

## **Natural Disasters**

Almost every day TV channels, radio and newspapers report on natural disasters striking different parts of the world. Scientists say that earthquakes, tornados, floods, droughts, tsunamis, landslides and hurricanes are happening more frequently nowadays. Global warming, pollution and growing industrialization lead to imbalance in our echo-system.

A natural disaster can be defined as an uncontrollable extreme disruption which causes ecological and financial damage and victims of vulnerable population. Sometimes the events can be predicted by special meteorological warning systems and they often happen in the same geographical area because they are related to climate and physical characteristics of the region. For example, Florida is constantly suffering from tornadoes and hurricanes, and Japan – from earthquakes. The most powerful earthquake was recorded in 1960 in Chile, its magnitude was 9.5.

A tsunami is a series of dangerous huge ocean waves, usually caused by underwater earthquakes. This natural disaster attacks the shore all of a sudden and often results in thousands of deaths. The height of the waves can reach 30 metres.

Flooding is another natural disaster. Sometimes flash floods can even wash away whole villages.

During extremely hot dry summers our world usually suffers from vast forest fires and severe droughts. Wildfires are especially dangerous in windy weather when they spread very easily. Droughts may result in famine because the land becomes dry and people can't grow any plants and vegetables on it.

A tornado is an enormous column of twisting wind that moves very fast and destroys houses, raises in the air and throws people, animals and heavy things. Hurricanes and tornados are very common in America and the Atlantic Ocean.

People face great problems after disasters: the water is usually infected, the communication lines (electricity, telephone) are often damaged, most of the buildings and property are destroyed, agricultural crops are also damaged. Natural disasters are great tragedies to many countries and nations. They take a lot of people's lives. Thousands of people become homeless, unemployed. They need medical and psychological help.