

Editorial

Inevitably we are going to encounter the terms -disaster risk reduction, exposure and vulnerability- among the key concepts most frequently repeated throughout this seventh issue of the Conorseguros Digital magazine, published in autumn 2017.

There is broad consensus on the premise that the global trend towards a higher incidence of damage caused by natural catastrophes observed to date has more to do with the increase in the properties exposed to the risk and their value than to an increase in the hazard level of these catastrophes. Therefore, the guiding theme in the majority of the contributions contained in this issue involves an examination of the many aspects of these concepts of exposure and vulnerability, stemming from the many initiatives on different levels for addressing the reduction of disaster risks -which directly impact on the reduction of exposure and vulnerability, among other measures- and, particularly in our immediate area, the various ways in which the insurance sector can actively participate in these discussions.

The central theme of the magazine, for which Drs. Jorge Olcina, Alfredo Pérez, Antonio Rico, Salvador Gil and Francisco López of the Universities of Alicante and Murcia have been responsible, is devoted specifically to the study of the importance exposure and vulnerability have acquired, in the course of the last few decades, in the increase in the risk of floods in one of the areas of Spain where this risk is most significant: the coastal areas of Catalonia, Valencian Community and Murcia. The combination of the torrential nature of the rainfall as a result of the presence of a very warm sea at certain times of the year, mountain chains practically adjacent to the sea, a very small coastal plain and very high urban development pressures contributes the ingredients necessary for a high flood risk.

Precisely to address this rampant increase in disaster damages, the international community has had recourse to mechanisms such as the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. During the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the States agreed to implement the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction, which are in effect between 2015 and 2030, with specific targets that address this issue from all of its many points of view. In her contribution, María Vara, from the General Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergencies, explains the process of creation, the objectives and the resources of the Sendai Framework, as well as the recent start-up of the global platform in 2017.

The insurance sector ranks among the many players involved in disaster risk reduction. In tune with initiatives such as the Sendai Framework, one of the proposals of which encourages the compiling of loss data, where the insurance sector has much to contribute, in France the National Observatory for Natural Hazards has been set in motion, with equal participation by the State, the Caisse Centrale de Réassurance (CCR) and the Association of French Insurance Undertakings. The contribution by Sarah Gerin, Roland Nussbaum of the Natural Hazard Mission and Elsa Rotschild of the CCR provides details of this interesting initiative, which is an example of the practical application of the postulates of the aforementioned Framework.



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The Consorcio de Compensación de Seguros (CCS) and the General Directorate for Water have been involved during 2017 in a number of initiatives aimed at the reduction of the risk of flooding, through the application of a collaboration agreement between the two institutions. One of the most tangible outcomes of this agreement has been the publication, this past July, of the *Guía para la reducción de la vulnerabilidad de los edificios frente a las inundaciones* [Guide for the Reduction of the Flood Vulnerability of Buildings], another example of practical application designed for reducing disaster risks. The article by Silvia Cordero, Sonsoles González and Elena Martínez, of INCLAM, explains the principal contents of this guide, which ranks as a new development in the literature on this subject in Spain.

All of the perspectives for disaster risk reduction have been complicated by the predictions of climate change scenarios, which envision an increase in frequency and intensity, together with a change in the distribution of the hydrometeorological and extreme climate events that generate danger. The initiatives for providing climate services to enable the taking of political and sector-specific decisions are many in number. The principal European initiative in this context is Copernicus, particularly its Climate Change Service (C3S). Dr. Louis-Philippe Caron, of the Barcelona Supercomputing Center, explains the most significant results obtained by the C3S to date and the principal conclusions reached on the basis of the dialogue with insurance sector users, in which the CCS has participated.

The CCS has also participated in initiatives of the European Commission and the European Environment Agency intended, on the one hand, to focus the European debate on the best way to provide insurance coverage for the damages caused by natural catastrophes and, on the other, to reduce the duplication of efforts when it comes time to relate disaster risk reduction and adaptation to climate change, considering the enormous synergies between these two concepts. These reports, published very recently, are also referred to in the content of this issue of the magazine.

However, an institution such as the CCS addresses issues which go beyond natural hazards and this, of course, is also reflected in our digital magazine. Santiago Espinosa explains in his contribution the principal changes introduced into the legislation regulating the Spanish insurance sector by the Voluntary Jurisdiction Act, of 2 July 2015. Also in the legislative and case-law field, Dr. José Antonio Badillo comments on a significant judgement in the context of insurance compensation payments, with respect to the meaning of the concept of "exceptional prejudice".

The insurance sector must adapt to the needs of society and to the constant evolution of technologies. In this context, the contribution by Antonio González examines the ethical and practices challenges posed by robotics and artificial intelligence to insurance, in order to provide coverage for the new technological developments, for example, autonomous vehicles.