

# **GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN RIVER BASINS: LESSONS FROM USA**

*Stephen M. Born*  
*UW-Madison*

**IOEW Academy - Berlin**

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# Evolution of the River Basin Model in the USA

- Progressive Era (1900-1930s)
- FDR/Federal Era (1933-1960s)
- Environmental Era (1960s-present)
- “New” Watershed Movement (1980s- )

***A new***  
**approach:**

**Why?**

# The New Watershed Approach

- Watersheds – fundamental management units
- Broad goals (evolutionary)
- Science-based, local knowledge
- Coordination among agencies/governments
- Local/ “grassroots” participation & influence
- Collaborative, voluntary partnerships
- Action-oriented

# What's Really New?

- Broader Goals
  - Ecosystem health/sustainability goals (Stewardship)
- Enhanced Coordination
  - Resource and information sharing
- Shared Decision-Making
  - More decentralized, partnerships
- Action-orientation
  - Plan, implement, evaluate, adapt

# Key Governance Issues

- Who are the stakeholders?
- Governmental role(s)?
- Experts and the role of science?
- Partnerships?

# PARTNERSHIPS: The Changing Political-Management Context

- Devolution, “grassroots” stewardship, new partnerships – “LIKES” vs. “UNLIKES”

# Partnerships

- **“Unlikes” – mixing cultures**
- **Variable motivation/salience**





# Stakeholder Motivations

- Highly-valued resource
- Perceptions of threat
- Resource degradation
- Perceived threat of external action
- Potential economic gain
- Incentives for joint action (\$\$\$)
- Interest group protection

# Key Governance Issues (cont.)

- Stakeholder participation processes?
- Structural and organizational issues?
- Scale issues?
- Coordination issues?
- Plans?
- Implementation “tools”?

**Measuring Success –**

**Evaluation  
Challenges**

# **SUCCESS – What to Measure?**

- **Changes/Outcomes?**
- **Goal Attainment? Progress?**
- **Less tangible measures – e.g., capacity building, stakeholder satisfaction?**
- **Evaluation Issues**
  - **Problem Tractability**
  - **Constraints**
  - **Maturity**
  - **Attribution**

# Some Key “Success” Factors

- Importance of Context
- Inclusive Participation
- Institutional Arrangements in a Shared Authority Environment
- Right Scale/ “nested hierarchy”
- Scope – Towards IEM; Land Connection
- Funding
- Sound Plans & Compliance
- Sustained Governmental Role
- Milestones, Monitoring & Transparency
- Dynamic & Adaptive

# Some Examples of “Success”

- **State** (TX, FLA, MA, WA, WI, OR, NY)  
Watershed Initiatives
- **Multi-state:** TVA; DRBC; Chesapeake Bay
- **Federal Agencies** - public lands; estuaries
- **RIVERPRIZE WINNERS**
  - Mersey River Campaign, ENGLAND
  - Grand River, Canada
  - Siuslaw River, USA