COMMUNICATING RISKS TO OCCUPANTS

HAZARD


RAINFALL AND FLOODS


COASTAL DYNAMICS


GEOTECHNICAL DROUGHTS


HEAT


WILDFIRES


STORMS AND STRONG WINDS

IMPLEMENTATION STEP


BUILDING IN OPERATION

AREA OF ACTION


COOLING


GROUND FLOOR

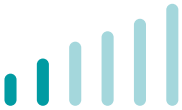

USES

COST

€ € €

low medium high

LEVEL OF SKILL


low

Although the building's occupants are the first to be affected by its resilience to climate hazards, they are often poorly informed about the risks to which the building is exposed. Even when they are aware of the risks, they often underestimate them and don't know what action to take. Informing occupants about the risks, how to behave, and the emergency systems in place is essential to limit human and material damage in the event of a crisis.

IMPACTS

Raising occupants' awareness helps to **reduce the physical risks** to building users and the damage to buildings during extreme weather events. Informed and/or trained occupants will be more likely to **seek safety** (e.g. by moving to a refuge area) and/or **help to protect the building** (e.g. by blocking openings in the event of flooding).

What's more, the building's occupants can become **proactive in combating the effects of certain climate hazards, such as heat waves**, by taking everyday steps to improve the building's thermal comfort (for example, by opening the windows at night to take advantage of free cooling).

INSTALLATION GUIDE

Informing building occupants about the climate risks to which the building is exposed requires a concerted effort on the part of the various players in the property sector, each of whom, in their own way, can set up awareness-raising initiatives:

- **Carry out an analysis of the climate risks** to which the building is exposed.
- **Add a clause on climate risks** to the green annexes.
- **Organise regular training sessions** to explain to occupants how to react in the event of climate hazards and ensure that they have a good understanding.
- **Organise regular simulation exercises** to enable occupants to put what they've learned into practice.

Whatever the chosen means of communication, the success of awareness-raising campaigns often depends on a number of determining factors:

1. Target the right people: this involves identifying the key characteristics of the building's occupants (age groups, active/inactive people, etc.) in order to select the most appropriate communication media (information meetings, brochures, notice boards, emails, etc.) and educational approach.

2. Be precise, clear and simple: the aim is to precisely identify the risks to which the building is exposed, without communicating in an overly technical or dense way that might make the information inaccessible.

3. Choose the right time: to increase the impact of awareness-raising campaigns, opt for times when people are physically or mentally receptive (when a climate event is in the news, during daytime workshops in commercial buildings, etc.).

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4 USES AND BEHAVIOUR

When communicating climate risks to building occupants, it's essential to adapt the transmission of this information to the **specific uses of the building**.

- In **residential buildings**, information must be made accessible and relevant to residents, using familiar communication channels such as community meetings, condominium association newsletters and so on. An annual information meeting can cover local climate risks, recommended preparedness measures, and resources for an emergency kit.

- In an **office environment**, climate risks can disrupt business continuity. It is essential to discuss potential interruptions and stress the importance of emergency planning. The best approach involves incorporating information on climate risks into the company's emergency plans, with communication to employees via emails, team meetings or posters.

- In **schools**, climate risks have an impact on the safety of pupils. It's therefore essential to involve teachers and administrative staff in raising children's awareness of climate hazards, carrying out regular evacuation and emergency drills, and communicating with parents via meetings and posters.

- In **healthcare centres**, preparing for climate-related emergencies is crucial, particularly for vulnerable patients. Raising awareness of climate risks can be done at staff meetings, through internal newsletters, emergency simulations and ongoing training for medical staff.

WEAK POINTS AND STRONG POINTS

⊕ The French buyer-tenant information scheme (IAL) makes it compulsory **to inform** all tenants or buyers of a property, particularly in an area regulated by a risk prevention plan (*PPR*), about **natural hazards** and any previous claims for compensation following a natural disaster. A risk report must be included in the technical diagnosis report appended to the promise of sale and the deed of sale or lease. To reinforce this information, the implementing French decree of 1 October 2022 stipulates that. All property advertisements, regardless of the medium used, must bear the following statement. Information on the risks to which this property is exposed is available on the Géorisques website. The risk report must be handed over at the first visit.

⊕ Thanks to the Barnier Fund, public authorities and insurance companies can apply for financial assistance to **subsidise up to 100%** of the costs incurred in carrying out an information campaign on the "CatNat" (natural disaster) guarantee.

⊕ The existing regulations may be complemented in the future by a general, compulsory **"CatNat" diagnosis**, based on the energy performance certificate (EPC), as recommended in a parliamentary report published in July 2019.

! MALADAPTATION

Maladaptation can result from the following:

Increased socio-spatial segregation and climate injustice

As residents become aware of the risks associated with where they live, some may want to move to less exposed areas. However, this raises concerns about socio-spatial segregation and climate injustice. This trend could accentuate the division between the well-off, who can relocate, and the less well-off, who are trapped in high-risk areas. This could result in the devaluation of property and the inability of individuals to change their place of residence, contributing to the perpetuation of poverty and the accentuation of climate risks for vulnerable groups.

Counterproductive communication

Communication that does not take into account the needs, habits and uses of the target audience can be counterproductive if occupants do not feel directly affected by climate risks. What's more, alarmist messages can provoke reactions of fear and denial, particularly when owners are concerned that their exposed properties might lose value, as in certain regions subject to clay shrinkage and swelling.

Neglect of specific territorial constraints

Communication that is not adapted to the local context can seem irrelevant and fail to engage residents. Each region has its own specific features when it comes to climate risks. Ignoring these features can make communication over-general and irrelevant to residents. In addition, a region's history of climate-related disasters will influence the perception of risk.

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MONITORING INDICATORS

ESSENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS WORTH THINKING ABOUT

- ADD A CLAUSE ON CLIMATE RISKS TO THE GREEN ANNEXES
- SOLICIT COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FROM OCCUPANTS ON THE COMMUNICATION OF RISKS

MONITOR MY ACTIONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

+/- : Quantitative indicator ★ : Qualitative indicator

INDICATORS OF MEANS	INTERPRETATION
+/- Percentage of occupants aware of the climate hazards to which the building is exposed (%)	To be maximised
+/- Number of simulated evacuations and/or management of climate hazards to which the building is exposed	To be maximised
+/- Number of signs inside the building on the climate hazards to which the building is exposed in relation to the number of users	To be maximised
+/- Percentage of essential recommendations followed (%)	The maximum number of recommendations should be implemented

INDICATORS OF RESULTS	INTERPRETATION
+/- Percentage of occupants complying with evacuation procedures during simulated evacuations and/or management of climate hazards (%)	To be maximised
+/- Percentage of user satisfaction with communication on the risks to which the building is exposed (%)	This percentage should be maximised
+/- Financial, material and/or human damage caused by disasters linked to climate change that could be avoided by changes in behaviour	To be minimised

** The control situation is defined by the parameters established to isolate the influence of the adaptation action (similar conditions: weather, time of measurement, space, etc.).*

CONCEPT / DEFINITION

- A **user** is considered to be **aware** when he or she has been trained in the understanding and practical application of educational content.

REGULATION / CRITERIA

- **The frequency of simulated evacuation and/or management of the climate risks** to which the building is exposed varies according to its nature and the occupants.

FIND OUT MORE

Centre européen de prévention des risques d'inondation (CEPRI) (2013), Sensibiliser les populations exposées au risque d'inondation

Dugast, M. and Gassiat, A. (2014), Prévenir ou s'adapter ? La vision des acteurs locaux du risque inondation dans le contexte du changement climatique

Ministry of Territorial Planning and Ecological Transition (2020), Prévention des risques naturels

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