

GLOSSARY

Definitions marked (IGH) are from the WMO/UNESCO International Glossary of Hydrology, though some have been simplified.

Catchment or River basin
The area drained by a river

Direct runoff
That part of the precipitation that flows directly to the river, without infiltrating into the soil.

Design flood
Flood hydrograph or instantaneous peak discharge adopted for the design of a hydraulic structure or river control. (IGH)

Evapotranspiration
Quantity of water transferred from the soil to the atmosphere by evaporation and plant transpiration. (IGH)

Flash flood
Flood of short duration with a relatively high peak discharge. (IGH)

Flood
Relatively high flow as measured by water level or discharge. (IGH)

Flooding (synonym inundation)
Overflowing by water of the normal confines of a stream. (IGH)

Hurricane
The name given to a tropical cyclone in the Caribbean.

Infiltration
Flow of water through the soil surface into the soil pores below.

Infiltration capacity
The maximum rate at which water can be absorbed by a given soil per unit area under given conditions. (IGH)

Interflow
Flow of water down slope through the upper layers of the soil towards the river at a rate much in excess of normal base flow seepage.

Return period
Average interval in years between successive occurrences of some event, such as a flood exceeding a certain level or discharge.

Storm surge
Elevation of sea or estuary level caused by the passage of a low pressure centre. (IGH)

Tropical Cyclone
A cyclone of tropical origin of small diameter (some hundreds of kilometres) with minimum surface pressure in some cases less than 900 hPa, very violent winds and torrential rain. (IGH)

Typhoon
The name given to a tropical cyclone in the North-West Pacific.

ACRONYMS

- FEMA United States Federal Emergency Management Administration
- DHA United Nations Department of Humanitarian Affairs
- IDNDR International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction
- KNMI Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute
- MOFFS Management Overview of Flood Forecasting Systems
- NWS United States National Weather Service
- NFIP United States National Flood Insurance Programme
- QPF Quantitative Precipitation Forecast
- WMO World Meteorological Organization