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Project fiche

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Harmonization of Seismic Hazard Maps in the Western Balkans

(ref. 983054)

Based on the experiences of a first smaller project for Bulgaria, Moldova and Romania (ref. 980468), scientists from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia¹ have cooperated with Turkey since September 2007 to harmonize the seismic hazard maps for the western Balkan countries.

The project is addressing the dangers posed by earthquakes in the western Balkan region, situated in very complex geological and tectonical conditions. This involves seismic hazard assessment, taking into account directivity effects, regional seismotectonic conditions, expressed in different probable return periods of large earthquakes. The end-goal is to harmonize the different seismic hazard maps of all the before mentioned Balkan countries and to create standard hazard maps in Eurocode 8 format that reflect the real transboundary geophysical characteristics, replacing current maps that are limited by political borders.

In order to build local capabilities, young scientists from all the countries involved have been trained in the field of seismic hazard, vulnerability and risk assessment. The Environmental Agency of the Slovenian Ministry for Environment organized training sessions and provided expertise and software for seismic hazard assessment. Historical and current data have been collected in large databases allowing the direct comparison and harmonization using standard scientific methods. In addition the project helps to upgrade and harmonize the seismic monitoring facilities of the countries. The results will be disseminated to local authorities, ministries and the engineering communities concerned.

Both above mentioned projects are supported by the Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Initiative for South-Eastern Europe (www.dppi.info).

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Duration: 3 years; expected completion by October 2010

Web site: <http://www.wbseismicmaps.org/>



Damage caused by the 1979 earthquake of 7.0 magnitude in Montenegro.
(Photo courtesy of Prof. Branislav Glavatovic, MSO, Montenegro.)

¹ Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.