

Research Institute for Geo-Hydrological Protection

in the Department of Earth System Sciences and Environmental Technology

an Institute of the Italian National Research Council (CNR)

POLARIS: POPuLutAtion at Risk of geo-hydrological events in Italy

A web page for the public to disseminate the results of our research on geo-hydrological risk to the population in Italy



Despite the large number and frequency of landslides and floods that affect our territories, and the information on landslides and floods available also online, the subject of geo-hydrological hazards remains poorly known to the Italian citizens. The lack of understanding reflects in the limited perception of the population on the geo-hydrological risks in Italy.

One reason for the lack of understanding is the way in which the subject of geo-hydrological hazards was discussed and communicated; all too often with a language

better suited to professionals than citizens. To reach a wider audience, use appropriate language and modern communication methods is necessary.

To communicate the information we have collected on landslide and flood risk to the population of Italy, we have launched POLARIS, a web site dedicated to the Population at Risk Landslide and Flood in Italy (<http://polaris.irpi.cnr.it/>).

The web site is organized in sections, including:

- **Reports**, that publishes regular reports on the risk posed to the Italian population by landslides and floods, which we update every six months.
- **Events**, that describes some of events most important and damaging landslide and flood disasters in Italy since 1962.
- **Focus**, to discuss in some depth issues related to geo-hydrological hazards and risk.
- **Are you prepared?** (Sei preparato?), that provides tips on what to do (and not do) before, during and after an event. Simple rules of conduct that may save your life.

In the section **Accadde oggi** (it happened today), every day of the year, we publish a brief description of the human of landslides or flood events that have happened in the past in the same day.

Results

For more than a year we have studied the access statistics to our POLARIS web site. The number of accesses increases when (i) geo-hydrological events (landslides, floods) of national resonance occur in Italy, with peaks coinciding with the most disastrous events, and (ii) following the publication of new content on the web site. In the later case, relevant is the contribution of social media, Twitter and Facebook, where we post regular updates. The highest numbers of accesses were recorded on 5, 6 and 7 December 2014, when the meteorologist Paolo Sottocorona advertised the POLARIS web site in his programme “il Meteo di La7”.

To know more

[Link to geomorphology website »](#)

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