1st cycle of implementation of the Floods Directive 2010-2015
First reflections from the Member States' perspective

Ioannis Kavvadas, DG ENV
10th Disaster loss data working group,
6-8 November, Brussels
A statement from an older presentation:

The Floods Directive created a "tectonic shift" in the management of flood risk in the EU

Was it an overstatement?
No, it wasn't! "Practicing only flood protection" belongs to the past

- Introduction, or strengthening, of flood risk management as a process;

- Identification of APSFRs and mapping of the hazard;

- Development of new models and methods for assessing and/or managing flood risk – and periodic reviews of these;
- Consolidation of different plans into one document;

- Systematic, coordinated and holistic implementation of flood risk management plans and measures – understanding of priorities;

- Focused discussion and improved awareness of flood risk by stakeholders and development of partnerships
- Strengthened coordination and collaboration between different sectors, beyond water: spatial & land use planning, civil protection, insurance

- Better integration of WFD and FD measures;

- Better protection of cultural heritage;

- Only three MSs disagree with the statement that "the FD provides a suitable framework and enough time flexibility for conducting preliminary assessments, drafting the flood hazard and risk maps and preparing risk management plans."
Examples of where the FD contributed to operationally

- In 19 MSs the historic floods database was created or significantly updated after 2007 and half of MSs developed guidance on how to collect and record flood event data after 2007;

- For 2/3 of MSs a suitably accurate Digital Terrain Model, covering a large proportion of the country, was created or significantly updated after 2007. An additional 5 MSs will improve their DTMs;
- For 2/3 of MSs digital inundation maps covering the affected areas of the country were created or significantly updated after 2007;

- In more than half of MSs the knowledge of the hydrological characteristics of water bodies, that have the potential to flood, improved post 2007;

- In 24 MSs there was enhancement of information on the location & size of flood defence infrastructure as a result of the implementation of the FD;
- 13 MSs carried out research specifically on climate change and its influence on the occurrence of significant floods;

- 24 MSs feel that cooperation at cross-border basins/coasts has improved after the introduction of the Floods Directive
What we would like to have more of?

- Resources: time, human and financial;

- Public participation and communication, including meeting the expectations of the public and other stakeholders;

- Effective involvement and coordination of national, regional and local authorities;
More of at the technical level...

- A definition of what is significant, accuracy of historical flood data, sufficiently accurate Digital Terrain Models and modelling techniques, agreement on methodologies;

- Further research on flooding not resulting from rivers or the coast – and a methodology to deal with these other sources;

- Less uncertainty in the return periods (due to short length of observed time series);
- Better quality of hydrological data and better hydraulic modelling of flooding;

- Data on receptors and their vulnerability and more research on the assessment of non-monetary damages (e.g. on culture, environment, human health);

- Development of web-GIS systems;

- Better modelling of flood conveyance routes
Some highlights

- Public consultation: Responses ranging between no significant feedback was received (only 3 MSs) to stating that the feedback influenced areas deemed to be at risk of flooding;

- No change in way likelihood is expressed for the second cycle of the FD for 25 MSs

- Difficulty explaining to the public re FHRMaps: hazard, risk or residual risk, probability, return period, uncertainty, significance...
- Except for 3 MSs, changes are being considered to the methodology for the production of flood hazard maps for the second cycle of the Floods Directive;

- In almost all MSs, consultants were employed to undertake/support data collection, method development, modelling and data processing and to undertake/support map production and FRMP drafting;

- 26 MSs able to provide INSPIRE compliant flood relevant spatial data for the second cycle;
- In 15 MSs the public had at least some influence on prioritisation of measures and 19 MSs made changes to the draft FRMPs as a result of public consultation;

- Post 2007 funding increased in 13 MSs, in 5 MSs it remained the same.

- In 17 MSs in the previous 3 years to 5 years EUR 10 billion were invested in flood risk reduction. 11 MSs no certain knowledge of what was invested in flood risk reduction;
- 26 MSs expect the budget for flood risk reduction measures in the next three years to remain stable or rise;

- Fewer than half MSs had none or little difficulties in reconciling the needs of local communities with the longer term planning of measures for flood risk reduction. Problems arise when local communities insist on development in flood prone areas or consider themselves an absolute priority for flood protection;
- 19 MSs have a way to keep track of the damage from floods;

- No known effect or evidence in 16 MSs from publication of the flood maps on insurance premiums for properties inside mapped flood extents;

- However, in only 9 MSs is insurance against floods compulsory (universally or at least when the asset is in an area that floods)
Obstacles to overcome...

- Defining a significant flood or significant consequences presents a challenge for MSs;

- Only 3 MSs have in their databases info on insured losses from floods. Damage to cultural heritage, damage to agriculture, damage to environment: Also only 3 MSs each;

- Only 14 MSs have information on the effectiveness (level of protection) of existing man-made flood defence infrastructure.
- Communication of the uncertainties in the FRMPs to the public, or sometimes unrealistic expectations from the public and politicians;

- Assessing the benefits of non-structural measures;

- Achieving national consistency;

- Decision on the level of detail required;
- Level of coordination the FRMPs should have with the RBMPs;

- Cross border working arrangements;

- Deriving a meaningful method for prioritisation;

- Lack of a definition of a common horizon for climate change scenarios;
- How to incorporate climate change effects on extreme floods and flood frequency estimation;

- How the effect of climate change should be represented on flood maps
A special note on floodplains

All MSs have in place urban planning and building regulations to control encroachment of human activity into floodplains;

- On the question how effective are the urban planning and building regulations in actually controlling encroachment few MSs were confident this was the case;
Half of the MSs responded there was a dedicated mechanism (e.g. at the municipal level) to monitor and record further "encroachment" of human activity into floodplains;

- However, when taking a closer look, in the sheer majority of MSs there are no controls other than urban planning and building regulations to limit encroachment of human activity (housing, production, services...) into floodplains, nor is there currently provision for establishing other controls.
Obstacles to cross-border cooperation in the preparation of FRMPs

- Lack of cross-border agreements;
- Lack of common methodologies;
- Lack of common priority setting;
- Different legal systems;
- Different level of detail sought;
- Different level of protection aimed at;
- Different hydraulic and hydrological models;
- Different language spoken
How can the EU help?

- *Guidance (18 MSs)*;

- *Facilitate information exchange between MSs*;

- *Feedback from European Commission on good practice*;

- *Clarify the role and synergies between the FD and other EU legislation (3 MSs)*
Thank you for your attention!