

## Foreword

This report focuses on the role of scientific advice in transnational crises. It brings together expertise from both the science and crisis management communities, through the OECD Global Science Forum (GSF) and the OECD High Level Risk Forum (HLRF). It builds on the 2015 GSF report on *Scientific Advice for Policy Making: the Role and Responsibility of Expert Bodies and Individual Scientists* presented at an OECD science ministerial meeting in Daejeon, Korea, and the 2015 HLRF report on *The Changing Face of Strategic Crisis Management*, as well as the 2014 OECD recommendation on *the Governance of Critical Risks*.

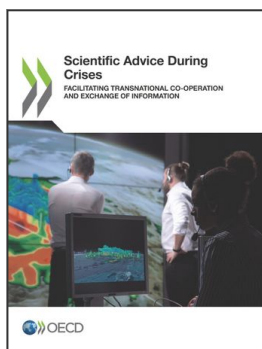
The project that forms the basis for the current report was initiated by the GSF in 2016 and has been carried out in close partnership with HLRF. The integration of science policy and crisis management perspectives is a critical aspect of the project. The initial aims were, first, to develop a compendium of national scientific advisory processes as they operate during crises, and, second, to develop a framework for the trans-national exchange of scientific data, information and advice during crises.

The partnership between the Global Science Forum (GSF) experts and the High Level Risk Forum (HLRF) risk managers brought in a welcome focus on ensuring the usefulness and timeliness of scientific advice for those who need to make decisions in crisis situations. In light of the diversity of hazards and threats that crisis managers have to prepare for, the choice was made to focus on two main areas: hydro-meteorological hazards and public health hazards and the response phase of the crisis management cycle.

The report covers a number of key issues for best use of scientific advice in crises, and overcoming barriers for transnational co-operation around scientific advice. It calls for institutionalising the use of scientific advice at national level to support crisis sense-making, complemented by more systematic trans-boundary exchange of information. It also focusses on the importance of building trust between providers and users of scientific advice by developing science networks, organising crisis management exercises involving scientists, and strengthening crisis communication strategies to convey the right messages at times of uncertainty.

The report does not address in depth issues such as public communication and engagement of citizens in scientific advisory processes or privacy and ethical issues related to the exchange of human subject data. These were covered by previous OECD work under the auspices of the GSF and HLRF.

The report draws on a survey of 18 countries and a workshop held at Wilton Park, UK in September 2017. The workshop also generated a separate report, *Science advice: international co-operation of data and information during trans-national crises*, published in 2017.



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