

Emergencies in the age of socials

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Why care about Social Media and Emergencies?

- Because social media already changed the way in which communication is made
- Because social media are no more just an opportunity, but a structured way to treat emergencies (no more an optional)
- Because public sector do not have nor (enough) expertise neither, in many cases, the suited administrative context to deal with social media
- Because World changes constantly and even if you just stop for a while, you are left behind

Mass Media vs Social Media vs Emergencies

- MASS media represent an «instrument» (In a recent past I could not communicate without them)
- MASS media represent an «intermediary» (I share an amount of information with them and they diffuse it for me)
- MASS media have their own «timing» (Newspaper, radio news, tv news, etc. are scheduled during the day)
- MASS media evolve slowly (formats and aspect remain constant for a long time)

Mass Media vs **Social Media** vs Emergencies

- SOCIAL media represent an «instrument» (cheap, open and effective)
- SOCIAL media do not need «**intermediaries**» (I can have a direct contact with the people I want to communicate with)
- SOCIAL media do not have a «**timing**» (I can communicate wherever and whenever. For this reason they are the ideal instrument for things like «emotions», «politics» or ... «weather»)
- SOCIAL media evolve rapidly (weak inertia)

Mass Media vs Social Media vs **Emergencies**

- EMERGENCY is a situation that **seldom** occurs
- EMERGENCY is a situation that represents a risk for people or property
- EMERGENCY requires action (often **involving people**) to reduce risk
- EMERGENCY has to be treated as **faster** as possible

Social media seem the best tool to treat emergencies, but there are a couple of aspects that need to be faced...

Did we loose our exclusive?



Issue Warnings
~~"ANYONE CAN COOK!"~~

In the Mass Media era a few people had the possibility to produce information and release it... now every one can do that

But probably this is not the most tricky aspect

Did we loose our leadership?



Did we loose our leadership?

This is the most tricky situation to deal with because...



...we risk to move from our duty (release warnings), switching toward the task to confirm or denial something issued by someone else...

... But our attention can not be detached from reality.

Did we loose our leadership?

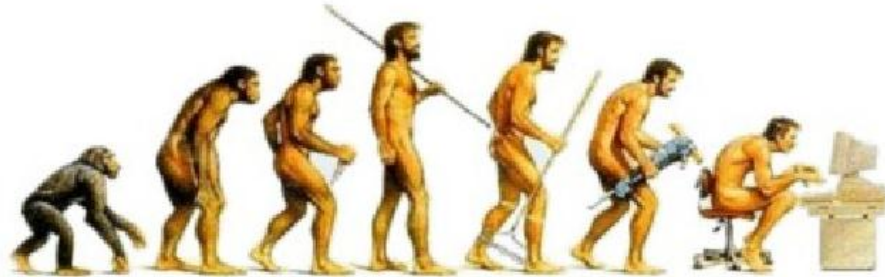
The risk is double:

Spent a lot of efforts to be the first that makes the cock-a-doodle-do.....
(I fear that this is a lost war)

Be the last person with the burning match in the hand



Future is easier to construct than forecast



Similar fears sprung out in '00 with the advent of private meteo centers

...and we are still here...

Solution (remember that the point of view is that of a public institution) might lie in the:

authority and assuredness

tight connection with who have to deal with emergency management (issue a warning does not mean to treat an emergency!)

Social media represent a resource, not the evil



Social media make possible a (filtered) **interaction** with end users (you can have feed-backs)

Social media represent a powerful (and cheap) tool to **collect information** on what is going on (but you need the instruments to deal with that)

....

...but I'm a physicist and I feel comfortable only with numbers

Is it possible to see how things changed in the past years
concerning the way in which emergencies are treated in media?

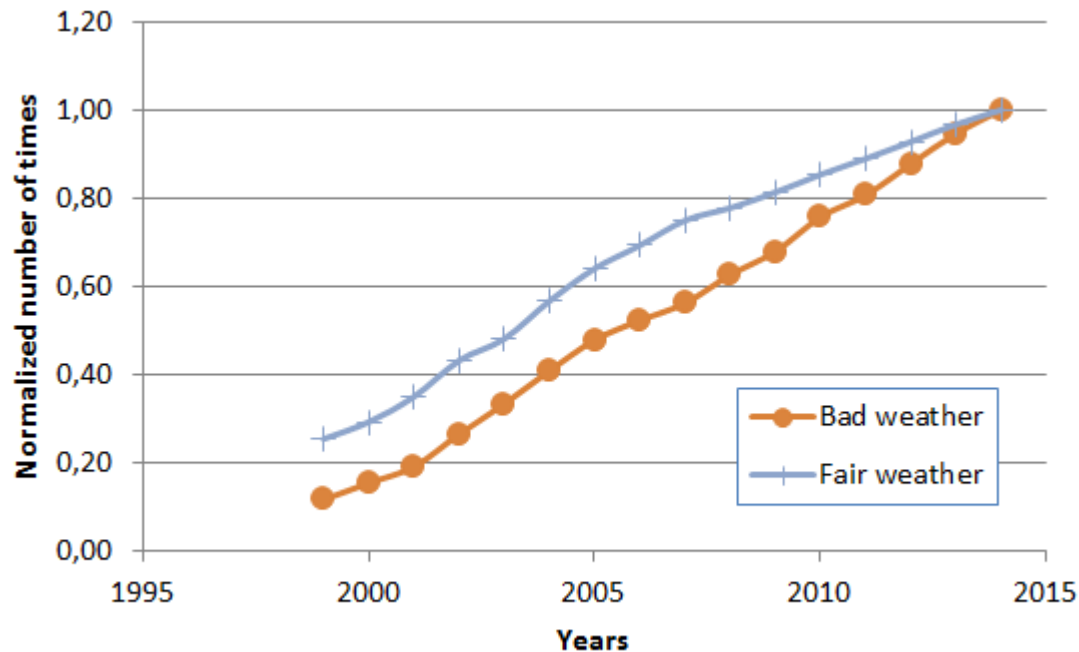
Were are we, concerning the relationship between media and emergencies?

The frequency of occurrence of some significant expressions (e.g., «heat wave», «heavy rain», etc.) in a national distribution newspaper is compared with the occurrence of these events at national level

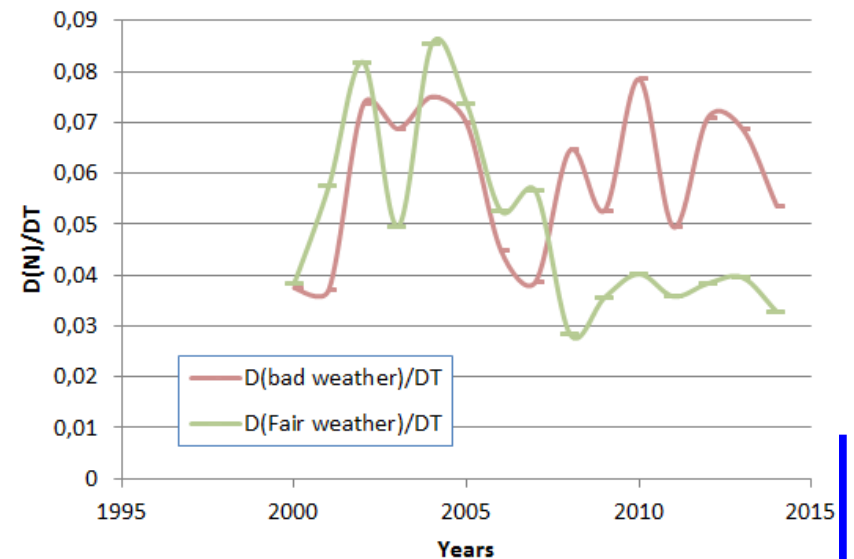
Trying to quantify how sensitive are traditional media to “meteo alerts”, occurrence of “meteo alert” expression in a National distribution newspaper is compared with the number of “meteo alert” really issued at Nat. Level

Number of times (normalized) the expression “bad weather” (it: “brutto tempo”) and “fair weather” (it: “bel tempo”) is present on a national distribution newspaper

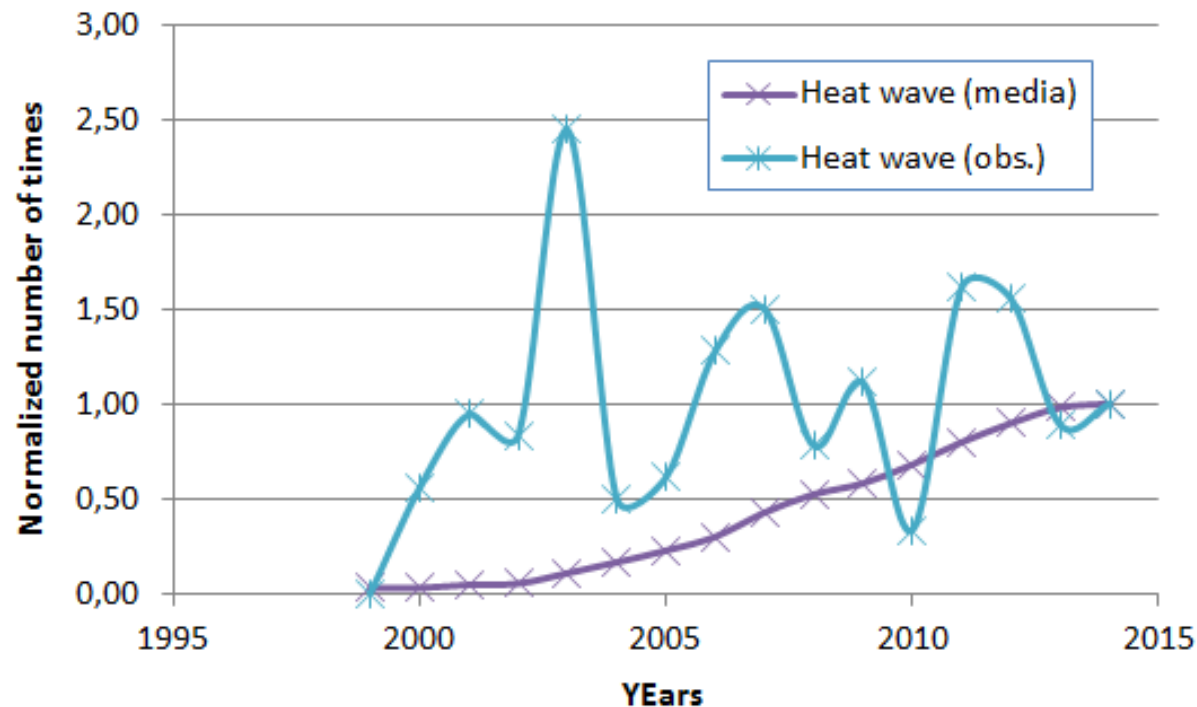
Normalized number of occurrences



Time derivative of frequency

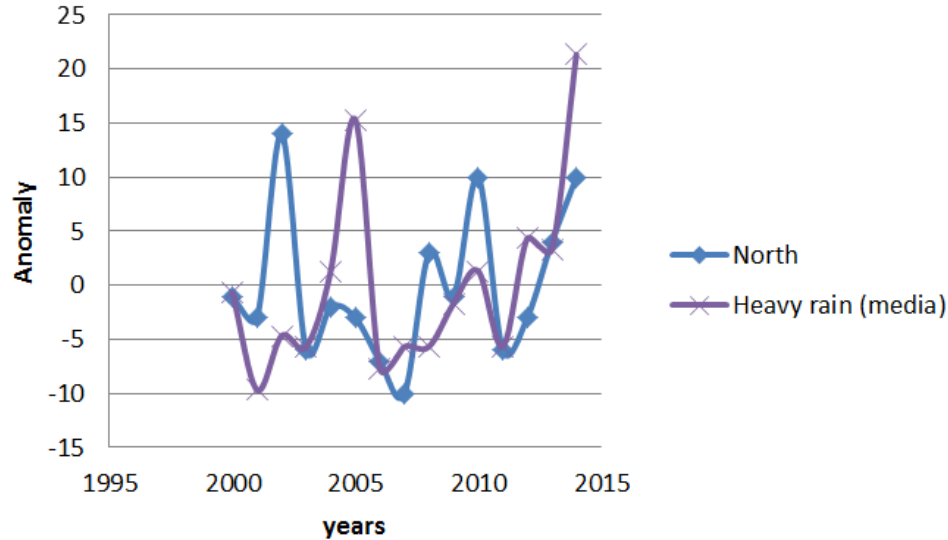


Number of times (normalized 2014) the expression “heat wave” is present on a national distribution newspaper compared with observed heat waves (WSDI, normalized 2014)

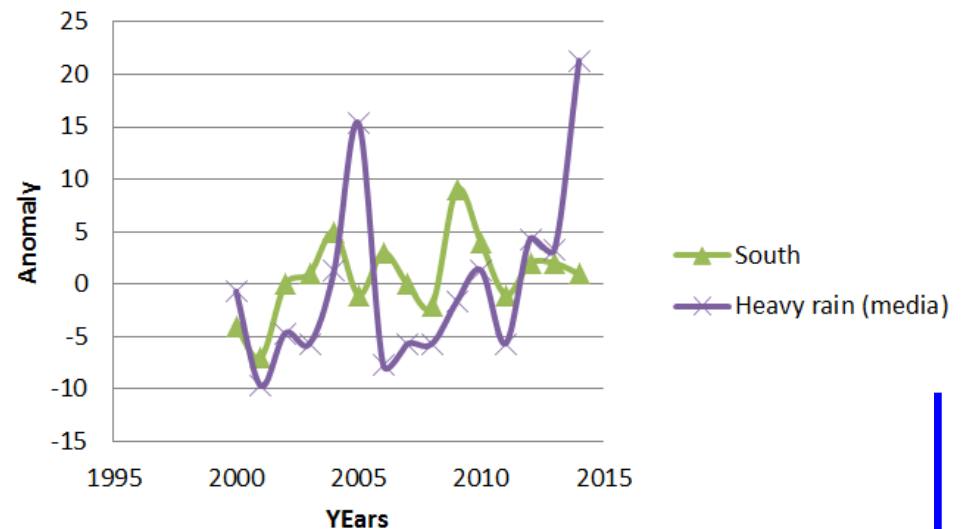
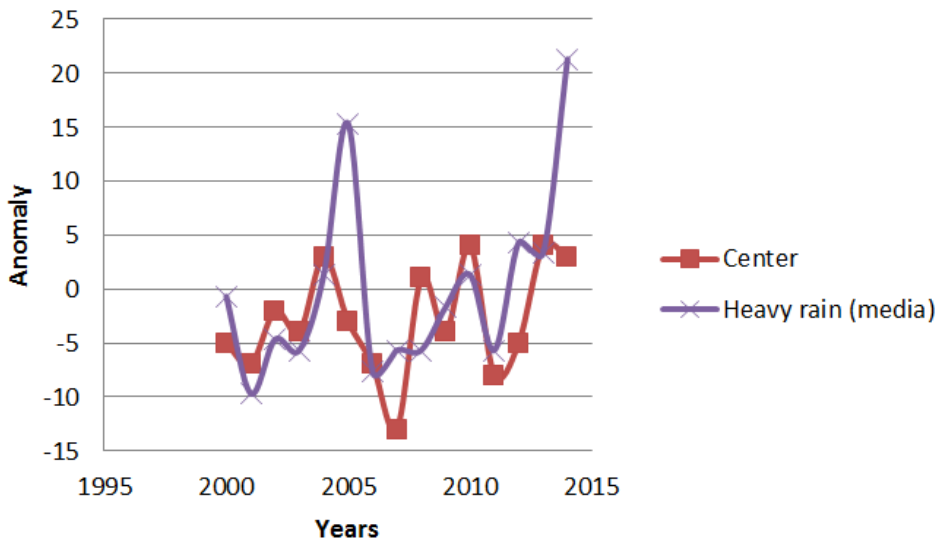


WSDI – Warm spell duration index (ISPRA, 2015)

Anomalies in the number of significant rain days and in the number of times «heavy rain» is present in media



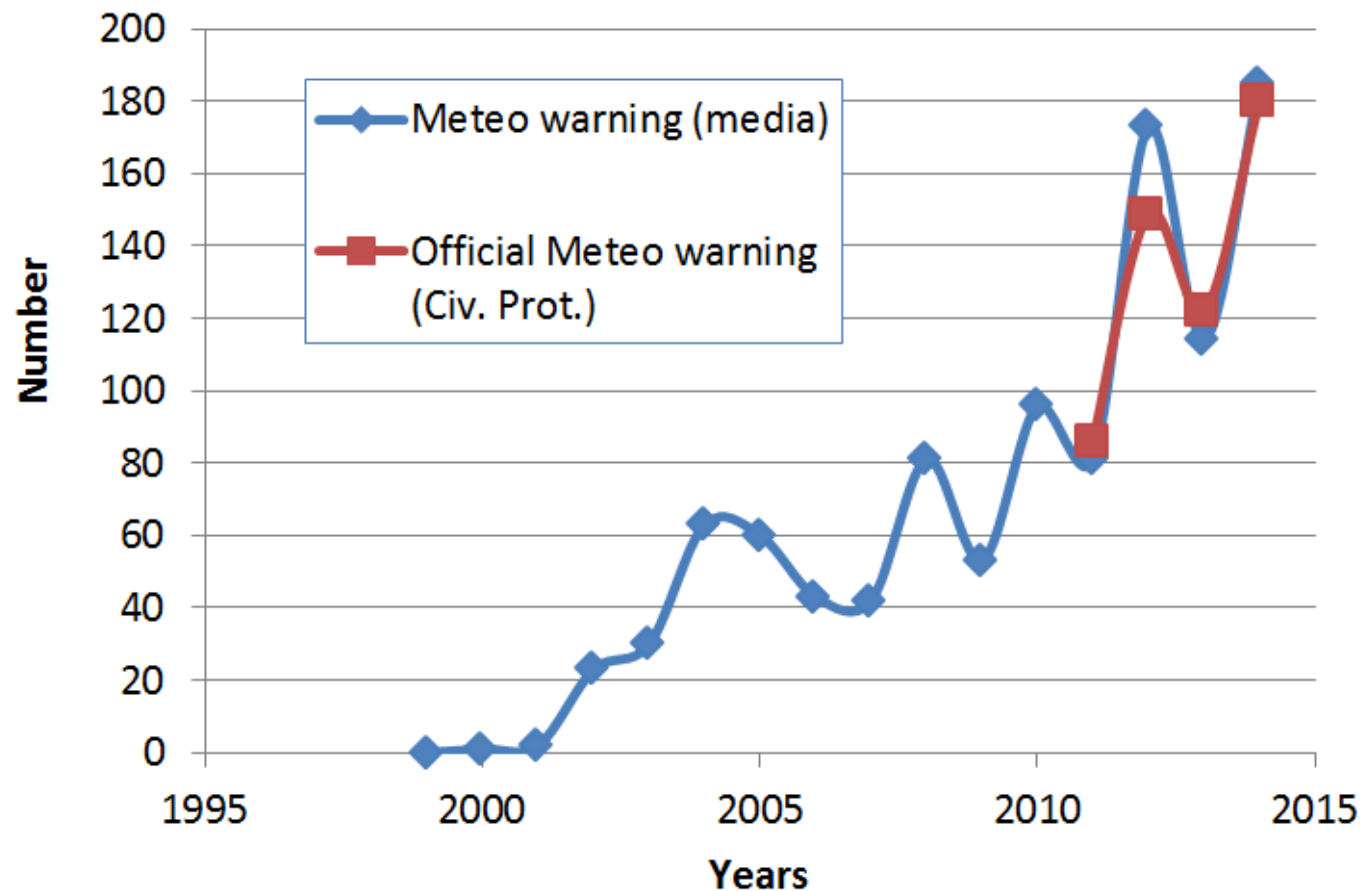
Number of days with rain > 10 mm
(ISPRA, 2015)
Stratified for north, center and south
Italy



Number of times the expression “meteo warning” (it: “allerta meteo”) is present on a national distribution newspaper

VS

Number of «meteo warning» bulletins released by Civil Protection



Conclusions and points of future discussion

- The number of meteorological warnings is growing in the years
- The number of times the expression «meteo warning» is present in media is growing as well
- Pay attention not to fell victims of the “ferry-boat captain” syndrome
- Do not fear to take the burning match (that’s what we are made for)
- Tight connection with Emergency Authorities

Thanks for your attention

Благодаря