

Research into the possible role of Nature Based Solutions in the Geul catchment

- *Precipitation and drainage analysis*
- *Opportunities for natural solutions*
- *Follow-up research*

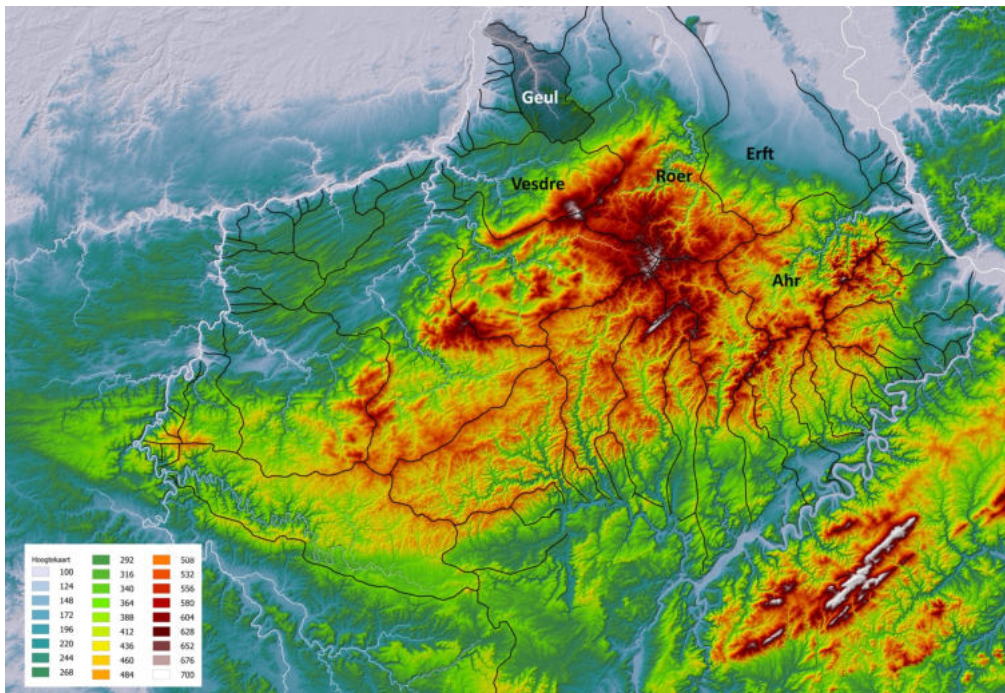
17 oktober 2022

Foto Hettie meertens (Ark)



Involvement of NGO's

- Disaster of unprecedented scale (in B, D and NL)
- Especially against the northern flank of the Ardennes-Eiffel
- Dutch NGO's are involved in research into solutions
- Solutions also enhancing qualities (landscape & nature) of middle mountain areas
- NGO's already investing in nature based solutions for > 5 years



Een klimaatrobuust Geuldal

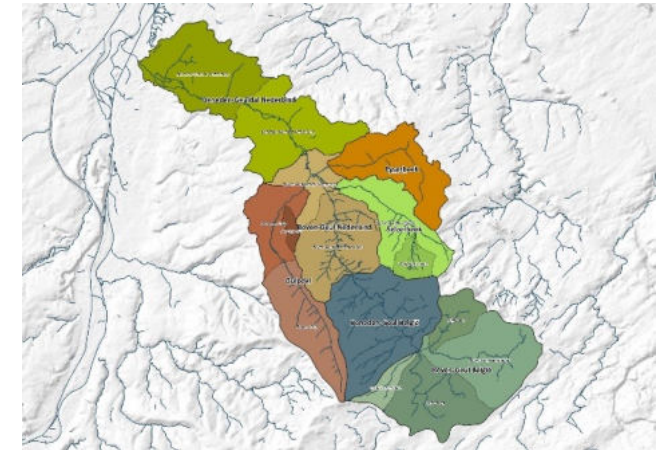
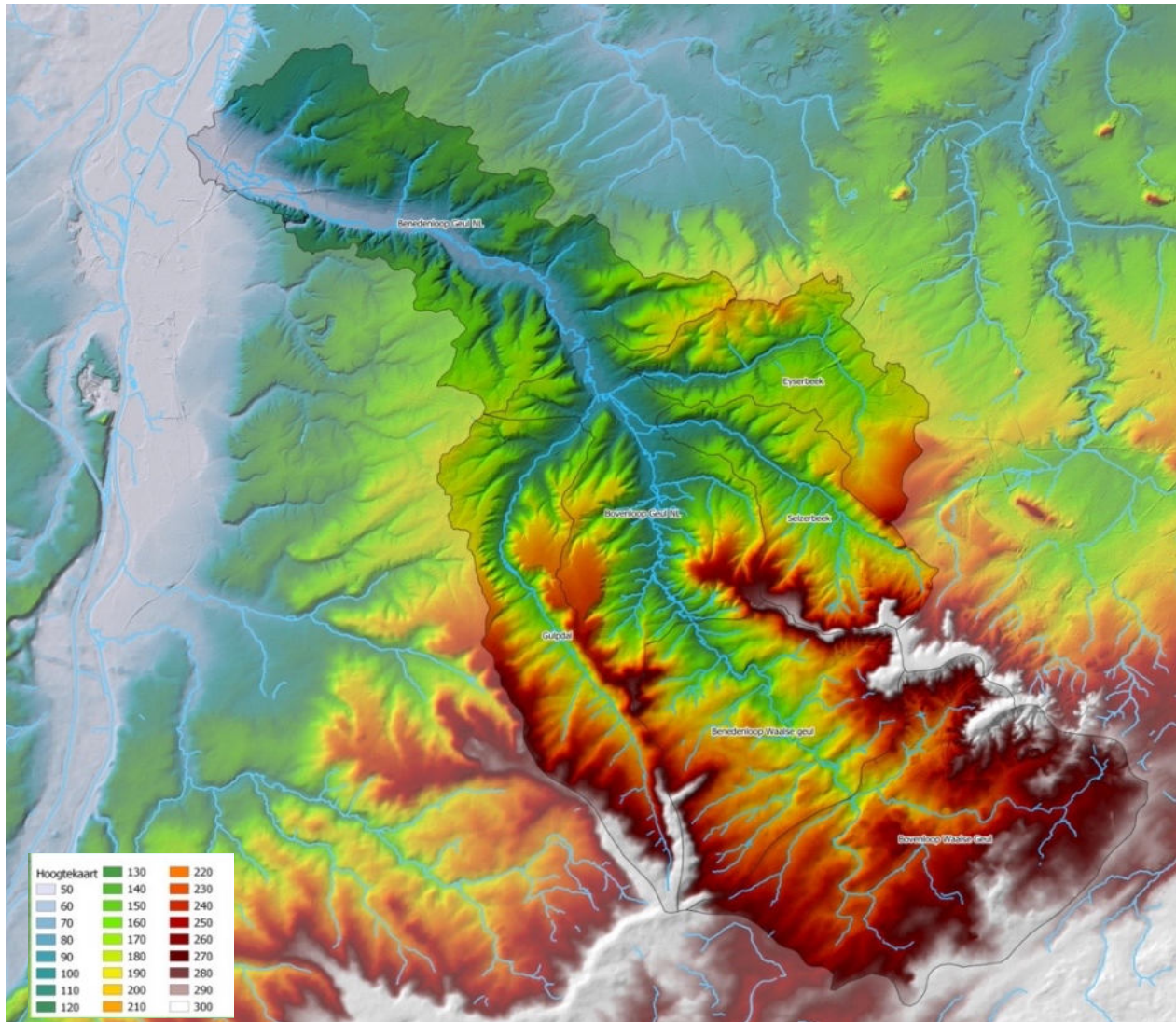


Objective and method

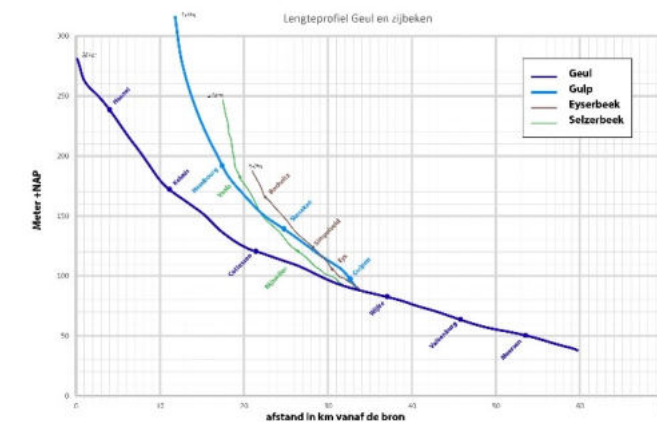
- Research question:
 - where did the water come from in juli '21?
 - do nature based solutions also work in this situation?
- Combining knowledge about precipitation and drainage
- Collecting our own dataset
- Exploring the entire catchment area
- Initially without models



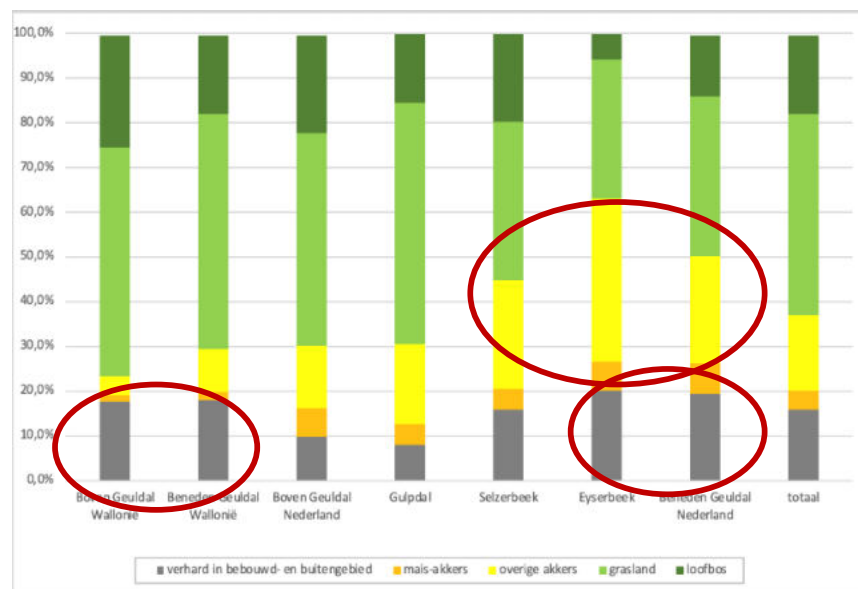
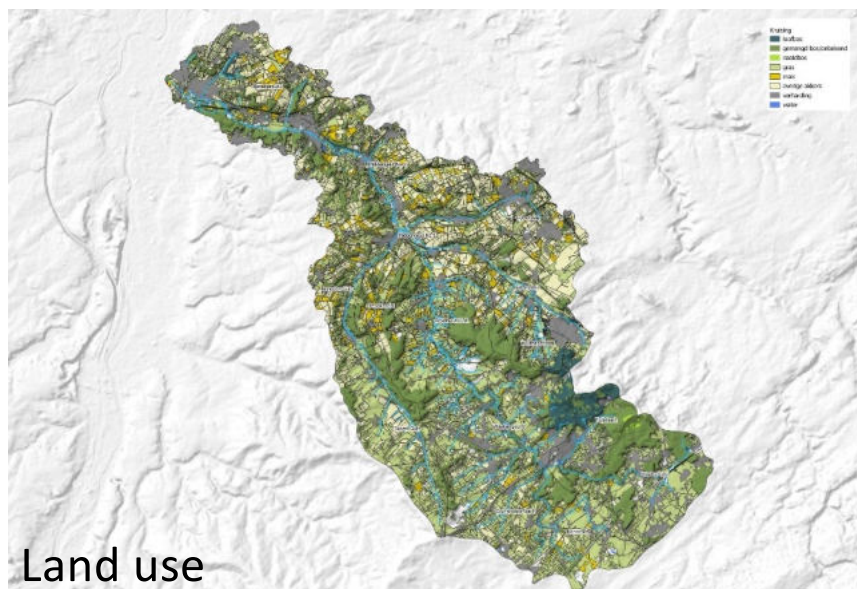
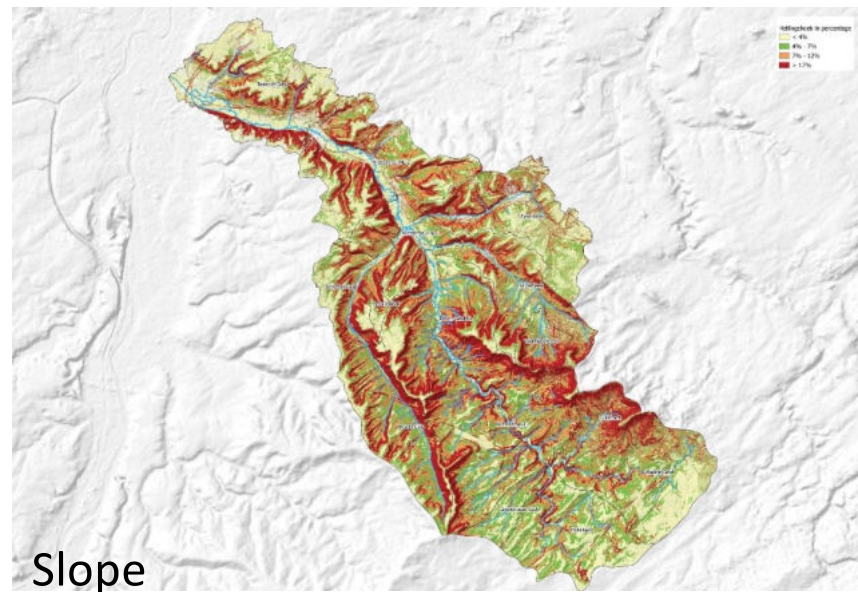
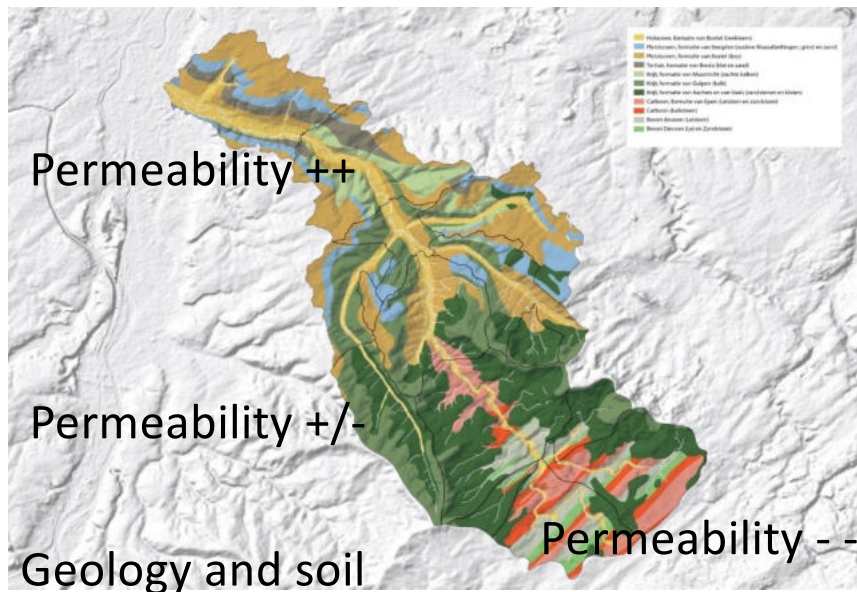
Geul catchment



deelstroomgebied	lengte traject	oppervlakte	percentage
Boven Geuldal Wallonië	10,0	7.265	22%
Beneden Geuldal Wallonië	8,5	4.755	14%
Boven Geuldal Nederland	8,0	4.286	13%
Gulpdal	17,6	4.362	13%
Selzerbeek	10,0	2.845	9%
Eyserbeek	10,0	2.795	8%
Beneden Geuldal Nederland	17,0	7.072	21%
totaal	44,5 (Geul)	33.380	



System analysis (cross border)

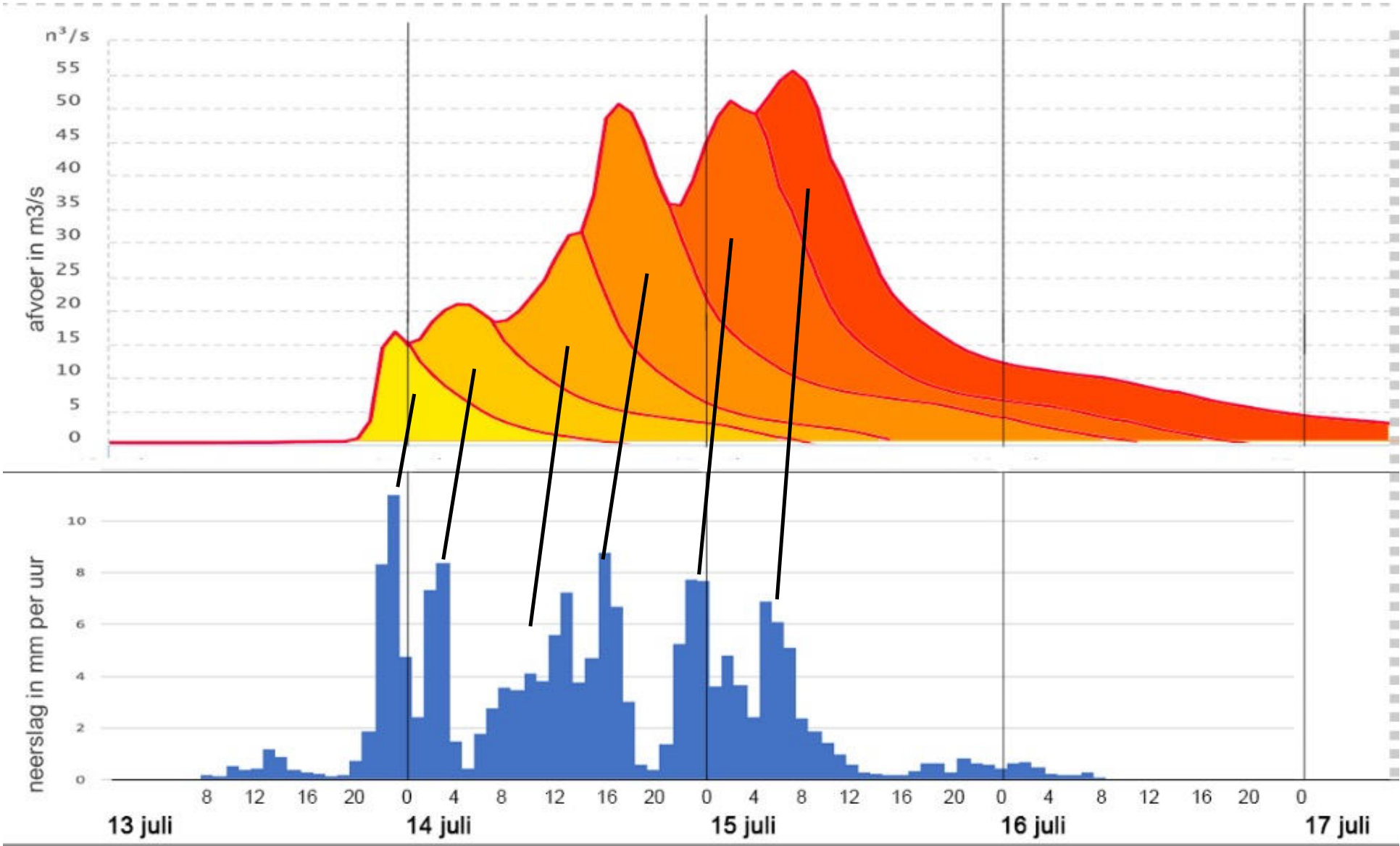


Main conclusions

1. Walloon part delivers the vast majority of discharge
2. Dutch sub-basins deliver little: buffer effect is high
3. Roads function as extended water system; great influence
4. Urbanized surface had a major influence
5. Floodplain (valley floor) caught a lot of water



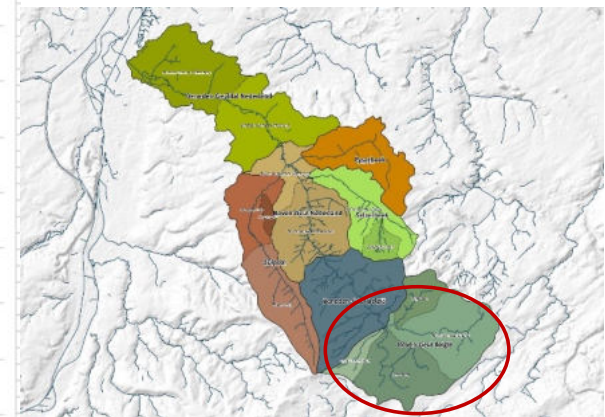
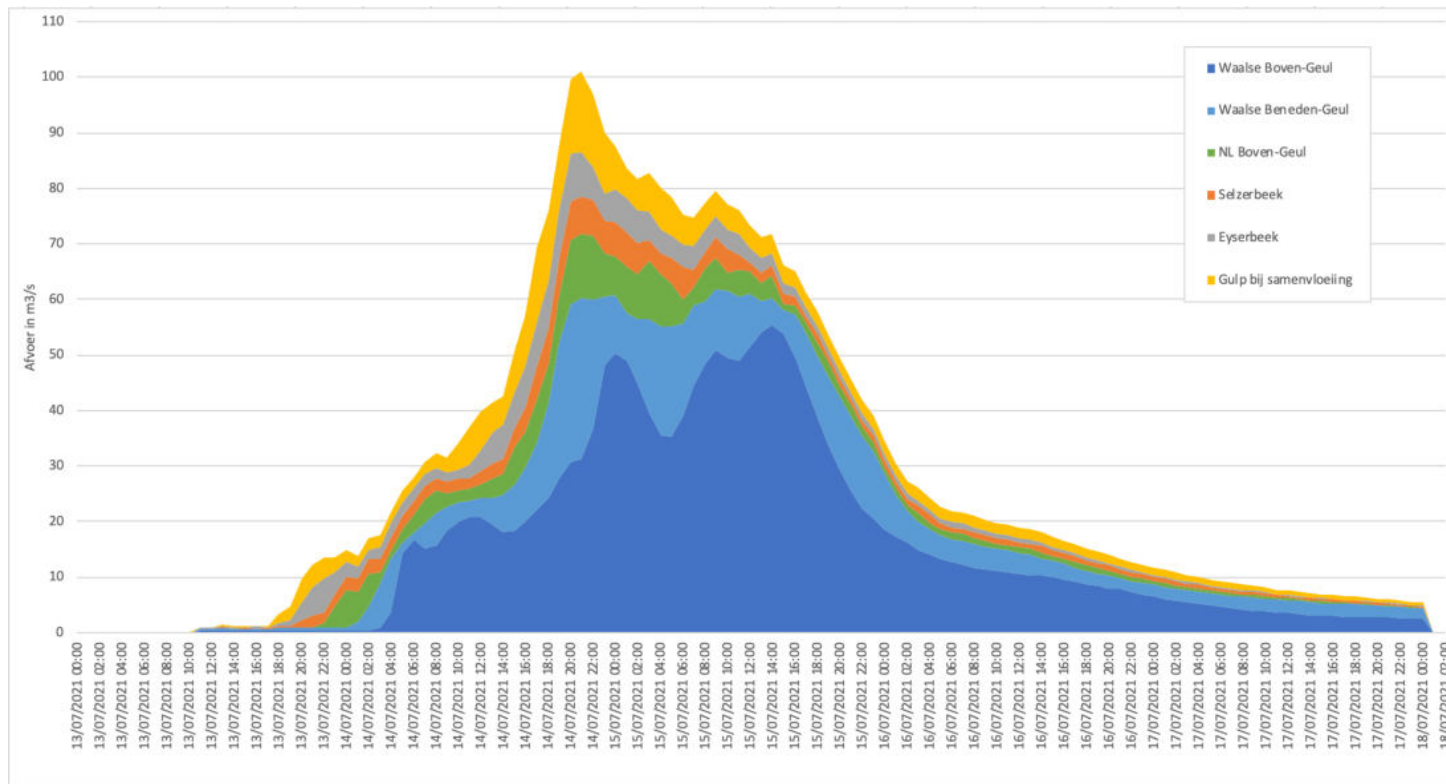
Upstream Wallonia (Kelmis)



similar for other sub-catchments

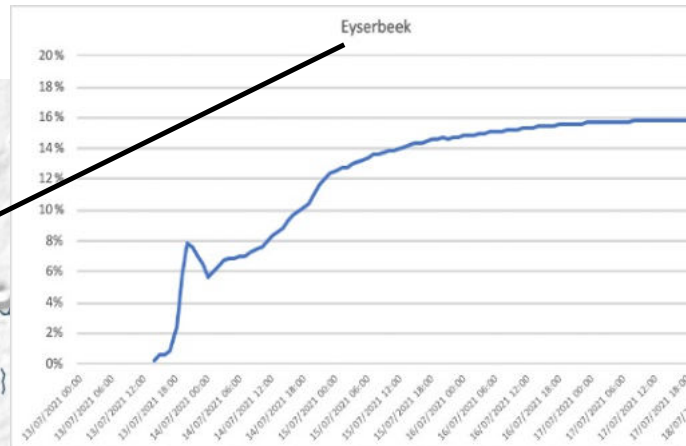
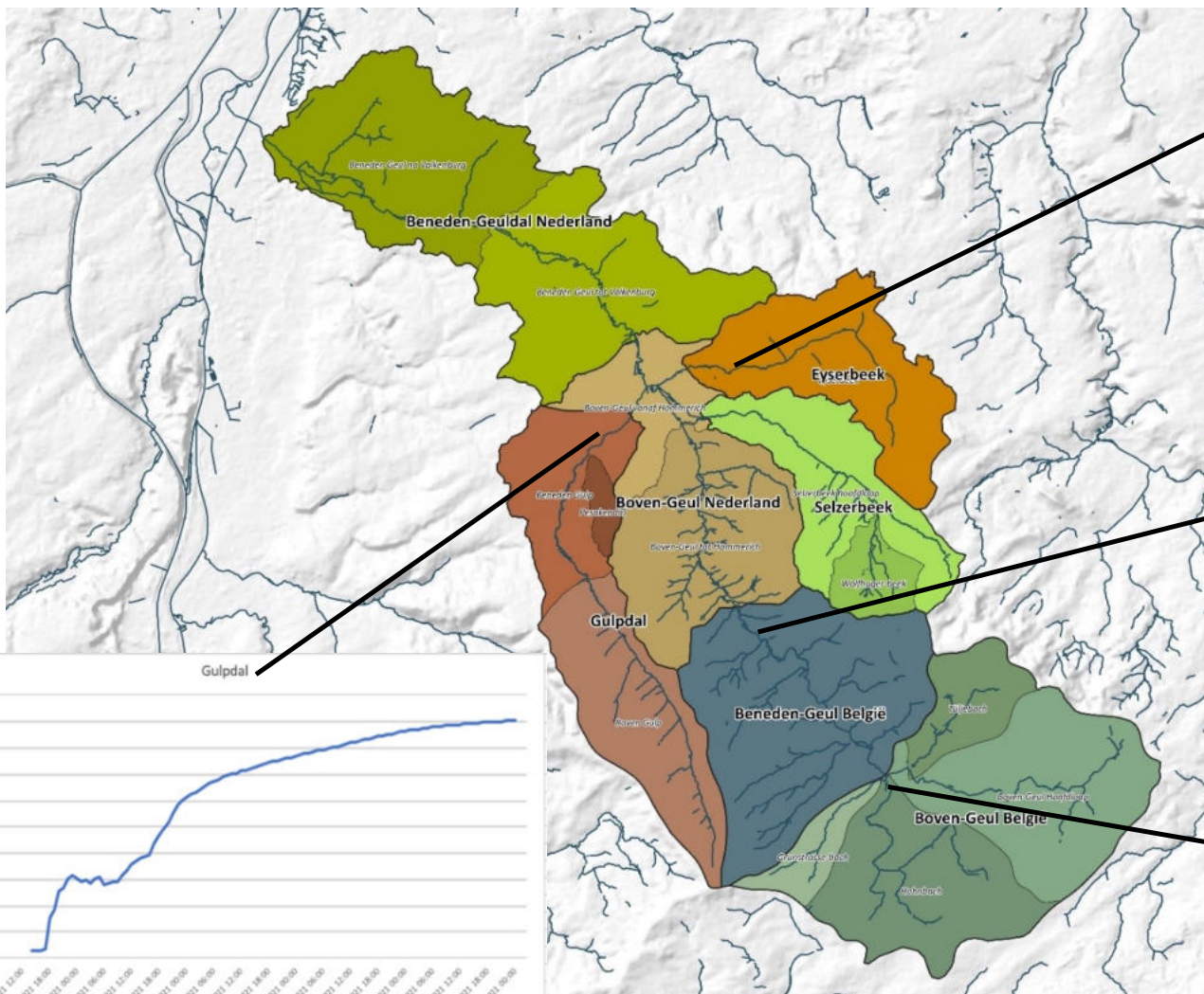


Wallonia major contributor



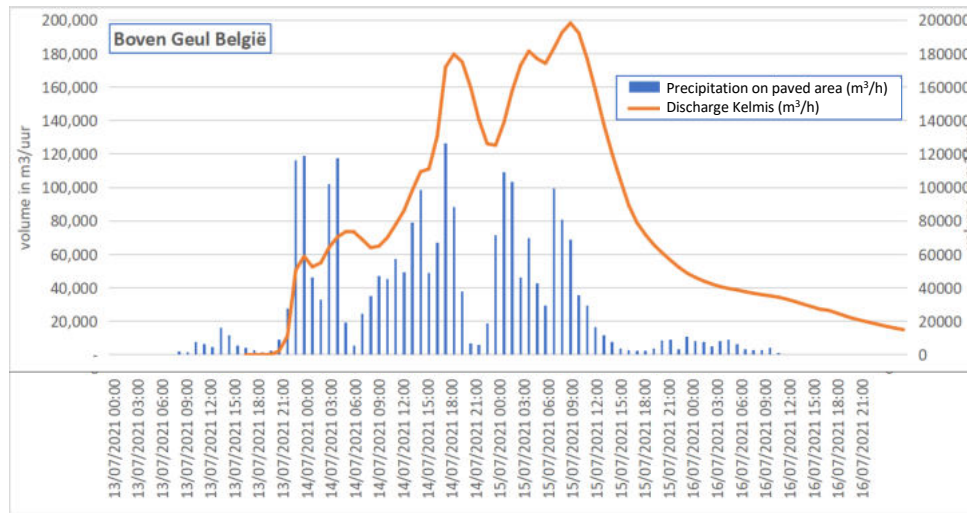
Simply the sum of all discharges at Wijlre (taking in account the duration, not the flattening of the peak)
 From Wallonia (blue): during the first peak 60%, during the second peak 75%
 With in Wallonia most water comes from the upstream part (dark blue)

percentage of precipitation discharged

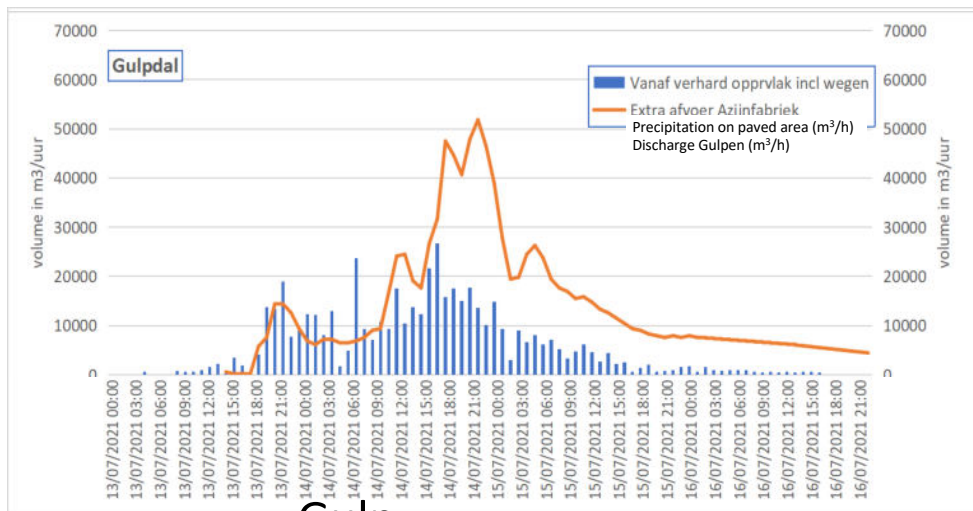


- Upstream Wallonia: rises fast to 40, later 50%
- Downstream Wallonia: rises to 30%
- Gulp: 18%, Eyserbeek: 16%
- Storage during the event: Wallonia 50-70%, NL 80-85%

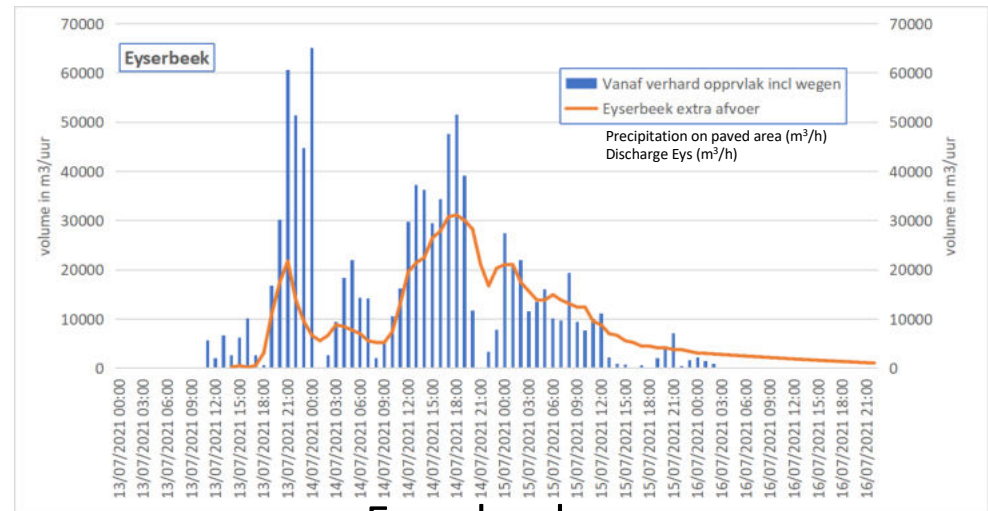
Discharge from urban areas and roads



Wallonia – upper part



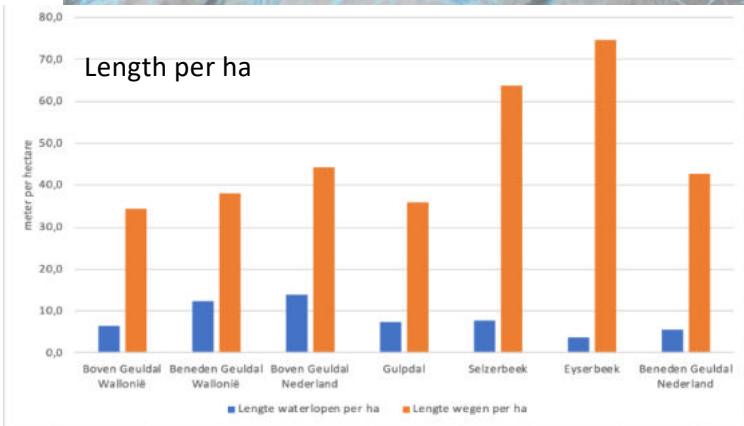
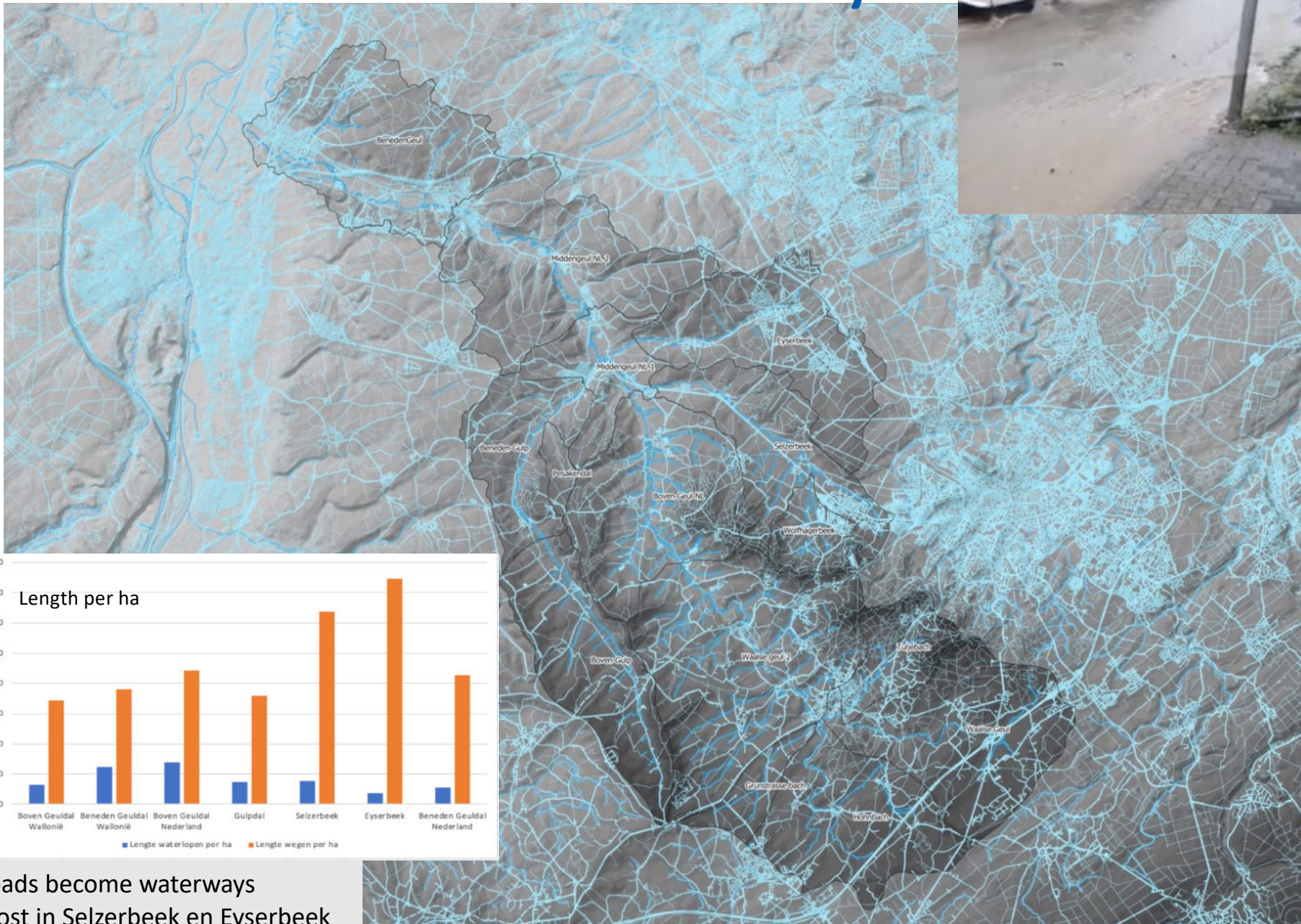
Gulp



Eyserbeek

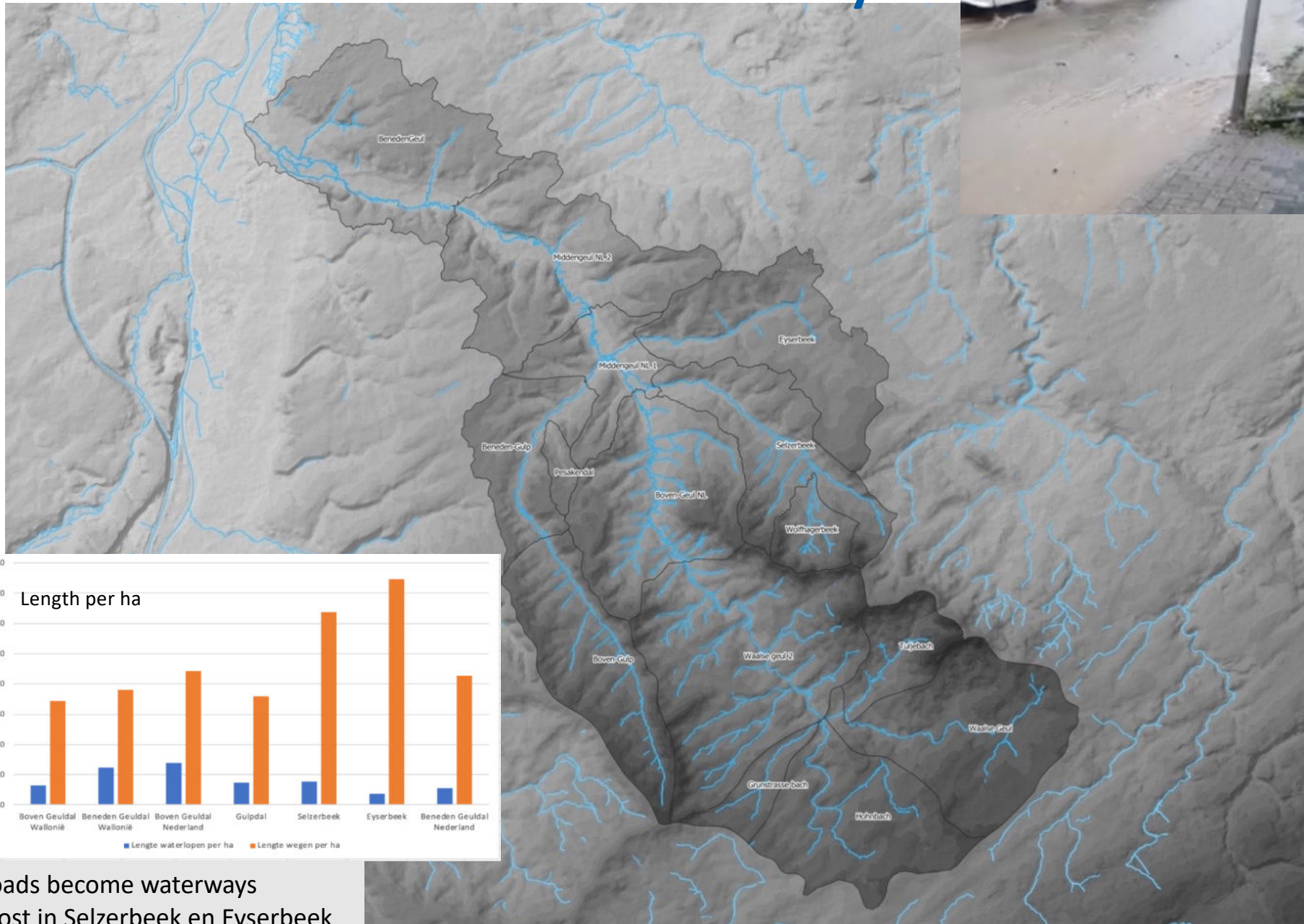
Total precipitation on paved surface (blue)
 In the beginning it explains the whole discharge
 Later it becomes less due to 'slower' water
 Proportion of runoff from urbanized areas
 Differences between the sub-catchment

Roads as extension of the watersystem



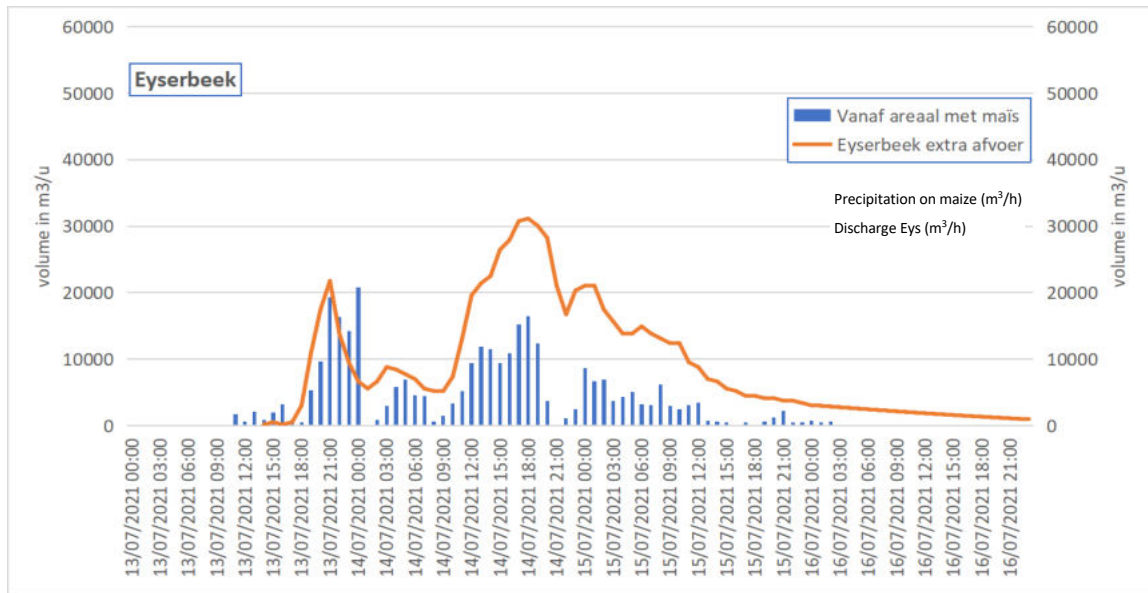
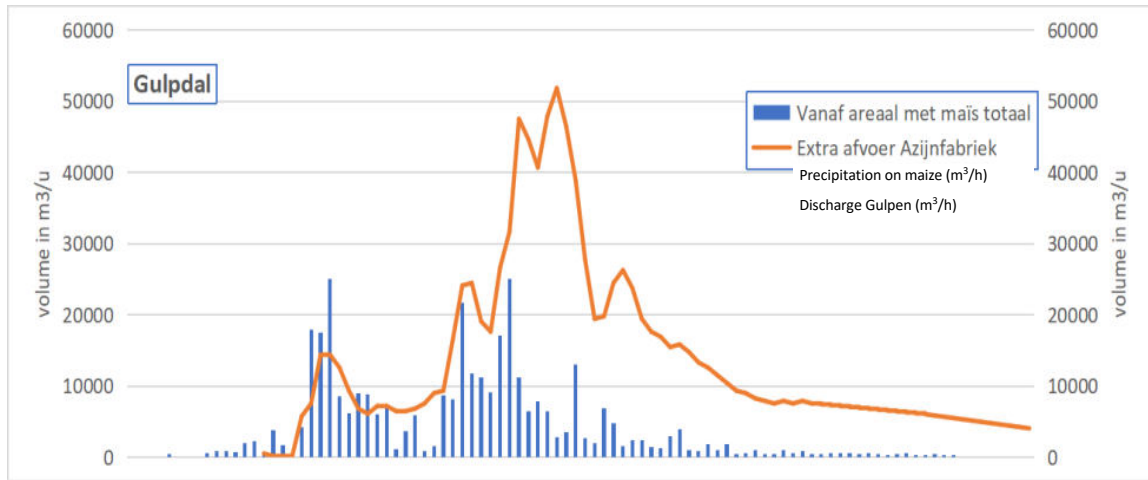
Roads become waterways
Most in Selzerbeek en Eyserbeek

Roads as extension of the watersystem



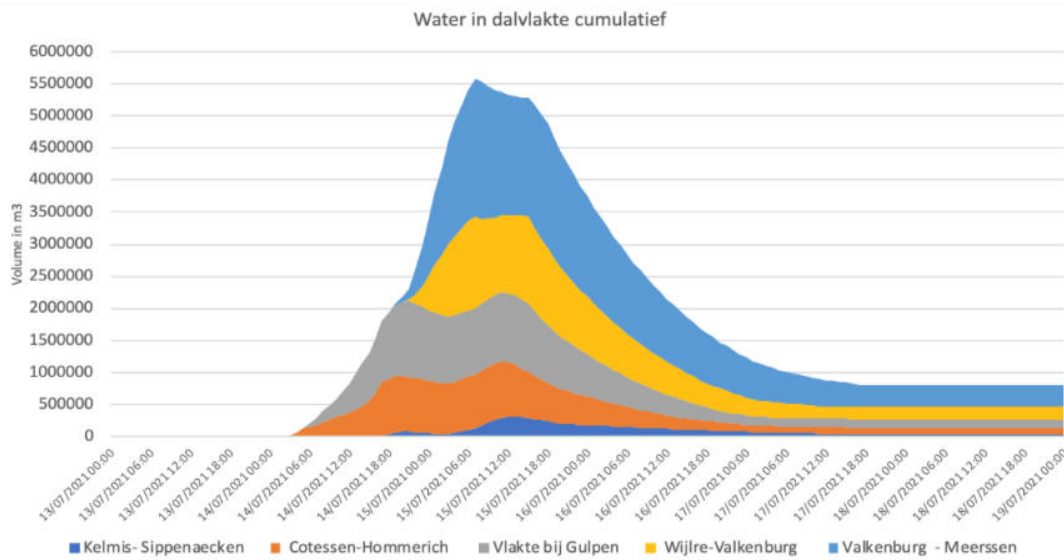
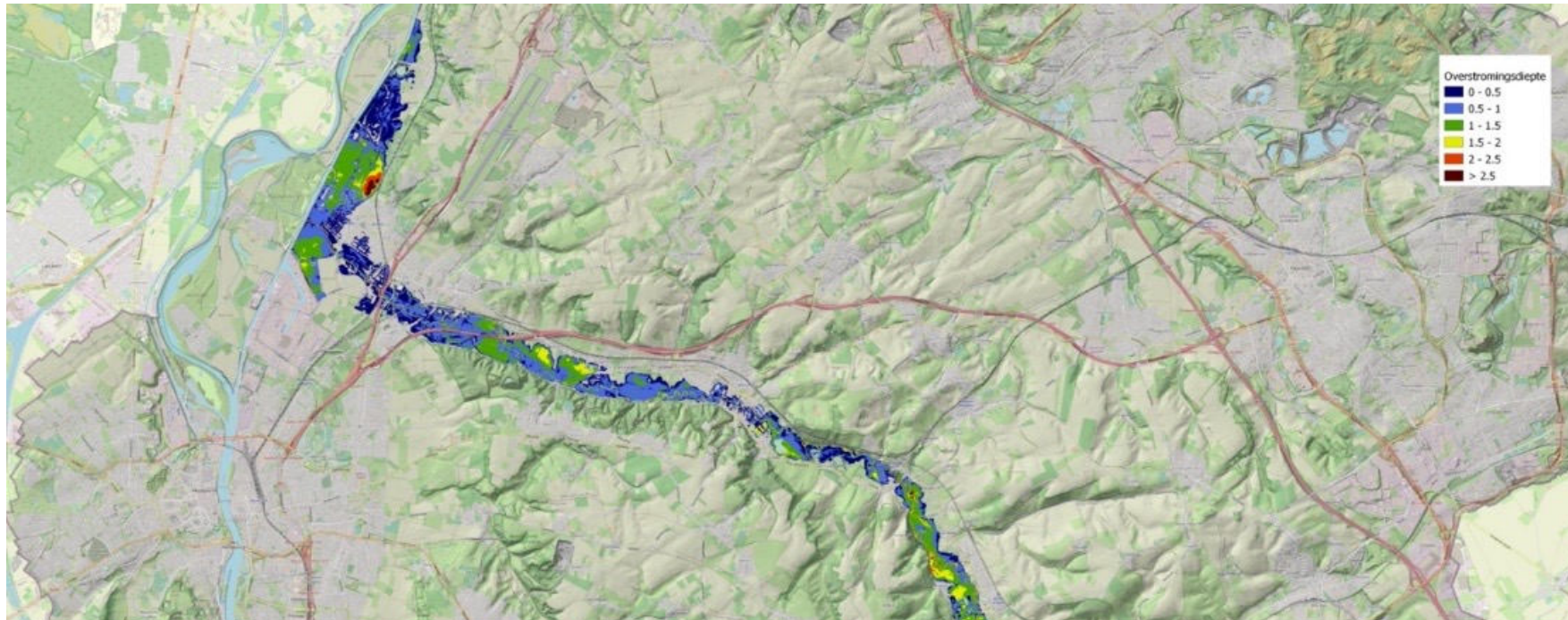
Roads become waterways
Most in Selzerbeek en Eyserbeek

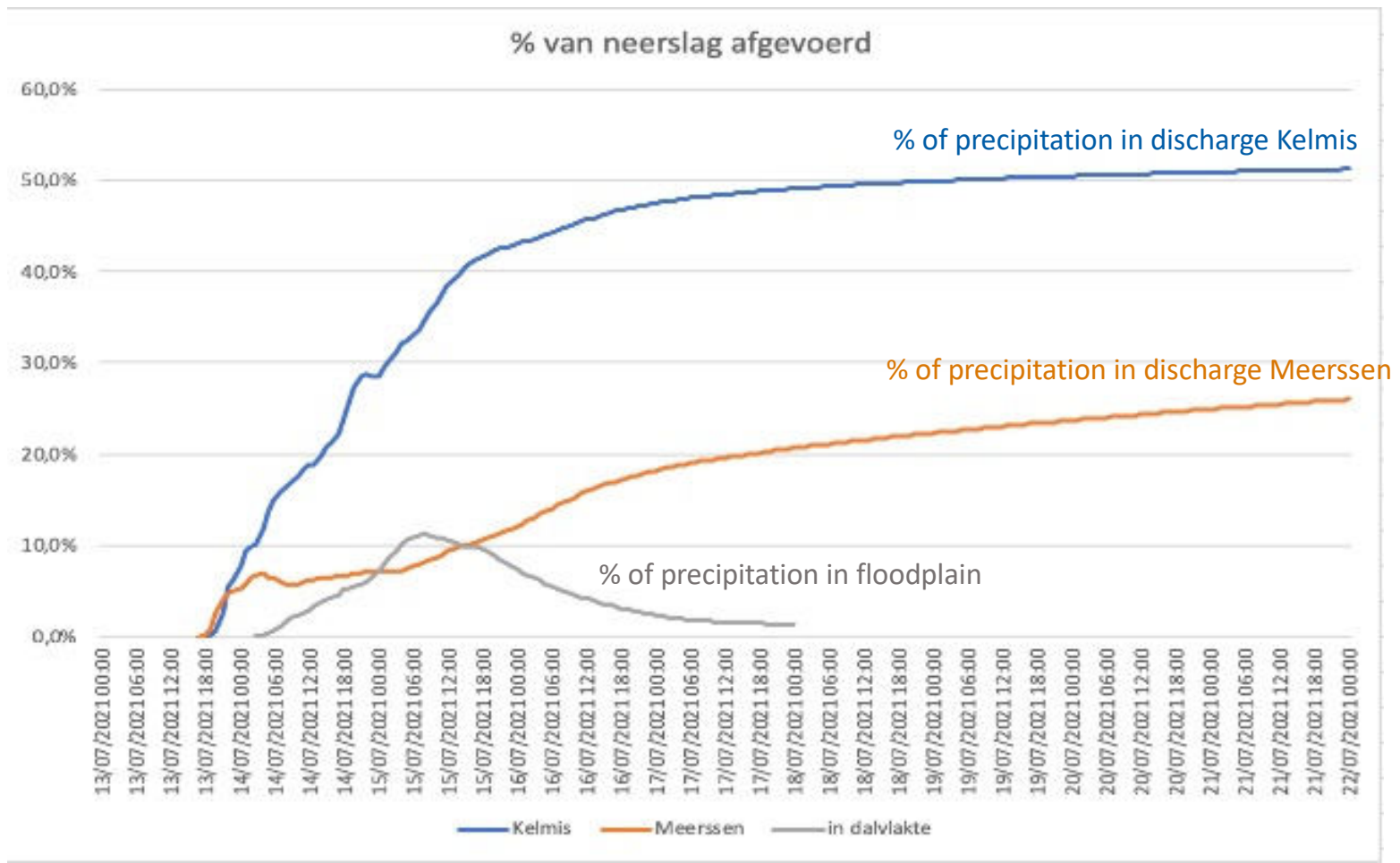
Discharge from maize fields



Idem for the proportion of runoff from maize fields
 Rainfall intensity exceeds infiltration capacity; especially in maize fields
 Total precipitation on maize fields (blue)

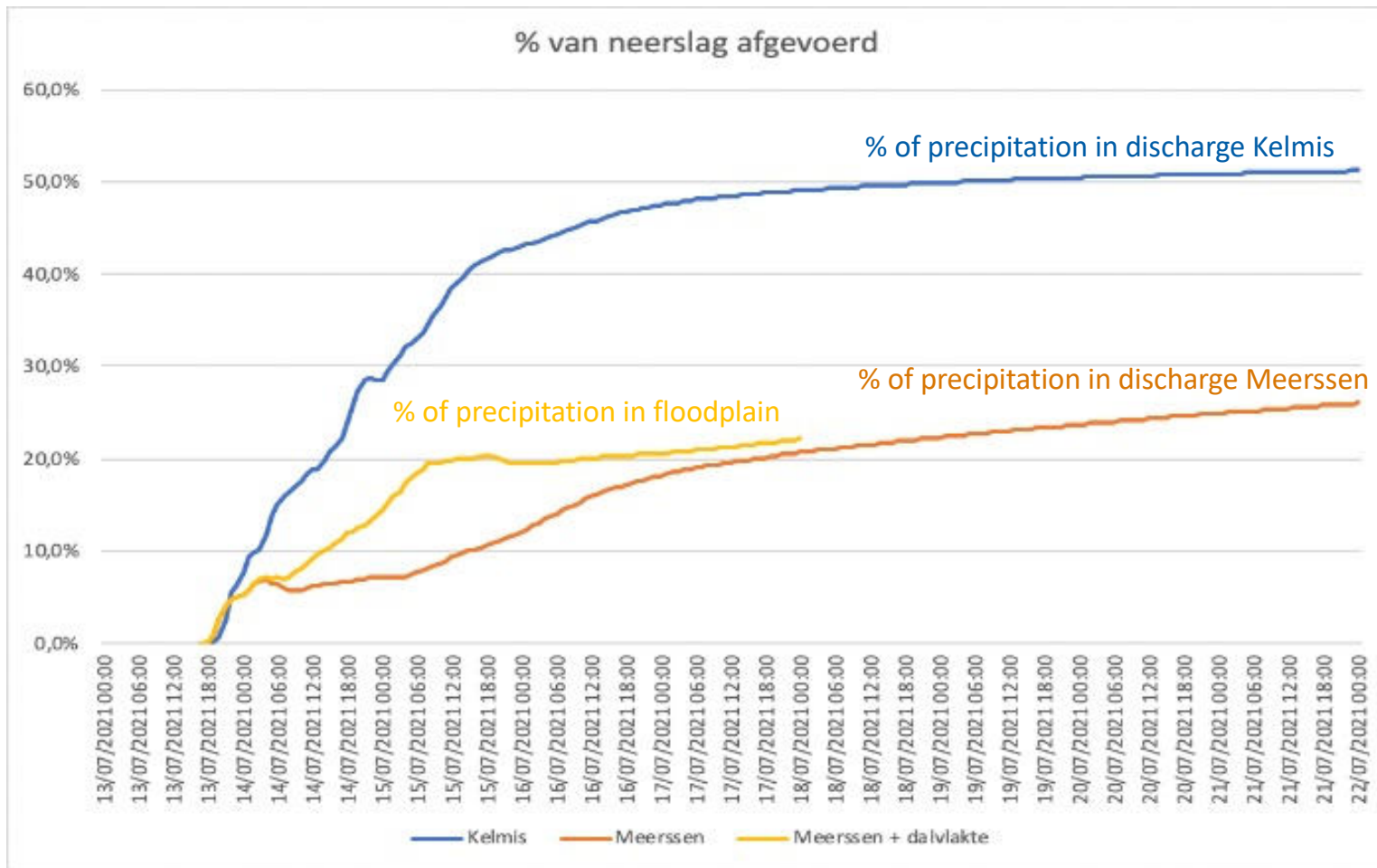
Flooding = storage in the floodplain





A lot of water stored in the floodplain
 On 15/7 even more than discharge in Meerssen
 Discharge Meerssen has a strange dip





When floodplan water is added to discharge Meerssen
Meerssen discharge looks more like Kelmis discharge



Conclusions

- Most water from upstream >> requires cross-border approach
- Much water from cities, roads and fields >> requires greening of city and changes of land use
- Requires small-scale measures on a large scale
- Nature organizations are already working on this
- and want to go on



Next steps

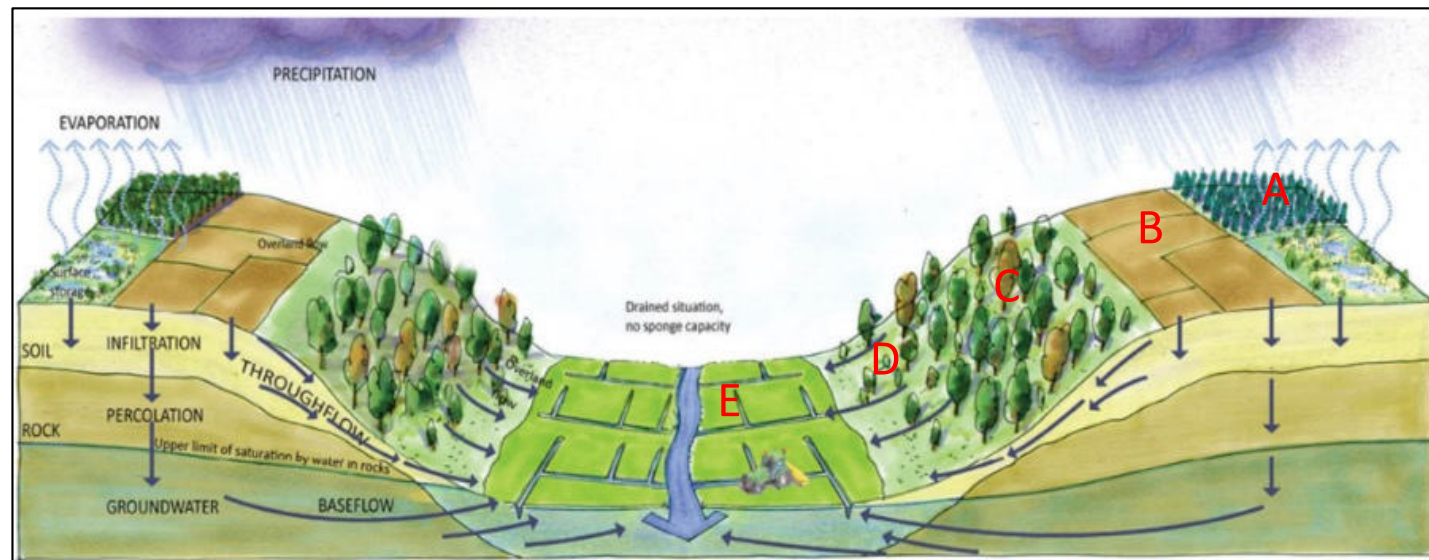
- Determination of effectiveness of the measures.
- By means of Swat+ model

- What is best where and to what extent
- Calculation of 10 different Nature Based Solutions
- Distributed over the catchment area
- Integrated in the landscape

- Applying different measures
- In collaboration with partners

starting points for the measures

- A. *Optimal use of vegetation absorption capacity*
- B. *Promote infiltration to prevent overland flow*
- C. *Subsurface flow should remain in the soil as long as possible; reinfiltrating when necessary*
- D. *Storing water upwelling at the foot of the slope in sponge areas*
- E. *Giving room to inundation in the valley plains*



Selection of locations

			A	B	C	D	E
	Nature Based Solution	Location	Optimal use of vegetation	Promote infiltration to prevent overland flow	Keep subsurface runoff in the soil	Slowing water in sponge areas	Improvements of the flood plan
1a	Convert corn field into natural grassland	plateau & slope		X			
1b	Idem into natural forest	plateau & slope	X	X			
2	Greening the city	plateau & slope	X	X			
3	Re-infiltrate water from roads	slope		X	X		
4a	Convert (drained) grassland into natural grassland	slope		X	X		
4b	Idem into natural forest	slope	X	X	X		
5	Wadi's along field edges	slope		X			
6	Sponge recovery in drained valleys	flood plain				X	
7	Natural vegetation on flood plain and obstruction of stream	flood plain	X				X



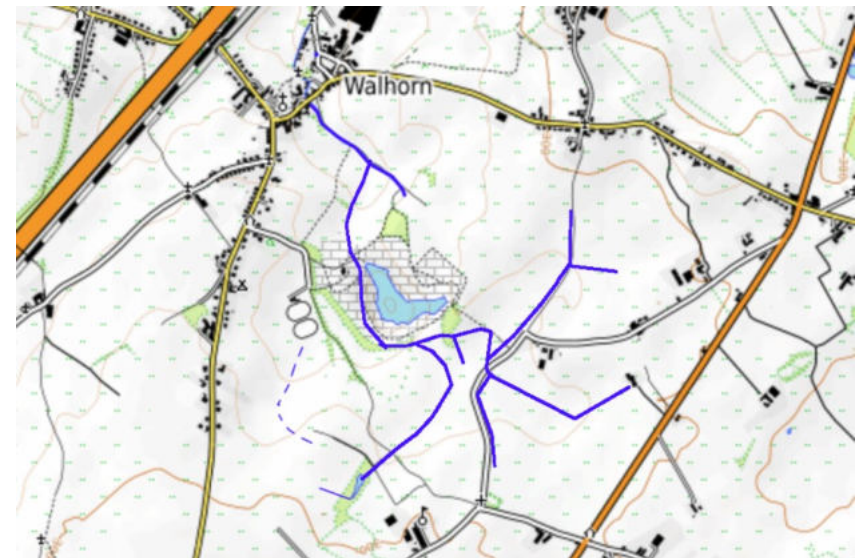
Nature Bases Solutions Geul: Paved surfaces

- Greening private areas and public spaces to increase infiltration capacity
- Use upstream valleys to store runoff from urban areas
- Intercept runoff from roads and increase infiltration on green slopes



Nature Bases Solutions Geul: sponge recovery

- Remove drainage and extended streams:
- Prevent water that runs off in (thin) soils from coming to the surface more quickly.
- Earlier modeling at the Kylldal shows reduction of peak discharge up to 30%
- Baseflows increasing by 10 – 30%



Nature Bases Solutions Geul: floodplain restoration

- Natural (rough) vegetation on the floodplain
- Restoration of meanders
- Obstructions (wood) in the stream
- Planological protection of inundation zones

