SCIENCE ADVICE IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

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Scientific Advice for Policy Making

The Role and Responsibility of Expert Bodies and Individual Scientists

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OECD GSF report 2015
Motivated by Fukushima and L’Aquila
Focuses mainly on deliberative processes

Includes:
- A review of national science advisory (eco-) systems
- An analysis of the different steps in an advisory process
- An analysis of legal responsibilities
- Special challenges in crisis situations
- Perspectives on public interest/engagement
A 12 point ‘check’ list

An effective and trustworthy science advisory process needs to:

a. Have a clear remit, with defined roles and responsibilities for its actors

b. Involve the relevant actors – scientists, policy-makers and other stakeholders, as necessary

c. Produce advice that is sound, unbiased and legitimate
Recommendations

Responsible authorities should:

1. Define clear and transparent frameworks and rules of procedure for their advisory processes.

2. Establish effective mechanisms for ensuring appropriate and timely advice in crisis situations.

3. Ensure coherence between national and international scientific advisory mechanisms.

4. Implement measures that build societal trust in science advice for policy-making.
Two main challenges emerged (from 60 interviews):

1. Maintaining an authoritative voice
2. Clarifying responsibilities

and the need for:

- Permanent structures or mechanisms
- A central clearing house and contact point
- Clear reporting processes
- A pre-defined public communication strategy
- International coordination
UK example: Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)

COBR (Cabinet Office)

Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE)

Government Scientists

Industry

SACs

Non-Governmental Organisations

Academia
Future GSF work

“International coordination and exchange of data and information during transnational crises” (epidemics, natural disasters, technological accidents etc.)

Aim to develop:

1. A compendium of national crisis response advisory mechanisms (and contact points)
2. A framework for the timely international exchange of scientific data and information
Project implementation

- International Expert Group chaired by Robin Grimes (UK CSA to Foreign Office)
- 1st meeting planned for Nov/Dec, 2016
- Workshop of case studies (e.g. Ebola, Zika, Fukushima) in June/July, 2017
- Final report to Governments, end 2017
- A potential OECD Council recommendation on Science Advice in 2018
Thank you