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Reflections on and lessons learnt from recent flood events in Flanders

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Raingain Consortium meeting Exeter, Oct 7th 2014.





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Flood management : how does it work ?

- before
- during
- after



Flemish Gvmt + Administrations

↳ Coordination and publication of flood prevention policy

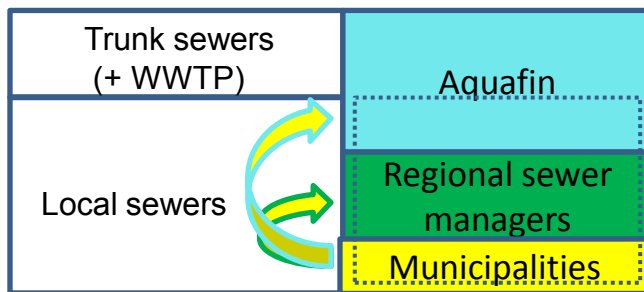
- runoff source control @ public + private sites
- safeguarding of flood plains (building permit)

⇒ Fluvial flooding

- design criteria + code of good practice for sewer systems

⇒ Pluvial flooding

Local (sewer) authorities



- (Planning)
- Design
- "Normal" operation

Flood prevention at design level



Real flood management





Flemish Gvmt + Administrations

- ↳ Early warning (48 hrs) of flood risk for watercourses
 - based on hydrologic/hydraulic modelling
 - Pluvial flood risk often not anticipated

RMI (Met Office)

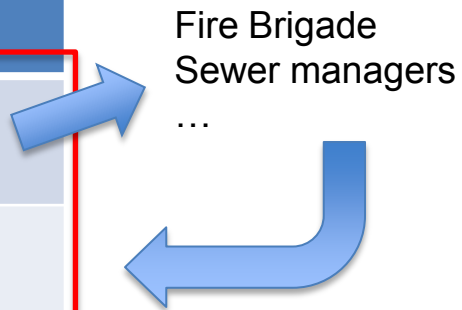


- Severe rain warning update frequency = f (alert level) 2-6 hrs
- realtime C-band radar images (+/- 10 mins delay)



Crisis / disaster management

Impact level	Coordination
(not officially declared)	None (individuals)
Level 1 (local impact)	Municipality (mayor)
Level 2 (regional impact)	Province (governor)
Level 3 (national impact)	Federal govt (Interior Minister)



- (when the media are still on top of it)
 - Find the culprit !
- (in the next days/weeks)
 - Prepare the insurance claim
- (in the next months – maybe for life)
 - Watch thunderstorms with a heavy heart ...
and pray that it won't happen again.





The July 29th event

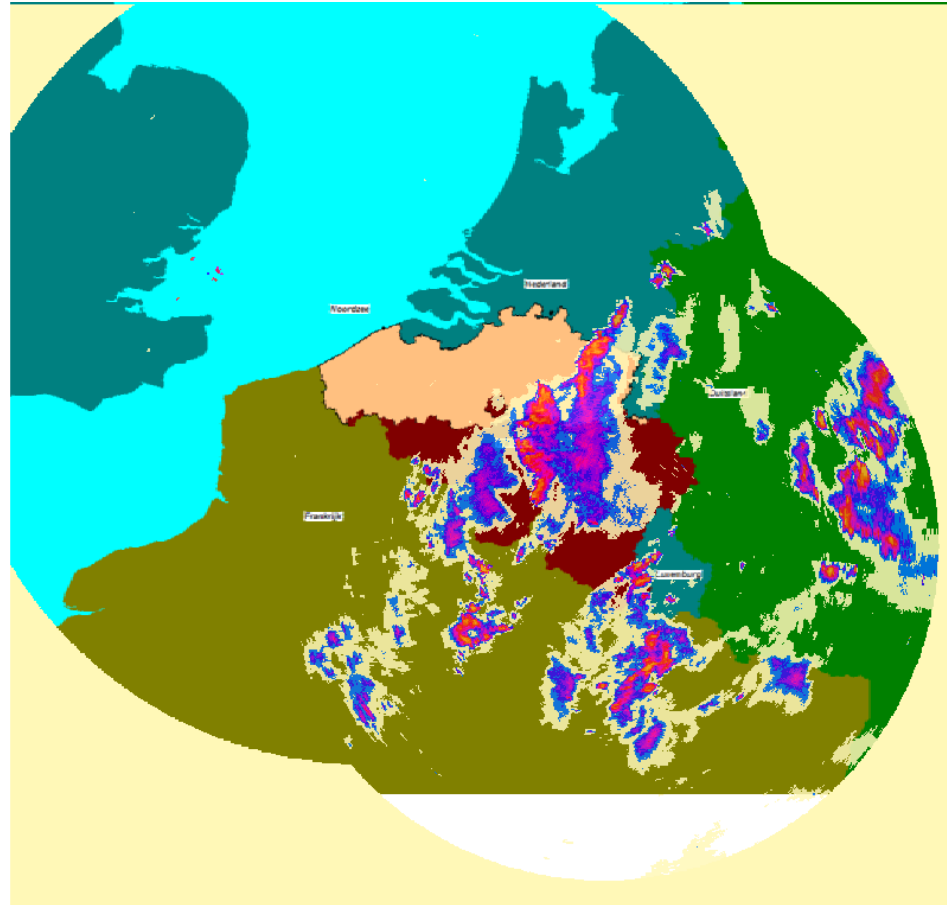
Investing in Opportunities



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Lessons to learn ?

- Don't wait until it hits you !
 - Watch the RMI severe weather alerts
 - Watch the radar images



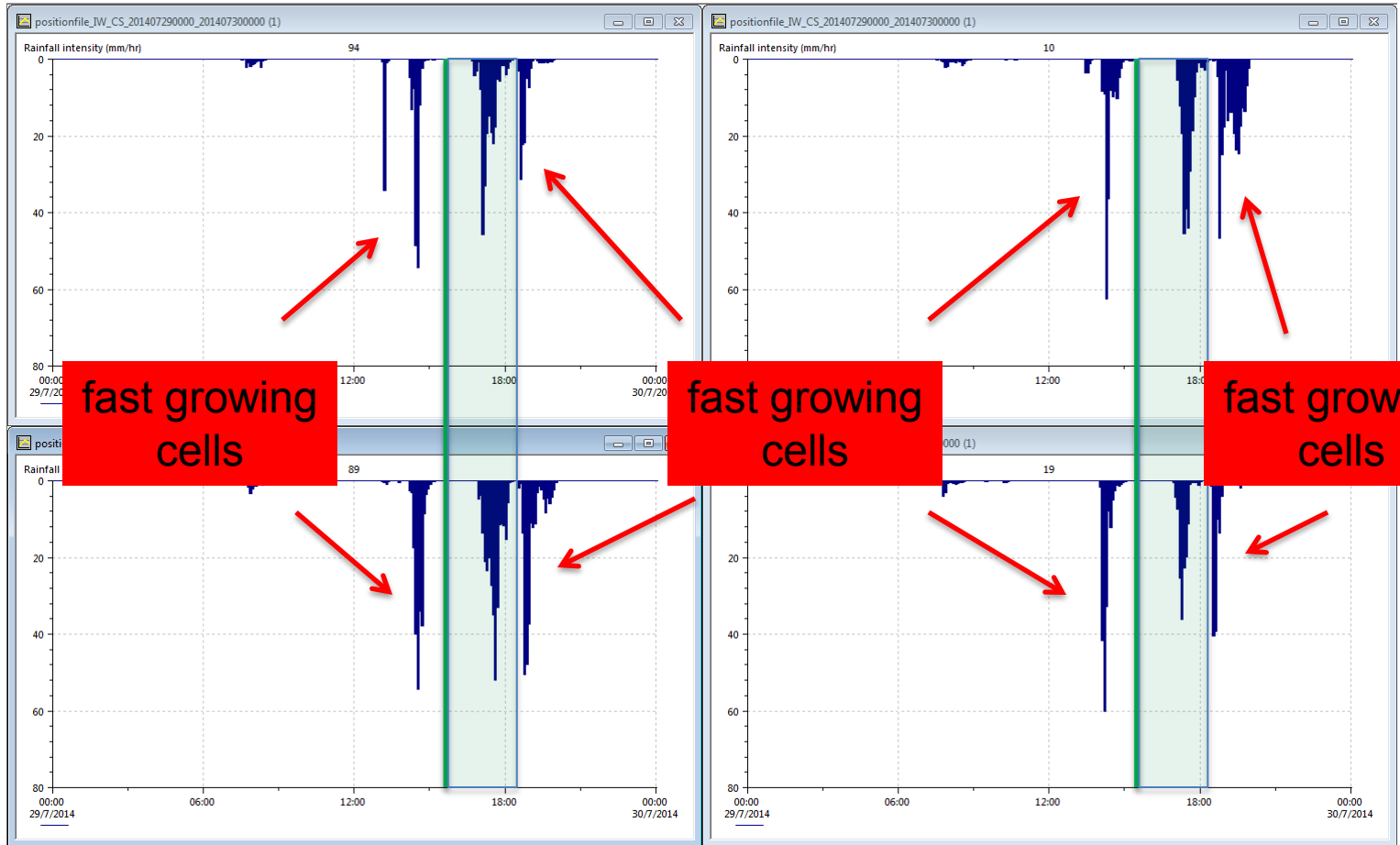
First clear indication of storm trajectory



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- Discrepancies in responsibilities
 - flood prevention
 - flood management
- Everybody should have a script for dealing with floods
 - public involvement
 - debriefing/discussion after the event

