Water Diplomacy at the Basin-Level

What Role for River Basin Organizations?

Dr. Susanne Schmeier
Transboundary Water Management, Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
susanne.schmeier@giz.de
A Need for Water Diplomacy?

Water: A Global Crisis
The world water crisis is both severe and entirely avoidable.

Risk of water wars rises with scarcity
Almost half of humanity will face water scarcity by 2030 and strategists from Israel to Central Asia prepare for strife.

Water scarcity a contributing cause of wars, terrorism in Middle East, North Africa

Water Experts Warn of Conflict Over Mekong Dams

Preventing a water war in Asia
China’s extensive dam-building would give it control of Southeast Asia’s rivers

Water wars between countries could be just around the corner, Davey warns
Energy secretary tells conference that growing pressure on water resources could worsen existing war and lead to new ones

Laos energy development spawns tensions

Water wars in Central Asia
Damned if they do
Spats over control of water roil an already unstable region

Why global water shortages pose threat of terror and war
From California to the Middle East, huge areas of the world are drying up and a billion people have no access to safe drinking water. US intelligence is warning of the dangers of shrinking resources and experts say the world is ‘standing on a precipice’

U.S. intelligence sees global water conflict risks rising

Mekong River Countries Face ‘Make or Break Moment’ Over Lao Dams

Which countries are most dependent on others for water?

Water Wars? Think Again: Conflict Over Freshwater Structural Rather Than Strategic
Defining „Water Diplomacy“

The difference between water diplomacy and water cooperation: Water as a goal in itself or water as a means for goals beyond water (stability, peace and cooperation)
The Water Diplomacy Process

Conflict Resolution

Conflict Prevention

Regional Cooperation

Regional Integration

Water Disputes

Water Dispute Resolution

Water Conflict Prevention

Water Cooperation

Joint Water Management

- Negotiations
- Diplomatic “pressure”
- Mediation
- Arbitration
- Good offices

- Confidence building
- Joint studies/fact finding

- Legal/institutional architecture
- International water treaties
- RBOs

- Joint planning mechanisms/RBM Plans
- Joint monitoring
- Notification of planned measures

Declaration of Principles - GERD

Picnic Table Talks

Indus Commissioners Meetings

Danube RBM Plan

Kishenganga Arbitration

Nile Track-II Diplomacy

Indus Treaty

MRC Council Meetings

MRC PNPCA
# River Basin Organizations and Water Diplomacy

## Provision of decision-making support
- **Council Meetings**
- **Nile DSS**
- **ORASECOM Studies**
- **Danube TNMN**
- **ISRBC**
- **PNPCA Report**
- **CICOS Notification**

## Monitoring of compliance
- **Environmental monitoring**
- **Treaty compliance monitoring**
- **ISRBC**
- **Danube TNMN**
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## Data acquisition/analysis/sharing
- **Analyses**
- **State of the Basin Reports**
- **Nile DSS**
- **ORASECOM Studies**
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- **PNPCA Report**

## Notification and consultation
- **Analyses**
- **Notification processes**
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## Dispute resolution
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## Basin planning
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## RBOs and Water Diplomacy

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Water Diplomacy: Opportunities and Risks for RBOs

Water diplomacy provides benefits to basins, countries and riparian populations and opportunities to RBOs:

- Strengthening RBO’s relevance
- Linking science/analyses to policy decisions
- Ensuring the basis for long-term sustainable basin development

BUT: Water diplomacy engagement also comes with risks for RBOs:

- Politization/securitization
- Risks to impartiality
- Capacity insufficiencies

RBOs need to carefully assess opportunities and benefits before embarking into water diplomacy activities.