

Case Study: London and Rising Sea Levels

Many people think that London is not in risk of flooding due to rising sea levels as it is far from the sea. However, the River Thames is a wide river that passes through London, which has been made thinner throughout the years so many new buildings could be built for city expansion. River banks were used and overflowing would result in the city being flooded all over.



The Thames flood barrier, built many years ago, is close to reaching its maximum capacity. This is a huge danger to London as the amount of water that should have filled the River when it was first designed, now is 5 times narrower, meaning there is more water in less space.

ECONOMICS: The economic impacts of flooding would be incredibly severe, considering that many major banks are situated in London. Overall, London is a very influential city considering the price of basic accommodation, it houses many top universities and headquarters from global companies. If these major banks would be flooded and therefore lots of money would be lost, together with lots of vital information. London contributes £150 billion to the UK economy each year, of which millions of pounds would be spent on many things: from repairing the damage, to re-locating affected businesses elsewhere.

POLITICAL: The Government of the United Kingdom is based in London, its houses of Parliament. A major flooding in London would severely affect the entire population of the UK, its Houses of Parliament are very much at risk, considering they are situated directly next to the narrowest part of the River Thames, a mere 252 meters wide.

SOCIAL: A flooding in London would cause major social problems: people losing their accommodation, jobs and major event venues, ranging from sports at Wembley to the entertainment industry at the o2, which is what many Londoners praise in their social life. Major television companies, radio stations and filming agencies are set in London, resulting in a nationwide shortage of access to these outlets - London is the vital home of many movie sets and series. Furthermore, London is one of the most popular tourist destinations worldwide, with 2 million visitors yearly. Its famous tourist destinations, such as the London Eye, the Tower Bridge and the Big Ben are vital to the millions of pounds sought from the tourist industry yearly, which would all be



inaccessible to tourists or possibly even destroyed in case of a flood. London is also home to the Underground, the oldest underground train network in the world, where the flooding of a single station results in a power loss across the entire network.

ENVIRONMENT: Flooding would furthermore affect the environmental aspects of the city – Floods result in the spread of diseases, sewage water leaks to the surface and the chances of infection are very high. Humans, plants and animals are in danger, the evolving of diseases at a such scale could result in incurable sicknesses, likely resulting in death for those involved. Trees and other plants are killed due to the salt water, which does not pass on the necessary minerals needed for their survival.

