



May 2017

## CIB Symposium Resilience to Climate Change and Flooding Summary of the event



### Introduction

In association with the Global Disaster Resilience Centre (GDRC) and the CIB, the School of Art, Design and Architecture at the University of Huddersfield organised a one-day symposium on climate change and flooding on the 6th of April 2017, at the Sir George Buckley Theatre, University of Huddersfield.

Invited was a team of academics, practitioners, local authority representatives and consultants in the field to showcase some of the local initiatives on flood resilience, community actions on climate change and natural flood management schemes amidst some of the similar initiatives worldwide. Altogether 35 guests attended the event. The event started with welcome messages from Prof. Bingunath Ingirige, Prof. Dilanthi Amaratunga, Director of the GDRC and Ms Helena Soimakallio, the President of the CIB.

### Presentations

The presentations of the event were as follows (presentation slides can be downloaded from the links below).

- Prof Dilanthi Amaratunga and Prof. Richard Haigh, the Director and Co-Director of the Global Disaster Resilience Centre (GDRC) discussed some of the projects of the GDRC portfolio relating to climate change and disaster risk reduction. They explained some of the examples and key societal outcomes achieved from their recent and ongoing research projects.
- Mr. Philip Wilbourn, a Chartered Environmental Surveyor and Consultant presented the [Sheffield Lower Don Valley flood resilience scheme](#) (1MB) where the funding for the project was raised as a collaborative venture

between the local authority and businesses in the area and how the benefits of the scheme was earned by the community as a whole. Mr. Wilbourn served as a member of the steering group for the project.

- Mr. Paul Cobbing, the CEO of the National Flood Forum of UK, presented ["Communities and Flooding"](#) (1MB), where he emphasized the importance of community based solutions for flooding. He also highlighted the importance of longer term sustainable solutions for flood resilience, not just developing short term reactive measures.
- Dr. Lydia Vamvakieridou-Lyroudia from University of Exeter and Dave Stewart from the Torbay council did a joint presentation titled ["Urban coastal flooding in Torbay"](#) (1.1MB), where they discussed one of the case studies where coastal flooding affects the critical infrastructure in the Torbay area of UK and to visualize the problem using ICT visualization and modelling. This presentation was conducted as part of the EU Horizon 2020 funded EU-CIRCLE project.
- Prof. Dongping Fang, is the Professor and Chair of the School of Civil Engineering and The Executive Director of Future Cities and Infrastructures at the Tsinghua University, China. He is also a CIB member. He presented ["Initiatives towards resilient urbanization"](#) (1MB) and highlighted some of the collaborative projects conducted by his laboratory at the Tsinghua University on visualization for resilient urbanisation.

- Mr. Andy Cameron, is the team leader for flood and coastal risk management partnerships and strategic overview team at the Environment Agency, UK. He presented the [Salford flood storage scheme](#) (3MB) and local natural flood management. He explained the value of putting together a scheme that provides multiple benefits to the community in the area rather than just one purpose – i.e. as a flood resilience scheme.

### The key messages of the symposium

Flooding is a global problem and in the UK it is one of the top items in the National Risk Register. The symposium offered the participants to discuss some of the global and local issues that affect communities due to climate change and flooding. The key message that came out from the discussion was that Increasing resilience to flooding and climate change should focus mainly on the people rather than the physical structures for flood mitigation so that people are at the heart of any solutions both in the short as well as in the long term.

It is believed that a significant number of people affected by flooding suffer post-traumatic stress. Hence community engagement is key during all phases of the flood propagation chain. It is also proven that flooding has direct links to house price behavior, therefore, people who are affected have to deal with both the immediate impact and then the cascading effects such as lower house prices, livelihood issues and enduring emotional challenges.

Another key observation was that the Government funding during the aftermath of a flood event is often targeted at households. Therefore small business owners are often overlooked despite their importance within the local economies. As the scale of the challenge of recovery after flooding is getting more and more complex, it is important that a more comprehensive and a cohesive solution should emerge and the strategic narrative in flood resilience is taken higher up in the Government agenda.

### Contact details

For more details of the event, please contact: Prof Bingunath Ingirige of the Global Disaster Resilience Centre (GDRC)

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