



From the farmer's plot to the floodplain: assessing contemporary flood-risk with archival documents (Southern France).

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This communication shows that archives may be of great interest in research on flood risk. A study of cadastral information allowed an accurate reconstruction of the geomorphological dynamics of palaeofloods in two mediterranean catchments. These documents were combined with other archives in order to understand the dynamics of flow during flood-events. For example they allow for mapping erosion and sedimentary deposits, ascertaining the depth of the fluvial bed or the thickness of alluvial aggradation, or determining the rate of downstream migration of bedload over time.

They make possible an evaluation of the hazard level through time (18th – 21th centuries). There continue to be approaches to this question that combine historic information about flood levels with contemporary bed geometry. However, the geomorphological data discussed in this paper allow for a critique of such approaches and provide a framework for assessing the accuracy of estimates of flood volumes based on historical high-water marks. In addition, they could help to evaluate the level of reliability of historical information in past-climate reconstructions.