

DOMODIS – Documentation of **M**ountain **D**isasters

State of Discussion in the European Mountain Areas

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Sponsored by:

IAG International Association of Geomorphologists, UBC, Vancouver (Canada)
ICSU-CDR International Council for Science, Committee on Disaster Reduction, Paris (France)
INTERPRAEVENT International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT, Klagenfurt (Austria)

Layout

Felix Frank, Berne (Switzerland)

Print

Jost Druck AG, Hünibach (Switzerland)

Quote

Hübl, J., Kienholz, H., Loipersberger, A. (Eds.):
DOMODIS – Documentation of Mountain Disasters
State of Discussion in the European Mountain Areas

To be ordered at:

International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT
Box 117
A-9021 Klagenfurt (Austria)
ISBN 3-901164-06-5

Also available in the internet:

<http://www.boku.ac.at/anfi/bibliothek/publikationen>
<http://wasser.ktn.gv.at/interpraevent>

DOMODIS

Documentation of Mountain Disasters

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Narenbach (Diemtigal, Switzerland)

Kienholz, 1977

DOMODIS stands for **D**ocumentation of **M**ountain **D**isasters. It is a joint ICSU-CDR¹/IAG² project on mountain disasters with support by INTERPRAEVENT³.

The project, initiated by Hans Kienholz, University of Berne (Switzerland) responds to the perceived needs for standardized documentation by local experts and geoscientists as well as a responsive organizational structure.

DOMODIS has been discussed in four international workshops:

- March 1998 in Bern, Switzerland;
- November 1998 in Barcelona, Spain;
- October 1999 in Bukarest, Romania;
- September 2000 in Goldrain, Autonomous Province of Bozen (South Tyrol), Italy.

The participants coming from different mountainous regions, but mainly from the Alpine countries in Europe tried to find a kind of **state of discussion** regarding this topic. In this paper we collected the basic contributions and ideas in order to deliver a survey regarding approaches in the European alpine countries about DOMODIS at the moment. We are quite aware of the fact, that this paper is only a starting platform for further discussion and experience exchange in future. In this sense we are looking forward to

comments and contributions from other groups dealing with this subject. Nevertheless we will use the term „hand-book“ for this paper as an abbreviation. You will find the results of our discussions in five chapters:

- **Part 1** describes the general aims and objectives of DOMODIS and the framework for implementation.
- **Part 2** gives more information in detail aimed at the people responsible for implementation.
- **Part 3** is directed to the practitioners, in charge of the documentation work on site.
- In **part 4** you will find the references for part 1–3.
- The appendix in **part 5** is a collection of suggestions and examples for practical work (e.g. proposal for a map legend, form-sheets, examples, fingerprints etc.).

We thank all the colleagues contributing to this paper and of course all the participants in the workshops supporting the progress of this work in the discussions. In case of any questions, remarks or contributions please contact (german or english):

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We thank the organizations, who supported our work and the production of this paper:

- International Council for Science, Committee on Disaster Reduction, Paris (France);
- International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT, Klagenfurt (Austria);
- International Association of Geomorphologists, Vancouver (Canada).

¹ International Council for Science, Committee on Disaster Reduction (former ICSU-SC IDNDR), Paris (France)

² International Association of Geomorphologists, Vancouver (Canada)

³ International Research Society INTERPRAEVENT, Klagenfurt (Austria)

1.1 Introduction

The management of mountain hazards and risks (due to snow avalanches, mountain torrents, debris flows, rockfalls, landslides, etc.) requires careful hazard and risk analysis and assessment. One of the fundamental approaches is to analyse former events, e.g. based on documents about such events. In order to do this and to enable or to improve such analysis in future it is absolutely necessary to provide such documents on occasion of actual events wherever these occur.

Because a lot of the information is not stored in an organized way we are presently facing the problem, that in many cases this documentation is stored only in the minds of local experts, inhabitants or archives. Needless to say as people retire these documents may become inaccessible or lost. Furthermore there is no consequent assessment of former events on a long term or regional level. So there is a strong need to implement a well organized structure for documentation and archiving of hazards.

This handbook deals with the **D**ocumentation of **M**ountain **D**isasters (DOMODIS). It provides information about the scientific and technical background, about the necessary organizational and technical framework. Thus it shows how DOMODIS may be carried out and how DOMODIS may be organized by a state or provincial government.

This handbook is about real-time/just-post-eventum **documentation** with form sheets, cartography and images. In the first hand it has nothing to do with hazard analysis and/or risk analysis, assessment or management in an actual situation; this system will only provide data in a synoptic form for further use. In this sense the collected information is a valuable source for further information. Because the natural conditions and the political and ad-

ministrative frameworks may vary very much all over the world, general proposals only and some illustrative examples are given. Based on the general ideas, in every single case the implementation must be adapted to the specific conditions.

1.2 Mountain Hazards and Risk Management

Mountain hazards are defined as the occurrence of potentially damaging processes resulting from movement of water, snow, ice, debris and rocks on the surface of the earth, which includes snow avalanches, floods, debris flows and landslides. These hazards are inherent in the nature of mountainous regions and may occur with a specific magnitude and frequency in a given region (UNDRO 1991).

1.3 Risk Prevention and Disaster Mitigation

Many mountain disaster losses – rather than stemming from unexpected events – are the predictable result of interactions between the physical environment, which includes hazardous events and the human system.

Therefore a modern strategy in dealing with mountain hazards is heading towards a comprehensive risk management. This strategy requires systemic approaches in planning and realizing concepts and measures. It is generally understood that risk management includes two main categories: **prevention strategies**, and **event and post-event management**.

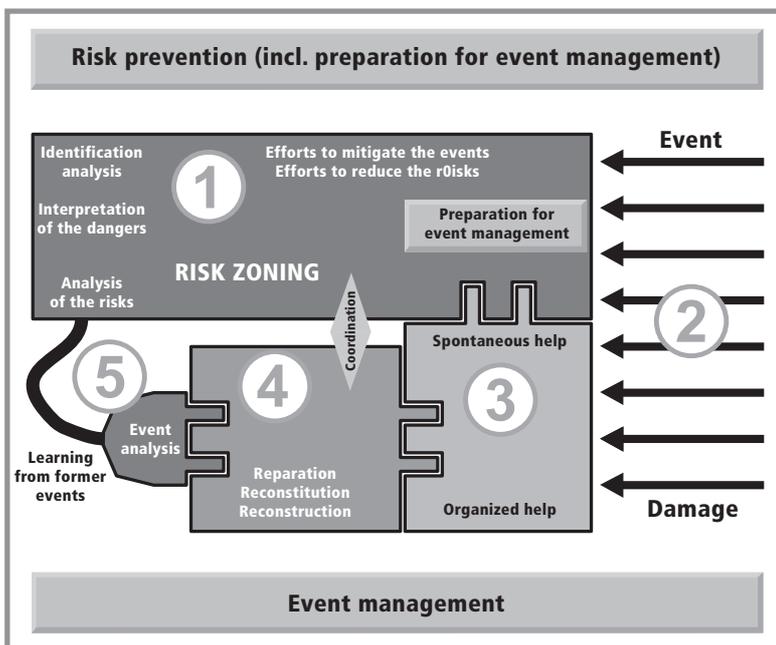
In fact the **preparation** for event management must be part of the prevention strategies.

As it is the case for any kind of risks, mountain risk management includes prevention and preparation for event management. This is illustrated in **fig. 1**. In step 1 the risk systems (terrain, geology, geomorphology, climate, hydrology, man's activities and behaviour, land use, etc.), thus all important components and processes and their dependencies and interrelations must be analysed. Risk analysis is a continuous and iterative procedure in order to keep track on the changes and developments within the considered system.

Wherever risk is considered unacceptable, adequate measures must be taken. These consist of well known „active measures“, that is, techniques which prevent the release of dangerous processes (e.g. avalanche defence structures, reforestation, etc.), to slow down the process (e.g. check dams in a river system), to divert the dangerous process (dams, walls, etc.).

Comprehensive risk zoning is aiming to prevent settlements, life lines, etc. to be installed in threatened areas, and it also may show where additional measures may be necessary. Despite the best and most comprehensive risk analysis and consequent measures there always remain residual risks. In order to deal with these residual risks efforts and measures (step 1 in fig. 1) also includes the preparation (organization, equipment, training) for interventions during and after events (steps 3 and 4).

Fig. 1 The risk management circle (Kienholz 2001).



Wherever there is no experience from former events the involved experts for hazard and risk analysis and assessment within step 1 fully depend on their knowledge and general experience about nature (physics, geology, etc.) and man (land use, action and reaction patterns, etc.) as well as from the adequate application of suited models: They depend on „forward directed indication“ only (fig. 2).

However, if there are former events at the considered place, that are reported and **well documented**, the hazard and risk analysis and assessment gets strongly supported by this local experience. Thus, it is only step 5 in fig. 1 that completes the risk management circle. This important step, its preparation, organization, and its execution are the issues of the presented handbook here.

1.4 Importance of Documented and Considered Experience

Accurate and comprehensive hazard assessment as one part of integral risk management demands application of a full set of methods (fig. 2). Such sets include:

- predicting future events (i.e. forward directed indication like detailed evaluation of the situations in the terrain as well as application of models describing the processes), and
- evaluating former events (for ex. „silent witnesses“ which are documents about former events in the terrain as well as the evaluation of written documents).

The predictive methods also depend on the experience gained through evaluating former events. It is impossible to work out good models without observations, monitoring and experience from real life situations. **Thus knowledge about former events is indispensable.**

Many hazardous events are „short-lived“ (lasting minutes to a few hours only), while there may be a very long time-span (years, decades or even centuries) between two reoccurring events (see example in fig. 3). Hazard assessment usually has to take place during the calm phases between the spectacular and decisive catastrophic events. Thus, the expert has to be able to form very good pictures and models of the possible events. And he or she has to be capable of predicting realistic scenarios which could happen during these intense shortlived events; needless to say this has to be backed-up by hard data and facts gathered from former events.

This demands for good monitoring of the events themselves. However, in reality it is quite seldom that experts are present, where and when such events occur. Therefore it would be desirable that those people, who are close to the event would monitor the processes and collect data, and that experts become alerted immediately to collect data during the event or, at least immediately after the event. Immediate measures like removal of debris from roads usually are taken **within a few hours**. Therefore important silent witnesses are removed in the runout and sedimentation zones of the disastrous processes.

The desire mentioned above however is not realistic: Inhabitants of the disaster area are fully engaged in rescuing and protecting life and goods. Also the experts and officers of the local governmental authorities are involved with rescue operations and immediate measures. People that incidentally try to document some aspects of the event (like local eye-witnesses, tourists or journalists) usually focus on the damage but not on the geomorphic process itself.

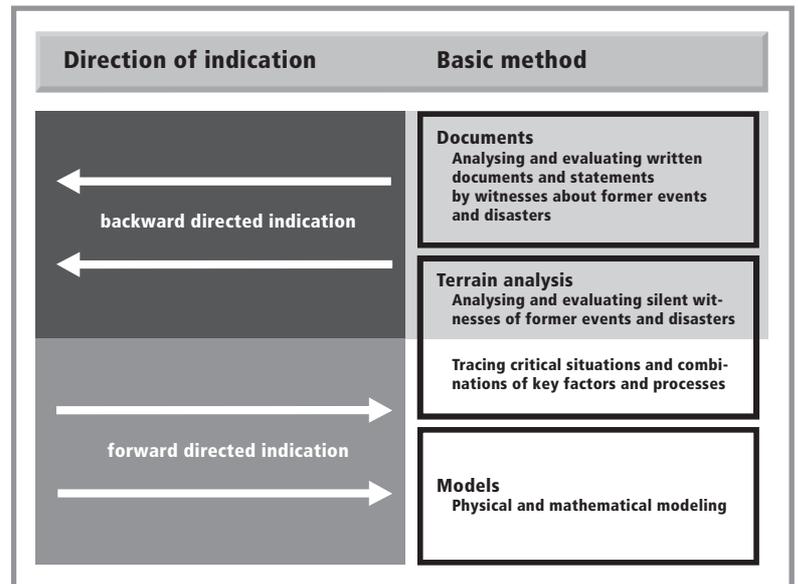
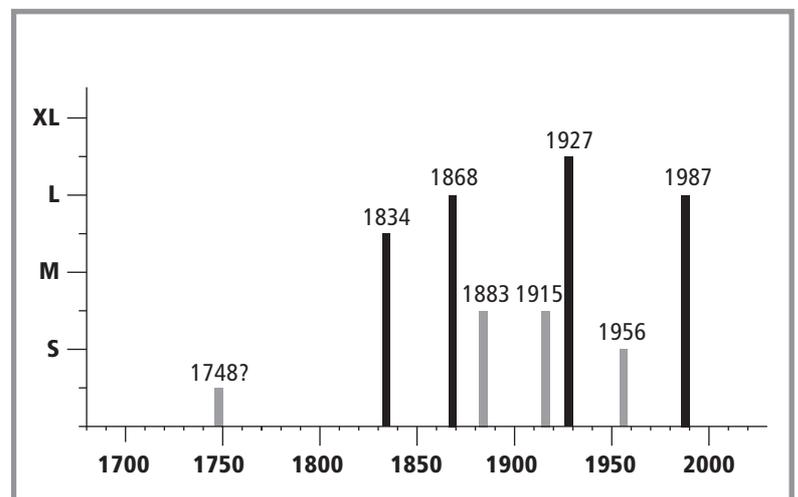


Fig. 2 Basic methods of hazard assessment (according to Kienholz in Heinimann et al. 1998: p. 55).

Fig. 3 Catastrophic torrential activity and debris flows affecting the debris fan of the Zavrugia river in the Grisons/Switzerland (according to Kienholz in Heinimann et al. 1998: p. 52). Magnitude of event (transported bedload): **S**mall, **M**edium, **L**arge, **eX**tra Large. Events larger than medium (M) size are indicated as dark bars, smaller ones as light bars.



1.5 What Kind of Events are DOMODIS Events?

Geomorphic processes occur anywhere at anytime: Water is flowing and weathering, erosion at small scales, transportation, and deposition of soil materials, etc. continues. However one issue of DOMODIS are those events that are of an important magnitude, that may cause either:

- damage to man and/or valuable goods;
- damage to vegetation and ecology;
- changes of landscape and ecosystems;
- reduction of performance of technical construction works.

Most of such events last only a short time (minutes, hours, few days); some other processes characterized by large masses, but slow velocities (e.g. deep seated landslides or rock creeping) may be continuous, periodical or episodic (years, decennials, centennials). However the documentation of the latter is less critical; thus DOMODIS mainly has to concentrate on the short lived events.

Besides the processes mentioned above DOMODIS also includes all different event types, even small in extent, not damaging events, that are able to provide information about processes, and about how well protective measures (e.g. defence structures) worked. Those events, that affect man, his goods and infrastructure require optimized event management.

Within a sustainable event management it is essential to include all available information of past events with or without respective damages as well as of current processes. How this documentation of the event can be integrated into the event management is outlined in the following.

In this context also the evaluation of historical data in archives of communities, authorities, monasteries etc. might be a helpful tool for a better assessment of hazards in a given situation. But this is not part of this paper.

1.6 Different Contributors; Various Interests

There are different contributors and customers, who are interested in various data about triggers and conditions of hazardous events and the relevant processes. Those people involved in the event management need actual data and first survey information.

On the other hand specialized scientists would like to gather very specific data about those aspects of processes they are especially interested in. And in between are the hazard experts and practitioners (e.g. civil engineers, forest engineers, etc.), from governmental agencies or private companies who are involved in any kind of mountain risk prevention.

The profound and specific data required by specialized scientists must be gathered by themselves, even if this is only possible some time after the event. For them it is essential, that they are informed as soon as possible about the event and that they will have access to the data already gathered by the other contributors.

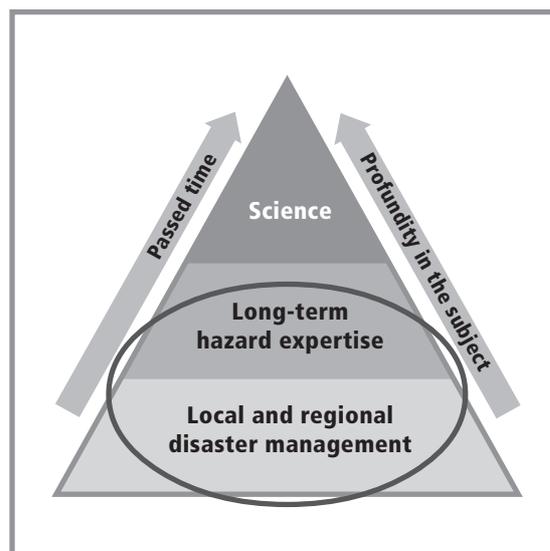


Fig. 4 Actuality and profundity of event documentation: interests of different contributors (Kienholz, 2001).



For the contributors, who are involved in event management the time factor is crucial. Thus they need quick and accurate information but they do not need all the information about details concerning the processes. Here the information is to be gathered by those people who are on the site.

DOMODIS is mainly focussing on the lower and partly on the medium category of contributors who require quite sound data that should be gathered during or very soon after the event. This involves data that are profound enough and reliable for hazard zoning and for the conception and design of future preventive measures and also for preparation for possible future events.

1.7 Organization and Training at a National, State or Provincial Level

In order to implement DOMODIS it is necessary to install a comprehensive administrative (even legal) framework at a national, state or provincial level.

The organization of DOMODIS in each country and province depends on various conditions, such as divisions and duties of the various governmental agencies, availability of (own) experts in case of event, availability of private experts, practicable financing procedures, financial restrictions, etc.

Event management on national, provincial or municipal levels includes many different activities that should be based on well prepared organizational structures. Many of the considered events, depending on the type (table 1) require the triggering of very well prepared as well as of ad-hoc activities. Such activities are for example:

- communication between all involved contributors;
- rescue of human lives;
- reconnaissance trips (flights);
- removal of debris;
- regulation of life lines (roads, railways, energy supply);
- warning systems.

Additionally to all these and many other tasks the event documentation must start as soon as possible after occurrence.

The monitoring and documentation of the event must be carried out by experts who are not involved themselves and who are not in charge of rescue measures.

To facilitate such documentation two major demands must be covered:

- Experts that can be called in case of events, must be instructed in a way to be able to provide such documentation in a standardized way and with the necessary grasp of the subject. This instruction is a part of the preparation of event management.
- An organizational structure must be provided,
 - that allows to call such experts and to co-ordinate their actions;
 - that supports the documentation by other appropriate means as to guarantee free access to the sites (e.g. by an official permit), to offer transportation, to arrange to take air photographs;
 - that guarantees the compilation, archiving of, and the free access to the collected data; and
 - that guarantees the basic funding of these actions.

It's an essential part of the implementation of DOMODIS to keep in mind the necessary training of the people in charge of the documentation work. It's also indispensable to provide proper tools for the documentation work in order to facilitate the work on site and also to ensure an equal level of quality of collected data.

1.8 Consequences for Decision Makers

The remarks mentioned above should emphasize the intention of DOMODIS and it's importance. All the experts participating in the four workshops and in the elaboration of this paper completely agree, that DOMODIS is an indispensable part of risk management in mountain areas. Some of the countries involved in the discussions have already started first steps for the implementation of DOMODIS. In this sense we consider this paper as a summary of the state of discussion in the European alpine countries. It might be valuable information for all other organizations dealing with this problem.

The implementation of DOMODIS requires some fundamental decisions:

- acceptance of the importance of DOMODIS;
- provision of necessary organizational and legal structure;
- guarantee of basic funding.

Under these conditions DOMODIS can be a powerful instrument in the framework of risk management in a preventive sense and also an important base for further development of our knowledge about complex natural processes.



Moschergaben (Austria)

Hübl, 1997

Öztaler Ache (Austria)

WLV Osttirol, 1987



2.1 General Remarks

Each country or province must organize its own documentation structure depending on the administrative background involving experienced experts with different professional background and sound experience in terrain-work. The development of an appropriate structure involves:

- to define the goals and limitations of DOMODIS implementation within the considered territory;
- to define the organization of data gathering;
- to define what categories of persons should be on duty with DOMODIS: Members of the central administration? Road inspectors? Foresters? Experts from private companies? Others?
- to (re-)arrange the necessary tools for the individual territorial situation, such as illustrated examples, form sheets, map legends;
- to describe the documentation work;
- to organize links with "external data" (meteorology, historical archives, witnesses, photo and media material, high-urgency-actions and costs, control measures and costs, damages, etc.);
- to build-up data-base and GIS (Geographical Information System);
- to organize a service-/information center to collect,

archive and disseminate information about events, dangers, risks, control measures, prevention modelling, etc.;

- to arrange input and verification of the data, output organization etc.

2.2 Insertion of DOMODIS into Risk Prevention and its Affiliation with Event Management

As illustrated in fig. 1, the documentation of hazardous events must be an integral part of risk prevention and closely related to event management. That's why it is necessary to pay some attention to this aspect in all planning and preparation of event management. This means:

- to integrate the responsibility for documentation in all organization schemes for crisis staff and other relevant organizations for example;
- to put the category "documentation" into all relevant check-lists and procedure forms of crisis staffs and civil rescue teams, etc.;
- to prepare permits for free access to the persons on duty with documentation and to support them (e.g. with transportation) with adequate priority.
- Event documentation must be perceived by all persons involved as a very important task in close relation with event management.

Table 1 Proposed classification of events: what are DOMODIS events? (Kienholz, 2001).

| | DOMODIS event: documentation in any case | | Conditional DOMODIS event: documentation also depending on the other criteria | | Chronicle event: registration of major parameters only (date, time, etc.) may meet the requirements | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Affected area | A3 region | | A2 community, town | | A1 single place | |
| Event frequency at the considered location/reach | F6 first time observed | F5 rare (recurrence interval >100y) | F4 medium (recurrence interval 30–100y) | F3 frequent (recurrence interval 5–30y) | F2 very frequent (recurrence interval 1–5y) | F1 several times per year |
| Magnitude of event | M3 damaging event | | M2 nearly damaging event | | M1 important none damaging event | |

Example A1 – F3 – M3:

single place event – frequent – damaging

As a general rule of thumb the field-work of phase 1 per event will require:

- **single place events:** 1 person-day (e.g. 1 day work for one person)
- **community, town events:** 5–15 person-days (e.g. 1 week work for 2–3 persons)
- **region events:** >20 person-days (e.g. >1 week work for >4 persons)

It may depend on the category of event what expenditure of time and costs really is necessary and possible. It is up to the responsible governmental administrations to decide this. However it is to be considered that very often the costs for good documentation are even less than one percent of the costs for rescue, clearance, restoration, and the eventual mitigation measures. Very often the expenditures for mitigation measures are better staked if the events are carefully analyzed.

2.3 Definition of Goals and Limitations of DOMODIS Implementation within the Considered Territory

Depending on the situation in the considered country or province it has to be defined which types of events are to be documented. This includes the following questions:

- What process types are occurring?
- What magnitude of events have been observed?
- Which locations were affected: Just major settlement areas? Life lines? All traffic routes? The whole territory?
- What else has to be considered?
- What type of work and in which extensiveness is required under which circumstances?

2.4 Classification of Events and Documentation Phases

There are different kinds of events. With respect to priority and recommended procedures for documentation there are – besides of the type of process – mainly three parameters to be considered: **magnitude of event**, **event frequency** and **affected area** (damage).

Depending on the general situation in a country or province, on the organization and on the availability of personal resources the responsible authority for DOMODIS may decide to modify the proposed criteria in table 1.

Depending on the dimension of the event and the requirements of different end-users (fig. 4) there may be 1 or 2 (or even 3) documentation phases:

- **Phase 1:** Just collect the minimum data (What? Where? When? How much?).
- **Phase 2:** Detailed study of the whole process area (e.g. catchment of a mountain torrent) will be necessary (experts).
- **Phase 3:** Very detailed and in-depth study about special aspects of the event. Such studies usually have to be done by the scientists and engineers themselves, but in close connection with the responsible authorities.

2.5 Organization of Data Collection During/After the Event

The purpose of first time documentation is to provide data for the event managers (e.g. for better safety for rescue teams, etc.). However, its primarily purpose is to collect all the important data for the lower and partly the medium category in fig. 4 (long-term hazard expertise), that is for the engineers and other professionals who are in charge of reducing future risks.

Therefore this kind of documentation must be carried out by people of the same profession and with the same education, thus by engineers, geologists, geomorphologists, etc. However this also must – in the beginning – include local (e.g. non academic) professional people (such as foresters, road foremen, linesmen, etc.), who are well instructed and trained in this work, and who may provide much better and reliable local experience. However, for the

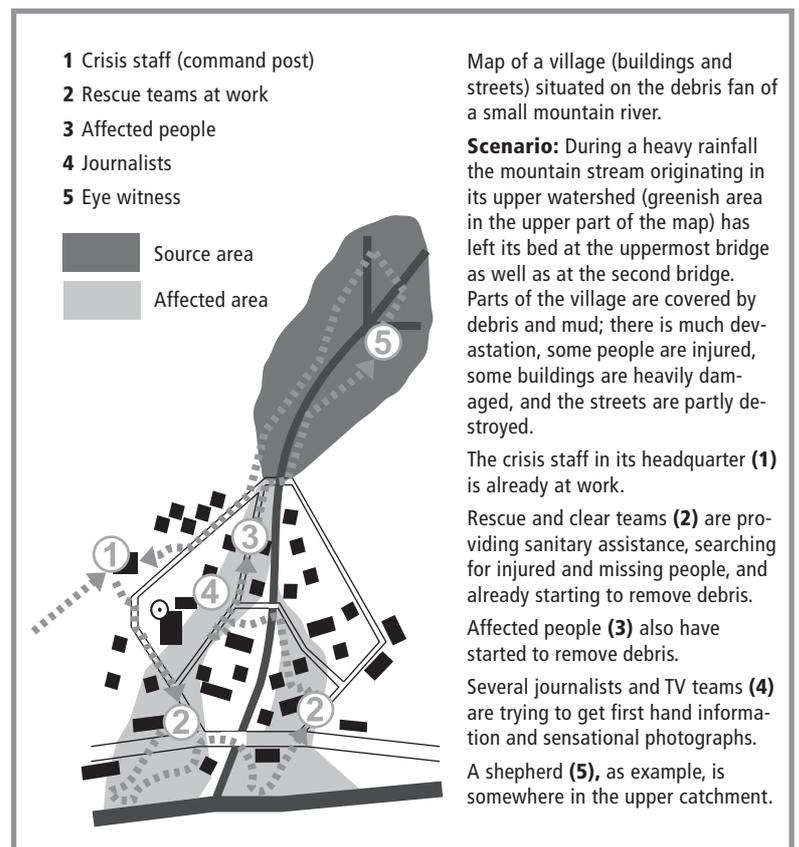
needs of the medium category in fig. 4 it is usually necessary to involve engineers, geologists, geomorphologists, etc. to refine and to supplement the observations and first interpretations. There are mainly the following issues to be considered:

- Who, in case of event, usually is alerted first? Is it any competent authority or office (e.g. police) where such information arrives in any case?
- After being alerted, who will be first on duty?
- Who is responsible for documentation (e.g. governmental officers, or experts from private companies)? Who decides about the further steps?
- How can this be integrated into the organization schemes of immediate risk prevention and event management?

Thus documentation must be provided by people, who know the needs of these engineers and other professionals; who understand the processes as well as the miti-

Fig. 5 DOMODIS as an independent part of event management (see also fig. 1). Arrows show an **example of "ideal path"**, the sequence of activities and the contacts of the DOMODIS expert in the disaster environment that consists of:

- the disaster itself (natural environment after the disaster, destroyed objects, etc.), and
- the various contributors (crisis staff as focal point of all rescue activities and major partner of the DOMODIS expert).



gation concepts and techniques, and who “speak the same language”. Therefore as one part of preparation for DOMODIS (preferably as part of the preparation for event management) a regional (provincial) list of experts for documentation is indispensable. This list must be actualized periodically.

The checklist and organization chart prepared for event management should include the item “to call in specialist(s) for documentation”.

The specialists for documentation must dispose of the knowledge, experience, and the necessary basic documents (forms, mapping legend) to do their job. They must be able to work more or less independently from the other activities of event management, but they must be in close contact with the event management staff.

The **principle of procedure** is indicated in fig. 5. The DOMODIS expert should be called by the crisis staff **(1)** or by local or higher level authorities. In any case, the DOMODIS expert contacts the crisis staff first **(1)**. With a mandate or at least with the approval of the crisis staff and eventually also with some specific instructions the expert is responsible for the documentation with first priority at those places (usually impact zone) where remedial works have already started; e.g. removal of debris **(2)**. The expert may also inspect other parts of the process area; e.g. parts of the relevant torrential catchment; making interviews with eye-witnesses **(5)**. This is for example to better understand the causes and the course of the event but also in order to assist the crisis staff **(1)** in making decisions about necessary safety measures to protect the rescue and clearing teams **(2)**. Having done this the expert reports to the crisis staff **(1)** exclusively.

The expert is not supposed to give any interviews to TV, radio and newspaper reporters **(4)**. Interviews with journalists/press/media is the duty of the **crisis staff**, and not of the documenting person. Of course, the crisis staff may ask the DOMODIS expert to assist them in the media information issue.

Depending on the situation the expert may do further documentation work, still as part of phase 1 (table 1).

2.6 Data Management – Storage, Maintenance and Dissemination

Data collected by documenting and mapping damaging events have to be stored appropriately in order to provide them quickly for future planning and work. Therefore it is very important to decide how the data are to be stored, who is maintaining the data base and how the data access can be organized. First of all, unaffected by the applied technical means an able data-base structure must be selected or created. It is to be considered, that the data will be used for decades. Their life span corresponds to several generations of hard and software. That’s why the emphasis must given on the organization of the data.

At state level it is to determine certain minimum requirements and to provide the basic structure of the data-bank.

This structure should allow adaptations and completions at regional or municipal levels. The structure and organization of such data-bank should enable:

- to document confirmed hazardous processes and events;
- to keep – with first priority – full registration of events threatening important areas (e.g. settlements, major roads etc.);
- to keep the recording at a long term with a reasonable expenditure of time and costs;
- to gather the data, either non-central by instructed local experts, or – depending on the situation – also by external experts (from private companies, universities, etc.), or by close collaboration of both;
- to provide reliable data for hazard and risk analysis and assessment;
- to analyse event data at regional and supra-regional (e.g. national) levels.

The goal of the data-base is to provide information on historical, mostly damaging events. Emphasis must be given on the type and conditions of triggering processes, the controlling factors of the occurring process (vegetation, geology, meteorology, terrain conditions such as slope angle, aspect, etc.) and on the process itself including all specific characteristics (e.g. velocity of movement, volume, frequency, etc.), the effect (inclusive affected area) as well as possible damage. Based on that data-base the following minimum request can be obtained:

- correct distinction of the various process types;
- frequency of the considered process at the affected locations;
- effects of the process in the affected area(s);
- origin(s) and track(s) of the process;
- damage (to persons, mobile and immobile goods, infrastructure, nature, etc.).

Data about hazardous events typically refer to defined places or areas. Therefore the data-base has to include some geographical information. This may be done – also in future – by well established mapping methods (e.g. hand-written numbers in a paper-map). It also may be done by applying any Geographical Information Systems (GIS). If GIS techniques are used, each data information has to be geo-referenced, The main advantage of such techniques are the analytical capabilities of this system. Independent on type of storage, it should fit with the philosophy and the customary infrastructure of the responsible governmental organization. The most important criterion to be considered is to provide an open system, that can be adapted to future needs and possibilities.

It’s also very important to define the format of the storage at the very beginning (e.g. tables in ACCESS or GIS-data).

After data collection and storage in a data-base, the information must be legally and technically accessible. Therefore the rules about disposal and use of the data must be defined.

2.7 Tools for Recording

For accurate and concentrate recording in a disaster area, in a stress situation under circumstances that require swift procedures, etc. it is helpful or even necessary to rely on accurate tools. Thus in a long-term preparatory stage it is necessary to provide such tools, to test already existing tools and adopt them to local/regional circumstances, to instruct the relevant persons etc.

It may depend on the organizational situation what tools are necessary and helpful for event documentation. In the field these may include:

- checklists;
- form-sheets for basic information¹;
- map legend¹;
- illustrated examples¹.

In the field sometimes it is more practical just to use simple checklists rather than to apply sophisticated forms. The goal – first of all – must be to gather all uppermost relevant information. The forms in this case are to be filled as the second step.

2.8 Instruction, Training of the Responsible Staff on Site

All persons that will be on duty with data gathering – e.g. road inspectors, foresters, experts from private companies, etc., (chapter 2.5) – must carefully be instructed. Besides the technical issue these instructions also have to deal with security! The experts doing documentation must maintain all adequate safety measures: They should not endanger rescue people (e.g. by triggering rockfall while crossing an unstable slope) nor themselves (e.g. sinking into the mud of a debris flow deposition or secondary follow up slides) in any immediate hazard. This includes informing the responsible rescue people about the planned paths and routes in order to fulfil the documentation purpose, etc. (e.g. **(2)** as shown in fig. 5).

The aims of technical and specialist DOMODIS instructions are:

- to make the recording experts aware of the importance of their documentation work;
- to enable the recording experts to document mountain disasters in a way that all relevant data are collected;
- to ensure that recording is done in a standardized way;
- to ensure that data fulfill the requirements of the end-user.

To achieve these goals it is essential to evaluate carefully the educational background of the recording experts. These experts may be road masters, foresters, technicians, engineers, etc.

The first course (for example 1–3 days) includes **theoretical and practical parts**. On occasion of periodical (e.g. biennial) workshops with practical exercises the DOMODIS experts can exchange experience, and also mutual calibration of analyses, methods, criteria, procedures, etc. is possible.

The number of participants in the practical part should not exceed 5–6 participants per instructor. The instruction in the field should be well prepared in advance. By checking the quality of records of the events the success of the training can be evaluated periodically by the responsible officers within the administration.

Theoretical Course. The success of the theoretical courses highly depend on comprehensible illustrations such as video sequences of processes, photos of characteristics, etc. The form-sheets must be explained in detail: The meaning and the filling-in-rules for each field must be instructed carefully (are these nominal data? ordinal data? or metric data?; etc.). The theoretical course includes:

- instruction about the goals and importance of event documentation;
- relevant hazardous processes (common terminology) and their characteristics;
- relevant events for documentation (chapter 2.5, 2.6);
- elements of the work done by the staff involved and hints for appropriate equipment;
- safety aspects of field-work;
- explanation of the tools (chapter 3.1);
- organization of data collection, data handling and data transfer.

Practical Course. The practical course includes:

- priorities in field documentation;
- recognition of the characteristic phenomena of the processes in the field;
- mapping exercises;
- exercises in finding the relevant sites for measurements;
- measuring exercises (indicators about intensity of the process, e.g. cross-sections of a debris flow channel, thickness of sediment deposits, height of dents in trees produced by rockfall impact, etc.; and
- how to take photos (e.g. scale; documentation of the photo: position of photographer, direction of view, etc.).

Control and Sustainability of Training. The quality level of the courses has to be ensured continuously. This can be done in different ways:

- check of completeness of collected data;
- check of plausibility;
- repetition of training courses;
- consideration and discussion of experiences of the staff working in the field.

¹ Examples see appendix

3.1 Tools for Documentation

It is wise to prepare a "tool-box" for the documentation work on site for several reasons:

- in the hectic of a hazardous event important items might be simply forgotten;
- for comparison and assessment of events on a regional level it has to be ensured, that collected data have the same structure and quality level;
- people on site should have a clear guideline of what they have to do.

3.2 Checklists

For the people in charge of documentation it will be helpful to have a checklist of what they have to do. In this checklist following aspects may be organized:

- What is to be done and in which order?
- Which experts (names, phone numbers) are to be informed?
- What tools are available? Where to find them?

When preparing these checklists one has to keep in mind, that the people experienced in documentation work may not be available, ill or on holidays. Even in this case data collection must be ensured, perhaps on a reduced level.

3.3 Formsheets

The purpose of form-sheets is to organize documentation of natural events in a way, that the recorded data are comparable with data of other events. They should be the base of a characterization of catchments and/or regions and an assistance to enlarge the knowledge of processes in these regions.

The aim is to get as much information as possible about an event without endangering the documentation experts. The primary work is therefore restricted to the affected depositional area or to non-dangerous parts of the area in order to obtain "vanishing informations" (limited to the essentials).

When designing form-sheets priority must always be given to the "just in time-post eventum" data which might be lost within the first few hours or days. Moreover do not ask for data, which can be collected later in a better quality or hardly be answered by the person on site. Examples for formsheets:

- **Amount of damage in housing areas.** How should people on site answer this question during or immediately after the event? This may be part of a second step documentation.
- **Intensity and duration of precipitation.** In some countries there is a fairly dense system of gauging stations for precipitation. So it's no problem to get these data afterwards may be even in a higher accuracy when a combination with weather radar is possible. Another question is the type of precipitation – rain, snow or hail. This has to

be documented on site. If available also data from private stations are of interest.

So form-sheets should be restricted to the essential informations, which are lost within a short time like:

- What has happened, type of event?
- When, date and time?
- How much in volume of discharge, debris flow, wood debris?
- Deposition zones, flooded areas?
- Significant influences like clogging of bridges, failure of construction works, if possible in the right order (what happened first, second etc.).

In the discussions within the DOMODIS-group it turned out, that the Swiss approach might be an effective concept for the design of form-sheets. In the **appendix** you will find a description in detail.

COMCAT (1996): Katastrophenschutz. Übersichtsblatt der Zentralstelle für Gesamtverteidigung, Swiss Federal Administration, Berne

Crozier, M. J. (1998): Landslides. The Encyclopedia of Environmental Science

Cruden, D.M., Varnes, D.J. (1996): Landslide Types and Processes. In: A.K. Turner and R.L. Schuster (Editors), Landslides: Investigation and Mitigation. National Academy Press, Washington, D.C., 36-75

Dikau, R., Brunsden, D., Ibsen, M., Schrott, L. (Editors), Landslide Recognition. John Wiley&Sons, Chichester, 1-12

Egli, T., Bart, R., Gaechter, M. (1997): Anleitung zur Spurensicherung. Kantonaler Ereigniskataster Naturgefahren, Naturgefahrenkommission des Kantons St. Gallen

Hegg, C., Bründl, M., 2002 (in prep.): Die Bedeutung von Ereignisanalysen, aus: Risiko+Dialog Naturgefahren, Tagungsband Forum für Wissen 2001, WSL, Birmensdorf

Kantonsforstamt Glarus (1998): Anleitung zur Spurensicherung. Kantonaler Ereigniskataster, Glarus

Mani, P., Zimmermann, M. (1992): Dokumentation nach Unwetterereignissen: Vorschlag für eine Anleitung. Interpraevent 1992, Tagungspubl., Bd.3: 121-130. Forschungsgesellschaft für vorbeugende Hochwasserbekämpfung, Klagenfurt

Melching, C. S. (1999): Economic Aspects of Vulnerability. Comprehensive Risk Assessment for Natural Hazards. World Meteorological Organization, Geneva, WMO/TD 955: 66-76

Munter, W. (1991): Neue Lawinenkunde. SAC, Bern

UNDRO (1991): Mitigation Natural Disasters. Phenomena, Effects and Options, United Nations Disaster Relief, New York

In the appendix you will find a collection of suggestions and examples for practical work as we found it in the discussions in the workshops.

5.1 Proposal for a Map Legend

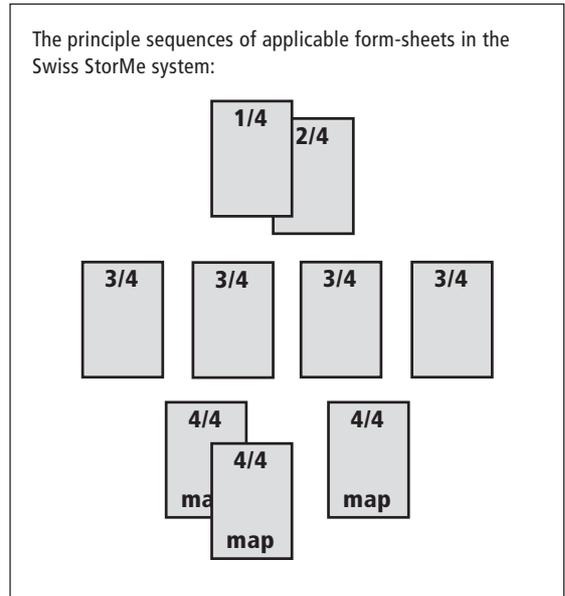
A generalized map legend is an important base to ensure a comparable data collection. However, this documentation work is more related to phase 2 of documentation, nevertheless it's an important tool to bring information on a comparable scale. The attached proposal for a map legend – originally proposed by Geo7, Berne (Switzerland) – refers to a scale of 1:25 000:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--|---|
| Torrent | red | | Erosion |
| | red/black | | Erosion on outcropping bedrock |
| | green | | Erosion and sedimentation (rearrangement) |
| | green | | Sedimentation |
| | green | | Sedimentation on alluvial fan/debris cone |
| | red | | Lateral erosion |
| | green | | Coarse boulders in the channel |
| | green | | Organic sediments (drifted timber) in the channel |
| | red | | Flooded forest |
| Debris Flow/ Mudflow | purple | | Erosion |
| | purple/black | | Erosion on outcropping bedrock |
| | purple | | Erosion and sedimentation (rearrangement) |
| | purple | | Head of debris flow |
| | green | | Debris cone (by debris flows) |
| Flood | blue | | Flooded area |
| Landslide | brown | | Scarp of landslide |
| | brown | | Foot of slipped mass |
| | brown | | Small landslip |
| Debris slide | | | Scarp of debris slide |
| | purple | | Erosion by debris slide |
| | | | Area of sedimentation |
| Rock fall | black | | Head, scarp, source area |
| | black | | Area of sedimentation |
| Supplementary signatures | black | | Interpretation uncertain (e.g. differentiation between former and recent traces)? |
| | black | | Area affected by several processes (not all phenomena can be mapped) |

5.2 Form-Sheets

(Example: StorMe, Switzerland)

StorMe, coordinated by the **Swiss Forest Agency**¹ (Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape, Berne), is primarily a data bank system that provides a unified structure of documentation and storage of the information about natural hazards. The system also includes a set of form sheets in order to make fieldwork for documentation easier, and to systematize it:



This system includes several levels of documentation:

- a master record: form-sheets 1/4 and 2/4; general information about what, when, where, general problems for any event;
- Form-sheets 3/4 and 4/4 give detailed information about the main processes snow avalanches; rock fall; water, debris flow, landslide.

All important statements on the form-sheets must be qualified by the **MAXO-code**. The principle of this code is the idea, that any information is valuable, even a questionable guess is better than no information at all. So indicate the reliability of data in this MAXO-code which means:

- M = measured data;
- A = estimation of data;
- X = not clear, to investigate;
- O = not known, investigation impossible.

¹ <http://www.buwal.ch/forst/e>

| Natural Hazards: Event Documentation | | Basic Data | | Sheet 1/4 | |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boxes (MAXO-Code): M = Measured value; Observation A = Assumption X = unclear; still to ascertain O = not ascertainable | | | | | |
| Kind of process <input type="checkbox"/> snow avalanche <input type="checkbox"/> rockfall <input type="checkbox"/> landslide <input type="checkbox"/> water/debris flow | | | | | |
| Basic information | | | other municipalities concerned? | | |
| | name | number/code | name | number/code | |
| municipality | | <input type="text"/> | | <input type="text"/> | |
| waters | | <input type="text"/> | | <input type="text"/> | |
| forest district | | <input type="text"/> | | <input type="text"/> | |
| region | | <input type="text"/> | | <input type="text"/> | |
| specific place: | | | | | |
| single event date <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> time <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> duration <input type="text"/> d <input type="text"/> h <input type="text"/> min | | | | | |
| repeated event <input type="checkbox"/> daily | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> weekly from date <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> to date <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> monthly | | | | | |
| uppermost (highest) point of the release area: X / Y = <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> Z = <input type="text"/> [m a.s.l.] | | | | | |
| coordinates of the front of runout zone: X / Y = <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> Z = <input type="text"/> [m a.s.l.] | | | | | |
| X / Y = <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/> | | | | | |
| date of survey: <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | | | | | |
| survey by (name, adress, phone): | | | | | |
| Damage | | | | | |
| | | # persons dead | # persons injured | # persons evacuated | |
| man/animals | persons | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | animals | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | | # destroyed | # damaged | financial loss [.....] | |
| real values | dwelling houses | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | industry, business, hotel buildings | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | farm buildings | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | public and infrastructure buildings | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | protection structures | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | other (to describe in Memo) | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | | burying [m] | cutting off [h] | financial loss [.....] | |
| communication/infrastructure | national highways | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | main road | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | other road | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | railway | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | cableway, conveyor, pylons | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | cable | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | other (to describe in Memo) | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | | affected area [a] | damaged timber [m³] | financial loss [.....] | |
| forest/agriculture | forest | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | space usable for agriculture | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |
| | other (to describe in Memo) | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> <input type="text"/> | |

| Natural Hazards: Event Documentation | Basic Data | Sheet 2/4 | | | |
|--|---|--|---|---|--|
| Damage (continued) | | | | | |
| Memo (description of damage considering the following catchwords): clearing (work, costs); removed material [m ³] financial loss (public/private) diversion of traffic other published early warnings immediate measures etc. | | | | | |
| Regional planning conflicts with present legally valid planning and hazard zones? <input type="checkbox"/> affected zones (zones for building, camping, exploitation, hazard zones, etc.): | | | | | |
| Protection structures present in release area? <input type="checkbox"/> no. in register of protection structures present in transition zone? <input type="checkbox"/> no. in register of protection structures present in runout zone? <input type="checkbox"/> no. in register of protection structures | | | | | |
| Memo (description of suitability of protective measures): kind and type of protective structures state of the structures; assessment of suitability remaining/new dangers costs for repairing; for supplementary structures other(s) | | | | | |
| Documentation <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> note, study, expert's report, calculations <input type="checkbox"/> newspapers, literature, historical sources <input type="checkbox"/> photo documentation <input type="checkbox"/> orthophotos, air photographs <input type="checkbox"/> video, movie <input type="checkbox"/> data about meteorology </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> name/address of documentation office; title, code of report, illustrations, etc. </td> </tr> </table> | | | <input type="checkbox"/> note, study, expert's report, calculations <input type="checkbox"/> newspapers, literature, historical sources <input type="checkbox"/> photo documentation <input type="checkbox"/> orthophotos, air photographs <input type="checkbox"/> video, movie <input type="checkbox"/> data about meteorology | name/address of documentation office; title, code of report, illustrations, etc. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> note, study, expert's report, calculations <input type="checkbox"/> newspapers, literature, historical sources <input type="checkbox"/> photo documentation <input type="checkbox"/> orthophotos, air photographs <input type="checkbox"/> video, movie <input type="checkbox"/> data about meteorology | name/address of documentation office; title, code of report, illustrations, etc. | | | | |
| Mapping the process area, is it mapped? <input type="checkbox"/> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> methodology <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> release area <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> runout zone/deposition area <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively </td> </tr> </table> | | | methodology <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively | release area <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively | runout zone/deposition area <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively |
| methodology <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively | release area <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively | runout zone/deposition area <input type="checkbox"/> in place <input type="checkbox"/> by air photographs, photographs <input type="checkbox"/> remote mapping (from the opposite slope) <input type="checkbox"/> other, retrospective mapping respectively | | | |

| Natural Hazards: Event Documentation | Snow Avalanche | Sheet 3/4 | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boxes (MAXO-Code): M = Measured value; Observation A = Assumption X = unclear; still to ascertain O = not ascertainable | | | | | |
| Kind of process <input type="checkbox"/> flowing avalanche <input type="checkbox"/> powder avalanche <input type="checkbox"/> mixed avalanche <small>(in Switzerland: additional questionnaire D of Avalanche Research Institute filled in?)</small> | | | | | |
| Causes (meteorology) <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> thunderstorm <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] </td> <td style="width: 33%; vertical-align: top;"> long-duration rain <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] </td> <td style="width: 34%; vertical-align: top;"> <input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable </td> </tr> </table> | | | thunderstorm <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] | long-duration rain <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] | <input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable |
| thunderstorm <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] | long-duration rain <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] | <input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable | | | |
| Trigger qualification of statement about trigger <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> spontaneous <input type="checkbox"/> blasting <input type="checkbox"/> ski/snowboard <input type="checkbox"/> other (to describe in Memo) | | | | | |
| Release area release area in forest <input type="checkbox"/> exposition <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> thickness of (slab) crown <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] width of (slab) crown <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] sliding surface: <input type="checkbox"/> within the snow cover <input type="checkbox"/> on soil surface | | | | | |
| Runout zone runout zone in forest <input type="checkbox"/> volume of deposition <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m ³] quality of snow: <input type="checkbox"/> dry <input type="checkbox"/> wet maximum depth of deposition <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] maximum width of deposition <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] | | | | | |
| Memo (description of event considering the following catchwords): release area state of the forest damage to nature in the transition zone information about peak-height of bouncing (dents in trees by impacts) prehistory, supplementary information about meteorology (0°C-line, precipitation, snow melt) comparison with former events; estimation of damage etc. | | | | | |

| Natural Hazards: Event Documentation | Rock Fall | Sheet 3/4 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boxes (MAXO-Code): M =Measured value; Observation A =Assumption X =unclear; still to ascertain O =not ascertainable | | |
| Kind of process <input type="checkbox"/> rock fall single stones < 0,5m <input type="checkbox"/> rock fall single blocks 0,5m–2m <input type="checkbox"/> rock fall blocks, rock mass > 2m <input type="checkbox"/> rock fall large rock mass ("Bergsturz") <input type="checkbox"/> ice-fall | | |
| Causes (meteorology) thunderstorm long-duration rain <input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> duration [h] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> precipitation [mm] | | |
| Trigger qualification of statement about trigger <input type="checkbox"/> naturally by: <input type="checkbox"/> general <input type="checkbox"/> man-induced (to describe in Memo) <input type="checkbox"/> landslide / erosion <input type="checkbox"/> other (to describe in Memo) <input type="checkbox"/> earthquake | | |
| Release area break out from <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> rock cliff number of blocks <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> released volume <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m³] <input type="checkbox"/> talus slope <input type="checkbox"/> glacier | | |
| Transition zone soil: talus slope forest pasture, meadow length of sector: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m] | | |
| Deposition area total volume <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m³] # stones, blocks, large blocks <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2–10 <input type="checkbox"/> 11–50 <input type="checkbox"/> >50 volume of the largest block <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="text"/> [m³] | | |
| Memo (description of event considering the following catchwords): release area state of the forest damage to nature in the transition zone information about peak-height of bouncing (dents in trees by impacts) prehistory; supplementary information about meteorology (0°C-line, precipitation, snow melt) comparison with former events; estimation of damage; etc. | | |

| Natural Hazards: Event Documentation | Water/Debris Flow | Sheet 3/4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boxes (MAXO-Code): M = Measured value; Observation A = Assumption X = unclear; still to ascertain O = not ascertainable | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Kind of process <input type="checkbox"/> flood / inundation <input type="checkbox"/> debris flow (in channel) (data passed on the appropriate hydrological survey office?) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other processes involved (minor importance): <input type="checkbox"/> flood <input type="checkbox"/> debris flow (in channel) <input type="checkbox"/> bank erosion <input type="checkbox"/> fluvial sedimentation <input type="checkbox"/> landslide <input type="checkbox"/> rock fall <input type="checkbox"/> other (to describe in Memo) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Causes (meteorology) <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">thunderstorm</td> <td style="width: 33%;">long-duration rain</td> <td style="width: 34%;"><input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> duration [h]</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> duration [h]</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> precipitation [mm]</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> precipitation [mm]</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | | | thunderstorm | long-duration rain | <input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable | <input type="checkbox"/> duration [h] | <input type="checkbox"/> duration [h] | | <input type="checkbox"/> precipitation [mm] | <input type="checkbox"/> precipitation [mm] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| thunderstorm | long-duration rain | <input type="checkbox"/> snow melt <input type="checkbox"/> not ascertainable | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> duration [h] | <input type="checkbox"/> duration [h] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> precipitation [mm] | <input type="checkbox"/> precipitation [mm] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Trigger qualification of statement about trigger <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> clogging by wood debris <input type="checkbox"/> overflow because of too small cross-section <input type="checkbox"/> clogging by bedload <input type="checkbox"/> dike failure/levee failure <input type="checkbox"/> clogging at bridge/culvert <input type="checkbox"/> overloading of sewerage system <input type="checkbox"/> other bottleneck <input type="checkbox"/> other | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Assessment of processes in the channel <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">major</td> <td style="text-align: center;">medium</td> <td style="text-align: center;">minor</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">major</td> <td style="text-align: center;">medium</td> <td style="text-align: center;">minor</td> </tr> <tr> <td>lateral erosion (bank, embankment)</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>debris flow deposit in the channel</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>vertical erosion</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>deposit of wood debris in channel</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td>bed aggradation</td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | | | | major | medium | minor | | major | medium | minor | lateral erosion (bank, embankment) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | debris flow deposit in the channel | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | vertical erosion | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | deposit of wood debris in channel | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | bed aggradation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | |
| | major | medium | minor | | major | medium | minor | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| lateral erosion (bank, embankment) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | debris flow deposit in the channel | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| vertical erosion | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | deposit of wood debris in channel | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| bed aggradation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Flood / deposition area <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td>volume of deposited solids</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m³]</td> <td>medium thickness of deposits</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>volume of debris flow deposit</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m³]</td> <td>medium flood depth</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>volume of deposited wood debris</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m³]</td> <td>max. depth of debris flow deposit (head)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>maximum discharge</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> [m³/s]</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p style="font-size: small;">(please map the hydrometric station on form-sheet 4/4)</p> | | | volume of deposited solids | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³] | medium thickness of deposits | <input type="checkbox"/> [m] | volume of debris flow deposit | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³] | medium flood depth | <input type="checkbox"/> [m] | volume of deposited wood debris | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³] | max. depth of debris flow deposit (head) | <input type="checkbox"/> [m] | maximum discharge | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³ /s] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| volume of deposited solids | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³] | medium thickness of deposits | <input type="checkbox"/> [m] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| volume of debris flow deposit | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³] | medium flood depth | <input type="checkbox"/> [m] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| volume of deposited wood debris | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³] | max. depth of debris flow deposit (head) | <input type="checkbox"/> [m] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| maximum discharge | <input type="checkbox"/> [m ³ /s] | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Memo (description of event considering the following catchwords): Q _{max} hydrometric station general mechanism of process, calculation and estimation methods state/assessment of existing sediment retention basins prehistory (wet, medium, dry; frost)/supplementary information about meteorology (altitude of 0°-line, hail, etc.) flood marks (where?; depth) comparison with former events; estimation of damage etc. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Natural Hazards: Event Documentation **Mapping** **Sheet 4/4**

Event municipality process digitalized?

Mapping scale 1 : date

name, adress, phone

5.3 Features and Fingerprints

The people on site are working as a kind of detectives. They find the body, but they don't see the murderer. So they rely on clues, more or less reliable witnesses and their own perception. It's always a kind of a puzzle to put all the different bits of information together for a general picture, that fits in the end. So:

- Take care with conclusions.
- Always be aware of the fact, that your conclusions are an interpretation of what you see afterwards.
- Always try to find two or more independent features which might proof your conclusions.

First collect all information you can get (observers, silent witnesses, gauging stations ans.). Then you may start to think about the plausibility and a reasonable idea about what was going on (reason, process, immediate and following measures).

5.3.1 Flooding and Sediment Transport Processes (by J. Hübl)

Floodings occur by overtopping the channel's banks and overflowing the valley area. Triggering precipitations are on the one hand short convective rainfalls with high intensity, on the other hand rainfalls with long duration and lower intensities. The form of the discharge hydrograph is related to the rainfall distribution, to the shape of the basin area, to the type of soil and the land-use forms.

Main features for floods are lines defined by high water marks. Beside process – related – features the contact with eyewitnesses (abutting owners, fire brigade etc.) may give useful information about the event (e.g. time distribution, photographs).

Floodings are in a way always connected with sediment transport. Flood sediments occur in numerous settings, such as fans, splays, channel fills, overbank deposits and backwater sights (WILLIAMS and COSTA, 1988). The form of the transported and deposed sediments is conditioned by the discharge and the geological disposition of the basin area. Main features are the sediment setting and the areas of deposition.

References

WILLIAMS, G., COSTA, J. E. (1988): Geomorphic Measurements after a Flood. In: Flood Geomorphology, edited by V.R. BAKER, R.C. KOCHER, P.C. PATTON. John Wiley&Sons, New York, pp. 65-77

| Precipitation | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|---|--|---|
|  <p data-bbox="135 645 699 674">Deposits of hailstones (Obersaxen, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1992</p> | <p data-bbox="726 322 933 374">Private gauging stations of e.g. farmers</p> <p data-bbox="726 398 901 450">Form of precipitation (e.g. hail)</p> <p data-bbox="726 474 901 504">Flooded depressions</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="991 322 1220 374"><input type="checkbox"/> Estimation of the precipitation height <li data-bbox="991 398 1220 450"><input type="checkbox"/> Calibration of hydrological models <li data-bbox="991 474 1220 526"><input type="checkbox"/> Intensity and rainfall distribution |
| Flooding | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|  <p data-bbox="135 1140 699 1191">Muddy signs at trees, deposited fine-grained fluvial sediments, leaves and branches (Fischbach, Austria) Hübl, 2002</p> | <p data-bbox="726 817 917 846">Stage lines defined by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="726 848 885 878">• depressed grass <li data-bbox="726 880 933 931">• accumulated leaves, branches, rubbish etc. <li data-bbox="726 934 933 985">• muddy signs on trees, buildings, etc. <li data-bbox="726 987 821 1016">• log jams | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="991 817 1204 869"><input type="checkbox"/> Flow depth and channel geometry <li data-bbox="991 893 1220 945"><input type="checkbox"/> Estimation of mean velocity <li data-bbox="991 969 1220 1021"><input type="checkbox"/> Estimation of peak discharge <li data-bbox="991 1046 1268 1097"><input type="checkbox"/> Calibration of simulation models <li data-bbox="991 1122 1236 1151"><input type="checkbox"/> Hazard zone mapping |
| Sediment transport | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|  <p data-bbox="135 1668 699 1697">Fluvial sediments (Gertnertalbach, Austria) Hübl, 1999</p> <p data-bbox="135 1744 699 1774">Accumulated branches (Hassbach, Austria) Steinwendtner, 1999</p> | <p data-bbox="726 1346 949 1397">Deposition of transported sediments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="726 1400 965 1473">• deposition areas (ripples, dunes, antidunes, ribs, bars) <li data-bbox="726 1476 837 1505">• grain size <li data-bbox="726 1507 869 1536">• erosion areas <li data-bbox="726 1538 965 1612">• deposited material from different geological zones <li data-bbox="726 1615 949 1644">• shape and roundness of the sediments <li data-bbox="726 1646 901 1675">• sorted sediments <li data-bbox="726 1677 965 1706">• impact signs on buildings, trees, etc. <li data-bbox="726 1709 949 1760">• interaction with control structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="991 1346 1157 1375"><input type="checkbox"/> Process type <li data-bbox="991 1400 1252 1429"><input type="checkbox"/> Grain size distribution <li data-bbox="991 1453 1173 1482"><input type="checkbox"/> max grain size <li data-bbox="991 1507 1252 1559"><input type="checkbox"/> Volume of transported sediments <li data-bbox="991 1583 1236 1612"><input type="checkbox"/> Height of deposition <li data-bbox="991 1637 1220 1688"><input type="checkbox"/> Spatial distribution of deposits <li data-bbox="991 1713 1252 1765"><input type="checkbox"/> Source of the deposited sediments |
|  | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="991 1785 1268 1836"><input type="checkbox"/> Input parameters for simulation software <li data-bbox="991 1861 1236 1890"><input type="checkbox"/> Hazard zone mapping <li data-bbox="991 1915 1268 1966"><input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness of control structures |

5.3.2 Debris Flow and Mud Flow (by J. Hübl)

According to HUNGR et al. (2001) a debris flow is a very rapid to extremely rapid flow of saturated non-plastic debris in a steep channel. It may occur in a series of surges, ranging in number from one to several hundred and separated by flood-like intersurge flow. The key characteristic of a debris flow is the presence of an established channel or regular confined path, that controls the direction of the flow and in which the debris flow is a recurrent process.

During the ongoing process a kind of longitudinal sorting occurs, leading to a typical bouldery front, a more homogenous suspension as body and to a turbulent or hyperconcentrated flow as tail of the debris flow. In the deposition area (normally at the fan) the debris flow front stops at first, the body bypasses and reaches lower fan areas, creating typical steep fronted lobes without segregation. The distal fan areas can normally be reached only by the tail of the debris flow or subsequent flood runoff, possibly reworking the deposits.

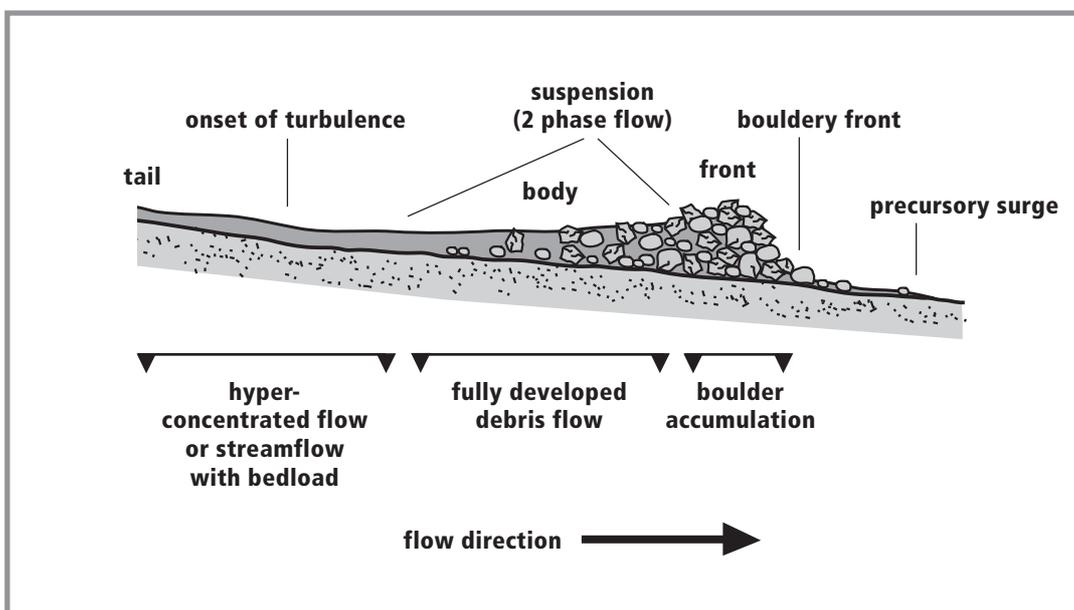
As reported by many authors (e.g. STINY, 1910; JOHNSON, 1970; AULITZKY, 1980, WILLIAMS and COSTA, 1988), U-shaped channel cross sections, marginal levees of coarse boulders and steep-fronted lobate deposits are diagnostic features of debris flows.

Mud flows are according to HUNGR et al. (2001) very rapid to extremely rapid flows of saturated plastic debris in a channel, involving significantly greater water content relative to the source material. They share many morphological and behavioural aspects with debris flows, but the clay fraction modifies the rheological properties.

References

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- WILLIAMS, G.P., COSTA, J.E. (1988): Geomorphic Measurements after a Flood. In: *Flood Geomorphology*, edited by V.R. BAKER, R.C. KOCHER, P.C. PATTON. John Wiley & Sons, New York, pp. 65-77

Fig. 6 Sketch of a debris flow surge based on PIERCON T.C. (1986).



| Transit zone | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>U-shaped channel cross-section (Ritigraben, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1994</p> | <p>Debris flow marks as "impact line"</p> <p>polished surface on bedrock (continuous)</p> <p>signs (mud silting) on trees, surface, buildings, etc.</p> <p>U-shaped channel cross section</p> <p>Superelevation in bends</p> <p>Lateral levees of coarse clasts, the biggest ones resting on the top (upward coarsening)</p> <p>Big boulders at the margin of the flow</p> <p>Interactions with control structures</p> <p>Impact signs due to boulders or large gravels on trees, buildings, etc.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Flow type (mud or debris flow) <input type="checkbox"/> Channel geometry and flow depth <input type="checkbox"/> Velocity estimation <input type="checkbox"/> Discharge estimation <input type="checkbox"/> Grain size distribution <input type="checkbox"/> Impact force estimation <input type="checkbox"/> Effectiveness of control structures <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretation used for a calibration of simulation models |
|  <p>Lateral levees of coarse clasts (Ergisch, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1992</p> | | |
| Deposition zone | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|  <p>Front deposit with sharp margin (Wassertalbach, Austria) Hübl, 1998</p> | <p>Debris flow front deposit: deposition of large boulders without more or less any fine material (matrix) with a steep front</p> <p>Debris flow body deposit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lobate deposits with a sharp and well defined margin between debris deposits and undisturbed ground cover (e.g. grass) • poorly sorted gravel, upward coarsening • interstices of the deposits filled with a matrix of clay, silt, sand and fine gravel (matrix) <p>Pressure ridges</p> <p>Signs (mud silting) on trees, buildings, etc.</p> <p>Impact signs due to boulders or large gravels (on trees, buildings, etc.)</p> <p>Debris flow tail deposits: deposits of sand, silt and clay overlaying ground surface and coarse deposits</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Delineation of deposition areas <input type="checkbox"/> Number of surges <input type="checkbox"/> Run-out distance <input type="checkbox"/> Spatial distribution of deposit heights <input type="checkbox"/> Width and depth of deposited lobes <input type="checkbox"/> Volume of debris flow <input type="checkbox"/> Spatial distribution of grain size <input type="checkbox"/> Maximum grain size <input type="checkbox"/> Shear strength <input type="checkbox"/> Recalculation of impact forces <input type="checkbox"/> Frequency (analysis of historic events) <input type="checkbox"/> Hazard zone mapping <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of simulation software |
|  <p>Pressure ridges (Kohnerbach, Austria) Hübl, 1994</p> | | |

5.3.3 Rock Fall (by J. Hübl)

Rock fall consists of free falling blocks of different sizes that are detached from a cliff or a steep rock wall. But „rock fall“ is a generic term under which we can find different phenomena and an international definition for rock fall is still missing. So we have to distinguish between the fall of individualised elements and a collapsing in mass. The different kinds of rock falls are classified in function of volume of mass in movement and the mechanism of propagation (HOESLE, 2001).

Especially in German different definitions for the term rock fall are existing. They are mainly depending on the volume of the transported material. German terms for a distinction of the different processes are given by POISEL (1997):¹

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Steinschlag | 0,01 m³ (is equivalent to approximately 20 cm block size) |
| Rock fall | 0,1 m³ (is equivalent to approximately 50 cm block size) |
| Blocksturz | 2 m³ (is equivalent to approximately 150 cm block size) |
| Felssturz | 10000 m³ (is equivalent to approximately 25 m block size) |
| Bergsturz | > 10000 m³ |

The specified volumes are equivalent to the size of the impact block or the over-all volume.

¹ Some different classifications are also used (see p.18)

Following WHALLEY (1984, in SELBY, 1993) the term “rock fall” is commonly used to refer to a collection of processes which may involve the removal of material ranging in size from large rock masses through single joint blocks to particles ranging from boulder-size to gravel-size. So SELBY (1993) makes distinctions between:

- Rock-mass falls
- Rock slab and block falls
- Rock particle falls

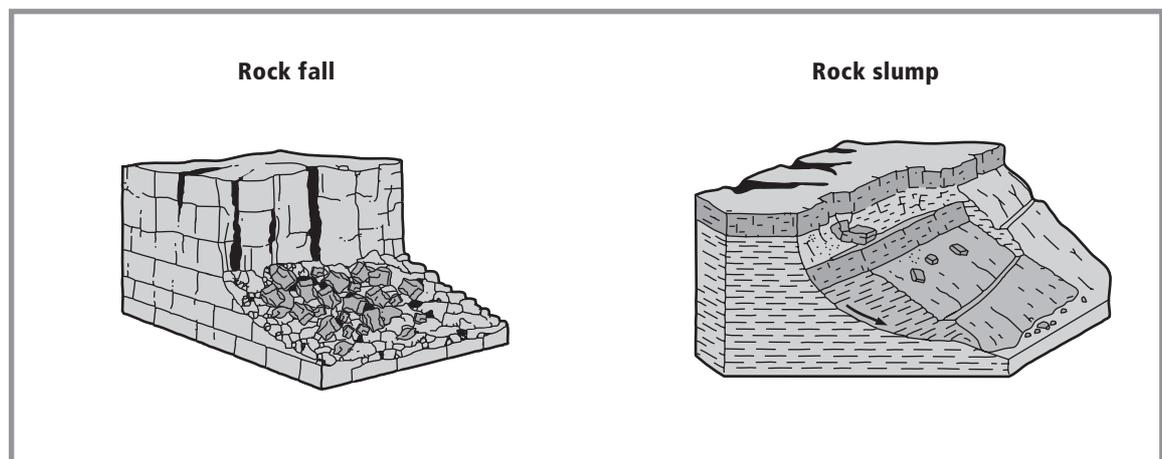
Following the characterisation of VARNES (1978) rock fall is a process in which the vertical component is predominant, the moisture content low and the rate of movement extremely rapid.

Usually there are distinct features in the release area, in the transit and deposition zone. Only eye-witnesses can give an information about time activity as well as the kind of process.

References

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- SELBY, M.J. (1993): Hillslope Materials and Processes, Oxford University press, Oxford
- VARNES, D.J. (1978): Slope Movements and Types and Processes, in: Landslides – Analysis and Control (eds. SCHUSTER, R. L. & KRIZEK, J.), Transportation Research Board Special Report 176, National Academy of Sciences, Washington DC
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Fig. 7 Primary mechanisms for rock fall based on VARNES (1978).



| Release area | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|--|---|--|
|  <p>Rockfall release (Sundlauenen, Switzerland)</p> <p>Kienholz, 2002</p> | <p>Geological structure; geomorphological situation (cliff, boulder, profounded or shallow material)</p> <p>Topographical situation (altitude, exposition, slope)</p> <p>Discontinuity (fissures, crack-system)</p> <p>Detachment zones</p> <p>Weathering (rock colour)</p> <p>Vegetation cover (stabilisation/destabilisation)</p> <p>Hydrogeological situation (springs or water drop-outs)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Dimension and geometry (length, width, depth) of failure <input type="checkbox"/> Cause of failure; failure mechanism (e.g. free fall, sliding, toppling) <input type="checkbox"/> Frequency (high/moderate/less) <input type="checkbox"/> Size of detachable stones <input type="checkbox"/> Stabilisation/destabilisation of source area caused by the root system <input type="checkbox"/> Water influence <input type="checkbox"/> Fracture tendency during failure process <input type="checkbox"/> Initial failure depth |
| Transit zone | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|  <p>Rockfall impact on a tree (Sundlauenen, Switzerland)</p> <p>Kienholz, 2002</p> | <p>Impact signs on trees (height/size of impact)</p> <p>Impact signs on ground (distance/depth of funnels)</p> <p>Topography of rockfall-path (inclination, soil properties, roughness, exposition)</p> <p>Cross section morphology</p> <p>Vegetation cover</p> <p>Deposited rocks</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Jumping-height and length <input type="checkbox"/> Trajectories <input type="checkbox"/> Frequency <input type="checkbox"/> Impact load <input type="checkbox"/> Energy dissipation (vegetation) <input type="checkbox"/> Fracturing during impact <input type="checkbox"/> Concentration of rockfall influenced areas <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of simulation programs |
| Deposition zone | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|  <p>Rockfall deposition (Stubachtal, Austria)</p> <p>Hübl, 1996</p> | <p>Topography of surface (e.g. scree slope)</p> <p>Slope inclination</p> <p>Position of deposits</p> <p>Size of deposited rocks</p> <p>Shape of deposited rocks</p> <p>Obstacles</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Deposited volume <input type="checkbox"/> Grain size (max.) <input type="checkbox"/> Run out slope <input type="checkbox"/> Run out distance (spatial extend) <input type="checkbox"/> Rockfall influenced area <input type="checkbox"/> Possible causes of deposition <input type="checkbox"/> Fracture mechanism of fallen rocks <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation of simulation programs <input type="checkbox"/> Hazard mapping |

5.3.4 Landslides (by J. Corominas)

Under the heading of landslides have been included here both rotational and translational slides, earthflows (CRUDEN & VARNES, 1996) and mudslides (HUTCHINSON, 1988). Landslides range from few cubic meters to thousands of millions of cubic meters.

The main common features of these movements consists on the rapid to slow downslope displacement of soil and rock which takes place mainly on one or more, discrete bounding slip surfaces. In rotational and translational slides the slipping mass moves as an essentially coherent unit. Earthflows and mudslides show a lobate or elongate shape. Even though they are considered as flows, they slide rather than flow.

Many of these movements experience periodical reactivations, mostly related to the rainfall episodes. The appropriate understanding of the driving mechanism and the effective design of remedial measures require the precise description of the movement and of its relevant features, which are specific of each landslide type.

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| Scarp area | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|---|---|--|
|  <p>Main scarp (Los Olivares, Spain) Corominas, 1986</p> | <p>Main scarp retrogressive failure</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Head of the landslide is progressing backwards by retrogressive failures. The landslide has instabilized the upper slope <input type="checkbox"/> Height of the scarp <input type="checkbox"/> Estimation of the depth of the surface of failure |
|  <p>Water seeps and springs (Cava, Spain) Corominas, 1987</p> | <p>Features indicating previous movements (i.e. soil structure, tilting)</p> <p>Water seeps and springs</p> <p>Striations</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Datable material for determination of the landslide age <input type="checkbox"/> Information about the aquifer <input type="checkbox"/> Distribution of macropores and groundwater paths <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of shearing <input type="checkbox"/> Direction/vector of displacement |
| Landslide body | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|  <p>Graben/twin ridges (Grindelwald, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1973</p> | <p>Graben</p> <p>Longitudinal shear</p> <p>Tension cracks (arranged parallel to the direction of movement)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Degree of circularity of the failure <input type="checkbox"/> Estimation of depth of the surface of rupture <input type="checkbox"/> Lateral shear surface <input type="checkbox"/> Boundary of the landslide or local failure <input type="checkbox"/> Development of lateral shear surfaces <input type="checkbox"/> Boundary of the landslide |
|  <p>Lateral ridge (Vallcebre, Spain) Corominas, 1982</p> | <p>Lateral ridge</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Indication of ground erosion and lateral shear surfaces (Corominas, 1995) |

| Landslide body (cont.) | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|--|---|---|
|  <p data-bbox="300 645 865 672">Transverse tension cracks (Pont de Bar, Spain) Corominas, 1982</p> | <p data-bbox="890 320 1109 347">Transverse tension cracks</p> <p data-bbox="890 448 1013 474">Displaced wall</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1157 320 1444 347"><input type="checkbox"/> Landslide stretching <li data-bbox="1157 369 1444 425"><input type="checkbox"/> Development of a graben or local failure <li data-bbox="1157 448 1444 604"><input type="checkbox"/> For translational movements it will enable the estimation of the depth of the slip using balanced cross section methods (Bishop, 1999) |
|  <p data-bbox="300 1008 865 1064">Offset features and pressure ridges (Falli Hölli, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1994</p> | <p data-bbox="890 689 1013 716">Offset feature</p> <p data-bbox="890 739 1021 766">Pressure ridges</p> <p data-bbox="890 817 1013 844">Mud intrusion</p> <p data-bbox="890 896 1077 922">Upright standing trees</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1157 689 1444 716"><input type="checkbox"/> Longitudinal displacement <li data-bbox="1157 739 1444 795"><input type="checkbox"/> Presence of compression zones <li data-bbox="1157 817 1444 873"><input type="checkbox"/> Presence of compression zone and fluidised mud <li data-bbox="1157 896 1444 922"><input type="checkbox"/> Presence of rigid block <li data-bbox="1157 945 1444 1041"><input type="checkbox"/> In flow-like movements indicates sliding rather than flowing mechanisms or the presence of a plug |
|  <p data-bbox="300 1422 865 1444">Displaced road (Murrizzano, Italy) Kienholz, 1995</p> | <p data-bbox="890 1097 1133 1124">Outcrop of the shear surface</p> <p data-bbox="890 1276 1037 1303">Displaced objects</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1157 1097 1444 1153"><input type="checkbox"/> Sampling for shear strength parameters <li data-bbox="1157 1176 1380 1202"><input type="checkbox"/> Landslide thickness <li data-bbox="1157 1225 1436 1252"><input type="checkbox"/> Nature of failure surface <li data-bbox="1157 1274 1428 1301"><input type="checkbox"/> Absolute displacements <li data-bbox="1157 1323 1404 1350"><input type="checkbox"/> Displacement vectors |
|  <p data-bbox="670 1590 845 1691">Bended and tilted trees/slumgullion landslide (Colorado, USA)</p> <p data-bbox="670 2072 798 2094">Kienholz, 1995</p> | <p data-bbox="890 1556 1077 1583">Bended or tilted trees</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1157 1556 1340 1583"><input type="checkbox"/> Rotated blocks <li data-bbox="1157 1606 1404 1632"><input type="checkbox"/> Flow-like movements |



Pettnau (Tyrol, Austria), Kreuzer, 1999

5.3.5 Avalanches (by J. Hübl)

Avalanches are falling masses of snow that can contain rocks, soil, wood or ice. Avalanches fall when the weight of accumulated snow on slope exceeds the forces within the snowpack or between the snowpack and the ground which holds the snow in place. The balance between these forces can be changed by further snowfall, by internal changes in the snow cover, or by the weight of a single skier. The often small force required to start the snow sliding is called an avalanche trigger.

As reported by some authors (e.g. McCLUNG 1993, DAFFERN 1992, LACKINGER 2000) there are two general types of snow avalanches:

- **Loose snow avalanches** which originate in cohesionless snow and which start from one point, gathering more and more snow as they descend. They move down the slope in a typical triangular pattern as more snow is pushed down the slope and entrained into the slide.
- The second type, the **slab avalanches**, is usually more dangerous.

It initiates by a failure at depth in the snow cover, ultimately resulting in a block of snow, usually approximating a rectangular shape, that is entirely cut out by propagating fractures in the snow.

So it will start when a large area of cohesive snow begins to slide at the same time.

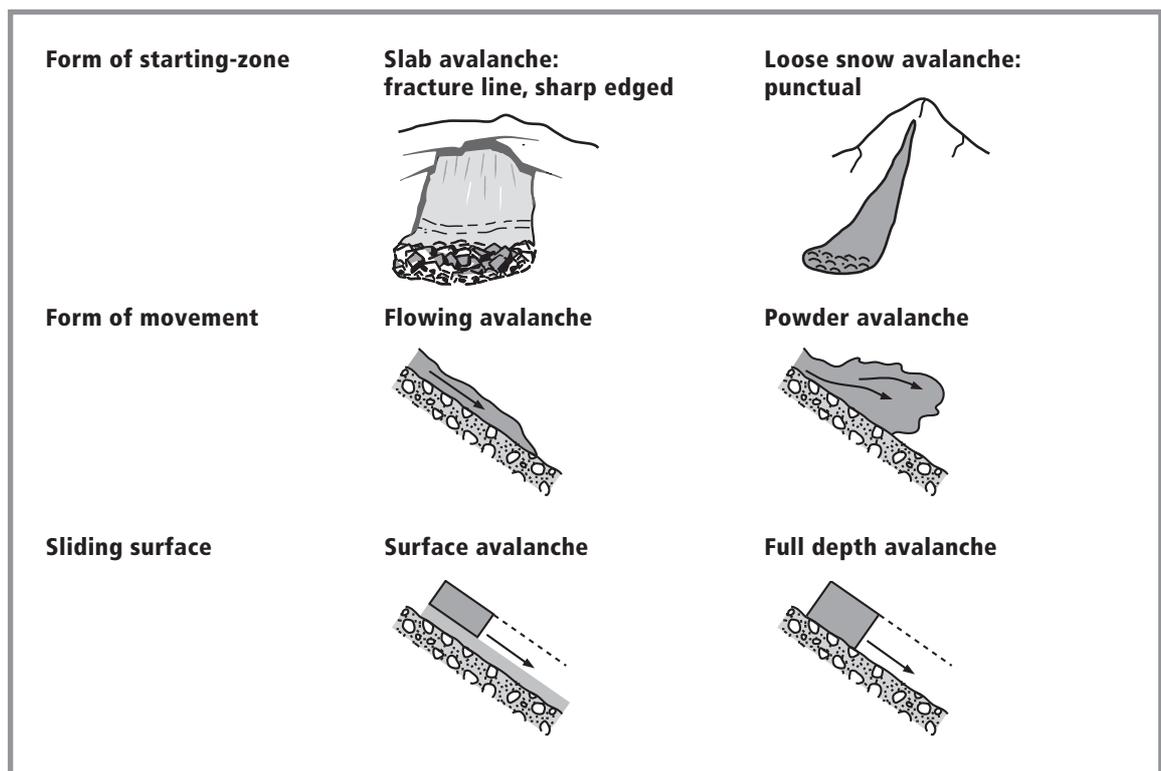
Both types occur in wet and dry snow, either sliding down on a layer of snow within the snowpack or along the ground surface. Large avalanches can attain sufficient speed for some of the snow to be airborne.

The entire movement procedure is called avalanche, beginning from the starting zone, the avalanche track till the run out, debris or deposit zone.

References

- AVALORG (2002): graphic by Manti-La Sal Avalanche Center, Utha, www.avalanche.org
- CEMAGREF (2001): pictures from Cemagref, www.cemagref.fr
- DAFFERN, T. (1992): *Avalanche Safety*, Baton Wicks, London
- EISLF (2000): graphic by Eidgenössisches Institut für Schnee- und Lawinenforschung in Davos, www.slf.ch
- LACKINGER, B. & GABL, K. (2000): *Lawinenhandbuch*, 7. Aufl., Tyrolia, Innsbruck
- McCLUNG, D. & SCHAERER, P. (1993): *The Avalanche Handbook*, The mountaineers, Seattle, Washington
- MUNTER, W. (1999): *3 mal 3 Lawinen*, Bergverlag Rother, München

Fig. 8 Classification of avalanches based on MUNTER W. (1991).



| Starting zone | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|--|--|--|
|  <p data-bbox="135 645 710 694">Crown of a slab avalanche (Gschnitztal, Austria) Kreuzer, 2001</p> | <p data-bbox="726 320 965 369">Visible tracks (human, animals) vs. no tracks</p> <p data-bbox="726 398 965 470">Crown: breakaway wall on top of the slab, sharp edged fracture line</p> <p data-bbox="726 499 965 548">Bed surface: surface over which avalanche slides</p> <p data-bbox="726 577 965 627">Flanks: lateral boundary of the slab</p> <p data-bbox="726 701 965 907">Snow profile observation of the crown:</p> <ul data-bbox="726 757 965 907" style="list-style-type: none"> • snow layers • snow height • density of snow layers • hardness • grain shape • snow temperature <p data-bbox="726 936 965 1064">Crown reaches to the ground surface (visible soil); release height equals snow height, grassy or rocky ground</p> <p data-bbox="726 1093 965 1142">Stauchwall covered with big tables</p> <p data-bbox="726 1171 965 1187">No big tables at Stauchwall</p> | <ul data-bbox="989 320 1281 1187" style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Artificial triggering or natural release <input type="checkbox"/> Slab avalanche: large area of cohesive snow slid simultaneously initiated by failure at depth in the snow cover, downslope component of the weight approached shear strength in weak layer and sufficient rate of deformation enabled fracture propagation <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of release height and area allows estimation of release volume, average snow density times the release volume gives the avalanche release mass <input type="checkbox"/> Full-depth avalanche. Possible triggering: snow gliding favoured by low ground roughness and/or high water content <input type="checkbox"/> Hard slab avalanche <input type="checkbox"/> Soft slab avalanche |
| <p data-bbox="135 1238 710 1310">Combination of avalanche types: slab avalanche triggered by a loose snow avalanche (Flüela, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1994</p>  | <p data-bbox="726 1317 965 1344">No definite fracture lines</p> <p data-bbox="726 1373 965 1422">Layer on which the snow slides is not identifiable</p> <p data-bbox="726 1451 965 1478">Triangular pattern</p> | <ul data-bbox="989 1317 1281 2085" style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Loose snow avalanche start at one point on the snow cover and grow in size as they descend. Snow with very little internal cohesion triggered by surface melting or by external forces such as sluffs falling from the rocks or trees |

| Track | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|---|--|---|
|  <p data-bbox="687 353 823 405">Avalanche path (Valzur, Austria)</p> <p data-bbox="687 864 804 884">Kreuzer, 1999</p> | <p data-bbox="890 320 1123 371">Spots without snow, visible soil, broken trees</p> <p data-bbox="890 398 1091 450">Superelevation in outer bends</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1158 320 1369 371"><input type="checkbox"/> Identification of avalanche path <li data-bbox="1158 398 1374 450"><input type="checkbox"/> High velocity; high centrifugal forces |
|  <p data-bbox="300 1485 673 1608">Avalanche track. The flow component followed the channel; the powder component crossed the ridge and destroyed (right part of photograph) a part of the forest (Valzur, Austria)</p> <p data-bbox="751 1485 868 1505">Kreuzer, 1999</p> | <p data-bbox="890 913 1082 965">Part of path which corresponds to terrain</p> <p data-bbox="890 992 1123 1043">Path which does not follow the terrain</p> <p data-bbox="890 1070 1102 1090">Broken or uprooted trees</p> <p data-bbox="890 1120 1031 1140">Position of trees</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1158 913 1358 965"><input type="checkbox"/> Track of the flow component <li data-bbox="1158 992 1347 1043"><input type="checkbox"/> Path of powder component <li data-bbox="1158 1070 1449 1090"><input type="checkbox"/> Indicator of impact forces <li data-bbox="1158 1120 1385 1140"><input type="checkbox"/> Direction of motion |

| Run out zone | Features (examples) | Information and possible interpretation |
|--|---|--|
|  <p data-bbox="134 645 703 696">Snow avalanche deposition (Lötschental, Switzerland) Kienholz, 1984</p> | <p data-bbox="726 320 917 376">Area with disturbed, sometimes dirty snow</p> <p data-bbox="726 398 965 454">Depth down to undisturbed snow</p> <p data-bbox="726 477 965 533">Point of furthest reach of the debris</p> <p data-bbox="726 555 821 589">Fine debris</p> <p data-bbox="726 611 965 734">The avalanche creates grooves or scores the surface while passing the lower portion of the track or runout zone.</p> <p data-bbox="726 757 949 813">Debris looks like fingers or arms</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="992 320 1252 376"><input type="checkbox"/> Deposition area of the snow cover <li data-bbox="992 398 1204 432"><input type="checkbox"/> Deposition height <li data-bbox="992 477 1189 510"><input type="checkbox"/> Run out distance <li data-bbox="992 555 1284 589"><input type="checkbox"/> Dry dense flow avalanche <li data-bbox="992 611 1284 757"><input type="checkbox"/> Wet snow avalanche (typical avalanche in spring time with melting heavy snow forming round boulders – hard like concrete) |
|  <p data-bbox="134 1182 703 1238">Avalanche deposition with Stauchwall (Gschnitztal, Austria) Kreuzer, 2001</p> | <p data-bbox="726 857 965 936">Hard and dense debris including snow boulders up to 0,5 m in diameter</p> <p data-bbox="726 958 869 992">Grooves, fingers</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="992 857 1236 913"><input type="checkbox"/> Debris of a wet snow avalanche <li data-bbox="992 936 1284 992"><input type="checkbox"/> Airborne component of a highspeed avalanche |
| <p data-bbox="134 1294 703 1350">Destroyed house by snow avalanche (Krössbach, Austria) Hübl, 2001</p>  | <p data-bbox="726 1182 965 1294">Fine material, dust (avalanche did not follow the terrain; snow marks on houses)</p> <p data-bbox="726 1350 965 1429">Damages to buildings or other structures like skilift, power poles, cars, trees, etc.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="992 1182 1252 1272"><input type="checkbox"/> Powder avalanche (Snow marks caused by powder component) <li data-bbox="992 1350 1268 1451"><input type="checkbox"/> The type of damages allows to recalculate the lower limit of impact forces <li data-bbox="992 1485 1252 1765"><input type="checkbox"/> Please notice every damage like (e.g.): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1024 1529 1252 1585">• damaged windows (what kind of windows) <li data-bbox="1024 1585 1252 1641">• damaged doors (steel or wood) <li data-bbox="1024 1641 1252 1709">• damaged truss, roof or chimney (what kind of construction) <li data-bbox="1024 1709 1252 1765">• damaged walls (bricks or concrete walls) <li data-bbox="992 1787 1252 2045"><input type="checkbox"/> Impact pressure (kPa): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1024 1809 1252 1843">• Break windows = 1 kPa <li data-bbox="1024 1843 1252 1877">• Push in doors = 5 kPa <li data-bbox="1024 1877 1252 1910">• Destroy wood-frame structures = 30 kPa <li data-bbox="1024 1910 1252 1966">• Uproot mature spruce = 100 kPa <li data-bbox="1024 1966 1252 2045">• Move reinforced-concrete structures = 1000 kPa |

Wolfgrubenlawine (Austria)

Kreuzer, 1988



