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*Linking Climate and Disaster Databases*

There are several international, regional and national databases that attempt to catalogue the occurrence, characteristics and consequences of natural disasters. Despite some excellent efforts at the international level, notably by the Centre for the Research and Epidemiology of Disasters (CREED) at the University of Louvain in Belgium and by the Reinsurance Industry (e.g. MunichRe and SwissRe) to introduce standardized methodologies for populating these databases, there is no internationally agreed, systematic approach to the matter, including the reporting processes. On the contrary, there are well agreed international methods and procedures for the exchange and archiving of standard meteorological data (weather and climate) including, although to a lesser extent, the processing of that data and archiving of it in many national and international climate databases.

It is estimated that around 70-75% of natural disasters have meteorological causes and further, even when the primary cause may be otherwise, meteorological factors can come into play to exacerbate the problems, e.g. heavy rain following an earthquake or volcanic eruption. It would seem beneficial then to improve the linkages between climate and disaster databases in order to estimate better the risk factors associated with weather and climate related disasters and further, to establish baselines for estimating increased risks that might be associated with climate change.

The matter has gained the attention of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) and this paper will explore the issues involved in forging these links.

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