

## What is the focus?

Floods are natural phenomena that cannot be prevented, although harmful impact of floods can be mitigated.

The overall objective of this two-year project is to assist efforts to increase the **resilience** of communities in flood prone areas. There are many definitions of resilience. In the FREEMAN context it may be defined as following:

**Resilience** is the capacity of a community to withstand loss or damage or to recover from the impact of an emergency or disaster.



A thousand-year-flood along the torrent Beltram on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September 2000 wiped out a camping site

The concept of resilience enables flood managers to combine (technical) flood protection measures such as dikes and flood plains with non-technical measures. These may be better awareness and preparedness of residents or avoiding to develop land in flood-prone areas.

In many European countries flood protection measures and forecasting systems are on the cutting edge of technological development. However, there is still potential to improve understanding of and access to these system for involved residents and stakeholders.

## How do we do it?

Each project partner has a specific expertise for one domain of **flood resilience enhancement**:

1. **Risk perception and communication** (Seecon/ DE): are stakeholders aware of flood risk as well as of flood protection measures and forecast systems? Are residents prepared for floods? How do the responsible authorities support stakeholders and residents?
2. **Flood risk assessment and flood forecasting systems** (Soresma/BE): how can flood management plans and forecasting systems be analysed? How can these systems be made more useful and accessible for stakeholders and residents?
3. **Flood policy framework and institutional structure** (CMCC/IT): which institutions and organisations are involved in the design and implementation of flood management plans? How do these institutions interact and communicate?

In close collaboration with local authorities, the project partners will review three **previous flood events**: Demer - Flanders, Leine/Innerste - Germany, Beltram - Italy.

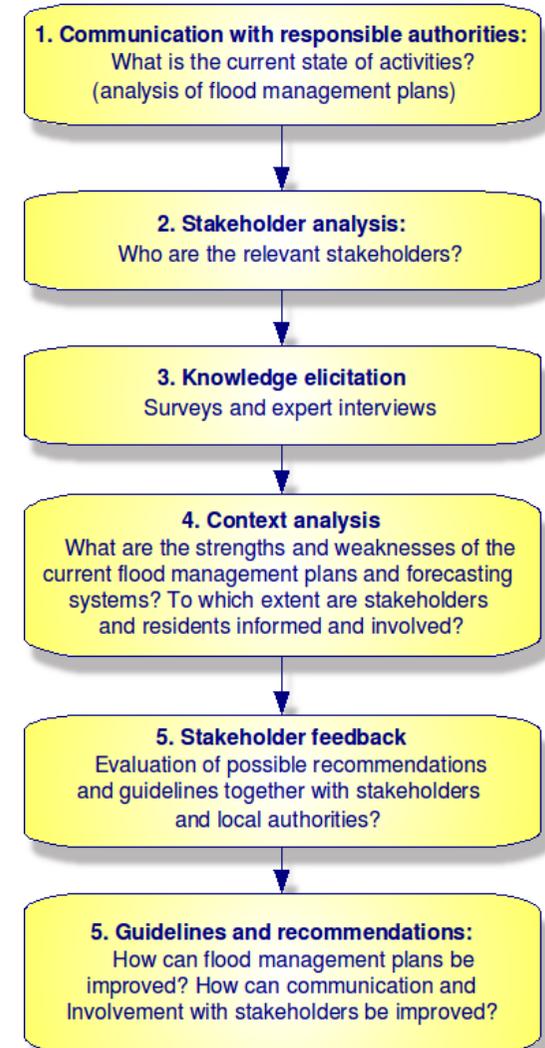


Flood at the Demer river basin, Belgium, December 2002

Freeman is a pilot project that builds upon the outcomes of preceding European projects such as FLOODsite, NeWater and SafeCoast.

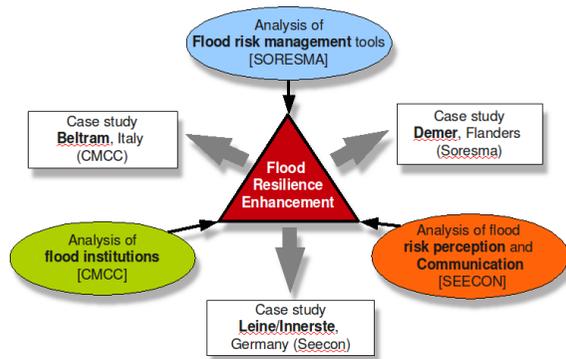
## What steps will be taken?

The flowchart below describes the main steps to be taken in collaboration between the three project partners and the respective local authorities.



## What are the expected results?

The overall objective of this project is to provide **guidance** on the integration of flood resilience into the flood risk management plans of the three selected case studies. Based upon the expertise of the project partners and the requirements of the European Flood Risk Directive, all flood risk management plans are reviewed, and **recommendations** will be given (see figure below).



The main output will be:

- Recommendations for an improved knowledge base for citizens and risk perception as well as for an improved crisis communication;
- Methodology for the evaluation of flood event management plans and flood forecasting tools (SOESMA);
- Deeper insights in flood institutions and their interplay;
- Guidelines on flood resilience and flood risk management.

At the end of the project FREEMAN will invite experts and stakeholders to an international workshop discussing issues of flood risk resilience in research and practise.

## Case study contacts:



Case study Demer river  
**Soresma NV (BE, co-ordinator)**  
 Marc Huygens • Marc.huygens@soresma.be  
 Jan Cools • Jan.Cools@soresma.be  
<http://www.soresma.be/>



Case study Leine/Innerste  
**Seecon Deutschland GmbH (DE)**  
 Sophie Rotter • sophie.rotter@seecon.org  
[www.seecon.org](http://www.seecon.org)



Case study Beltram  
**Centro Euro-Mediterraneo per i Cambiamenti Climatici (IT)**  
 Jaroslav Mysiak • jaroslav.mysiak@feem.it  
<http://www.cmcc.it/>

# FREEMAN

**Flood REsilience Enhancement and MANagement:** a pilot study in Flanders, Germany and Italy



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supported by:



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