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Early Detection and Information Extraction for Weather-induced Floods using Social Media Streams

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Abstract

Today we are using an unprecedented wealth of social media platforms to generate and share information regarding a wide class of events, which include extreme meteorological conditions and natural hazards such as floods. This paper proposes an automated set of services that start from the availability of weather forecasts, including both an event detection technique and a selective information retrieval from on-line social media. The envisioned services aim to provide qualitative feedback for meteorological models, detect the occurrence of an emergency event and extract informative content that can be used to complement the situational awareness. We implement such services and evaluate them during a recent weather induced flood. Our approach could be highly beneficial for monitoring agencies and meteorological offices, who act in the early warning phase, and also for authorities and first responders, who manage the emergency response phase.

Keywords: extreme weather, flood, social media, text mining, anomaly detection, classification

1 1. Introduction

It is commonly acknowledged that high impact, extreme weather events occur more frequently and last longer due to climate change. During the last J syears, the average Earth surface temperature has risen about 0.8 °C [1]. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the

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