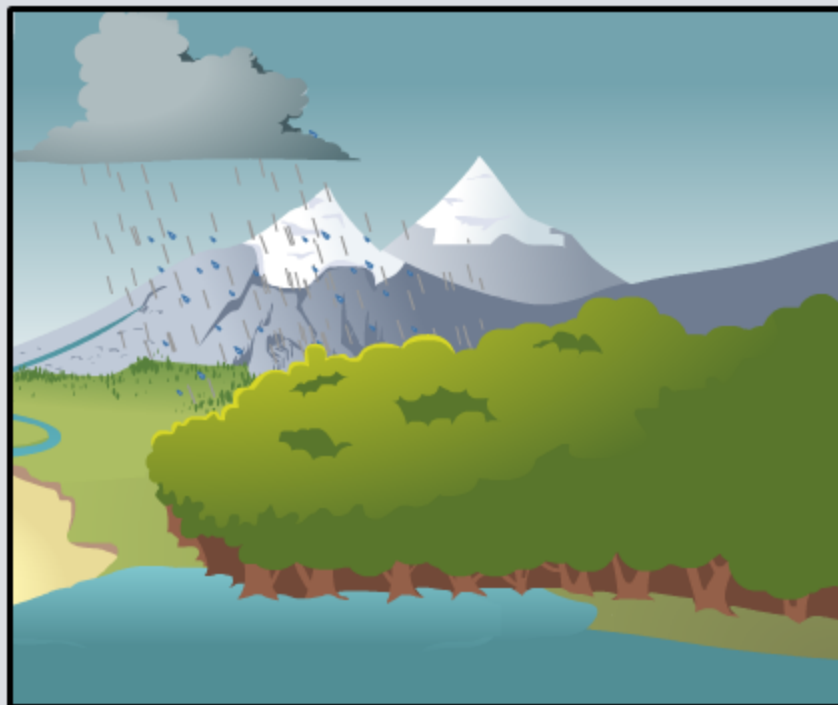


# Flooding



**Flooding** is the most frequently occurring disaster in the world.

Flooding occurs when rivers cannot contain their waters and overflow.

It can also occur when storms at sea drive large amounts of water onto the coast and past flood defenses.



Heavy rain concentrated in a local area can cause water levels to rise sharply which may result in a **flash flood**.

**Can you think of any floods that have happened in the recent past?**

# On the rise?



To combat the dangers of flooding, humans have built many different flood defenses.

**Dykes** and **levees** act as flood barriers along major rivers.

**Dams** make it possible to control the amount of water flowing through a river.



Sea walls and coastal defenses can help protect shorelines from sea-flooding.



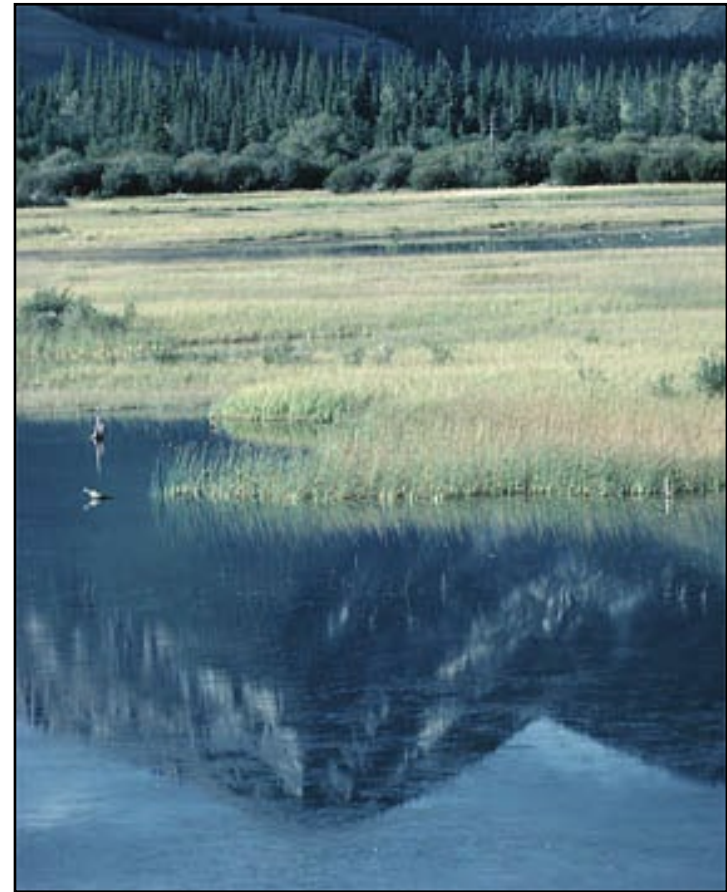
Flooding is a natural event that can never be fully controlled.

**Wetlands** and **flood plains** contain life that has adapted specifically to deal with flooding.

These areas also act as flood defenses, soaking up water like a sponge. This prevents flooding elsewhere.

Flooding can bring natural benefits to many areas.

The mineral rich nutrients that it spreads make soil fertile.



Building on flood plains dramatically increases the risk of flooding disasters.

Water runs off tarmac. As a result, it cannot be absorbed by the earth.

Human actions have added to the devastation floods can cause.



Dams and **flood defenses** disturb the natural flow of water. Although dams offer protection to some areas, they may cause flooding elsewhere.



Constructing dams may also severely affect the course of a river, causing it to dry up further downstream.

This could possibly result in a **drought** affecting a region.

**Deforestation** can alter the soil's ability to hold water, drying out the ground and triggering **desertification**.



**Do you think humans actions have had an impact on the destructive nature of weather hazards?**

