



● RESOURCE

El Niño platforms: participatory disaster response in Peru

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Description / Abstract

Climate change is expected to lead to greater extremes (droughts and floods) in river regimes around the world. While the number of major calamities is predicted to rise, the efforts of the public sector, experts and local stakeholders are badly coordinated. Consequently, aid does not reach target groups, resulting in unnecessary losses. Hence, there is a need for more participatory and integrative approaches. To ensure a more concerted response to climate-induced disasters, stakeholders could coordinate and negotiate within Multi-Stakeholder Platforms. Such roundtables are increasingly being established for vision-building and integrated water resource management, but could be employed in disaster management as well. After discussing the advantages and disadvantages of participation, this article trace the rise of and the problems facing two 'El Niño' platforms: one in Ica, a city on the Peruvian coast that flooded unexpectedly in January 1998, and one in Ayacucho, which saw a climate change-induced drought around the same time. The issue of internal and external legitimacy receives particular emphasis.

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