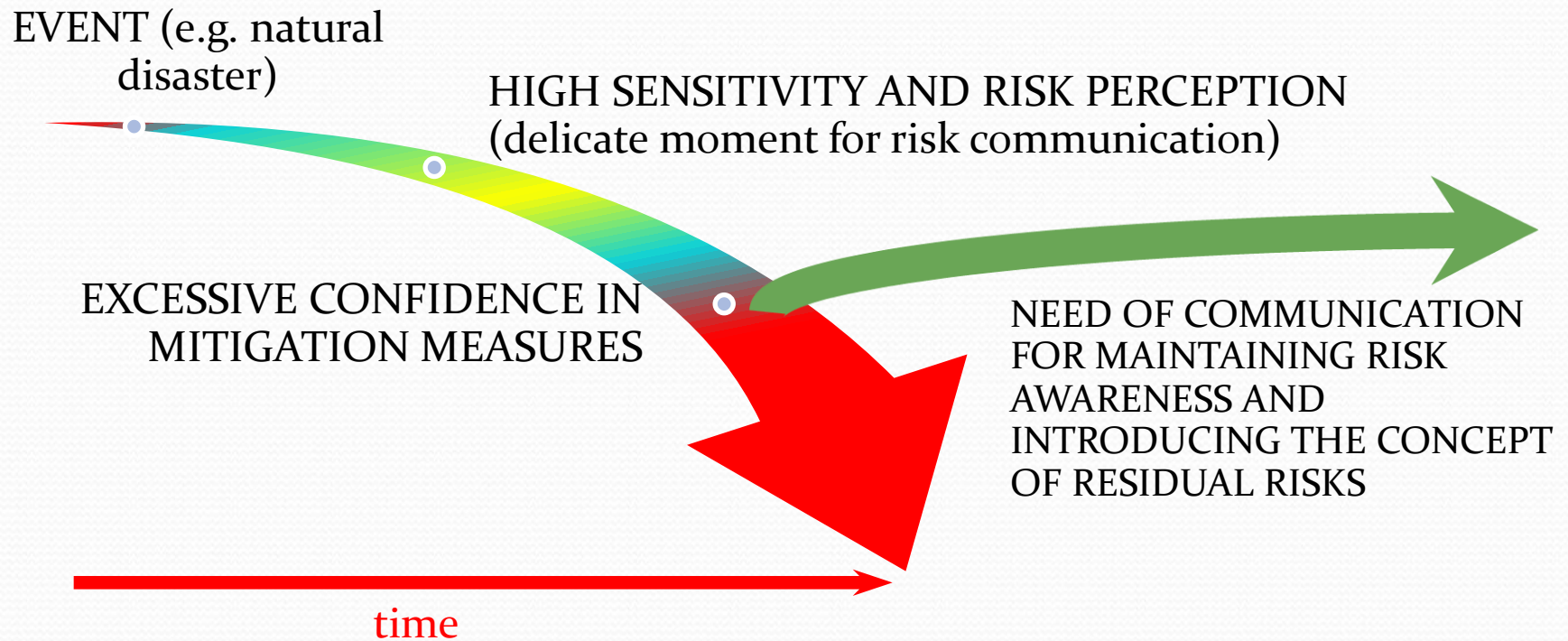
# Lessons learned

Public shows greater concern for...	...lower concern for...
involuntary risks (e.g. air pollutants)	voluntary risks (e.g. smoking, settlement of flood-prone areas)
dramatic hazards (e.g. 1 x 3400 deaths)	frequent hazards (e.g. 3400 x 1 deaths per year by car accidents)
“unfamiliar” hazards (e.g. epidemics)	“familiar” hazards (e.g. floods)

→ lower concern  
e.g. for floods

- Media and political debates can shape perception
- Mandatory participation processes for 2000/60 and 2007/60 are an opportunity

# Risk perception





# Recommendations (1)

- Communication experts are helpful in the communication process, in particular for providing targeted-information and avoid misunderstandings
- The intention of sharing the information and data should be clarified
- Involvement of all stakeholders as soon as possible, already when defining the goals of the process; discussions should be lead in a flexible / interactive way

# Recommendations (2)

- Involve people by an interactive way of communication and by providing target group-oriented information
- New media and social networks could be helpful for improving interactive and bilateral communication, stimulate feedbacks and facilitate the involvement of public and stakeholders
- As risk perception of people varies a lot due to different factors (like personal experience), one important goal of the communication process should be the raise of risk awareness and the introduction of residual risks concept.





# Thank you for the attention

on behalf of the Italian Co-President  
of the Platform “Water Management  
in the Alps” Raffaele Rocco

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