

Dr. Joachim Blatter: “Political Science Perspectives on Governance of Transboundary Watercourses: Sovereignty, Games, Advocacy-Coalitions and Symbols”

Abstract

The presentation will provide an overview over the major approaches in Political Science on transboundary water-management. A first perspective conceives transboundary water issues in the context of power politics between states which try to defend their sovereignty and to enhance their power in an anarchic international system. A second perspective models transboundary water management as strategic games between self-interested governments. A third perspective focuses on international norms and networks, primarily as epistemic communities and advocacy coalitions and their role in the various stages of transboundary policy making. The last and newest approach stresses the symbolic meaning of water and argues that transboundary water management is embedded in processes of political place-making and institution-building. It will be argued that for a "politically sustainable" governance approach for specific river-basins it is crucial to tailor the approach according to the dominant meanings of water - in other word, to adapt water governance to the "political environment."

Curriculum Vitae

Dr. Joachim Blatter is Hochschulassistent at the Department of Politics and Management, University of Konstanz. He has published books and articles in the fields of cross-border cooperation and environmental politics, including “Reflections on Water: New Approaches to Transboundary Management and Conflict” (coedited together with Helen Ingram, MIT-Press, 2001).

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