

INTERNATIONAL FLOOD INITIATIVE

About IFI



The International Flood Initiative (IFI) focuses on research, information networking, education and training, empowering communities and providing technical assistance and guidance for Integrated Flood Management. IFI is a framework for promoting collaboration among related international organizations such as UNESCO, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), the United Nation University (UNU) and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR). IFI made its official launch in January 2005 at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCDR) in Kobe, Japan. The IFI Secretariat is located in the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICARM) in Tsukuba, Japan.

The overall aim of the initiative is to build capacity in countries to understand and better respond to floods by taking advantage of their benefits while minimizing their social, economic and environmental risks. The IFI partners at present include the International Association of Hydrological Science (IAHS), the International Association of Hydraulics Engineering and Research (IAHR) and the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR).

Istanbul-Turkey
March 21
Workshop

**International
Flood
Initiative**

**5th World Water Forum
Side event**

Charting a global agenda for meeting today's flood management challenges

Date: 21 March 2009
Time: 17:00-19:00
Venue/Room: Feshane/F 4 Hall
Capacity: 200
Registration fee: free

In response to increasing worldwide flood disasters and related damages, this workshop is organized by the International Flood Initiative (IFI) to catalyze a global agenda toward Integrated Flood Management. IFI partners will report on their activities to improve today's flood management too. *See page two for more detail.*

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IFI Newsletter is a semiannual and non-commercial publication to develop information networking and promote the exposure of IFI activities. It is distributed via e-mail. For subscription please send your request to info@ifi-home.info They can also be downloaded from the IFI website.

Interview: Prof. Slobodan Simonovic
Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction (ICLR)

ICLR is a research institute, established by Canada's property and casualty insurers, working to reduce disaster losses. The Institute is internationally recognized for its leadership in multi-disciplinary disaster prevention research. Quality research provides the foundation for better public policy and disaster management.



Q. Have you ever experienced any flood personally?

A. Yes! Actually, I went through the largest flood that occurred in Canada in the recent years. That was the 1997 flood in the Red River Basin, Canada and US. At that time I lived in the city of Winnipeg. After the flood of 1997, governments of Canada and US asked International Joint Commission (IJC) to investigate floods of this magnitude and larger. I was fortunate to be appointed by Canadian government to the IJC international task force. It had the most significant influence on my personal and professional life.

Q. You were the chairman of the organizing committee for the 4th International Symposium of Flood Defence in Toronto in May 2008. Can you summarize the findings of the symposium?

A. The Symposium was attended by more than 300 participants from all over the world. One of the most significant issues discussed at the Symposium was the impact of a long-term change - such as climate change, population growth and economic development – on the variation in frequency and magnitude of flood event Findings of the Symposium are summarized in the Toronto statement. One of the recommendations is to continue strengthening the application of interdisciplinary and integrated flood management principles and practices, together with the combination of structural and non-structural flood management measures.

Q. What can be the contribution of ICLR to IFI?

A. ICLR is involved with various applied research activities related to management of floods. One of the areas that is very high on our agenda is impact of climate change. Various projects are being conducted by the researchers in our Institute on this topic. Our experience from this work could represent one of the main contributions to IFI.



Slobodan P. Simonovic is currently Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Western Ontario and the Director of Engineering Studies with the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction. He has over thirty years of research, teaching and consulting experience in water resources systems engineering. Up to now he has supervised 13 doctoral candidates. He has been involved in the IFI related activities from the beginning. He is also chair of the ad hoc committee for International Conference on Flood Management.

“My message to young researcher is that research they are involved with should offer new theoretical contributions, but also should be of value in solving practical water resources management problems.”



IFI News 

IFI Workshop in WWF5 in March 21, 2009:

This side event is organized by the International Flood Initiative (IFI) to catalyze a global agenda toward Integrated Flood Management. IFI partners will report on their activities to improve today's flood management under changing natural and social condition too. The main conveners of the event are UNESCO, WMO, UNU, UN/ISDR and ICHARM as the IFI Secretariat. Other IFI partners such as IAHS, IAHR and ICLR will also take part in the workshop.



IFI in the Second Global Platform for DRR:

IFI will be participating actively in the second Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (16-18 June, 2009-Geneva). IFI is now trying to organize a specific session in the platform on Flood Risk Reduction upon agreement of the platform organizer. The 4th IFI Advisory and Management Committee will be held at Geneva-WMO Headquarters back to back with this event.

3rd IFI Meeting

The third meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC) and Management Committee (MC) of the International Flood Initiative (IFI) was held at ICHARM on 2 October 2008. The main agenda of this joint meeting was to propose the IFI Action Plan. Following the review of the IFI mapping activities exercise, the discussion on the IFI Action Plan went to emphasize the role of the initiative in synthesizing what we already know on flood issues and translating available research and studies to an understandable format for flood policy makers. In order to formulate sensible IFI outcomes, three types of IFI products were proposed:

- IFI briefs: About 2 pages (at most 4 pages); a brochure-type multilingual publication to communicate flood issues and available solutions to governments and policy makers. They can be in a printed format or web-based.

- IFI reference series: A kind of guidebooks and manuals to fulfill gaps and elaborate in detail on flood issues and solutions for practical use with respect to ongoing activities at WMO and various other available texts.

- IFI web tutorials: web-based education and training with respect to the available e-courses at UNU and UNESCO-IHE.

In order to promote the exposure of IFI activities, it was agreed that the IFI Secretariat at ICHARM should publish IFI newsletters. They can be distributed using the UNESCO-IHP network as well as WMO-CHy and other relevant networks. The next meeting of the IFI AC/MC will be held at Geneva-WMO Headquarters on the occasion of the 2nd Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (16-18 June 2009).

Interview: Prof. Arthur Mynett IFI representative for IAHR



Arthur E. Mynett is a professor of Environmental Hydroinformatics at WL Delft Hydraulics as well as UNESCO-IHE in the Netherlands. He is also the director of the Strategic Research and Development at Delft Hydraulics. As a member of the IAHR Council, he is the chair of the International Flood Initiative Working Group of IAHR. He has been involved in the IFI related activities since the beginning.

The International Association of Hydraulic Engineering and Research (IAHR) promotes the advancement and exchange of knowledge on water resources, river and coastal hydraulics, risk analysis, energy, environment and disaster prevention. IAHR is a member of IFI Management Committee.



Q. I have noticed a small IAHR flag on your suit. Can you talk about IFI related activities by IAHR?

A. Various IAHR sections can contribute to IFI. For example, we have vast experience through our expert network on river hydraulics, hydroinformatics, ecohydraulics, etc., which can contribute to IFI. I will try to put together such expertise and knowledge as the chairman of the IFI working group at IAHR.

Q. How many PhD students have graduated under your supervision?

A. I have supervised six doctoral candidates and I am supervising five more now.

Q. What is your message to young researchers in the field of flood management?

A. We have to always remember that flood is not only a matter of water quantity. There are many other research aspects, such as water quality, health issues and post flood environmental impacts. I think in these topics we still have a lot to do.

Q. What do you think is the most important to be considered in future IFI activities?

A. Flood management is very much depended on local conditions. For example, flood risk reduction in a small steep mountainous river in an arid zone might have different options from those for floods in delta areas in the Netherlands. While IFI is an international initiative and should work on a global scale, IFI should also consider localism to address floods on a local scale.

International Flood Initiative

In Close Collaboration with:



Tsukuba-Japan
2011

ICFM5

5th International Conference on Flood Management

The International Conference on Flood Management (ICFM) is the new title for the International Symposiums on Flood Defence (ISFD). This is the only international conference fully focused on flood issues so far, and it is the best place to share your research results, experiences and achievements in flood management with other researchers, engineers and policy makers.

The 5th International Conference on Flood Management (ICFM5) will be held in Japan in Autumn 2011. The ICFM5 will be hosted by the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHARM) under the auspices of UNESCO.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.ifi-home.info/ICFM.html>

Integrated Flood Management HelpDesk

An introduction to IFI partners activities:

WMO - Associated Program on Flood Management (APFM)

The HelpDesk for Integrated Flood Management (IFM HelpDesk) is a facility that will provide guidance on flood management policy, strategy, and institutional development related to flood issues for countries that want to adopt the Integrated Flood Management concept in close partnership and tailored to the needs of the particular partner, with the aim of helping the partners further in IFM implementation.



Background

Application of the IFM concept can be a challenging task. The challenge lies in striking and sustaining an optimal balance between the development needs and the risks associated with the use of flood-prone land, within given institutional structures. At this stage, an impartial and competent development partner in this specific area with operational capacities to respond to country's needs in IFM implementation is urgently required.



Need more information?

For more information visit the IFM HelpDesk webpage. You can access to various information from their webpage including a concept note on IFM HelpDesk. Moreover the latest news on launching the HelpDesk is also available in the website.

<http://www.apfm.info/helpdesk.htm>