New technique to assess the cost of major flood damage to be unveiled at international conference

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A new approach that can calculate the cost of flooding will be presented at the International Conference of Flood Resilience.

A new approach to calculating the cost of damage caused by flooding is to be presented at the International Conference of Flood Resilience: Experiences in Asia and Europe at the University of Exeter.

The methodology combines information on land use with data on the vulnerability of the area to calculate the cost of both past and future flooding events.

Climate change, along with increased building on flood plains, has led to both a greater likelihood and a higher impact of flooding across the globe.

The method has already been employed to estimate the damage caused by heavy rain events that caused serious flooding in Barcelona in 2011 and in Dhaka, Bangladesh, in 2013.

As well as being used in the analysis of historical flood situations, the methodology is being used to predict the impact of future flooding, including health impacts of pollution caused by combined sewer overflows. Information on land-use from urban growth projections is coupled with hydraulic modelling results to assess the effectiveness of different strategies for future flood scenarios.

Flooding places enormous pressures on national economies, cities, communities and individuals. The short-term impacts may include many hundreds of casualties, displaced people, serious health problems and huge damage to property and infrastructure. Recovery and rebuilding in the affected areas can take years.

Two hundred experts from nearly forty countries will gather at the University of Exeter from the 5 - 7 September 2013 to discuss the latest advances in flood management plans and flood resilience measures.

Conference Co-Chair Professor Slobodan Djordjevi? from the Centre for Water Systems at the University of Exeter said: "The impact of flooding, especially in urban areas, can result in tremendous damage to buildings and contents, huge financial costs as well as serious health risks . In some cases floods can threaten human life, result in loss of industrial production and lead to societal disruption. This conference is an opportunity for researchers to meet delegates from city planning services, relief organisations, consultancies and software companies from across the world. It is imperative that we work together with our international partners to implement flood resilience measures and build robust flood management plans so that we can minimise disruption and loss of life in the face of inevitable future flooding."

Professor Sir Steve Smith, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Exeter, will give the opening address at the conference which will be followed by a keynote lecture by the Taiwan Minister of the Interior, Professor Hong-Yuan Lee, who will speak about Taiwan's experience of the governance of climate change and aggravated natural disasters. Other keynote talks during the week will include discussions on responses to major flooding in Thailand, flood insurance in Germany, resilient technologies and research highlights from the CORFU project.

More information: icfr2013.ex.ac.uk/

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