



Exchange of information and lessons learnt on management of natural hazards and civil protection in the European Union: the NEDIES project

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NEDIES stands for “Natural and Environmental Disaster Information Exchange System”. It is the name of a project and the name of the corresponding web site at the same time. The NEDIES project was initially launched as a pilot project in 1997, and was established to support the Community action programmes on Civil Protection by making available validated information on natural disasters and technological disasters not falling under the Seveso Directive and not considered for its possible amendment.

Principal aims of NEDIES include the publication of lessons learnt reports from the management of natural and non-Seveso technological disasters and the preparation of guidelines and recommendations to face future disasters. NEDIES constitutes a repository of information, contributing towards the establishment of an EU Knowledge-base in the field of disaster risk management that is targeted to the relevant Commission Directorates General (DG), particularly the Environment DG, the Civil Protection Authorities and the European citizens. Particular emphasis is given to the collection, analysis and dissemination of information (within the NEDIES web site), to the investigation of the domino effect in natural disasters, natech disasters, socio-economic and health implications of disasters and their management, and to hazard, vulnerability and risk mapping. NEDIES is also the driving force of a multi-annual Cooperation Agreement with UN/ISDR (International Strategy for Disaster Reduction) concerning disaster reduction, vulnerability and risk management.

As opposed to the Seveso Accidents, which is supported by a Directive, NEDIES was launched in the hope that the Member States would provide lessons learnt in-

formation on a voluntary basis. In order to facilitate the collection of lessons learnt information, various channels are used. They include the organisation of workshops and meetings, the voluntary contribution from practitioners and the identification of world wide disaster-related web sites.

The information collected is then analysed and synthesised. The lessons learnt can have three different types of outputs: proceedings, Lessons Learnt Reports and Recommendations.

The NEDIES project is realised through the NEDIES website geared towards the general public and national experts thanks to information concerning prevention, preparedness and response measures, embedded in a password-protected access database. The NEDIES 2 redesigned website was launched on 30 June 2004 (<http://nedies.jrc.it>).