



Defra agreed to use the conclusions of the Working Group in its discussions on a future model of flood insurance with Working Group 1.

The Working Group also discussed the potential benefits and negative consequences of making the entire NaFRA dataset available to all, free of charge, and not subject to third party licence restrictions. In support of the proposal it was noted that:

- A free NaFRA dataset could be more easy to use with other formats such as Google Maps.
- NaFRA is paid for by the taxpayer, via Defra's grant to the Environment Agency, so the dataset could be made available to the taxpayer for free, including for commercial use.
- Individuals could use the data to produce many different and flexible tools, such as Apps.
- Such Apps or an interface with Google Maps could improve the ordinary consumer's understanding of their flood risk and could be easier to use than the current maps on the Environment Agency's website.
- People might more easily be able to find out about their flood risk online.
- Insurers and other businesses, such as estate agents, could have access to the most up-to-date Environment Agency flood risk assessments, free of charge and in a format that is most useful to their specific use.
- The Environment Agency could save money as it might not have to respond to so many individual requests for detailed flood risk information.

Against the proposal, it was noted that:

- Making the NaFRA dataset available for free could have a negative impact on private companies who specialise in producing and selling flood risk information.
- There are some restrictions on licensing the NaFRA dataset for not charge because some information is provided by third parties under licence.
- It could run counter to the argument that a 'one stop shop' is needed for flood risk information, in order to reduce confusion for members of the public. It could be difficult for people to know where to go to get the 'official' data.
- The Environment Agency would still need to respond to individual requests for detailed local information as it would be difficult to make the detailed local knowledge involved in mapping available automatically.

Actions and next steps

Following on from the discussion and evaluation for different options for the provision of flood risk information, Defra will work with the Environment Agency to make flood risk datasets more transparent and accessible.

8. Defra and the Environment Agency to work together to make flood risk datasets more transparent and accessible.