

Floods: From Risk to Opportunity

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Abstract “From risk to opportunity” implies that in facing risk, humanity has an ability not only to avoid it turning into a disaster, but also to use the threat as an opportunity to transform society into a higher level of sustainability. The means of transformation include increase of social capital in communities, promotion of development, both structural and non-structural, integrated with risk reduction and building resiliency. In the case of floods, this concept should be completed by best use of flood flows. In order to implement this concept, a paradigm shift is necessary from focusing on emergency response and recovery to risk management before disaster occurs. This process should be supported by vulnerability monitoring and development of tools such as standard scales for measuring risk and preparedness level in an integrated approach in order to build capacity for better response to floods by taking advantage of their benefits while at the same time minimizing their social, economic and environmental risks. This shift should be reflected in the post-Hyogo Framework for Action to start in 2015.

Key words disaster resiliency; flood risk management; IFM; risk to opportunity; sustainable society; standard scales of measuring risk and preparedness; social capital