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The Role of Foresight in avoiding systematic failure of natural disaster risk management

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Abstract

Foresight practices have recently grown in all fields of science. Moreover, studies in which the enormous need have existed to design desired futures in natural disaster management have increased as well. In this paper, the authors try to elaborate the relations between ‘disaster management’, ‘risk management’, and ‘disaster risk management’ in Foresight philosophies and fundamental concepts. In this regard, different information has been gathered and analyzed. These include literature review in disaster management, Foresight, and related fields, as well as evidences of Foresight and disaster risk management projects. In addition, global statistical data related to natural disasters have been analyzed.

Reviewing global trends of natural disasters reveal that disaster impacts are dramatically increasing. The uncertainties associated with future disasters have grown too. This will certainly surprise decision-makers in future disasters. Furthermore, the key stakeholders, who could apply the Foresight methods in managing natural disasters, are national and international policy-makers. They will have faced with a systematic failure in case of inability to follow a reliable long-term planning.

To resolve this problem, there is a need for comprehensive, in-depth review of fundamental concepts of Foresight being specifically applied in managing disasters Considering the concept of the systematic approach to disaster risk management and key concepts of Foresight will respectively show the importance of Foresight in avoiding ‘systematic failures’ in case natural disasters occur.

‘Foresight studies’ are not common in ‘disaster management’ studies, therefore, the information collected and analyzed in this paper is based on theoretical and fundamental concepts of two fields of studies including ‘disaster management’ and ‘Foresight’, as well as available resources of the practical Foresight studies in disaster managing.

To improve the insights of the related decision-makers, the common areas, and the key differences between the ‘disaster management’ approach and Foresight are compared. Moreover, the related viewpoints are also discussed after analyzing the basic concepts which can be viewed through Foresight.
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