



Bundesministerium
für Umwelt, Naturschutz
und Reaktorsicherheit



Precautionary Flood Protection in Europe International Workshop

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"Living with Floods" Summary of Results

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Workshop organised by Ecologic, Institute for International and European Environmental Policy
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“Living with Floods”

Summary of Results

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Summary Content

- **Restate Water Management Principles**
- **Flood Protection into Other Policies**
- **[National] Flood Action Plans**
- **Interdisciplinary Flood Protection**
- **Civil Protection, Response, and Damages**
- **International and European Co-operation**
- **The Strategic Way Forward**
- **Notepad: Miscellaneous Ideas**

Restate Water Management Principles

- **Reality: Rivers Need Room to Move**
 - **Move dykes**, transport structures, & **homes**;
Move sensitive (emergency) services
 - ‘**Men, women & assets + flood = catastrophe**’
 - **Greatest problem:**
Development of flood-prone areas
- **No Export of Flood Stress to Downstream**
- **No Deterioration of River Systems (WFD)**



Flood Protection into Other Policies !

- **Integrate Flood Protection Requirements into - or with - other Policies, e.g.:**
 - Transport, shipping, **Urban development**
 - **Emergency management** (being prepared)
 - **Nature Conservation** (wetlands etc.)
 - ...
- **Spatial Planning to Mediate diff. Interests**
- **Need for more International Activities**



[National] Flood Action Plans - 1

- **Changing Circumstances:**
 - Climate >> **rising flood peaks**, risk areas
 - **EC Water Framework Directive** (incl. floods?)
 - **UN/ECE Århus Convention** >> access
 - **EU: Decreasing importance of agriculture**
- **Distinguish floods 10-500y, high / lowland**
- **To Ecosystem-Based Flood Management**

[National] Flood Action Plans - 2

- **Scattered** Responsibilities/Competencies
 - Combine duties and improve co-ordination
 - Link with public participation and WFD
 - Provide information on hazards for decisions
- Measures **Specific to River Systems**
 - Relocate sensitive services, restoration
- High Cost (private & public), incentives?
- Land use + development, no \$ for nature

Interdisciplinary Flood Protection - 1

- **Session Underlined:**
 - **Complexity** of the Issue
 - Role of **information & participation**
 - Need for **different disciplines** to co-operate
 - Power of **new presentation aids (GIS)**
- **(Re-)Link**
Water Management & Regional Planning
- **Link Engineering & Ecological Measures**

Interdisciplinary Flood Protection - 2

- **Need High Resolution, Local Flash Floods**
Need to Act on Climate Change Threat ?
- **Not Behind Closed Doors !**
Avoid Focus on (Heavy) Engineering
- **Inform, Consult, Involve -**
Every Level, Every Service, Stakeholders
 - Practice **co-operation among disciplines**
 - Focus on (physical and) **spatial planning**



Civil Protection, Response, Damage - 1

- Protection (10y floods) raises **confidence**
Ensure Information to Raise Awareness
- Economic Instruments to set Incentives
- Compensation and **Restitution** (new start)
 - **Liberalism** versus (state-imposed) **solidarity**
 - **Private** individual / business (no state cover)
 - **Insurance** (obligatory / regulated)
 - **EU Disaster Fund** (super-fund + “learning”)

Civil Protection, Response, Damage - 2

- **Publish Maps, Alerts, Assume the Worst**
 - EU may clarify access to risk maps & data
 - EU to finance (more) research & learning?
 - EU can help evaluate systems after floods
- **EU can Facilitate Information Exchange**
- **EU Common Agricultural Policy may Pay for “Losses” in Agricultural Land Values**



Internat. & European Co-operation - 1

- **Strengthen Co-Operation in Intern. Rivers**
- **WFD and Floods (Quality and Quantity)**
 - **WFD refers** > floodplains, wetlands, structure
 - **Flood-relevant economic & social objectives**
 - **Programmes of (flood-relevant) measures**
 - **Guidance on wetlands & flood action plans**
 - **Use WFD “Window of opportunity” for floods**
- **WFD & Nature Conservation Legislation**

Internat. & European Co-operation - 2

- **Collation and Validation of Experience**
 - **Retention, re-naturalisation** (HMWB a start)
 - **Regional and land-use planning**, sealing
 - **Information**, risk awareness, **access to maps**
 - **Compare models and modelling practices**
 - **Improve sharing of data** (climate & weather)
 - **Link forecasting and early warning systems**
 - **Measure for damage mitigation & regulation**
- **JRC Modelling & Early Warning (Open)**

The Strategic Way Forward - 1

- **Need a Structure for Analysing Floods**
 - **Scales** (time, space, floods, ...)
 - **Upstream**/headwater - **downstream**/lowlands
 - **Protection objectives**
 - **Life** - humans, animals
 - **Assets** - values, vital infrastructure, strategic
 - **Prevention of floods, protection from water**
 - **Prevention of loss, regulation of damages**
 - **How to (Partially) “Retreat” from Flood Plains**
- **Learn to Tap European Funds**

The Strategic Way Forward - 2

- **NL and F Chair European Core Group**
 - **Review** approaches, measures, experiences
 - Establish **best practice** (for different cases)
 - Stimulate **exchange** (lessons learned)
 - **Co-ordinate implementation** of EC laws
 - (Minimum) requirements for data exchange
- **Future Conferences and Workshops**
 - Next: UN/ECE, Helsinki, 28-29 April 2003
 - ... **... To be continued ...**



Notepad - Miscellaneous Ideas ...

- **(Annual) Reminders** of Floods and Risks
 - Commemorations
 - Pictures, statutes, high-water marks
- **Flood Information in Property Deeds**
- **(European) Recommendations** for Households & Businesses in Flood Areas
- **Focus on Pollution** during and by Floods

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