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Geospatial Hydro-Geoinformatics of Flood Resilience Critical Review: Optimization, Sustainability and Equity

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Abstract
An interdisciplinary synthesis and review of the geospatial hydro-geoinformatics towards its streamlined methods will critically evaluate the current state of flood risk management (FRM) to three interconnected pillars, which are efficiency, sustainability, and resiliency. It is determined in this argument that, in the modern-day planning to control the global floods, it has been observed that approaches to flood governance have been changed to a fidelity-based and holistic geospatial paradigm, with digital elevation models (DEMs), specifically those derived by Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) technology, being considered sinews of the accuracy of hydrodynamic mechanism, as well as the measurement of uncertainty associated with them. It compares and contrasts the technical trade-offs of physics-based models, such as the Saint-Venant Equations and other novel data-driven architectures like Deep Learning. The review finally advances combined approaches e.g. Data Assimilation and Fractional-order calculus to attain both computational speed and predictive accuracy in data sparse contexts. Moreover, the study determines a great geographic inequality in research funding, which shows the susceptibility of the Global South. Lastly, the review highlights that indeed resilient results should be achieved by using combined policy frameworks and adherence to Environmental Justice, which ensures that benefits of flood reduction are shared equitably amidst the increasing climate change.
Keywords: *Flood Risk Management; LiDAR; Data Assimilation; Environmental Justice; Saint-Venant Equations; Hydro-Geoinformatics; Resilience Engineering.*

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I. Introduction: The Paradigm Shift in Global Flood Management

1.1 Contextualizing the Global Flood Threat

Flooding is widely acknowledged as one of the most drastic and influential natural disasters, and it is a very serious and habitual threat to human life, economics, and essential infrastructure (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024). The rate and severity of such hydrometeorological occurrences are increasing, mainly because of the two-fold pressures of escalating climatic changes to the fore and swift and in most cases unplanned urbanization (Nwogu et al., 2025; González-Cao et al., 2025). With the unfortunate consequence of impervious covers taking the natural ground cover, and the rain patterns becoming so unpredictable and random, the drainage capacity of the traditional drainage systems is often exceeded. In such volatile situation, geoscience data has been a very crucial instrument in investigating the spatial-wise distribution of flood risks, the level of risks and the impacts of the risks (Cvetković et al., 2024).

Scholarly and policy thinking regarding the management of this menace currently has shifted decisively beyond classical Flood Control (via single-engineered mitigation interventions, such as levees and dams and concrete channelization), towards a campus Flood Risk Management (FRM) one (Morrison, Westbrook, & Noble, 2018; Wang et al., 2022). Although control means having a fixed capacity to prevent water, management recognizes the dynamic and unavoidable character of floods. The modern FRM is predetermined by the need to create powerful and resilient solutions that will be effective to operate in the conditions of uncertainty of the future (Jonkman & Dawson, 2012). This practice necessitates accepting the complexity of interrelations between the physical infrastructure, dynamic economic environment, and the human factor in the risk assessment and management (Jonkman & Dawson, 2012).

Sustainable FRM can be advanced using policy statements including the ones provided by the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), which lay an emphasis on the restoration and conservation of natural and beneficial values that floodplains provide. Also, they require joint risk sharing, risk management and communication at all government levels, the insurance sector and community. The challenge to effect successful resilience planning, then, is setting a variety of conditions in the future and implementing safeguards against possible failure, such as insurance mechanisms, evacuation plans in the case of emergency, and wet-floodproofing of buildings (figure 1).

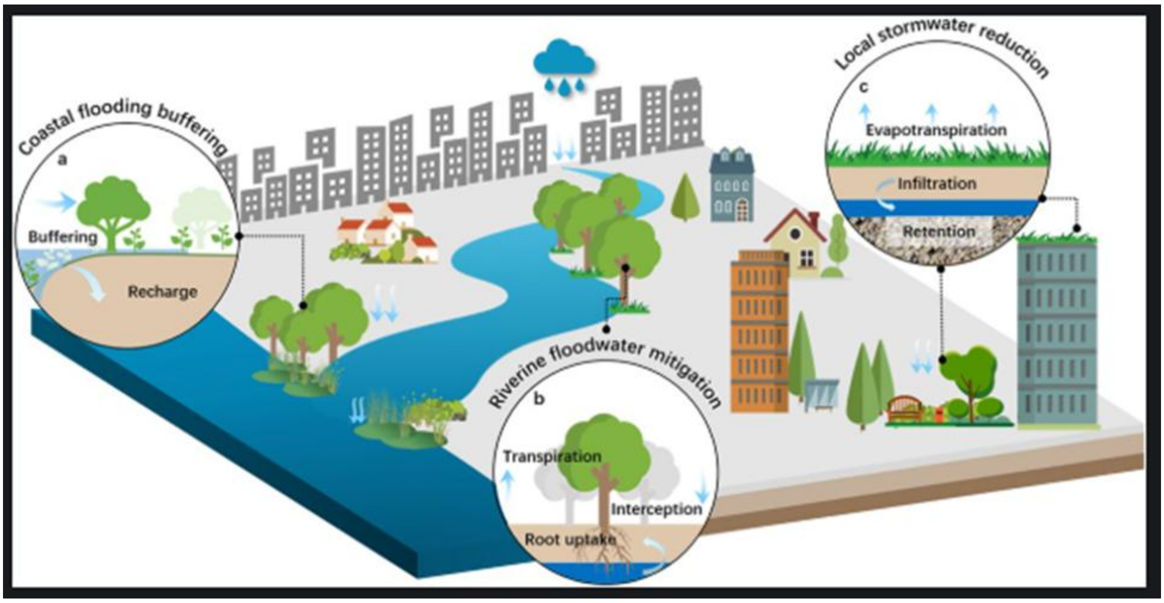

Figure 1: A conceptual diagram illustrating the evolution from "Flood Control" (Engineering focus) to "Flood Risk Management" (Holistic focus), highlighting the integration of Ecology, Sociology, and Engineering. (Hartmann, Slavíková, & McCarthy, 2019)

1.2 The Geographic and Scientific Divide

Although the problem of the danger is worldwide, there is a severe disproportion in the allocation of the study on floods and further protection. Through geospatial and temporal analysis, it can be seen that developing areas especially in Asia and Africa are seen to face the highest rates of flood fatality (figure 2). It highlights an acute and insufficiently fulfilled solution that should be aimed at the improvement of drainage systems and flood defence in those regions especially susceptible to it (Cvetković et al., 2024).

This perceived weak point is internally correlated with an unequal situation in scientific investment. In a review of state-of-the-art flood prediction tools, it was observed that advanced studies are still lacking especially that of uncertainty assessment tools specifically the Copula functions and Bayesian Networks, in Africa, South Africa and Australia (Byaruhanga et al., 2024). This gap implies an important gap in operations: the absence of localized and high-impact model capacity is negative to carry out an efficient regional plan and investment in adaptive infrastructure, hence continuing to pose a society at high risk. Efforts in optimization should therefore focus more on directing technical knowledge and data resources to these high-risk geographical regions that are underrepresented in order to close the digital divide in hydro-informatics.

Figure 2: Flooding in Chad, West Africa, highlighting the urgent need for enhanced flood prediction in the region. (FloodList, 2022)

1.3 Defining the Pillars of Optimization

The strategic use of geoscience tools in FRM should be addressed in contrast to three fundamental goals that are closely related to each other and create the basis of this review:

1. **Efficiency:** This pillar covers the technical requirements of speed and computational parsimony. It brings the field of adoption of computationally sparse models with the ability to forecast nearly in real-time now and the negotiation between the speed of processing and the predictive reliability that can be attributed to a specific one (Cache et al., 2024).
2. **Sustainability:** This is a goal that includes long-term ecological, economical, and social objectives. It also facilitates the implementation of more healthier nature-based solutions (NBS) i.e., blue-green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), and at the same time, it requires the integration of integrated planning horizons or structures to take into consideration the socio-economic aspects (Nwogu et al., 2025; Issakov et al., 2025).
3. **Resilience:** The aspect of this pillar is to do with the ability of a system in case of floods to resist, adapt, and recover swiftly. The resilience engineering, in its turn, has set of requirements related to practicing strict and effective uncertainty management (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024), proactive attitude toward varying risk scenarios, and the capability of assuring that all strata.

II. Methodology of Review

In order to guarantee the validity and integrity of this review, a systematic search strategy was utilized and based on the principles of PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items to Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). The researcher conducted the literature search in high-impact peer-reviewed databases, such as Scopus, Web of Science, and IEEE Xplore.

The search was performed with the help of a particular keyword, which is taxonomy Geospatial Flood Modeling, LiDAR Hydroconditioning, Saint-Venant Equations vs. Machine Learning, and flood risk management policy. The inclusion criteria were based on the fact that the studies were prioritized with the bridging of the gap between technical hydro-informatics and policy outcomes. Such grey literature by respectable agencies (e.g., USGS, FEMA, ASCE) was also also integrated to make certain that theoretical findings are related to what is happening on the ground. The synthesis that results gives the evidentiary basis of the strategies presented herein.

III. Foundations of Geospatial Data Quality: Ensuring Accuracy and Reliability

Topographical data with high-fidelity, high-resolution is inherently required to model floods, as well as assess risks. The essential input to determine a flood path, storage zones, and limits is the geospatial technology which defines the ground truth. A misrepresentation of terrain will cause the most advanced hydraulic models to figure out their mistakes and thus the garbage in, garbage out occurrence.

3.1 Advanced Geosensing Technologies for Terrain Characterization

Airborne and Terrestrial Remote Sensing

Airborne Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) has been accepted as the gold standard in hydrological monitoring since it is the only sensor capable of detecting space points with an excellent spatial density, and having excellent vertical precision (Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, 2006; BELFOR, 2024; Malinverni et al., 2025). LiDAR systems are implemented at the drone level or aircraft-shooting platforms, and they utilize Laser pulses to create dynamic 3D maps of maps, watersheds and infrastructure in the form of high-resolution Digital Elevation Models (DEMs) and Digital Surface Models (DSMs) (BELFOR, 2024; Malinverni et al., 2025). LiDAR is superior to photogrammetry as it is generally able to detect the difference between the upper most part of the vegetation and the bare ground that lies below, as opposed to photogrammetry where it is impossible to easily go through canopy cover (Malinverni et al., 2025).

LiDAR data has been empirically tested in intricate coastal conditions and has been shown to be useful in the process of flood risk assessment. An example of this is a study in the New Brunswick coast where LiDAR derived maps were used to model 2 storm-surge occurrences and sea-level increase (Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, 2006). Field visits to validate the simulations have also proved that the simulations were relatively accurate with storm-surge water levels observed being within 10 20 cm of the simulations. The specified precision was important to make necessary data on socioeconomic and ecosystem impact assessments in a way that enabled regional planners to pinpoint particular properties under threat (Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, 2006). The products of this, the resulting maps, can now be actively obtained by regional planners and coastal communities to develop long-term adaptation strategies.

Dynamic Monitoring and Infrastructure Stability

Turbocharging the captured accuracy of LiDAR DEMs is the system of Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar (InSAR), which offers the means of dynamic control over the infrastructure and terrain stability. Time-series is a process that creates SAR data on surface movement and time changes (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 2024). This is essential to resilience engineering in subsiding coastal cities. Time-series of displacement can indicate episodic shift or quickening in ground motion, which is crucial in surveying the flood-impacted regions or unsteady inclines that can change the flood patterns (Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning, 2024).

In addition to enhancing the productivity of the data collection, mobile and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) LiDAR platforms are easily accessible; thus, data acquisition can quickly be performed with accuracy. This technology is reshaping the mitigation and after-disaster relief operations that have been occurring around the world as it enables quick "before and after" examinations (FARO, 2024) (figure 3).

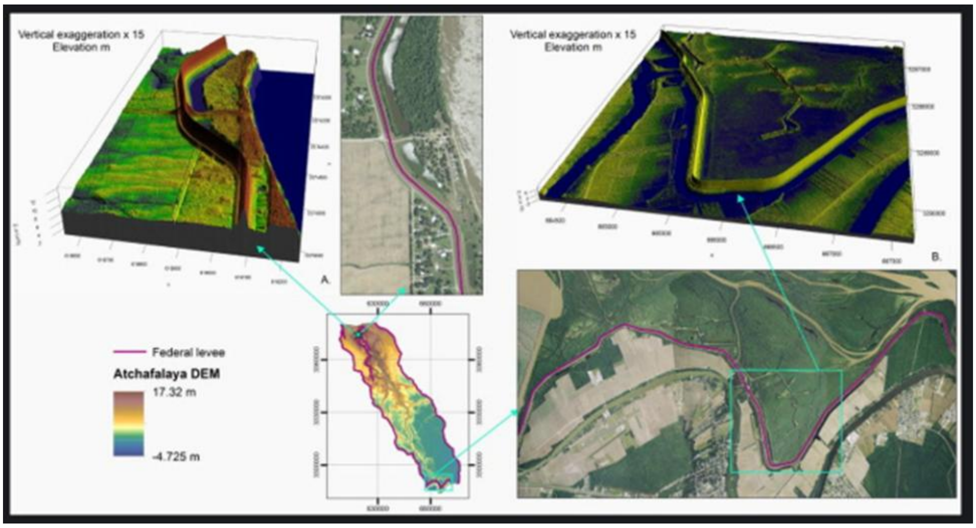

Figure 3: A side-by-side comparison image. Left: A standard satellite DEM showing pixelated terrain. Right: A LiDAR-derived DEM showing crisp details of levees, ditches, and road crowns. (Palaseanu-Lovejoy, Thatcher, & Barras, 2014)

3.2 Geospatial Data Standards: The Mandate for Precision

The quality and the precision of the DEM can be viewed as a fundamental limitation to the reliability of any flood simulation. Therefore, it is a requirement to have strong geospatial data standards to facilitate flood control policy. It is impossible to download data and assume one will get resilient results, the data should be of high quality.

The specialized acquiring of LiDAR data in flood periods has stringent requirements such as a clear snow-free and flood-free ground and an ideal example of having bare leaf-toile land as well as vegetation that would not act as an obstacle to laser penetration to conduct the procedure against the bare-earth ground (USGS, 2024). In order to measure this threshold, such specifications as the low Vertical Root Mean Square Error (RMSEZ) 10.0 cm and Vegetated Vertical Accuracy (VVA) 30 cm at 95 th percentile (NRCan, 2024) are required.

Not only is this attention to high exactness, but a fundamental element of monetary and structural strength. In flat topography floodplains, even small amount of error in the vertical elevation, such as 15 cm, can change the amount of predicted flood inundation significantly and could therefore classify safe areas as dangerous and vice versa. Closely following the RMSEZ requirements, the inherent uncertainty in the topograph input is reduced (NRCan, 2024). This enables risk analysts, whose projects should have a high confidence in the result (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024), to more effectively isolate and manage hydraulic uncertainties, including spatially varying Manning friction parameter (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024). This sound base is necessary in the production of credible risk-advised choices that are critical to the infrastructure planning.

3.3 Hydro-Conditioning and GIS Processing for Flow Dynamics

Raw DEMs cannot be used to do hydrological analysis and require undergoing a procedure referred to as hydrological conditioning in order to create watershed boundaries, flow paths that are more precise. It is an important preprocessing stage that also deals with the detection and correction of digital anomalies in the terrain model that are not present at an actual terrain (PythonGIS, 2024).

Hydro-conditioning involves pitting (isolated cells with no cells under them) and depressing (combinations of cells without an outlet) (PythonGIS, 2024). Uncorrected, such sinks will entrap virtual water, and will thus not allow the model to simulate downstream flow. Specialized geospatial libraries can be used to facilitate practical applications of this process, e.g. the Python package pysheds can perform these necessary functions automatically and includes such functions as grid.fill_pits, grid.fill_depressions and grid.resolve_flats (PythonGIS, 2024).

Also, GIS processing is required in the high-resolution to model a complex interaction of water flow and artificial structures. The studies of coastal flood mapping have revealed that notching of the DEM over raised infrastructure, e.g. roadbeds, is required in places where culverts or bridges provide a conduit between the sea and low inland land (Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, 2006). In the absence of this digital culvert, the model perceives the road as a dam, and harbors the region behind the dam artificially. This GIS change would make the flood models reflect the simulated relationship, an essential component of proper mapping of the inundation extent and depth (Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, 2006).

3.4 The Resolution Trade-off: Efficiency vs. Detailed Accuracy

An important problem in the implementation of the geoscience data into the operational flood modeling is the trade-off between the resolution of the data and the efficiency. The most precise depiction of the terrain is made by high-resolution DEMs that are regularly acquired through LiDAR (Haile & Rientjes, 2005). Nonetheless, the inclusion of such fine resolution (e.g. 1-meter grids) in large model fields makes them computationally prohibitive, which makes it impossible to quickly produce forecasts (Haile & Rientjes, 2005).

In order to get high efficiency, it is customary to downsample the data to a more coarse resolution (e.g., 30-meter grids). It can be simply calibrated in shorter time periods, and sensitivity analysis is also possible (Haile & Rientjes, 2005). Flood prediction in real-time (nowcasting) becomes possible (Haile & Rientjes, 2005). The price of resilience itself, though, is enormous: due to the averaging effect of the downsampling process, key small-scale topographies (curbs, walls, and fences) are lost that regulate flood propagation in urban settings (Haile & Rientjes, 2005). This tradeoff essentially undermines the simulation results. The resolution of flood risk adopted is critical in the assessment of hazard, exposure and vulnerable aspects, which has a considerable impact on the accuracy of flood-damage estimates at a building and community levels (Sameer, 2025).

Table 1: Geospatial Data Standards and Impact on Flood Resilience Outcomes

Data Standard/Metric	Typical Specification (Example CQL1)	Targeted Flood Application	Impact on Efficiency/Resilience

Vertical Root Mean Square Error (RMSEZ)	≤10.0 cm (NRCan, 2024)	Flood Depth/Inundation Extent Mapping	This methodological insight is the key to proper depth estimation to decrease uncertainty ratio according to the vertical in relatively flat plain terrain, as shown by Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, (2024).
Vegetated Vertical Accuracy (VVA)	≤30 cm (NRCan, 2024)	Modeling in vegetated floodplains	Moreover, it also provides a consistent image of the bare-earth surface, thus allowing parameterisation of flow resistance (Manning n) of hydrologic models more accurately, which the USGS (2024) indicated.
DEM Resolution (High vs. Low)	1-meter vs. 30-meter (Cache et al., 2024; Haile & Rientjes, 2005)	Urban Pluvial Flood Nowcasting	The ability to solve minor drainage characteristics is critical to streamlining local decision-making which was concluded by Sameer, (2025).
Hydrological Conditioning	Pit/Depression Filling, Notching (Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, 2006; PythonGIS, 2024)	Watershed Analysis, Flood Connectivity	Last but not least, flow lines and connecting them to each other is stable in infrastructure design as described by Webster, Forbes, MacKinnon, & Roberts, (2006).

IV. Optimization in Flood Dynamics Modeling: Efficiency and Predictive Power

the past, the only choice available to the engineer was a stark trade off in that, physically detailed mechanistic models demanded vast computing power whereas simple models compromised their critical accuracy. The current practice is therefore moving towards hybrid architectures in order to fill this gap. The combination of the predictive power of physical equations that are deterministic and the high-throughput of high-resolution data-driven algorithms is giving researchers high-fidelity predictive power without the prohibitive computational costs of the past.

4.1 Physics-Based Hydrodynamic Modeling: The SVE and Advanced Solutions

The Saint-Venant Equations (SVE), a pair of non-linear partial differential equations of one-dimensional unsteady, gradually varied flow in open channels, is the foundation of the traditional method of flood prediction (Chow, 1959; Cunge et al., 1980). These equations include continuity equation (mass conservation) and dynamic equation (conservation of momentum) (Chow, 1959). The non-linearities and complexities of the channels make it impossible to come up with an analytical solution, and the channels have to be numerically integrated instead (Cunge et al., 1980).

There are several resisting forces that are incorporated leading up to the dynamic equation. The first one is the frame of the dimensionless friction slope (Sf), which considers roughness of the channels and is usually estimated with the help of the quasi-empirical equation called Manning (USACE, 2024). The additive slopes are also further advanced in the mathematical models like HEC-RAS that are able to consider several phenomena such as unsteady contraction-expansion losses (SCE) and fluid internal forces related to mud and debris movements (SMD) so that the momentum equation becomes more realistic and descriptive:

$$\frac{\partial Q}{\partial t} + \frac{\partial}{\partial x}(QV) + gA\left(\frac{\partial z}{\partial x} + S_f + S_{CE} + S_W + S_{MD}\right) = 0$$

where Q is discharge, V is velocity, $g$is gravity, A is the cross-sectional area, z is the bed elevation, and SW is the wind force slope (USACE, 2024).

Even though simple models like the one-dimensional inertial model (also known as SVE without convective acceleration) have the benefit of being simple to formulate and computationally inexpensive, the latter have a critical drawback: due to the CourantFriedrichsLewy condition, they tend to be limited to a very small time step, adversely affecting their operational efficiency (Fassoni-Andrade et al., 2023).

An emerging field of development is parsimonious upscaling models. The ideas of fractional derivatives in fractional-order Saint-Venant equations (FSVEs) are used to model complicated hydrographs (Suzuki et al., 2020). They play an important role in alleviating the computational load to map detailed system heterogeneity by a meaningful proxy in these models. The FSVE method showed higher predictive power in determining complex flow processes compared to traditional SVE and even worse to the state of art Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) machine learning models, with only a few data points required (Wei et al., 2025).

4.2 The Ascendancy of Data-Driven Models for Efficiency

Unlike physics-based models, data-driven models (DDMs) apply machine learning (ML) to Artificial Intelligence (AI) to process a large amount of hydrological and hydrodynamic time series data. In these models, an explanation of the development of the physical river flow is not necessary, additionally, underlying patterns and correlations are identified (Byaruhanga et al., 2024). The widespread use of ML in flood prediction is due to the fact that DDMs have a promising alternative that saves the computing costs and does not require complex and resource-consuming boundary conditions (Byaruhanga et al., 2024).

In operational comparisons, DDMs can perform better when it comes to given contexts. As one example, ML models that were trained on the framework of the Nonlinear Autoregressive with Exogenous Inputs (NARX) proved to be more accurate (improved NashSutcliffe Efficiency coefficients and reduced by 3337 percent Mean Absolute Error) than the physically-based Stormwater Management Model (SWMM) (Frisk & Johansson, 2024). Moreover, NARX models tend to be more cost-effective regarding the need to develop them and implement them (Frisk & Johansson, 2024).

The main constraint of DDMs, however, is quite detrimental to resilience, and it is related to the inability to be generalized (the latter is also known as the Black Box problem). With inferred invisible rainfall situations or clearly different land cover, these models are not precise to apply at large spatial scales, which are involved in urban flood mapping (Cache et al., 2024; Özdoğan-Sarıkoç & Dadaser-Celik, 2024). They can also face the problem of inaccuracy with limited data in case of extreme floods; the model built on two-decades of small floods will not predict the 1-in-100-year disaster with high precision (Frisk & Johansson, 2024). The recent innovative models of deep learning (DL) aim to address this generalization barrier by retaining the high-resolution data of the nearby terrain patch, but introducing a bigger area, promoting the visual field of the model and its generalization to various urban environments (Cache et al., 2024).

4.3 Hybrid Strategies: Data Assimilation and Reliability

The most efficient and resilient Optimization solution will involve a shift towards hybrid platforms that combine the physical precision of SVE with the speed and remedial action of information analysis.

Data Assimilation (DA)

The critical bridge offered by Data Assimilation (DA) is connecting the real-time measurements, which are usually remote sensing with hydrodynamic models (figure 4) (Nguyen et al., 2022). This time-changing correction system dramatically enhances the ability to represent the flood extent by changing fundamental physical parameters dynamically in the course of simulation (Nguyen et al., 2022). DA is specifically aimed at correction of the area-based friction coefficients and inflow discharge. This approach is especially important to create credible flood forecasting to well-gauged catchments that are prevalent in the Global South where the calibration of traditional parameters is problematic because of the absence of historical gauge information (Nguyen et al., 2022).

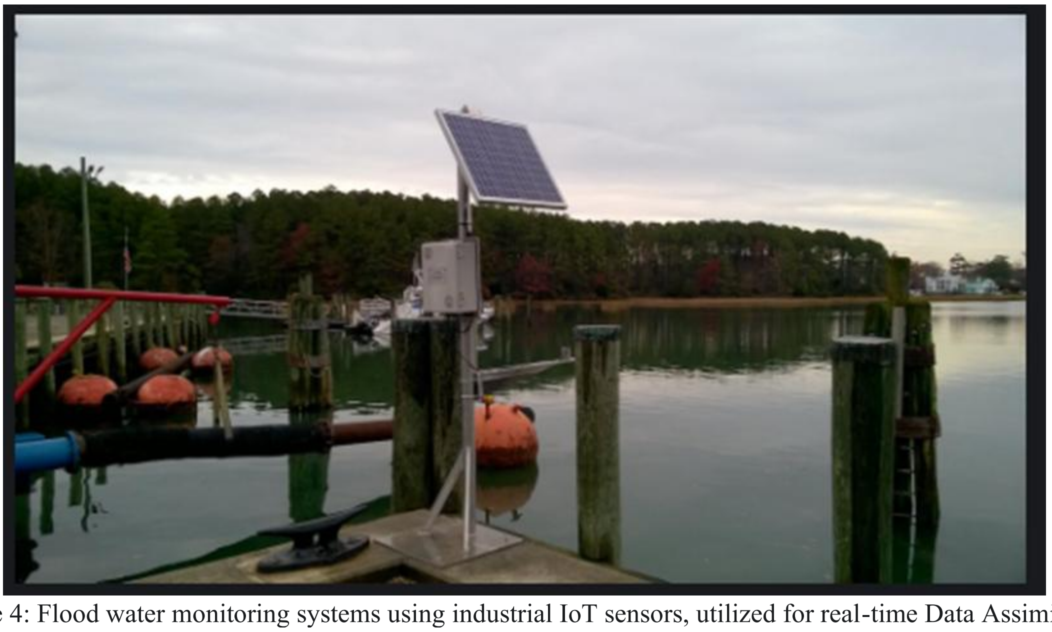

Figure 4: Flood water monitoring systems using industrial IoT sensors, utilized for real-time Data Assimilation (DA) calibration. (Pultar, 2018)

FSVE and DA as Resilient Efficiency Solutions

The Fractional SVE (FSVE) model, as well as the Data Assimilation strategy, is a resilient efficiency strategy of data-constrained systems. Application FSVE reduces the required input data with an advanced mathematical parsimony (Wei et al., 2025), and DA increases the accuracy of the existing physics-based models by adjusting the inputs with the help of the available remote sensing measurements (Nguyen et al., 2022). This guarantees the reliability in those systems, where it will not be sustainable to rely only on either complex, data-consumption-driven SVE models or unreliable, possibly, standalone ML models.

Synthetic Data Generation

Enhancing the resilience of ML models to extreme or rare events needs another important approach that is high-fidelity physics-based simulation (e.g. SWMM) to obtain synthetic training data (Frisk & Johansson, 2024). The given method is a hybrid of physical landscape limitations with hydrodynamic models and the calculational performance of ML that enhances the predictive capacity of the latter at predicting non-standard or extremely destructive flood events (Frisk & Johansson, 2024).

Table 2: Comparison of Flood Modeling Paradigms: Trade-offs in Efficiency and Predictive Accuracy

Modeling Paradigm	Technical Basis	Computational Efficiency	Typical Data Requirement	Generalizability/Extrapolation	Key Advantage
Physics-Based (e.g., SVE/SWMM)	Hydrodynamic equations (Mass/Momentum) (Chow, 1959)	Low (Long run times) (Cache et al., 2024)	High (DEM, roughness, boundary conditions) (Xu, Han, & Fu, 2022)	High (Physically robust)	Reliable for infrastructure design and scenario testing.
Data-Driven (e.g., NARX, LSTM)	Statistical correlation/Time series patterns (Byaruhanga et al., 2024)	High (Fast nowcasting) (Cache et al., 2024; Frisk & Johansson, 2024)	Low to Moderate (Historical/Real-time series)	Low (Brittle in unseen terrain/extreme events) (Cache et al., 2024)	Highly efficient for real-time forecasting (nowcasting).
Fractional SVE (FSVE)	Parsimonious upscaling model (Wei et al., 2025)	Moderate	Moderate (Requires calibration)	Moderate to High (Effective proxy for complex dynamics)	Superior accuracy in complex flow with minimal data (Wei et al., 2025).
Hydrodynamic + Data Assimilation (DA)	Physics core corrected by remote sensing (Nguyen et al., 2022)	Moderate	High (Physical inputs + RS data)	High (Better flood extent representation)	Reliable solution for poorly gauged/data-scarce areas (Nguyen et al., 2022).

V. Metrics, Uncertainty, and Validation for Optimized Outcomes

The usefulness of flood control models is the traditional parameters are measured by standard numerical indicators, such as Root Mean Square Error (RMSE) (Fassoni-Andrade et al., 2023), Mean Absolute Error (MAE), and Nash Sutcliffe Efficiency (NSE) coefficients (Frisk & Johansson, 2024). These metrics are used to give a picture of the performance but it is not extensive enough to give a comprehensive resilience estimation. A detailed assessment should also incorporate a spatial distribution analysis of the model behavior especially of complex or highly urbanized river sections where physical complexity poses a problem to model performance (Moussa & Cheviron, 2015).

5.1 The Resilience Mandate: Quantifying Uncertainty

The flood risk models are inherently complex due to various sources of uncertainty, including hydrology (precipitation that causes a flood), hydraulics (flow propagation), exposed assets, vulnerability, and coping capacity (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024). The hydraulic Manning parameter (n) which is the surface roughness is a key source of error. This is approximated in most models and this creates equifinality of the model that gives the correct answer but due to the wrong reasons (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024).

Resilient FRM requires going beyond deterministic single-value risk forecast to actively quantifying this risk in a more active manner. The shift of thematic focus into resilience-based planning is confirmed by the prioritization of the research into probabilistic models, including Copula functions and Bayesian Networks (BN) (Byaruhanga et al., 2024). Deterministic models have been unable to sufficiently represent the possible spectrum of impacts, but probabilistic frameworks have added uncertainties to give a spectrum of certainty of predicting risks (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024).

The given uncertainty analysis is crucial to determining the weak areas and estimating the crucial resilience variables including Expected Annual Damage (EAD) and Expected Annual Population Affected (EAPA) (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024). This is a spatially correct geospatial input that is enhanced by rigorous data standards and thus enables risk management to project future conditions of a variety of forms turning technical engineering as a powerful tool of financial modeling as well as insurance calculations and policy planning.

VI. Sustainable Governance and Equitable Flood Resilience

Technical prowess will not enable optimization, sustainability and resilience and these areas need combined policy frameworks where geospatial data is central to equitable governance mechanisms. There is no value in LiDAR data that is the best and whose results in maps do not guide policy or which results in social disequilibrium.

6.1 Policy and Governance Frameworks for Collaborative Risk Management

Uncertain future conditions should be of specific consideration in design of effective flood solutions (Jonkman & Dawson, 2012). This entails long-term incorporation and cooperation of various organizational forms such as flood control districts, city planners, and non-profit organizations (Ulibarri et al., 2023). In a manner akin to the priorities described by decision-makers, challenges in flooding can be described using other priorities, with some emphasizing either large fluvial floods amplified by climate change and leading to infrastructure effects, whereas others focus on pluvial nuisance flooding, pollution, and historic underinvestment in particular communities (Ulibarri et al., 2023). Geospatial analysis should be in a position to provide customized solutions that directly relate to these diversified problem frames to enable efficient cross-organizational integration and policymaking (Ulibarri et al., 2023).

6.2 Addressing the Geospatial Policy Disconnect

Even with the high-resolution geospatial technology, the technical flood risk assessment is often compromised due to institutional and regulatory issues (Nwogu et al., 2025; Issakov et al., 2025). The underlying constant gaps are irreconcilable datasets, lack of stakeholder involvement, and critical operational disaggregation between advanced geospatial risks mapping and how this is incorporated into the formal planning systems (Nwogu et al., 2025). The planners do not usually get the training to interpret probabilistic flood maps, and this results in the reversion to less accurate tools that are not considered as probabilistic.

To address those issues, frameworks such as GIS-Integrated Flood Risk Management (GIFRM) Framework are being suggested. GIFRM is a conceptual framework used to immerse the science, policy, and implementation through combining risk mapping in high resolution, adaptive infrastructure design, sustainable urban planning, and participatory governance (Nwogu et al., 2025). This model is especially applicable to resource-constrained, fast-urbanizing environments, as most found in the Global South, in which data unavailability tends to freeze conventional planning (Nwogu et al., 2025). Finally, flood risks can only be reduced through an integrated approach, which is a systematic amalgamation of technical innovation coupled with strict regulation and the socio-economic solutions necessary (Issakov et al., 2025) (Figure 5).

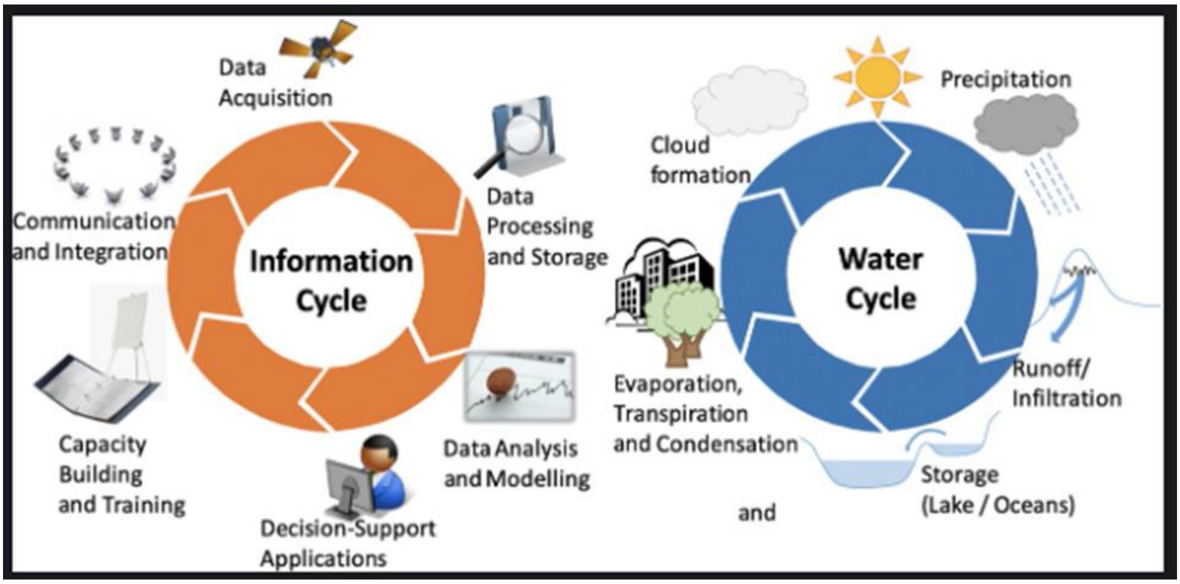

Figure 5: A schematic framework connecting Technical Inputs (Data Acquisition/Modeling) to Policy and Decision Support Outputs. (Wagener et al., 2021)

6.3 The Imperative of Environmental Justice (EJ) and Climate Equity

The resilience should not just be determined by the physical integrity of the infrastructure, but also the equitableness of the reduction of risk distribution benefits. Some communities are being disproportionately affected by climate change than the other; such vulnerable communities tend to bear an extra cost when it comes to their repetitive exposures to the threat of floods and are traditionally over-impregnated with environmental health issues, including poor air and water quality (EPA, 2024).

The use of geo spatial technology is a very important accountability tool in that it offers a spatial proof of the unequal. It is key to measuring the overlap between flood risk and Environmental Justice Initiative (EJI) populations, which would facilitate the measurement of change in the total area of EJI populations in flood-prone areas (Sharkus et al., 2025). Geospatial analysis compels policymakers to take a policy stance that is more distributive, with respect to distributing flood water fairly (Pappalardo & La Rosa, 2023) and handling reduction strategies to reduce flood hazards by focusing on the worst hit populations (Sharkus et al., 2025).

There should be policy initiatives that involve active adaptation. The research aims can be developing a consistent way to identify and engage the vulnerable communities (EPA, 2024) and developing strategies fostering sustainable communities (EPA, 2024). Some of these strategies include but are not limited to the term of nature-based solutions (NBS), also commonly referred to as blue-green infrastructure, like land management to decrease the probability of wildfires, the planting of resistant crops, and enhancement of water storage (Issakov et al., 2025; CEC, 2024).

6.4 Economic Optimization: Beyond Monetary Damage

FRM optimization requires the project justification to go beyond the traditional measurement of damages and the social and environmental co-benefits. The federal funding processes, including the FEMA grants, demand the demonstration of a cost-effective in terms of a Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA), with the Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 1.0 or higher (FEMA, 2025). Historically, this has benefitted the rich districts with high property values which has led to a cycle of reinvestment into richer districts and abandonment in poorer districts (Portney, 2024).

The BCA should commercialise the extended value offer of the geospatial-supported infrastructure projects to satisfy the demands of sustainable and resilient development (FHWA, 2012). They could be the value to the environment through the stabilization and restoration of natural environments, the health benefits provided by the provision of better walkability or even bike paths on levees and the improvement of the quality of life through the provision of new living shoreline and open spaces (Portney, 2024).. Importantly, economic optimization also requires the quantification of the explicit utility of targeted benefits towards low- and middle-income (LMI) individuals, with the water management strategies propagating economic development and promoting the health and welfare of the population living in the historically underinvested areas (Portney, 2024). The combined strategy fits the ASCE requirement to employ community and infrastructure risk resiliency tools to shape planning and decision-making, like the Envision rating system.

VII. Conclusion: Optimized Strategies and the Future Research Agenda

7.1 Synthesis of Optimization, Sustainability, and Resilience

Geoscience incorporation into flood control forms the necessary baseline in enhancing optimization, sustainability and resilience of resource management and development of infrastructure. The information offered above suggests the shift between the time when the flood was controlled through the entirely civil-engineering-based approach to the highly multidisciplinary and data-oriented one.

Optimization of Efficiency is realized by the twofold embrace of sophisticated modelling and the use of extensive-data. High predictive accuracy is guaranteed by the use of computationally efficient approaches that include Data Assimilation (DA) to correct physics-based models (Nguyen et al., 2022) and parsimonious mathematical models such as the Fractional Saint-Venant Equations (FSVE) (Wei et al., 2025). Extremely sophisticated geospatial processing, such as automated hydrological conditioning and trade-off management of resolution is also enhanced to increase efficiency (PythonGIS, 2024; Haile & Rientjes, 2005).

Sustainability provides the translation of these technical outputs into wholesome policy. This includes the shift of hazard mapping to the adoption of adaptive infrastructures and participatory governance in the form of GIFRM (Nwogu et al., 2025). Sustainability also favours solutions that are based on nature and the monetization of environmental and social co-benefits in the cost-benefit analysis (Virginia DHCD, 2024).

Resilience is grounded on strict uncertainty quantification to convert the geospatial data into investment and insurance decision-support technology (Pavesi, Volpi, & Fiori, 2024). More importantly, geospatial analysis as an accountability mechanism can only attain strong outcomes when Environmental Justice is prioritized in flood mitigation strategies to ensure that the vulnerable communities are not disproportionately exposed (EPA, 2024; Sharkus et al., 2025).

7.2 Critical Research Gaps and Future Directions

To maximize the potential of geoscience in FRM, there are a few important areas of research that should be filled in the next decade:

1. **Addressing Geographic and Temporal Imbalance:** It is imperative to bridge the already documented gap in geographic research by focusing on research in flood predictive tools and numerical simulation of historical flood occurrences in high fatality areas, which have been very underrepresented, such as Africa, South Africa, and Australia (Cvetković et al., 2024; Byaruhanga et al., 2024). The international funding organizations should focus closely on capacity building in these areas.
2. **Developing Robust Hybrid Modeling Techniques:** In the future, the studies should aim at taking advantage of high-fidelity physics-based simulations in order to produce synthetic datasets (Frisk & Johansson, 2024). This will make data-driven models more robust and generalizable so that they can predict extreme, non-standard flood events with high accuracy when there is a lack of historical data (Frisk & Johansson, 2024).
3. **Advancing Implementation Science and Policy Evaluation:** The academic community should shift to the empirical research of policy effectiveness, the measurement of the long-term implications of the combined use of FRM strategies, and addressing the methodological flaws and implementation issues that have been revealed in the transfer of technical discovery to social-economic and regulatory action (Nwogu et al., 2025; Issakov et al., 2025).
4. **Integration of Real-Time Geosensing and AI:** Further development of work should expand the spatial range of the LiDAR survey and improve the frequency of these surveys, introduce the real-time flood forecasting system, which will be harmonized with the high-quality geospatial streams, and should be able to automatize analysis of the sophisticated and high-quality geospatial data to facilitate quick and expert decision-making (Malinverni et al., 2025).

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