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The Politics of Flooding in Bangkok

Abstract
This presentation challenges the dominant approach to examining flooding through a case study of the 2011 Bangkok floods, the fourth-costliest disaster ever and which led to over 800 deaths. The alternative approach developed here views floods not only as outcomes of biophysical processes but also as products of political decisions, economic interests, and power relations. This approach illustrates how vulnerability to floods in Bangkok, which is a combination of exposure to floods and capacity to cope with them, and the extent to which floods are a disaster, are uneven at multiple scales across geographical and social landscapes.