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## **Benfield Hazard Research Centre Launches New Updated Website [www.benfieldhrc.org](http://www.benfieldhrc.org)**

*The Leading Online Resource for the Study of Natural Hazards Including Windstorm, Seasonal Forecasting, Landslide, Flood, Volcanoes and Earthquakes*

Benfield Hazard Research Centre (BHRC), part of University College London (UCL), has launched its new updated website [www.benfieldhrc.org](http://www.benfieldhrc.org). The website - which is one of the few that deals with natural phenomena and crisis management in any depth\* - provides up to date information on a wide range of natural hazards including seasonal and extreme weather forecasts and windstorms, earthquakes, flood risk, climate change, volcanoes, tsunamis and landslides. It incorporates the Centre's fresh new brand identity and logo which were unveiled recently.

In addition to providing access to the Centre's latest publications including Issues in Risk Science and the ALERT newsletters, the new website contains invaluable contact details for all the leading hazard and risk experts based at BHRC as well as comprehensive information on forthcoming education and training programmes and events. The website also includes results from current and recent primary research projects undertaken at the Centre, including:

- **Seasonal Weather Forecasts:** Including long-range forecasting of UK and European temperature, precipitation, and storminess; tropical cyclone activity in the Atlantic, NW Pacific and SW Pacific oceans; tropical cyclone numbers on the USA, Caribbean, Japan, and Queensland (Australia).
- **Project VOLCALERT:** A recent EU-funded project that has developed innovative models for quantifying eruption precursors, and used these models to develop practical forecasting techniques to communicate forecasts effectively to non-specialists.
- **Project RUNOUT:** A recently completed EU-funded international study examining the threat posed by large volume, long run-out landslides.
- **Project CARIB:** Aimed at reducing the vulnerability of small volcanic islands to future eruptions, the main outcome of CARIB is a volcanic emergency manual, designed for use by - and to improve communication between - scientists, civil authorities, and the media, at times of volcanic crisis.
- **Tsunami Risk:** A study of global tsunami risk undertaken jointly with Coventry University and funded through the TSUNAMI initiative by the UK Government and a consortium of insurance and reinsurance companies.
- **Project REA:** The Rapid Environmental Impact Assessment in Disasters project, which has developed a methodology to identify salient environmental impacts during disasters.



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Commenting on the launch of the new website, Professor Bill McGuire, Benfield Professor of Geohazards and Director of Benfield Hazard Research Centre says:

“BHRC was established to provide a conduit for the transfer of cutting-edge natural hazard research and innovation from the academic environment to the business world and government and international agencies. Through the rapid application of new research we can facilitate the improvement of natural hazard risk assessment and the reduction of exposure to natural catastrophes.

“The new BHRC website has been designed specifically to improve the exchange and application of new research on natural hazards. With its great new look and easy navigation, the new website is unique in containing such a broad range of natural hazard research in one location and enables us to release new, cutting-edge hazard and risk science to business and industry and allow people to see the results of this research as it happens.”

\*The original BHRC website was recently awarded a 2003 ‘Best of the Web’ award by Business Insurance within the category of Crisis Management. The editors of Business Insurance commented: “[The] Web Site has information on windstorm and seasonal forecasting, flood, landslide and earthquake studies. A major bonus to the site is that it has a terrific listing of experts, their areas of expertise and contact information.”

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Notes to Editors:

#### **About Benfield Hazard Research Centre:**

With over fifty researchers and practitioners, Benfield Hazard Research Centre is Europe's leading multidisciplinary academic hazard research centre. BHRC comprises three groups: Geological Hazards, Meteorological Hazards & Seasonal Forecasting, and Disaster Studies & Management. The Centre is based at University College London, one of the world's leading universities and, along with Oxford and Cambridge, one of the UK's top three multi-faculty teaching and research institutions.

BHRC is sponsored by Benfield, the world's leading independent reinsurance intermediary and risk advisory business. Benfield's customers include many of the world's major insurance and reinsurance companies as well as Government entities and global corporations. Benfield employs over 1,700 people based in over 30 locations worldwide. [www.benfieldgroup.com](http://www.benfieldgroup.com)