

HOW DRONES ARE USED IN DISASTER MANAGEMENT



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◎ Drones are becoming an indispensable asset in disaster areas, the availability of the aerial imagery and mapping combined with low-cost and flexibility promotes new opportunities as well as fresh ideas. Caroline Briggert, Head of Stakeholder Relations at DJI, gave insights into the unassuming role of drones.

The vast majority of news coverage about drones lately has focused on their negativity impacts, such as the use of armed drones, privacy issues or interference with air traffic. However, drones have also found a far more positive application in the humanitarian sector. With a steady rise in climate-related disasters, innovative disaster management strategies are being put under the radar. Through the running of drones, risk governance has undergone in the recent years a remarkable breakthrough. According to Briggert, drones can access hard-to-reach areas and ensure easy accessibility, while costs are kept low compared to other aerial vehicles. When a disaster occurs, first responders have a complete picture of the entire affected territory within hours, enabling them to act immediately, due to the professional and quick mapping of drones. In addition, drones are used to enhance disaster preparedness, by efficiently monitoring areas and spotting potential risks. "Aerial photos help you to analyse the situation and it is a much easier way to see the impact," Briggert said. "Everyone agrees that aerial technology is a must in disaster management."



Caroline Briggert, Head of Stakeholder Relations at DJI, present the latest drone technologies Photo: VI



Clemens Stoll marvels at the fascinating technology of drones. Photo: VI

USING DRONES TO FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS IN MALDIVES

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and DJI, a leading drone company based in Shenzhen, have established a partnership in order to address climate change risks in the Maldives. Approximately 80% of the islands in Maldives have an elevation of one metre above the proper sea level, while this rising sea level threatens submersion of many of these islands. With the help of drone technology from DJI, UNDP is able to create three-dimensional maps and accurately assess the impact of climate change and floods. In operating drones, UNDP speeds up the process of mapping the 11 islands significantly and more thoroughly, ensuring better disaster preparedness for its communities. "This collaboration is a prime example of how drones support the humanitarian sector," Briggert asserted. "The project with the UNDP is something we are very proud of." ● VI

Input from Prof. Dr. Alex Ringenbach

◎ Insight China 2017 was an extraordinary and unforgettable trip. It was perfectly organized and a good mix between impressive foreign culture and insights into innovative companies. And it was far more; it was a journey of surprises and emotions. As a smoothly functioning team we mastered challenging official and nightly events. It was great to be part of this Insight China team!



Prof. Dr. Alex Ringenbach, FHNW School of Life Sciences, an accompanying lecturer of Insight China. Photo: VI