

## From Knowledge to Action - A Defining Quarter for IRDR



As we move further into the implementation of the [IRDR Action Plan, 2025-2027](#), the Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR) community continues to demonstrate that science, when mobilised collaboratively and inclusively, can meet the moment. This quarter’s activities underscored a central truth: reducing disaster risk is not merely a technical challenge, it is a societal, governance, and generational choice.

### A Foundational Quarter for Phase II

The period from January to March 2026 marked significant operational strides. Our

first online meeting with the International Centres of Excellence (ICoEs) in February was more than a routine update—it was a strategic alignment. With 17 ICoEs now actively linking their work to IRDR’s three research priorities and five dynamic work streams, we are building a truly global, regionalised research architecture.

And we are pleased to have formalised a new five-year strategic alliance with the Global Alliance of Disaster Research Institutes (GADRI), deepening scientific cooperation on disaster risk reduction (DRR).

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### From Pilot Studies to Indigenous Wisdom

Our 2025 call for pilot study proposals yielded three outstanding projects, each bridging ICoE expertise with citizen science and risk-informed development, exemplifying IRDR’s commitment to actionable, place-based research.

Equally inspiring was the 4<sup>th</sup> IRDR Young Scientists Lumos, themed “*Indigenous Knowledge for DRR – Bridging Wisdom and Innovation*”. Hearing young scholars from New Zealand, Peru, and Nepal demonstrate how Māori, Aymara, and traditional riverbank practices can interface with modern seismic engineering and nature-based solutions reaffirms that resilience is multi-generational and deeply cultural.

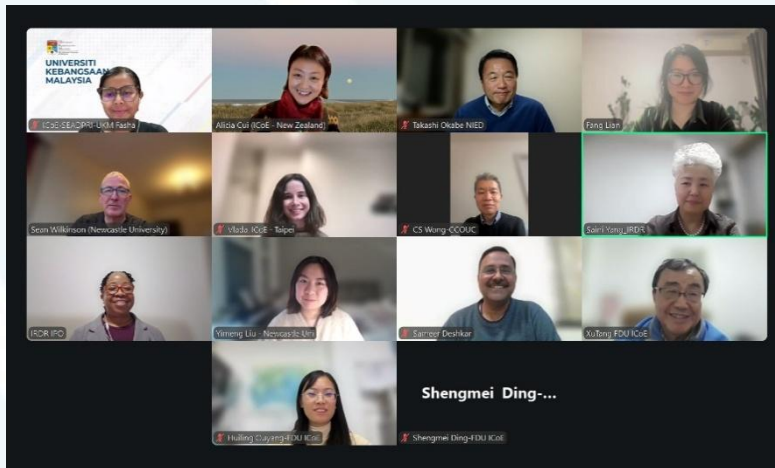
### Looking Ahead

The message from this issue is clear: science mobilised across generations, disciplines, and knowledge systems is our most powerful tool against all forms of disaster risk.

— The IRDR Editorial Team

## Enabling the Full Operation of IRDR Phase II

### IRDR ICoEs Hold Inaugural Meeting, 2026



Representatives of IRDR’s ICoEs joined online for its first meeting for 2026.

On 4 February 2026, IRDR convened its first online meeting of the year with representatives from its International Centres of Excellence (ICoEs). The session brought together the current cohort to share updates—including the [outcomes of the successful 2025 call for new ICoEs](#)—and to discuss how best to connect each Centre’s work with IRDR’s three research priorities and five dynamic work streams.

The meeting marked a pivotal step as IRDR prepares to actively engage in the post-2030 agenda-setting process, with all ICoEs committing to actively support [IRDR’s Action Plan, 2025-2027](#) of mobilising science to reduce all forms of disaster risk.

For more information: <https://irdrinternational.org/news/869>.

#### What are IRDR ICoEs?



IRDR ICoEs serve as hubs for transdisciplinary research, capacity building, and policy support in advancing IRDR’s mission of mobilising science for

DRR, resilience building, and sustainable development. IRDR ICoEs will, *inter alia*, enable regional scientific activities through geographically focused contributions based on more localised inputs and by being visible centres of research and actions within the wider IRDR community.

The full list of the current 17 IRDR ICoEs can be viewed here: [https://irdrinternational.org/irdr\\_community/icoe/](https://irdrinternational.org/irdr_community/icoe/).

### IRDR ICoE-RE&SRT Promotes Risk-Informed Economic Analysis



Hosted by the Department of Economics at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece, [IRDR ICoE-RE&SRT](#) promotes risk-informed economic analysis and resilient strategies that connects scientific research with policy and practice.

IRDR ICoE-RE&SRT contributes to IRDR’s mission by advancing inclusive, risk-informed, and economically robust approaches to climate resilience in the Mediterranean.

Public engagement is at the heart of the Centre’s work. As Dr. Stella Tsani, Scientific Lead of the ICoE, said during a January 2026 event in Athens:

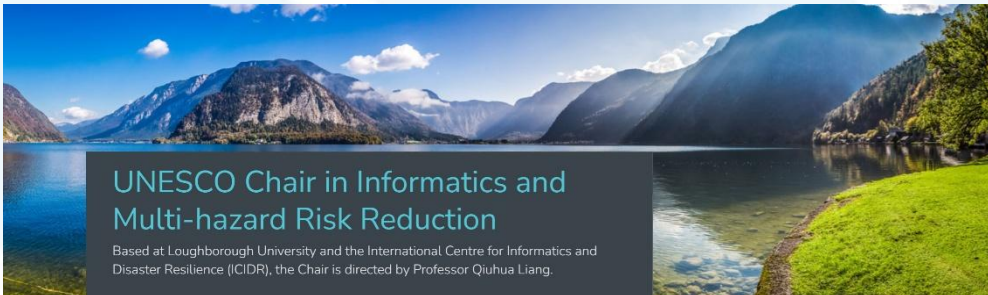
*“Climate resilience must be built locally, through informed communities, participatory governance, and long-term, place-based strategies.”*

This philosophy underscores the Centre’s belief that resilience is not only a technical task but a societal and governance choice, shaped by institutions, incentives, and inclusive decision-making.

This approach is exemplified by its new [REACT](#) (Resilience, Education and Action for Climate Transformation) project, which focuses on three pillars: strategic risk communication, emergency preparedness education, and active youth engagement.

## Enabling the Full Operation of IRDR Phase II (cont'd)

### IRDR ICoE-IDR Hosts UNESCO-IMRR & SIMR Distinguished Webinar Series



Source: [IRDR ICoE-IDR](#)

The IRDR ICoE on Informatics and Disaster Resilience (IRDR ICoE-IDR), hosted by the School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering at Loughborough University, United Kingdom, in collaboration with the Global Partnership for Smart Informatics and Multi-hazard Reduction (SIMR), delivered

three webinars from January to March 2026 as part of the [UNESCO-IMRR and SIMR Distinguished Webinar Series](#).

The UNESCO-IMRR & SIMR Distinguished Webinar Series features experts from partner organisations and global research centres, focusing on bridging cutting-edge research with practical technology transfer. The three sessions held during this period were:

- [14 January 2026: “River Danube, Niger and Mekong – comparing the sediment status of large rivers”](#) (Prof. Helmut Habersack, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna, Austria);
- [4 February 2026 – “Experiences and Observations from the Flood Disaster 2021 in Germany”](#) (Prof. Holger Schüttrumpf, RWTH Aachen University, Germany); and
- [11 March 2026 – “A Fast Flood Inundation Model with Groundwater Interactions and Hydraulic Structures”](#) (Prof. Brett Sanders, University of California, Irvine, USA).

Each webinar attracted over 200 participants, demonstrating strong international engagement and impact.

#### About IRDR ICoE-IDR

IRDR-ICoE-IDR (IRDR ICoE on Informatics and Disaster Resilience) is one of the [three newly established IRDR ICoEs](#). It serves as a world-leading hub for advancing transdisciplinary DRR science, accelerating the translation of digital and informatics innovations into practice, and fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange in support of the UN sustainable development agenda and global resilience-building efforts.

The Centre integrates the multidisciplinary expertise of six world-leading institutions to pioneer high-performance computing and smart informatics for DRR. This consortium includes:

- Loughborough University, UK;
- Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China;
- School of Water Conservancy and Transportation, Zhengzhou University, China;
- Disaster Prevention Research Institute, Kyoto University, Japan;
- Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences, Delft University of Technology, Netherlands; and
- Institute of Hydraulic Engineering and Water Resources Management, RWTH Aachen University, Germany.

## Enabling the Full Operation of IRDR Phase II (cont'd)



### IRDR and GADRI Forge Strategic Alliance to Advance DRR Education

IRDR and the [Global Alliance of Disaster Research Institutes \(GADRI\)](#) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a collaborative partnership aimed at deepening scientific cooperation on DRR.

#### Key Areas of Collaboration

The five-year agreement outlines several core areas of cooperation, with a particular focus on DRR education. These include:

- Joint academic projects.
- Jointly facilitated development of materials and technical trainings to enhance institutional capacity building.
- Facilitation of exchange and networking (of students and researchers); and cooperation between the universities and institutions.
- Promotion of best research studies and practices.
- Advocacy for DRR.

Additionally, both parties will hold observer status at each other's Scientific Committee or Board of Directors meetings.

The MoU was signed by Prof. Saini Yang, Executive Director of IRDR, and Prof. Hirokazu Tatano, Secretary-General of GADRI.

#### About GADRI

Hosted by Kyoto University in Kyoto, Japan, GADRI is an international alliance of disaster research institutes. It serves as a forum for sharing knowledge and promoting collaboration on DRR and disaster resilience.

## Honours and Awards

IRDR congratulates Prof. Alik Ismail-Zadeh (IRDR SC Chair and Research Professor at the Institute of Applied Geosciences, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Karlsruhe, Germany), and Prof. Qihua Liang (Director, IRDR ICoE on Informatics and Disaster Resilience, and Professor of Water Engineering at the School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering, Loughborough University) on their recent awards and recognition!



Prof. Ismail-Zadeh has been named a 2026 Fellow of the [CORE Academy](#) for “*outstanding contributions to geohazard and disaster-risk science, leadership in international scientific cooperation, and commitment to advancing knowledge for the*

*benefit of humanity*”.



Prof. Liang has been awarded the [Theodore von Kármán Fellowship](#) at RWTH Aachen University. This fellowship will support his visit to the RWTH Aachen to undertake short-term international research in fluid dynamics and disaster resilience.



Send your news and announcements for the next issue of the IRDR Newsletter to [connect@irdrinternational.org](mailto:connect@irdrinternational.org)



## Coordinating and Facilitating International Research Cooperation



Source: [StockSnap](#) from [Pixabay](#)

### IRDR Pilot Studies: Results of the 2025 Call for Proposals

In February 2026, IRDR published the results of its [2025 call for pilot study proposals](#). Following a thorough evaluation process, three research proposals were selected, having been found to be well-defined and aligned with IRDR’s research objectives.

#### What are IRDR Pilot Studies

In line with [IRDR’s Action Plan, 2025-2027](#), pilot studies bridge the scientific activities of IRDR ICoEs with the programme’s five work streams:



By doing so, they enhance the influence of IRDR ICoEs in addressing practical DRR challenges across communities, countries, and regions, while generating cutting-edge research outputs that help fulfil IRDR’s mission of mobilising science for the reduction of all types of disaster risk.

The three successful research proposals are:

<b>IRDR Pilot Study Title</b>	<i>“The MyBahaya System: Integrating Community-Based Observations with Scientific Validation for Early Warning in Klang Valley, Malaysia”</i>	<i>“Seroepidemiological Patterns and Community Preparedness for Climate Change Driven Mosquito Borne diseases in Flood Prone Areas of Western Kenya”</i>	<i>“From Awareness to Action: A Citizen Science Social Media Campaign for Disaster Preparedness in Wellington”</i>
<b>IRDR ICoE Affiliation</b>	<a href="#">IRDR ICoE for Disaster Risk and Climate Extremes (SEADPRI-UKM)</a> ( <a href="#">IRDR ICoE-SEADPRI-UKM</a> )	<a href="#">IRDR ICoE for Risk Education and Learning (IRDR ICoE-REaL)</a>	<a href="#">IRDR ICoE in Community Resilience (IRDR ICoE-CR)</a>
<b>IRDR Work Streams</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>risk-informed development</li> <li>citizen science research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>climate change and public health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>citizen science research</li> </ul>

We congratulate the three IRDR ICoEs and look forward to the innovative outcomes of these pilot studies!

## Knowledge Production and Outreach



Attendees at ICoE-Taipei's first Advanced Institute for 2026 (Source: IRDR ICoE-Taipei)

### Building Resilience in Southeast Asia: IRDR ICoE-Taipei's 2026 Advanced Institute Tackles Land and Water Challenges (Van Don, Vietnam – 23–27 March 2026)

In response to escalating hydro-geological hazards across northern Vietnam, the IRDR ICoE-Taipei held its first 2026 Advanced Institute on Land and Water Resources Management and Disaster Risk in Southeast Asia.

The five-day programme brought together leading scientists and emerging professionals from across the region for a five-day intensive programme to share knowledge, develop practical solutions, and build lasting collaborative networks.

#### A Region Under Pressure

Northern Vietnam is increasingly vulnerable to landslides, erosion, and water-related disasters driven by active tectonics, mountainous terrain, and increasingly extreme weather. In 2024, Super Typhoon Yagi triggered the catastrophic Lang Nu landslide, which claimed an estimated 95 lives. Meanwhile, the Red River—a critical water source for over 30 million people—is threatened by upstream water use, sedimentation, pollution, and climate change. Bank erosion along the river now reaches several tens of metres per year, with significant social and economic consequences for local communities along its course.

#### Programme Highlights

The five-day programme blended lectures, group discussions, a Seed Grant idea session, and a full-day field trip. Each day focused on a distinct theme, including land-use change and water resources in the context of rapid urbanisation and industrial development in Vietnam; water supply and pollution - monitoring and mitigation; sustainable sand harvesting, sediment dynamics, and delta stability; and river sediment monitoring.

#### Distinguished Faculty

Eight experts from institutions across Taiwan, Vietnam, China, and Singapore shared cutting-edge insights, covering landslide hazard assessment, TDR monitoring technology, InSAR applications, water treatment, groundwater modelling, GIS-based disaster information systems, and compound geological hazards.



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## Knowledge Production and Outreach (cont'd)

### Participants - A Diverse Cohort

Approximately 20 early- to mid-career professionals from across South and Southeast Asia—including Vietnam, Thailand, Nepal, Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and India—participated.

Representing geotechnical engineering, hydrology, remote sensing, environmental science, and DRR, attendees formed working groups and presented original research proposals at the closing session, fostering lasting cross-border collaboration.



### Organising Partners

The 2026 Advanced Institute was organised by the IRDR ICoE–Taipei and Academia Sinica, in partnership with:

- local host, the Geoinformatics Research Center of the Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry, Vietnam;
- International Science Council; and
- academic partners National Central University, Taiwan; National Institute of Natural Hazards, China; Hanoi University of Natural Resources and Environment, Vietnam; Earth Observatory of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.

### Upcoming IRDR ICoE-Taipei's Advanced Institutes

- 📅 Health Investigation and Air Sensing for Air Pollution (20-24 July 2026, Bali, Indonesia)
- 📅 Transboundary Transport of Cloud Systems and Acid Deposition (7-11 September 2026, New Delhi, India)

## Publications from Members of the IRDR Community

From the Director of the IRDR ICoE-IDR, Prof. Qihua Liang:

- Hill, B., Liang, Q., Chen, H., & Boshier, L. (2026). *From reach to catchment-scale impacts: High-resolution hydrodynamic modelling of Nature-based solutions in the Cocker Catchment, UK*. *Journal of Hydrology: Regional Studies*, 64, 103178.
- Li, Z., Feng, H., Sun, B., Gualtieri, C., Liang, Q., Zhang, W., & Wang, F. (2026). *Influence of shape on the incipient motion of exposed microplastics*. *Journal of Hydrology*, 135254.
- Tong, X., Liang, Q., & Wang, G. (2026). *High-performance modelling of urban non-point-source pollutant dynamics: A full-process approach*. *Advances in Water Resources*, 105241.

From former SC member, Dr. Bapon S.H.M Fakhruddin:

- *Why Disaster Risk Financing Must Evolve to Meet the Climate Crisis* (source: UNDRR's Preventionweb's Blog)
- *Bridging the Glacier Finance Gap in the Decade of Cryospheric Sciences* (source: CODATA)
- *Water Security Demands a Systems Change and Programmatic Approach* (source: The Water Diplomat Newsletter)

## Empowering Young DRR Professionals



### 4<sup>th</sup> IRDR Young Scientists Lumos Showcase Youth-Led Innovations Integrating Indigenous Knowledge for DRR

The 4<sup>th</sup> IRDR Young Scientists Lumos took place online on 4 March 2026. Themed “*Indigenous Knowledge for DRR - Bridging Wisdom and Innovation*”, this 90-minute online workshop highlighted how indigenous knowledge systems offered deeply rooted, context-specific insights into environmental stewardship, community resilience, and disaster risk reduction.

The webinar created a platform for indigenous scholars and young professionals to share their research, showcase indigenous perspectives, and explore how traditional knowledge can be integrated with contemporary science and technology.

#### Webinar Highlights



Following a keynote speech by [Professor Christine Kenney](#) on the challenges and opportunities at the interface of indigenous knowledges and DRR, young researchers shared compelling case studies from New Zealand, Peru, and Nepal. Presenters explored topics including Southern Māori approaches to climate resilience, integrating indigenous knowledge into seismic engineering for traditional meeting houses, revisiting Aymara structures of solidarity, and engineering nature-based Bio-Dykes from traditional riverbank practices.

Through engaging discussions, the workshop ensured that the innovation cases and localised solutions from young

DRR professionals were visualised and acknowledged by the global DRR community.

For more information: <https://irdrinternational.org/66618143/14.html>.

### IRDR, UNESCO, the Horizon Initiative, *et al*, Publish Report on Youth Innovations on Climate Actions and DRR



The “*Youth Innovations on Climate Actions and Disaster Risk Reduction*” report was jointly launched by IRDR, UNESCO, the Horizon Initiative and other institutions, and is based on three hackathons held between 2023 and 2025. With the theme of “*Empowering Youth for a Healthy Planet*”, these hackathons mobilised over 200,000 young people and gathered more than 100 high-quality projects, some of which were showcased internationally.

For more information: [https://irdrinternational.org/knowledge\\_pool/publications/139](https://irdrinternational.org/knowledge_pool/publications/139).

## Empowering Young DRR Professionals (cont'd)

### IRDR Young Scientists Recognised with Prestigious Fellowship Membership and International Research Awards

IRDR congratulates the following Young Scientists for their exceptional achievements as they continue to advance in their careers as integrated disaster risk scientists!



[Dr. Abayineh Amare](#), a [3<sup>rd</sup> batch IRDR Young Scientist](#) and assistant professor in the College of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine at Jimma University, Ethiopia, was recently selected as a Fellow of the [Ethiopian Young Academy of Sciences \(EtYAS\)](#), a national platform established in 2015 that brings together Ethiopia's most promising early-career researchers.



[Dr. Gouvidé Jean Gbaguidi](#), a [5<sup>th</sup> batch IRDR Young Scientist](#) and Research Fellow at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, received the [Malaria Best Researcher Award](#) by the [International Research Awards on Infectious Diseases](#). The award recognises his pioneering research that utilises mathematical and statistical modeling to forecast malaria transmission under various climate change scenarios in West Africa.



[Dr. Rayees Ahmed](#), a [6<sup>th</sup> batch IRDR Young Scientist](#) and Project Scientist at the Indian Institute of Science, received the Jean Tricart Scholar Award at the [11<sup>th</sup> IAG International Conference on Geomorphology](#) in Christchurch, New Zealand. The award recognises his significant research on Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) and related hazard and risk assessments.

### About the IRDR Young Scientists Programme

The [IRDR Young Scientists Programme \(IRDR YSP\)](#) is a global initiative that aims to build a pipeline of future leaders in DRR by empowering early-career researchers. Launched in late 2016, the IRDR YSP has grown into a dynamic, interdisciplinary network of over 200 young researchers from more than 50 countries.



### Call for Applications – 7<sup>th</sup> Batch IRDR YSP

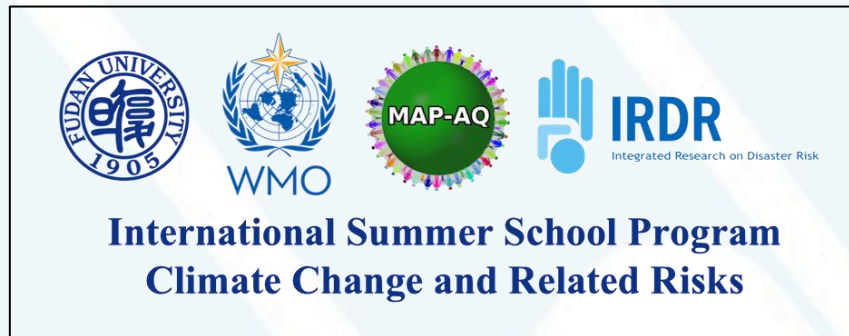
Applications are now open for the [7<sup>th</sup> batch of the IRDR YSP](#). Passionate and forward-looking early-career researchers who are committed to advancing DRR through research that is integrated, innovative, and responsive to real-world needs are invited to apply. The deadline for application is 30 April 2026.

For more information:

<https://www.irdrinternational.org/news/872>.

## Call for Applications

### 2026 International Summer School on Climate Change and Related Risks



**Theme: "Climate Change, Cities and Anthropogenic Impacts"**

**Date: 6-24 July 2026; Shanghai, China**

**Application Deadline: 31 May 2026**

The IRDR International Centre of Excellence on Risk Interconnectivity and Governance on Weather/Climate Extremes Impact and Public Health (IRDR ICoE-RIG-WECEIPHE) invites applications for its [2026 International Summer School on Climate Change and Related Risks](#). The programme will be hosted at Fudan University, Shanghai, China, from 6 to 24 July 2026.

#### *About*

The primary objective of the Summer School programme is to cultivate the next generation of scientists and leaders in climate governance by immersing early-career researchers in state-of-the-art climate change research and fostering inclusive collaboration and holistic, integrative problem-solving approaches.

This annual summer school represents a key capacity-building initiative under the auspices of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Monitoring, Analysis, and Prediction of Air Quality International Research Program (MAP-AQ), and the IRDR programme.

#### *Applicant Requirements*

The summer school welcomes applications from students, postdoctoral researchers, and young scholars who have received their Ph.D. degree within the past five years in atmospheric sciences, environmental sciences, climate governance, or relevant fields. Applicants from all countries are encouraged to apply. Proficiency in English is a prerequisite for participation.

**The teaching language will be English.**

#### *Tuition & Fees*

The **summer school is tuition-free**, but participants are responsible for their own transportation, health insurance, accommodation, and living expenses.

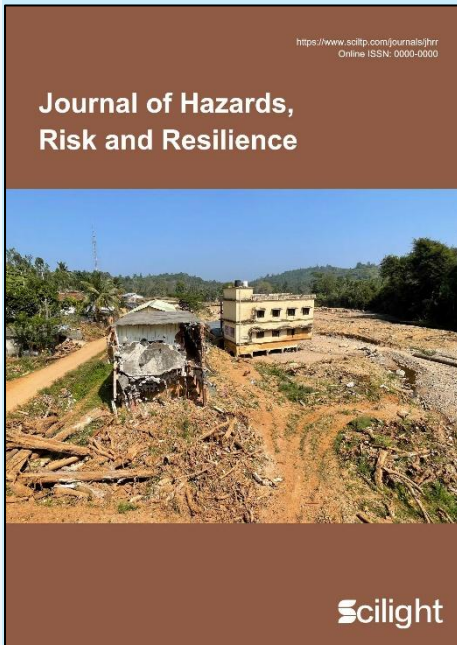
Limited scholarships are available to support local expenses.

- **For more details and to apply:** <https://iss-climatechange.fudan.edu.cn/>
- **Application deadlines:** 31 May 2026 (8 May 2026 for scholarship consideration).

For inquiries contact: Dr. Huiling Ouyang (Programme Officer) at [ouyanghuiling@fudan.edu.cn](mailto:ouyanghuiling@fudan.edu.cn).

## Call for Submissions

### Upcoming IRDR Special Issue in the Journal of Hazards, Risk and Resilience



IRDR is pleased to announce an upcoming special issue in the Journal of Hazards, Risk and Resilience (JHRR). This special issue will focus on advancing community-based disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, with a particular focus on innovative research led by young scientists.

Contributions are welcome from young researchers affiliated with IRDR, through our International Centres of Excellence (ICoEs), National Committees (NCs), the Young Scientists Programme (YSP), and our various partners, to submit their latest research on the following integrated thematic areas:

- Climate change impacts, local vulnerability, and community coping strategies.
- Risk perception, anticipatory actions, participatory and inclusive approaches for resilience.
- Risk-informed planning and investment.
- DRR financing and innovative financial mechanisms.
- Integrated risk governance.
- Humanitarian efforts and post-disaster recovery.
- DRR education, citizen science, knowledge co-production.

**Submission deadline: Thursday, 30 April 2026.**

For detailed submission guidelines:  
<https://www.sciltp.com/journals/jhrr/call-for-papers/2010627919886172162>.

**CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS**

The IRDR programme invites submissions to the Journal of Hazards, Risk and Resilience (JHRR). We welcome original research articles, review papers, and applied case studies that address one or more of the following integrated thematic areas:

**SCOPE & THEMES**

- Climate change impacts, local vulnerability, and community coping strategies
- Risk perception, anticipatory actions, participatory and inclusive approaches for resilience
- Risk-informed planning and investment
- DRR financing and innovative financial mechanisms
- Integrated risk governance
- Humanitarian efforts and post-disaster recovery
- DRR education, citizen science, knowledge co-production

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

- 30 April 2026

**CONTACT US**

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