

NATURAL DISASTERS: THE RISKIEST TRAVEL DESTINATIONS



Not long ago, Tourism Review presented the most [dangerous countries to travel](#) to with regards to man-made issues, such as terror attacks, high crime rates, political situations etc. However, it is equally as important to judge a travel destination based on the risk of natural disasters, as it has a direct influence on the safety and security of each individual traveler.

German company Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft has published the World Risk Report for six years. The index includes data from 171 countries. **The researchers analyzed not only how often countries are statistically hit by natural disasters, but also how well prepared they are.**

“Disaster risks are unevenly distributed, affecting mainly island and low and middle-income countries in Oceania, Asia and Central America,” the researchers write in the report.

The factor of infrastructure is, therefore, particularly decisive. For only if there are enough roads and airports, for example, can people quickly get to safety and rescue teams reach the crisis areas. A stable power grid, clean drinking water and sufficient hospitals and doctors will save lives in the event of natural disasters.

Even rich countries affected

Even in rich countries like the USA, there can be disaster, such as the hurricane “Sandy” in 2012. At that time, power grid collapsed, and rescue work was particularly difficult.

Also, the unusual drought this summer in Europe illustrates, according to the researchers, the differences between countries. While, for example, there were considerable harvest losses in Germany, it did not result in a major catastrophe, because Europe was capable to offset the losses. In drought regions such as the Horn of Africa or the Sahel, the consequences would have been much more serious.

Regions particularly vulnerable

At the top of the list of vulnerable areas are the Pacific Islands: Vanuatu and Tonga. This means that there is the highest risk of getting deceased in a natural disaster. The region is particularly threatened by earthquakes, tsunamis and storms. The Philippines are also affected, as people have to reckon with volcanic eruptions and landslides. Central America, West and Central Africa and Southeast Asia are also risky travel destinations.

It may come as a surprise to many, but Qatar is considered the safest in the index. The desert state is much less affected by extreme natural events than other countries. The least vulnerable regions include Malta and Saudi Arabia.

More natural disasters and children affected

Just recently, a UN report showed that the number of natural disasters has increased rapidly. Between 1997 and 2017, 1.3 million people worldwide died as a result. 4.4 billion suffered injuries or lost their livelihood. The researchers of the World Risk Report now warn that the situation could be aggravated by global warming. **According to the UN, especially the environmental catastrophes, which are influenced by climate change, have increased.** These include floods, storms, heat waves, drought and forest fires.

However, the analysis also shows positive developments. As a result, people today are much better prepared for natural disasters worldwide than six years ago. However, it is still children who suffer the most. According to UNICEF, almost one in four children lives in areas affected by disasters. More than 68 million people had to leave their homes last year, more than half of them were children under the age of 18.

WorldRiskIndex 2018 – Top 20: Country/Index Value

Vanuatu	50.28
Tonga	29.42
Philippines	25.14
Solomon Islands	23,29
Guyana	23.23
Papua New Guinea	20.88
Guatemala	20.60
Brunei Darussalam	18.82
Bangladesh	17.38
Fiji	16.58
Costa Rica	16.56

Cambodia	16.07
East Timor	16.05
El Salvador	15.95
Kiribati	15.42
Mauritius	14.27
Nicaragua	13.99
Djibouti	13,90
Guinea-Bissau	13.4
Chad	11.88

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