

Prof. Stephen Born: "Governance Issues in River Basins: Lessons from Experience in the USA"

Abstract

One of the most profound institutional innovations in environmental management in recent decades is the emergence of a "new" approach to watershed and river basin management. This approach has deep historical roots. Its distinguishing features include decentralized and shared decision-making, collaboration, engagement of a wide array of stakeholders, and goals including ecological sustainability. It differs from "traditional" approaches that are more fragmented, less inclusive, and reliant upon centralized agency decision-making and command-control strategies. I briefly review salient events in the evolution of river basin management in USA leading to the "new" approach; define its significant features; and trace its rapid expansion in the USA. Based on the experiences in the USA, a set of key governance issues is identified, including: participation of stakeholders; governmental roles; role of experts and science; engagement and decision-making processes; structural and organizational factors; scale issues; coordination arrangements; planning frameworks; and implementation tools. A robust evaluation approach is outlined to address dilemmas associated with measuring the success of new river basin/watershed management approaches. I conclude by identifying key factors influencing successful efforts that may be applicable to implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.

Curriculum Vitae

Stephen M. Born received degrees from the Universities of Illinois (B.S.-Geology); Oregon (M.S.-Geology); and Wisconsin-Madison (M.S.-Water Resources Management; Ph.D.-Hydrogeology). He has been associated with the University of Wisconsin since 1969, where he is a Professor of Urban and Regional Planning and Environmental Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has served as Chair of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning and the UW-Madison graduate Water Resources Management Program. From 1974 through 1977 Born served Wisconsin state government as Director of the State Planning Agency and later Wisconsin State Energy. He has also worked in natural resources and governmental policy planning in Thailand, Tunisia, Mexico, New Zealand and Australia. His interests are in the areas of environmental and natural resources planning and management, with emphasis on watersheds (also groundwater, lakes and shorelands, and coastal management; land use policy and planning; integrated environmental management; and analysis of governmental institutions and policy-making). Recent research has focused on assessing watershed partnerships. He has been a principal in the development of Wisconsin's laws for lake and watershed

management, groundwater protection, land use planning and mineral development. Prior to coming to the University of Wisconsin, Born worked in petroleum exploration and development for Shell Oil Company in the Western U.S. Born has served as chairman of the National Resources Board of Trout Unlimited, the conservation agenda-setting body for the U.S. largest coldwater conservation organization; he has also served on the Boards of Directors of the River Alliance of Wisconsin, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, and Trout Unlimited Canada. Born is coauthor of "Exploring Wisconsin Trout Streams" (UW Press), and writes occasionally for conservation/angling periodicals.

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