

GEOL 308 Natural Hazards

Activity 1: Introduction Electronic Resources on Disasters, Country Project

Turn in the **ANSWER SHEET ONLY** at the beginning of lecture. *No late home works accepted.*

The purpose of this homework assignment is to become familiar with some online disaster resources and begin following the disaster history and vulnerability of your country. **PUT ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS ON THE ATTACHED ANSWER SHEET.** The answer sheet is the only thing you need to turn in. Please use the links I have provided below. If they don't work, send me an email and I will check out the problem. A copy of this assignment is posted on Moodle. If you download it, you can click on the links in the document and you won't need to type in long URLs.

A list of countries is being circulated in class today. Choose a country that hasn't been claimed yet. **Only one person per country (unless you are in the lab).** You will be using this country to answer many of the homework questions and to monitor for disasters during the semester. If you are fluent in another language, I encourage you to choose a country where that language is spoken. Many news articles and reports are written in the native language.

I: General information about your country (not the US – the one you are keeping track of this term)

One of the best resources on general facts and demographics of the nations of the world is the CIA Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/index.html>

Click on the map to select the region of the world where your country is located, click again on the country map to bring up the country information. Click on "Open All" on the upper right of the table to bring up detailed information.

Question 1:

- Where is your country located? (continent and region)
- What is the population of this country?
- What is the total area of this country (square kilometers)?
- What is the average population density of this country (people/square kilometer)?
- What are the Natural Hazards of this country (as listed by the CIA Factbook)?

II: The Em-dat data base. <http://www.emdat.be/>

Em-dat is the internationally recognized database for both natural and technological disasters. Established in 1988 by the World Health Organization, the main objective of the database is to support humanitarian efforts at both national and international levels.

Select the Country Profile link under the Data Base title. Scroll down to the United States in the Natural Disaster window. Click Display Country Profile and look at the "Top Disasters" Table.

Question 2: US Natural Disaster History

- What was the worst Natural Disaster since 1900 based on fatalities? What type of event was this (earthquake, hurricane, heat wave, severe cold, or flood)? You may need to do some sleuthing on other web sites and your notes to identify it.
- What was the worst Natural Disaster since 1900 based on number affected? What type of event was this?
- What was the worst US Natural Disaster since 1900 based on total economic cost? What type of event was this and what was the cost? (look very carefully at the table to make sure you have the correct units for the losses).

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Go back to the main menu and scroll to your country. Answer the same questions about your country.

Question 3:

- What was the worst Natural Disaster since 1900 based on fatalities? What type of event was this (earthquake, hurricane, heat wave, severe cold, or flood)?
- What was the worst Natural Disaster since 1900 based on number affected? What type of event was this?
- What was the worst Natural Disaster in this country since 1900 based on total economic cost? What type of event was this and what was the cost? (look very carefully at the table to make sure you have the correct units for the losses – there may be more zeroes than a quick glance shows!).

III: Human Development Index (HDI)

The United Nations ranks the countries of the world according to a number of factors that are combined in a Human Development Index (HDI). HDI is a decimal number usually expressed in three significant figures between 0 and 1. In 2014, the lowest HDI was .337 and the highest was .944. Countries with an HDI of .800 or higher are considered Highly Developed, between .700 and .800 Highly Developed, between .550 and .700 Moderately developed, and less than .550 are Low Development. Information about the HDI and data tables is posted at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi/>

This page gives you some background information about HDI and how it is calculated. You can click on the link to “Download all 2015 data by indicator, year and country” to view the most recent values. I have also posted a copy of this table as an excel pdf, and a copy of the 2014 United Nations Summary Report on Human Development on the class website. Note – if you have Taiwan, you will need to use the excel pdf to find the HDI value. Because Taiwan is not a member of the United Nations, its data aren’t included in the report.

Question 4:

- Average life expectancy is one of the factors used in calculating HDI. Name two other factors.
- What is the 2014 HDI of the United States? What is the HDI ranking of the US? What does this ranking mean in terms of the four UN development categories (Very High, High, Medium, or Low)?
- What is the HDI of your country? What is the HDI ranking? What does this ranking mean in terms of the four UN development categories (Very High, High, Medium, or Low)?
- Why is the HDI important in discussion Natural Disasters?

IV: Relief Web

Relief Web is a UN site that compiles media articles and other information about current and ongoing disasters. Direct your browser to the United Nations Relief Web site at: <http://reliefweb.int/>

Click on the Countries button at the top of the page. Select your country.

Question 5:

- What is the most recent event posted on Relief Web for your country? What were/are the impacts? If nothing is listed, say so.

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Geology 308 Home Problem #1 Answer sheet Name: _____

1. General information about your country. NAME OF COUNTRY: _____

a) Location (continent & region) _____

b) Population _____

c) Total area (square kilometers) _____

d) Population density (people/sq kilometer) _____

e) Natural Hazards _____

II. Em-dat

2. United States Disaster history (since 1900)

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Type of Event</u>	<u>Losses</u>
a) Worst disaster (fatalities)	_____	_____	_____
b) Worst disaster (affected)	_____	_____	_____
c) Worst disaster (cost)	_____	_____	_____

3. Your Country

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Type of Event</u>	<u>Losses</u>
a) Worst disaster (fatalities)	_____	_____	_____
b) Worst disaster (affected)	_____	_____	_____
c) Worst disaster (cost)	_____	_____	_____

III. Human Development Index (HDI)

4. HDI:

a) Two factors (other than life expectancy) used in HDI:

b) US HDI _____ US HDI ranking _____ UN Development category _____

c) Country HD _____ HDI ranking _____ UN Development category _____

d) What role does HDI play in natural disasters? _____

5. Recent Event:

a) Most recent posting for your country:

EVENT: _____ Date(s) _____

Impacts: _____
