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#11-202 Testimonial of an Educational Immersion Experience in Fukushima Prefecture: A Technical and Sociological Approach

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The Health and Safety Department of Aix Marseille University trains future technicians specializing risk management. Among its programs is the Bachelor's degree in Radiation protection and Nuclear Safety which is able to advise managers about the complex risks in nuclear workplaces as power plants, fuel cycle facilities, research centers or naval propulsion sites.

With the aim of providing new insights into major nuclear accidents and crisis management, Franck FALCO, organized an educational trip with some of his students to Fukushima area in Japan last November.

On March 11, 2011, time stood still on the northeast coast of Japan. An earthquake followed by a tsunami devastated part of the region, leading to a nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

Since the disaster, people had to be relocated across several perimeters, and their return to the land is dependent on several factors, such as the level of soil contamination, the ambient dose rate, and also the willingness of families to come back to their roots being away for more than a decade.

Jointly organized with the Fukushima Dialogue association, this educational trip aims to help bachelor students discover the cumulative effects of the disaster and the nuclear accident on the current and future sociological situation faced by the population. Focused on numerous field visits like interim storage facility or ambient dose rate measurements in forest and various encounters, this immersion aims to demystify the current situation to a foreign audience.

This discussion will highlight the deep desire among the inhabitants of the province to look forward the future without erasing all traces of the past. On a sociological level, the presentation will focus on better understanding the complexity often faced by the scientific community when dealing with a population seeking answers about its present and future.

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