

The Birth and Spread of IWRM

A Case Study of Global Policy Translation

- Why has IWRM become so popular and so resilient, at least in discourse and policy?
- What has caused IWRM policies to diffuse across time and space?
- Focus: on process.
 - how a common global understanding emerged within and across water networks and policy processes
 - Need to deconstruct what we mean by the global and who is part of this global



- Professor Tony Allan, Emeritus Professor, Kings College London
- Mr William Cosgrove, Former President of the World Water Council
- Dr. Peter Gleick, President and Co-founder, Pacific Institute
- Mr Alan Hall, Senior Advisor, GWP
- Mr Johan Holmberg, Senior Advisor, GWP
- Dr Guy Howard, WASH Policy Team Leader, DFID
- Professor Torkil Jonch Clausen, Chief Water Policy Adviser DHI Group
- Professor Roberto Lenton, Executive Director of the Robert B. Daugherty Water for Food Institute, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- Professor Jan Lundqvist, Senior Scientific Advisor, SIWI
- Professor Bruce Mitchell, Professor of Geography, University of Waterloo
- Professor Peter Rogers, Gordon McKay Professor of Environmental Engineering and Professor of City and Regional Planning, Harvard University
- Mr Peregrine Swan, Senior Water Advisor, DIFD
- Professor Eelco van Beek, Professor of Modeling Integrated Water Resources Management, University of Twente
- Professor Pieter van der Zaag, Professor of Integrated Water Resources Management, UNESCO-IHE
- Dr Martin Walsh, Global Research Adviser, Oxfam



Conceptual framework

- four large conceptual explanations of the phenomenon of policy diffusion, namely:
 - Endogenous conditions within countries that lead to similar conditions (economic shock or cultural and institutional similarities),
 - Uncoordinated diffusion, esp. through learning (evidence and best practice),
 - Cooperation through technical support or epistemic communities,
 - Coercion, especially through soft power such as donor or international institutions' conditionalities or Gramscian ideological hegemony.
 - Coercion entails two sets of assumptions, firstly that there is an intentional motive from powerful countries to coerce weaker ones, and secondly that weaker ones are resisting.



<p>Coercion: a structural hegemonic thought pattern where no alternatives were feasible or discussed</p>	<p>Cooperation</p>	<p>Learning, information cascade and policy mimicking</p>
<p>Global policy diffusion occurred through a hegemonic northern led process imposed by the World Bank through its auxiliary the Global Water Partnership. IWRM is seen as form of coercion as it imposes a set of principles and tools to be followed. World Bank's leading role in creating a new discourse around water management (A technical solution to the imminent water scarcity crisis, An economic solution to our modern economic growth oriented urban society, An ecosystem solution to the limits of the hydraulic mission, A social solution to the limits of not engaging communities and stakeholders)</p>	<p>IWRM, a cumulative cooperative knowledge process going back before the adoption of the concept in global policy circles in the early 90s. IWRM is seen through a 'longue durée' perspective as knowledge construction, a positivist perspective which involves the scientific study of water systems in relation to human society and ecosystems. Different experiments around integrated water management, go back to as early as the beginning of the 20th century Harvard Water Programme This long tradition of working on multidisciplinary and system analysis used the sustainable development policy momentum to bring about the IWRM concept.</p>	<p>Soft coercion and cooperation assume a certain level of coordination at the global level. For some IWRM practitioners interviewed, there was no master plan. IWRM was an ideal, and IWRM was based on a 'learning from the ground' approach where IWRM was tested and improved. The GWP and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Torkil Jonch-Clausen, IWRM really came from Africa - Uganda (the 3 pillars) IWRM could be conceived as a bottom-up process based on learning from the ground</p> 

Conclusion

- Global Policy Translation: Coordination, politics and resistance: GWP vs WWC
- Focused on tracing the IWRM idea and knowledge diffusion but more work is needed to look at the political economy aspects, namely tracing back the funds among donors, institutions and IWRM programs at the global level.
- Why was this idea so successful in travelling across different regions of the globe?
 - The resistance to water as an economic good created an institutional pathway around networks rather than intergovernmental route.
 - No clear policy alternative
- An IWRM fatigue?

