Natural disasters affect one in thirty people across the world each year. All nations are at risk and the field of natural hazards is one of the fastest growing areas of research in the Earth and Climate Sciences.

About the UCL Hazard Centre

Established in 1997, the UCL Hazard Centre delivers the latest research and knowledge on natural hazards to industry, humanitarian and development organisations, government and civil protection agencies. It co-ordinates two postgraduate programmes – UCL's MSc in Geophysical Hazards and Postgraduate Certificate Natural Hazards for Insurers – and provides bespoke workshops on understanding and communicating natural hazards.

Hazard Research & Mitigation

The UCLHC specialises in

- Fundamental research on the geophysical processes that drive natural hazards.
- Practical strategies for forecasting natural hazards and their impact.
- Communicating hazard information to decision makers and vulnerable communities.

Training

The MSc in Geophysical Hazards provides essential training for careers in hazard assessment and risk evaluation, from academia to industry and from governmental agencies to humanitarian organisations. For more information, see:
www.ucl.ac.uk/earth-sciences/study-here/postgraduate/geophysical-hazards

The Postgraduate Certificate Natural Hazards for Insurers is designed for insurers, re-insurers and others in the financial sector who require a strong grounding in natural hazards and risk.
For more information, see:
www.ucl.ac.uk/earth-sciences/study-here/postgraduate/natural-hazards-insurers

The UCLHC provides bespoke workshops on natural hazards for humanitarian and development organisations, the business community, civil protection agencies, the media and the public. For more information, please visit our website (*see below*).

Want to know more? Please browse our website at: *www.ucl.ac.uk/hazard-centre*

UCL
Hazard Centre
Helping the Vulnerable Protect Themselves

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Cover Photo: Pyroclastic cloud on Soufriere Hills, Montserrat. C.R.J. Kilburn.

LONDON'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

UCL

Understanding Natural Hazards
Research - Training - Mitigation

Bespoke Seminars & Workshops

UCL
Hazard Centre
Helping the Vulnerable Protect Themselves

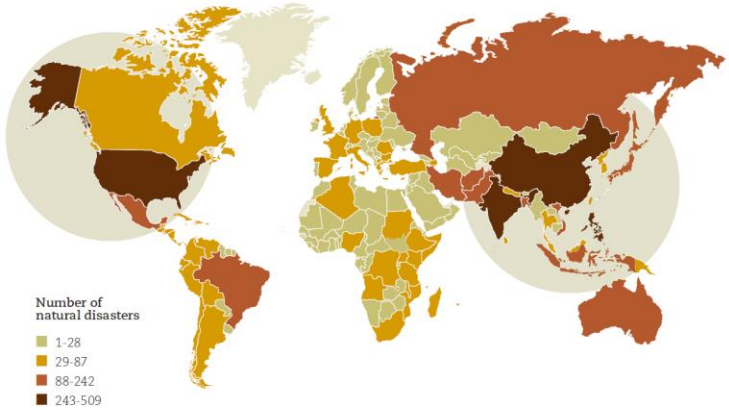
Plucking disaster from a crisis

Nations react to natural calamities but are rarely prepared before they strike. This becomes increasingly the case as the size of the hazard becomes larger, because large events are rarer than small ones – from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions to floods, hurricanes and landslides. The perception of threat dissipates as collective memory fades, whether it is the memory of exposed communities, the financial risk industry, relief organisations, civil protection agencies, political bodies or the media. As a result, those vulnerable to a hazard, physically or economically, are commonly unaware of the threat they may encounter. They do not realise how unprepared they are and so do not seek the information that could prevent turning a crisis into a disaster.

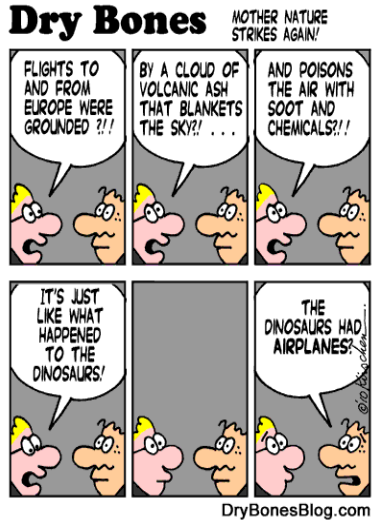
Forewarned is forearmed

The economic cost of responding to a hazard is 5-10 times greater than the cost of being prepared. Being prepared means being informed. Understanding how natural hazards work is thus fundamental for saving lives and livelihoods. The UCL Hazard Centre has twenty years of experience in designing seminars and workshops for humanitarian agencies, the business community and academic practitioners engaged in all aspects of research into natural hazards and disasters. We can provide the latest knowledge on natural hazards and prospects for mitigating their impact. By tailoring activities to your objectives, we can deliver the information you need in the form that you want.

For more information, please visit our website at: *www.ucl.ac.uk/hazard-centre*



Number of disasters reported per country, 1994-2013.
(*Source:* CRED, 2015. The human cost of natural disasters. *www.emdat.be/publications*)



Overconfident or Confused?

Are you prepared?

Stakeholders tend to believe that they have understood information about a hazard and so are fully prepared; advisers tend to believe that they have provided all the information required. This ideal combination is rarely achieved immediately, but can be approached provided conscious attempts are made to avoid the undesirable outcomes listed below. Do any of these outcomes seem familiar? If so, we can help you design methods to move towards the ideal outcome.

Overconfident. Recipients incorrectly believe they appreciate the nature of the threat. They learn technical jargon and so give the impression in conversation that they have understood the information provided. Advisers believe they have achieved their objective. All parties are deceived that suitable preparations will be made.

Confused. Recipients do not understand the information provided, which is anyway of poor quality. No party is properly prepared.

Sceptical. Recipients recognise that the information provided is poor. They may suspect a hidden agenda behind the recommended preparations and so take no action.

Ideal. Recipients understand the information provided and, also, that the advisers are knowledgeable about the hazard. Recommended preparations are put into practice. This is the ideal outcome, but is more difficult to achieve than is usually recognised.

(*Source*. Kilburn CRJ et al. European Geosciences Union, Vienna, Austria, 2014.
Also poster archive at *www.ucl.ac.uk/hazard-centre*.)