



KEY RESULTS OF THE INSIGHTS CAFÉ

“NATURAL HAZARDS AND CLIMATE CHANGE”

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Climate change is intensifying natural hazards globally, increasing both their frequency and severity. Events such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, and volcanic eruptions are becoming more common due to factors like rising sea levels, shifting rainfall patterns, and melting glaciers. These changes not only amplify existing risks but also expose new regions to potential disasters, endangering larger populations.

The interplay between climate change and natural hazards necessitates urgent action. For instance, melting glaciers and rising sea levels increase underground pressure, potentially leading to more earthquakes. Extreme weather events, like unprecedented rainfall and stronger storms, contribute to landslides and flooding, affecting both developed and developing regions. While scientific understanding of these hazards has improved, effective mitigation and adaptation require interdisciplinary collaboration among scientists, policymakers, industry, and the public.

THE EXPERT PANEL ARTICULATES THE FOLLOWING CALLS TO ACTION:

Invest in early warning systems and research.

1 — Enhance monitoring and modelling of natural hazards to improve early warning systems, giving communities more time to prepare and potentially saving lives. Significant funding for key observatories and research initiatives worldwide is essential.

Promote interdisciplinary collaboration.

2 — Break down silos between scientific disciplines and integrate insights from engineering, social sciences, and policymaking to create more effective solutions for mitigating and adapting to natural hazards exacerbated by climate change.

Implement adaptation measures.

3 — Adopt proactive strategies such as improving infrastructure, enforcing better building codes, and implementing urban planning innovations like sponge city projects to reduce community vulnerability. These measures often provide immediate benefits and can incentivise further action.

Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

4 — Take collective action to lower greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change, preventing the long-term exacerbation of natural hazards. Addressing the root causes of climate change is crucial despite the challenges involved.

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Enhance public engagement and awareness.

- 5 —** Involve citizens in data collection (e. g. monitoring light pollution) and raise public awareness to foster greater community involvement in risk reduction and climate action efforts. Develop effective strategies to motivate behaviour change in the population to support climate action.

This event is supported by the GFZ German Research Centre for Geosciences, Hannover Research Foundation and assembled in the framework of the Falling Walls Science Summit 2024 in Berlin. The Falling Walls Science Summit is a leading international, interdisciplinary, and intersectoral forum for scientific breakthroughs. It commemorates the fall of the Berlin Wall and aims to promote dialogue between science and society.

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