

The advantages and disadvantages of adopting consistent standards for communities

Technical Summary FD2009

Joint Defra / EA Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management R&D programme

Background to R&D project

There have been a number of proposed flood management schemes where concerns have been raised that the recommended approach to the evaluation of benefits and costs at a flood cell level has led to the adoption of different levels of flood alleviation for different parts of the same community. This project set out to consider the arguments for and against adoption of different criteria for evaluation that would consider a range of impacts including economic efficiency and social equity.

Results of R&D project

The project considered a range of approaches to decision making and examined five possible criteria for decision-making, narrowed down from a longer list of potential criteria. These were then applied to examine the implications for a range of practical river flood management situations through seven case studies. The aim was to rehearse the arguments rather than make any definitive recommendations for policy change. The main conclusions are that no single replacement criteria could provide a more equitable and consistent or logical approach to decision making, that there is no criterion which can be mechanically applied and which will result in universal happiness and that a more productive approach is likely to be achieved by considering flood risk management policy more comprehensively within the context of integrated catchment management.

R&D Outputs and their Use

The research report is a discussion of issues and should not be considered as a statement of policy or best practice. The recommendations from the work will be taken into account in development of future guidance and the work should provide users with a better understanding of the basis for current guidance when faced with alternative proposals for approaches to evaluation.



This R&D Technical Summary relates to R&D Project FD2009 and the following R&D output:

- **R&D Technical Report FD2009/TR – The advantages and disadvantages of adopting consistent standards for communities.** Published December 2004.

Publication Internal Status: Released Internally External Status: Released to Public Domain

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The report may be downloaded from the Defra/EA R&D FCERM Programme website (www.defra.gov.uk/envIRON/fcd/research), there is a search tool located on the project information and publications page. Copies are held by all EA Regional Information Centres, contact the Environment Agency's National Customer Contact Centre by emailing enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk or by telephoning 08708 506506.



PB 10461/TS

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