



The Flood Game

Facilitator Guide





Session Setup Guidance

Set up one game table for each team. Each table should have one flood hazard map, the full set of 29 measure cards, 100 cost tokens, a score sheet, and access to the rules. The room should allow easy movement by the facilitator and clear visibility of the countdown timer. Where possible, tables should be composed of mixed stakeholder groups to encourage discussion from different perspectives. Each table should also have a moderator or facilitator assigned to it. Before participants begin, the facilitator should verify that all materials are present and clearly arranged: map, cards, tokens, marker/score support, timer, and the dynamic challenge prompt for the mid-game event.

Facilitation tips

The facilitator should keep the discussion focused on decision-making rather than speed alone. Teams should be reminded to consider all three indicators on each card: cost, effectiveness, and implementation time.

They should also be reminded that they must build a balanced strategy using at least one Prevention, one Mitigation, and one Adaptation measure. Encourage all participants to contribute, especially when tables include different stakeholder profiles. Useful prompts include: Why did you choose this measure? Why is this measure placed upstream, downstream, or in both zones? What trade-off are you making between cost and effectiveness? How are you preparing for limited time and budget?





When teams are unsure about the meaning of a measure, the facilitator may refer to the Definitions and Measures document, which explains the purpose of each category and describes all 29 measures.

Timing and sequence prompts

Facilitator Opening

“Your task is to build the most effective flood risk management strategy you can using the measures available to you. You must work within the available budget and implementation time, use at least one card from each category, and aim for the greatest possible reduction in flood hazard.”

Suggested session timing

- ▶ Rules briefing: 5 minutes
- ▶ Group work: 25 minutes
- ▶ Dynamic adjustment introduced 10 minutes after group work starts
- ▶ Plenary discussion and debrief: 10 minutes

Mid-game prompt

“A major flood event has occurred. Emergency response and damage costs now reduce your available resources. Twenty percent of any unspent funding tokens is deducted immediately. Review your strategy and adjust your remaining measures.”





Closing prompt

“Prepare a short summary of your strategy. Explain which measures you implemented, their cost, effectiveness, and implementation time, and how you adapted to the surprise event.”

Scoring support

The facilitator should use the score sheet to track the measures selected by each team and to record totals by category. The provided score sheet is structured around Prevention, Mitigation, and Adaptation and allows the facilitator to note card numbers, costs, percentages, and final totals.

Scoring support should reflect the rules of the game rather than an abstract formula. The facilitator should verify that:

- ▶ At least one card from each category has been used.
- ▶ No measure has been used twice.
- ▶ Enough cost tokens were available for every selected measure.
- ▶ Enough implementation time remained for every selected measure.
- ▶ Cards placed incorrectly in relation to upstream/downstream logic receive the appropriate effectiveness reduction,
- ▶ All implemented measures are captured for plenary reporting.





At the end of play, each team's result should be reviewed in terms of total measures selected, total cost used, total effectiveness achieved, and the quality of the team's response to the unforeseen event.

Troubleshooting / Support Notes

If a team does not spend all tokens, remind them that unspent funds may be treated as lost budget. If a team repeats a card, ask them to replace the duplicate because the same measure cannot be deployed twice. If a team forgets one of the three categories, remind them that a valid strategy must include Prevention, Mitigation, and Adaptation.

If players are confused about where a measure may be placed, direct them back to the map zones and the measure descriptions. If necessary, remind them that incorrect placement can reduce the effectiveness awarded for that measure.

If teams try to keep a measure that no longer fits within the remaining time, the facilitator should remove or reject that measure. The presentation explicitly states that a card cannot be used or retained if the countdown time remaining is lower than the card's implementation time.

If teams are stuck, the facilitator should encourage them to compare lower-cost and higher-cost options and to think in combinations rather than single measures. The game is meant to surface trade-offs and collaborative decision-making, not only "correct" answers.





Other facilitation material

Debrief Questions

1. Which combination of measures gave your team the best balance between cost, effectiveness, and time?
2. How did the funding cut change your priorities?
3. Which measures were most difficult to agree on?
4. Did your team favour structural solutions, planning measures, or preparedness measures?
5. What lessons from the game could apply to real flood risk management discussions?

Expected plenary summary from each table

Each table should report:

- ▶ The measures implemented.
- ▶ What those measures do.
- ▶ Total cost.
- ▶ Total effectiveness.
- ▶ Implementation time.
- ▶ How the strategy changed after the unforeseen event.

Components list

- ▶ Each game table includes:
 - ▶ 1 flood hazard map / game board
 - ▶ 29 measure cards
 - ▶ 100 cost tokens
 - ▶ Score sheet
 - ▶ Timer
 - ▶ Moderator support
 - ▶ Dynamic challenge prompt/card for the unforeseen event





Scoring and end-of-game instructions

At the end of gameplay, each team totals its selected measures and records the cost and effectiveness achieved. The team then prepares a short verbal summary for plenary discussion, explaining the measures chosen, why they were selected, and how the team adapted its plan after the funding cut. The facilitator compares outcomes across tables and highlights key lessons and recurring strategy patterns.





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