



Protection against Natural Hazards in the Alpine Region

INTERPRAEVENT, the International Research Society based in Klagenfurt has been successfully meeting this challenge since 1968.

Following the European flood disasters of 1965 and 1966, the “Research Society for Preventive Action against Flooding” was founded in Klagenfurt in 1968. The aim of the forum for experts from the fields of science, technology and administration was to analyse the causes of these natural occurrences and to draw up plans for protection.

Internationalization of activities and membership

In the founding phase, members included the Federal Republic of Austria, the State of Carinthia, and Carinthian local authorities and companies. Up to the present day, however, it is not only Austrian membership which has grown – many international members have also joined: Japan, Bavaria, Switzerland, South Tyrol, Trento, Slovenia, Taiwan, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the Region of Aosta and Liechtenstein.

The international activities and members led to the association's being renamed the “International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT” in 1990. Currently, talks are being conducted with France and the Czech Republic concerning membership.

A platform for information exchange

Experts from all institutions and member countries, chiefly from the fields of science and administration, bring great commitment and energy to their work on the different committees, which are often carried out on a voluntary basis. They thus achieve a constant exchange of information and continuing development in the field of preventive protection against natural hazards at the international level.

Up to now, the passing on of information and, with it, the basis of INTERPRAEVENT's expert network, was strictly limited to personal contact between members and partners at meetings, workshops and congresses. It is therefore important to continue to strengthen and develop the network and, with it, the passing on of information, i.e. transfer of knowledge.



Tasks, aims and functions

The Research Association works to set up preventive protection against natural hazards and supports interdisciplinary research to protect our living space against flooding, debris flow, landslides, avalanches and rockfall, as well as anthropogenic (man-made) effects and destruction. As the association's name implies, its aim is to research and communicate the causes of these occurrences, to make them applicable in practice.

In future, the Research Association will be giving priority to the following projects:

- Compiling an international web-based list of experts
- Expanding the partner network on the Web
- Developing a databank of knowledge in several languages
- Expanding the information network within the EU
- Organizing more meetings for specialists, between the congresses
- Finding more members in the European Alpine region
- Carrying out more information work to sensitize the public
- Supporting scientific research and up-and-coming young scientists

11th INTERPRAEVENT Congress

One important task of INTERPRAEVENT is to organize and realize international interdisciplinary events. 2008, the 11th INTERPRAEVENT Congress is taking place from 26th – 30th May in Dornbirn (Vorarlberg / Austria).

Besides the presentation of specialized subjects in different talks, objective of the Congress is to bring out an international position paper on current issues, in which the demands and experience of all the participating nations will be taken into account.

Better protection and correct reactions in a critical situation

The extent of natural disasters is increasing worldwide, and the resulting damage is getting out of all proportion. These occurrences can be influenced only to a limited extent, and the funding and land that are required for more effective preventive control of the potential damage are limited as well.

Through the international network and the resulting passing on of information and research results, INTERPRAEVENT can play an important part in ensuring that the population is better protected against natural disasters, i.e. that we can react rapidly and effectively in a serious situation.



International cooperation by the INTERPRAEVENT Research Society – particularly with regard to the (eastward) expansion of the EU – presents the most important challenge, since natural hazards are not respecters of national boundaries. Those who cooperate preventively can also react better to a disaster.

A united Europe requires united, coordinated action in protecting against natural hazards. The heads of the administrative authorities in the individual countries are therefore important partners for INTERPRAEVENT.

In conclusion, a quotation from Max Frisch:

Only man knows disasters, if he survives them. Nature knows no disasters.

Further information:

International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT
Postfach 48, 9021 Klagenfurt, Austria

Your contacts:

Dipl.-Ing Kurt Rohner, President

Dipl.-Ing Norbert Sereinig, Business Manager

Tel: +43 / (0)463 / 536 – 31 818

Fax: +43 / (0)463 / 536 – 31 828

e-mail: interpraevent@ktn.gv.at

www.interpraevent.at