

From fail-safe to safe failure: implications for climate resilient infrastructure

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2011 Thailand Floods



Hue – Assumptions of Fail Safe



Urban Systems

- Infrastructure and technology – and complex institutions define contemporary urbanisation – interlinked and networked
- Deliver differentiated services & benefits
 - Climate impacts will be felt through these systems

Climate uncertainty and risk

- Climate change as a 'wicked problem'
- Inherent future uncertainty and risk
- Social calculation of risk - contested

- Levee effect
- Path dependency
 - Urban infrastructure has built vulnerability
- Caught in trajectories of pathway dependency

Safe Failure

- The consequences of system failure?
- Rethinking the 'one in a hundred year' risk
- ...to dealing with a failure
- Avoiding the 'levee effect'
 - Different scales of risk
 - Different distribution of risk
 - Acceptability of risk (for whom? By whom?)

Socially acceptable risk – need to be socially determined



THANK YOU!

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