

Prof. Hans Bressers: “Integrated Regimes for Natural Resource Management: What is needed and does it work?”

Abstract

The European Water Framework Directive (2000) aims at a good ecological status for all European waters by means of integrated water management at river basin level. This presentation addresses the questions: (1) do integrated water regimes lead to more sustainable water use? (2) on what conditions can integrated water regimes be achieved? A better understanding is needed of the dynamic relationships between various conflicting uses of water resources, the regimes under which these uses of water resources are managed, and conditions generating regime shifts towards sustainability. To elaborate on 'institutional regimes for natural resources' two scientific approaches of resource management are combined: a property rights based approach and a governance based approach. A resource regime is defined as a combination of property rights and elements of governance. The integration of a regime is understood in terms of the regime's scope and the coherence between property rights and governance elements. Also a pragmatic operationalisation of 'sustainable use' as well as a list of potentially relevant triggers and change conditions is specified. On the basis of a comparative case study analysis of twelve water basins and their regimes across Europe, it is concluded that a combination of both scientific approaches makes sense for the analysis of natural resource regimes.

Curriculum Vitae

Prof. Dr. Hans Th. A. Bressers (1953) is professor of Policy Studies and Environmental Policy at the University of Twente in the Netherlands and scientific director of the Center for Clean Technology and Environmental Policy of that university.

Furthermore he was, inter alia, vice-chairman of the official permanent Evaluation Committee of the Environmental Management Act, which advises the Minister regularly on the efficacy of Dutch environmental policy. He was also the chairman of the Advisory Committee to the Dutch Minister for the Environment for the implementation of environmental policy by local government (1991-2001) and has been chairman of the Dutch social science association for environmental and energy research, SWOME.

Currently he is an independent scientific member of the Commission on Sustainable development of the Dutch Social-Economic Council (SER). Furthermore he is a member of the editorial board of the Dutch policy studies journal 'Beleidswetenschap'.

In over two hundred articles, chapters, reports, papers and books (both in Dutch and in English) he published on policy-mapping, -instruments, -implementation, -evaluation and policy networks, mostly applied on environmental policies. He has been researcher and project leader of numerous externally funded projects, including several projects funded by EU research frameworks, Dutch national science foundation, Dutch ministries, etceteras. Together with Stefan Kuks he supervised a large EU fifth framework sponsored six country study into the development of integrated water management regimes in which public policy approaches and property rights approaches (Ostrom e/o.) are combined.

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