Introducing Impact-based Severe Weather Warnings in South Africa

Severe weather events in South Africa are often well forecast, i.e. what the weather will **be** is well understood. However a study reveals a lack of preparedness for severe weather due to little understanding of the impacts of the event, i.e. what the weather will **do**.

The South African Weather Service (SAWS) has now developed its first impact-based severe weather warning system, supported by the Met Office under WCSSP South Africa* and the Hydrologic Research Centre in the USA.

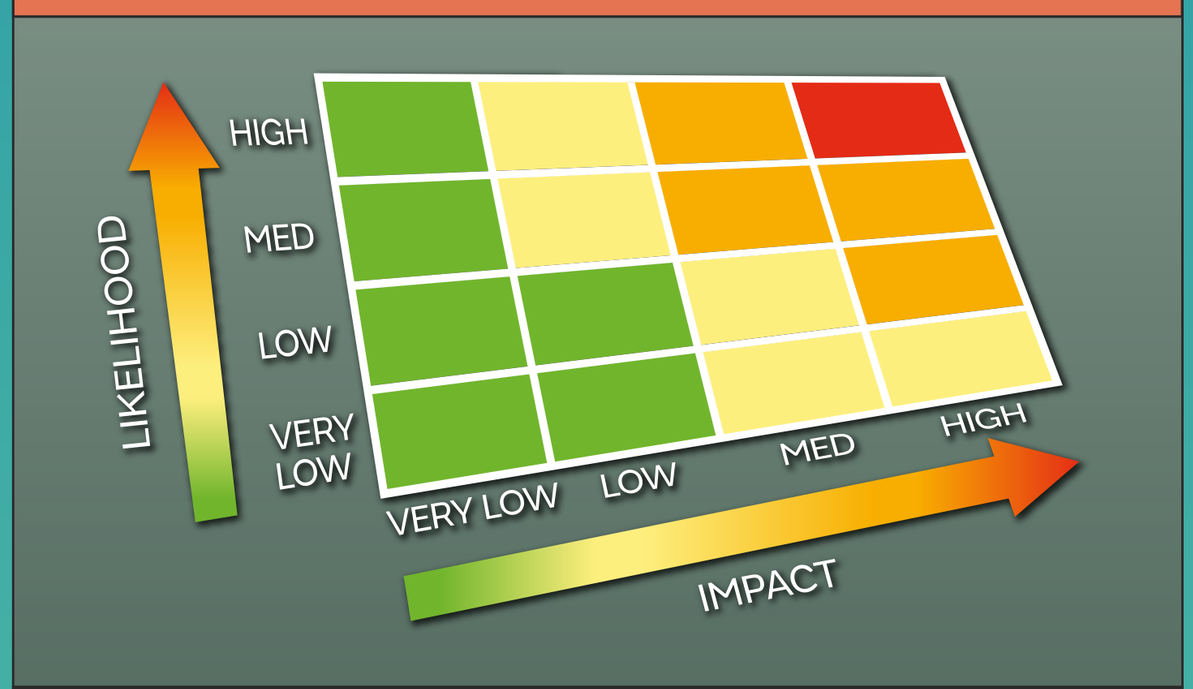
WHAT ARE IMPACT-BASED WARNINGS?

Rather than simply forecasting the weather, impact-based warnings take into consideration the vulnerability of people, livelihoods and property to a hazard and warn for the associated impacts, as well as the likelihood of them occurring.

WHO ARE THEY FOR?

Impact-based warnings support government, emergency responders, businesses, communities and individuals to manage severe weather events today and support decision making to protect the population in the future, especially as climate changes.

HOW IS THE IMPACT OF A SEVERE WEATHER EVENT DETERMINED?



SAWS works in collaboration with disaster managers, sharing knowledge and expertise to understand potential impacts of different weather conditions and develop a warning system based on their severity and likelihood.

WHY ARE IMPACT-BASED WARNINGS BETTER THAN TRADITIONAL WARNINGS?

The combined effort and expertise of partner agencies working with communities vulnerable to disasters, enables an integrated, authoritative voice, accessible to all parts of society so everyone can take appropriate action to ensure personal safety and protect property.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS · 13 CLIMATE ACTION · 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

* WCSSP South Africa is part of the Weather and Climate Science for Service Partnership programme, supported by the UK Government's Newton Fund.
The WCSSP programme is developing a global network of projects and partnerships that harness the scientific expertise needed to strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities to weather and climate variability.

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