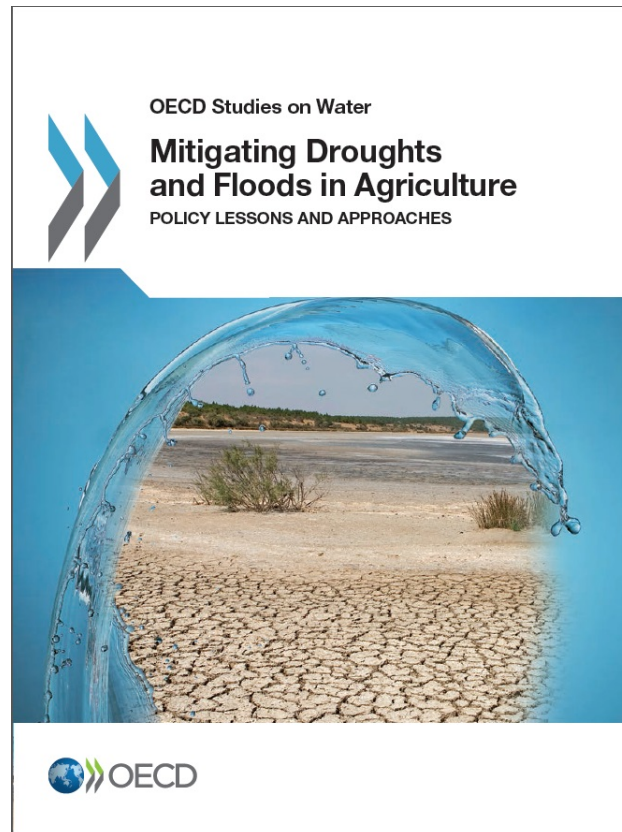


# Water: It's all or nothing

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**Major floods and droughts have prevailed in many countries throughout 2015. South Africa saw the emergence of its worst drought in 30 years, Ethiopia is threatened with a major food crisis, and California suffered its fourth consecutive year of drought. Floods caused over 2 000 deaths in India last summer, while England, Paraguay and South Carolina reported unprecedented flood damage. The trouble is, climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of such extreme weather events in the coming years.**

Governments can do a lot better in improving the mitigation and management of drought and flood risks, argues *Mitigating Droughts and Floods in Agriculture: Policy Lessons and Approaches*. Part of broader OECD work on risk management in agriculture, this report builds on recent trends, experiences and research in OECD countries, particularly Australia, Canada, France, Spain and the UK, in the sustainable management of floods and droughts in agriculture, and sets out

recommendations for policy approaches. The report provides a general policy framework to enable countries to analyse their own drought and flood policies and identify potential strategies.

The study argues that comprehensive and coherent government policies at local and national levels are necessary, particularly if agriculture is to meet the growing food needs of a larger urban population. It examines policy approaches to water rights and water allocation, weather and hydrological information, innovation and education, and insurance and compensation against drought and flood risks, and explores how they might be combined in more consistent ways to improve risk management. The reduction of subsidies, for example, such as guaranteed prices or insurance subsidies, that distort incentives, would enable farmers to base production and investment decisions on the real costs and benefits of risk taking.

## References

Mitigating Droughts and Floods in Agriculture <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264246744-en>