



ADB's Perspective on Flood Management

Component 2: Structural Measures and Flood Proofing

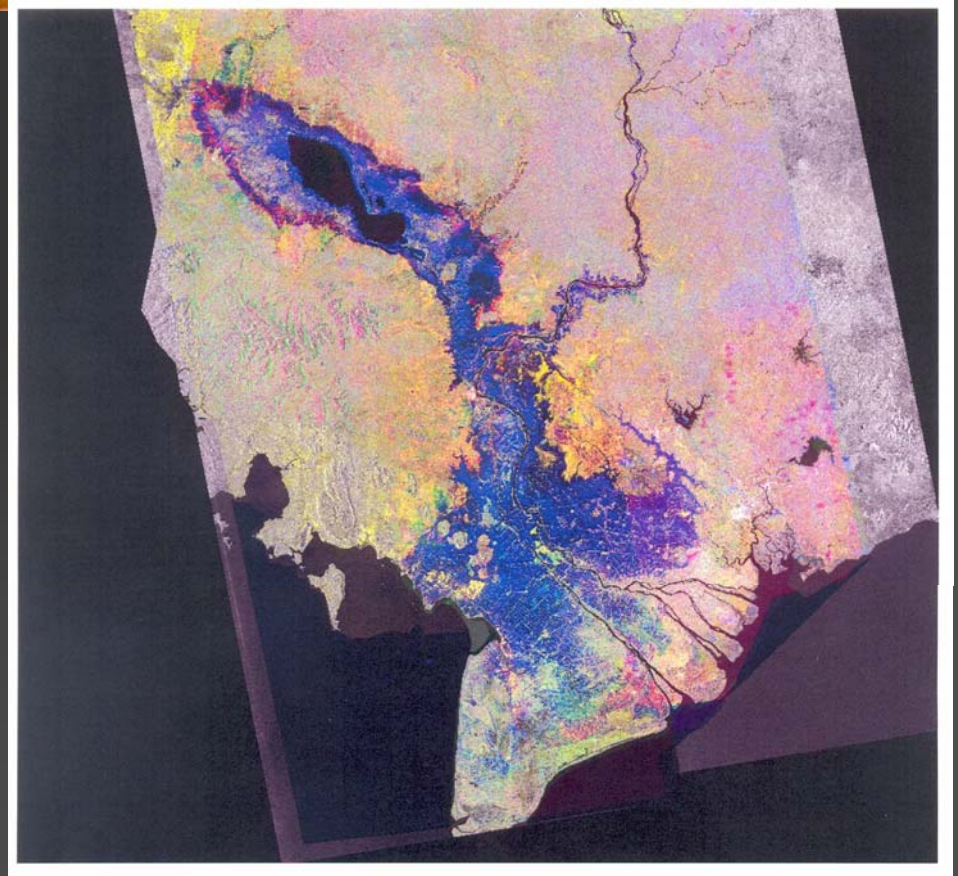
Third Annual Mekong Flood Forum 2005
Don Chan Palace Hotel, Vientiane – 7-8 April 2005

Are floods really getting worse?

- yes and no
- global climate change caused by human activities
- inappropriate land use
- spread of human settlements into floodplains and wetlands
- but floods are only disastrous when people and property are in the way...
- so it is more appropriate to refer to floods as “unnatural disasters”
- and, yes, unnatural disasters are getting worse

What is flood control?

- a structural means of keeping a river within its channel
- reflects the idea that floods are bad



Reproduced from Figure 6 of the MRC report Inundation Mapping in the Lower Mekong Basin, prepared by Hatfield Consultants Ltd. (January 2001).

Is flood control desirable?

- it all depends on your point of view
- obvious benefits for some, but...
- loss of flood benefits for others
- less predictable behavior of rivers
- increased risk of catastrophic failures
- heavy maintenance commitments
- flood control progressively removes options

How does flood management differ from flood control ?

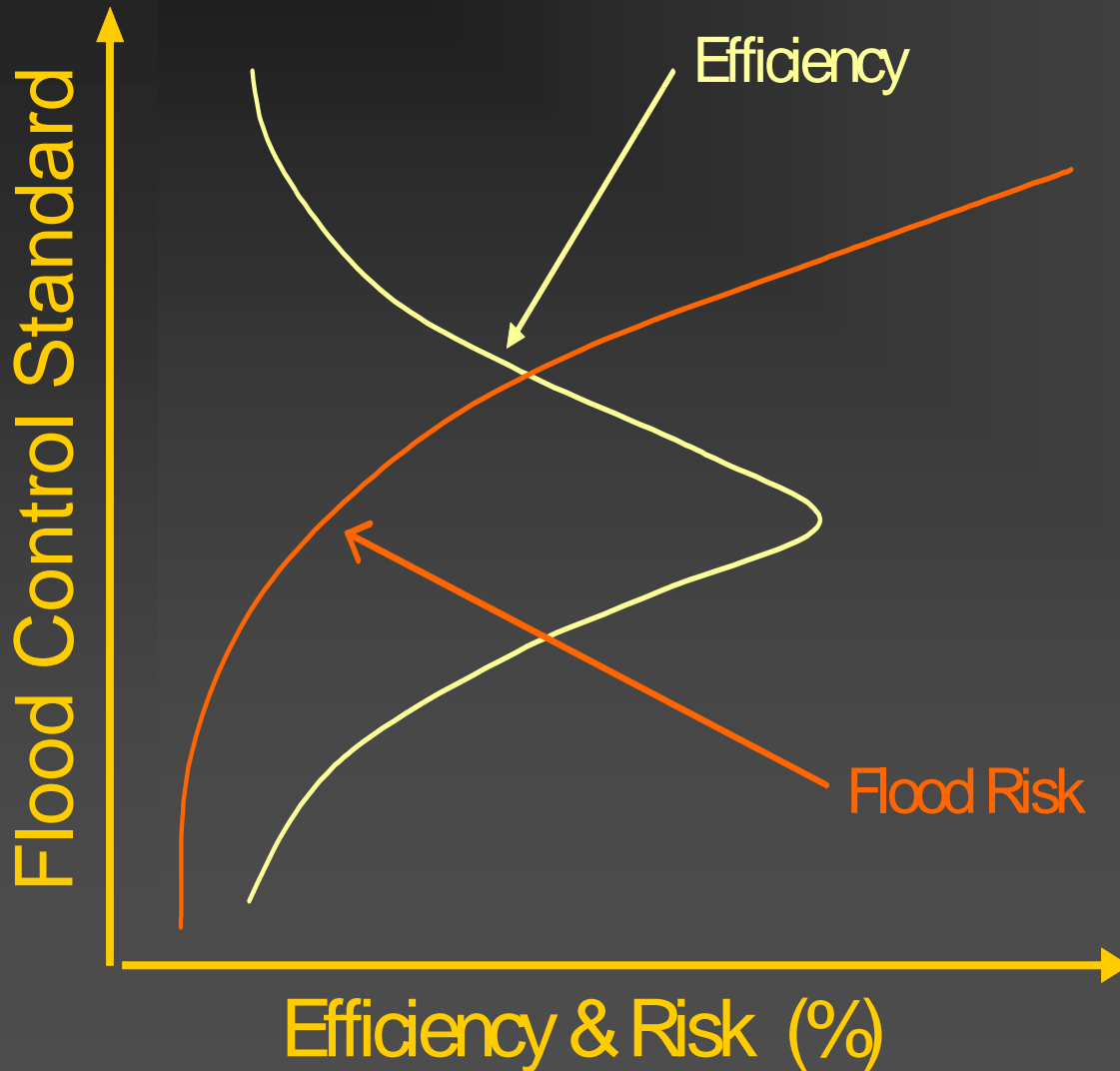
- flood management implies willingness to “live with floods”
- it means taking measures to avoid floods from becoming disasters...
- anticipation of worst-case scenarios...
- and identification of options for conveying floods in a safe and predictable way



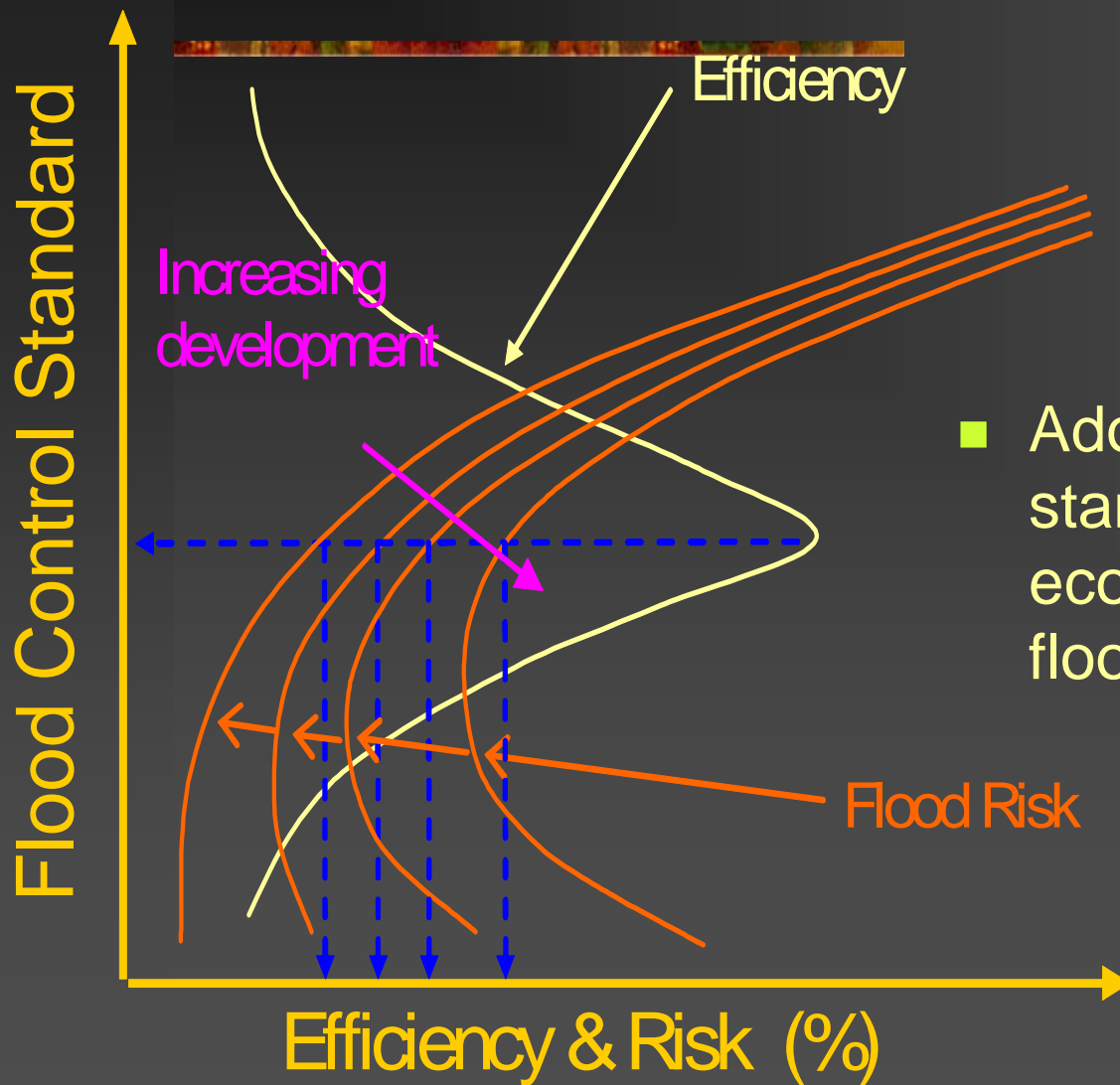
How should the FMMP be realized?

- risk assessment is the key to flood management
- risks are perceived differently by different groups
- rural poor in the lower Mekong River Basin see floods as a source of livelihood and sustenance
- droughts cause greater hardship in flood-affected areas than floods
- determination of risks is not easy or straightforward

Appropriate flood control standard



Appropriate flood control standard



- Adopt a flood control standard which balances economic efficiency against flood risk.

Who bears the risk?

- the poor are most at risk of losing their lives due to floods
- the poor are also more likely to lose crops, livestock, possessions, and means of livelihood
- the poor are more likely to suffer water-borne diseases
- the poor are the least likely to be consulted in any flood management scheme

Who bears the risk?

<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Poor people in cities and rural areas living near rivers and in floodplains2. People living in coastal areas prone to surges	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Lives lost, people injured■ Homes, possessions, crops, livestock, and other means of livelihood lost■ Water-borne diseases
<ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Owners of large commercial interests in floodplains4. Regional and national economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Businesses disrupted■ Jobs and income lost