Council of the European Union

Brussels, 25 February 2026
(OR. en)

6687/26

PROCIV 32
INTER-REP 17

NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
On:	24 February 2026
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Presentation on preparing for High Impact Low Probability (HILP) events

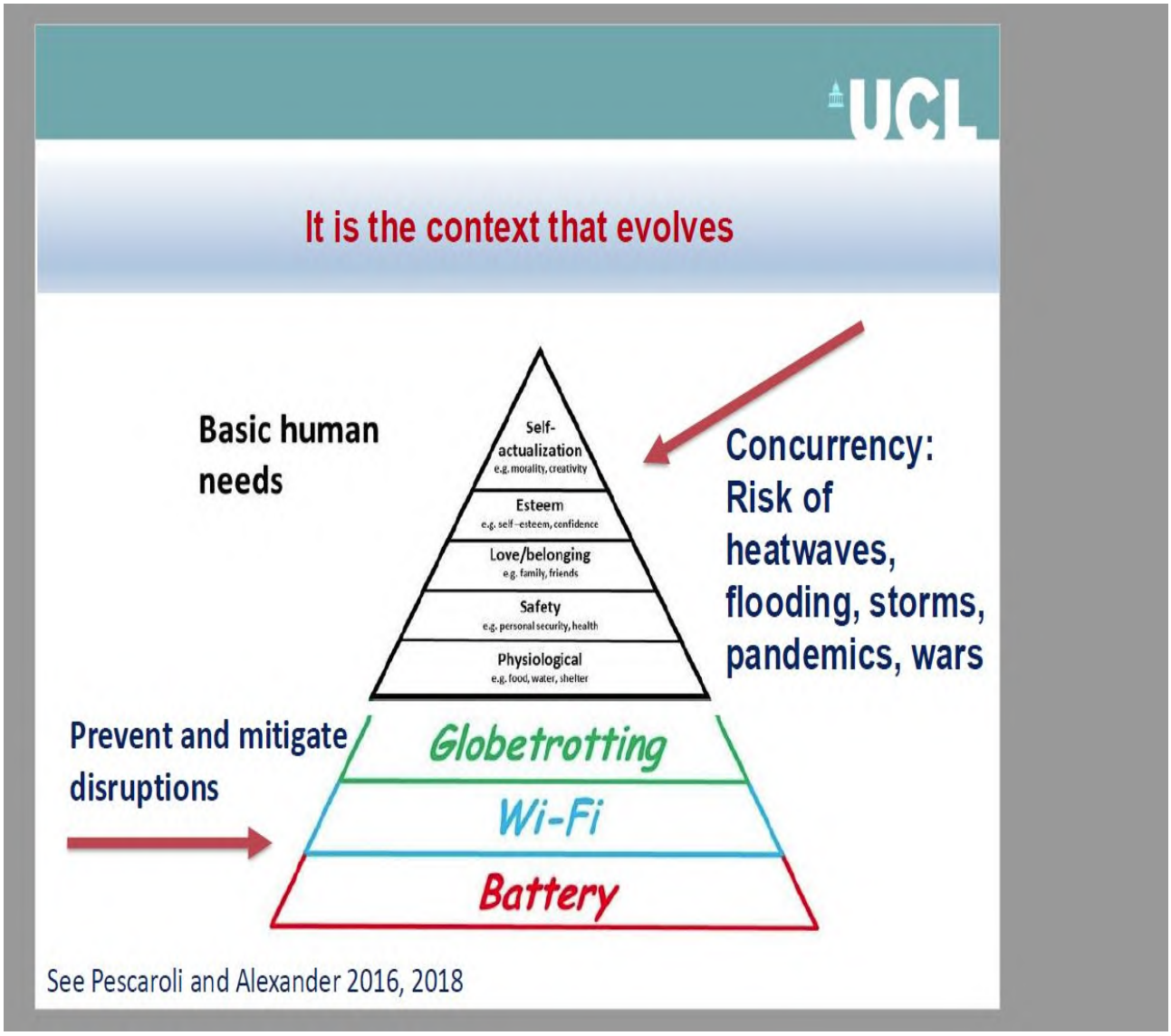
Delegations will find attached the presentation in subject delivered at the PROCIV CER WP meeting on 17 February 2026.

This document contains a presentation by an external stakeholder and the views expressed therein are solely those of the third party it originates from. This document cannot be regarded as stating an official position of the Council. It does not reflect the views of the Council or of its members.

UCL

Preparing for High Impact Low Probability (HILP) events

Prof. Gianluca Pescaroli, Science lead of Horizon AGILE,
Director of Systemic futures lab, UCL
Senior Advisor, Cambridge Centre for Risk Studies

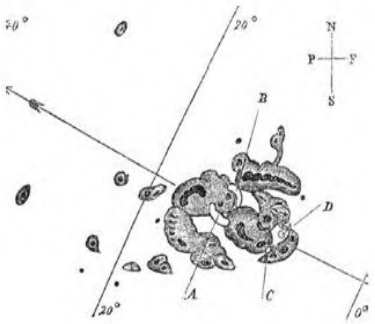

UCL
It is the context that evolves
Basic human needs
Self-actualization
e.g. morality, creativity
Esteem
e.g. self-esteem, confidence
Love/belonging
e.g. family, friends
Safety
e.g. personal security, health
Physiological
e.g. food, water, shelter
Concurrency: Risk of heatwaves, flooding, storms, pandemics, wars
Prevent and mitigate disruptions
Globetrotting
Wi-Fi
Battery
See Pescaroli and Alexander 2016, 2018

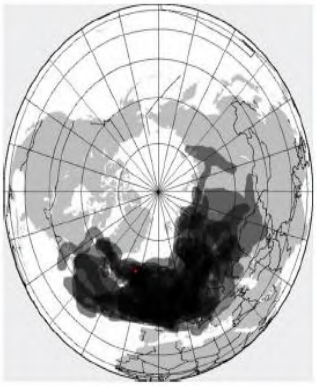
UCL

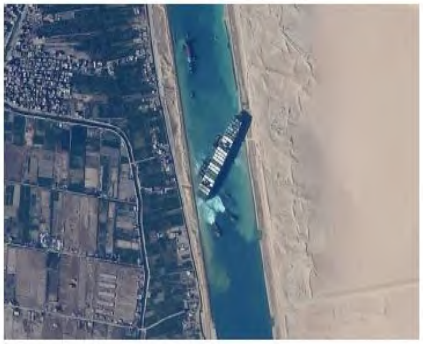
Our concept: we cannot predict everything

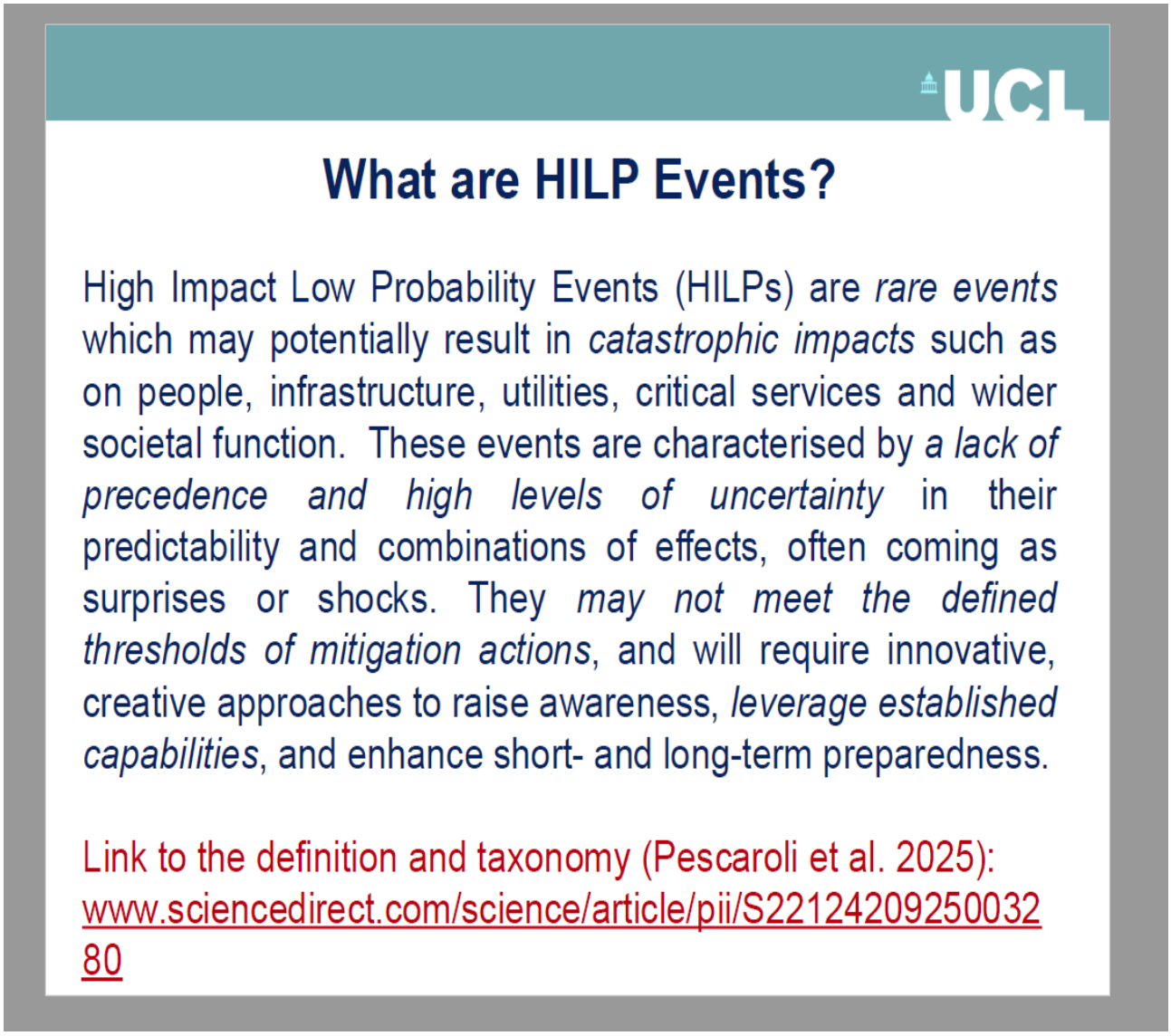
UCL

The challenge: “it will never happen to us”







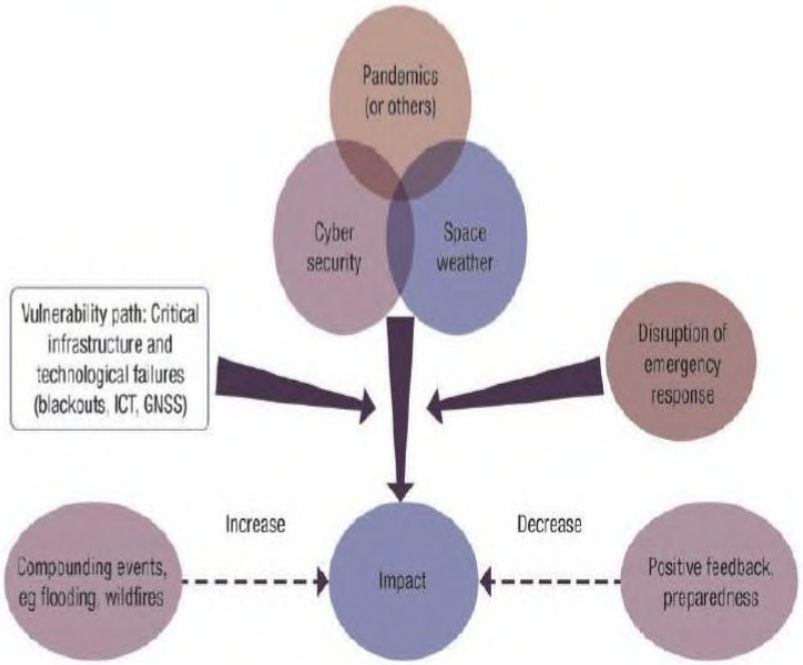


Link to the definition and taxonomy (Pescaroli et al. 2025):

www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212420925003280

UCL

Addressing single point of failures across multiple threats (risk agnosticism)



Pescaroli et. 2016 2018, Trump et al. 2025

UCL

It's not rocket science: redundancy in both soft and hard infrastructure

See Pescaroli et al. 2022,2023, Trump et al. 2025

UCL

The role of stress testing

UCL

Practical steps for public policies

- ✓ Benchmark HILP scenarios
- ✓ Streamline a risk or threat agnostic approach
- ✓ Assure the adoption of stress testing methodology across the supply chain (third party providers)
- ✓ Increase the focus on preparedness
- ✓ Moving toward training and creativity for thinking the unthinkable.

UCL

Any questions?

References

- ✓ Pescaroli, G., McMillan, L., ... & Linkov, I. (2025). *Definitions and taxonomy for High Impact Low Probability (HILP) and outlier events*. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 127, 105504
- ✓ Trump, B. , Mitoulis, S., ...Pescaroli, G.., Pingina, E. Trump, J. & Linkov, I. (2025). *Threat-agnostic resilience: Framing and applications*. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 124, 105535
- ✓ Pescaroli, G., Guida, K., & Alexander, (2023). *Managing systemic risk in emergency management, organizational resilience and climate change adaptation*. Disaster Prevention and Management, 32(1), 234-251
- ✓ Linkov, I., Trump, B. D., Trump, J., Pescaroli, G.,.. & Panda, A. (2022). *Resilience stress testing for critical infrastructure*. International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 82, 103323
- ✓ Pescaroli, G., Wicks, R. T., Giacomello, G., & Alexander, D. E. (2018). *Increasing resilience to cascading events: The M. OR. D. OR. scenario*. Safety science, 110, 131-140
- ✓ Pescaroli, G., & Alexander, D. (2018). *Understanding compound, interconnected, interacting, and cascading risks: a holistic framework*. Risk analysis, 38(11), 2245-2257.