

Transboundary water conflict resolution mechanisms: toward convergence between theory and practice

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Transboundary waters are expected to be one of the biggest challenges for human development over the next decades. The growing global water scarcity and interdependence among water-sharing countries have created tensions over shared water resources around the world. Therefore, interest in studying transboundary water conflict resolution has grown over the last decades. This research focuses on transboundary water resources conflict resolution mechanisms. A more specific concern is to explore the mechanisms of allocating of transboundary water resources among riparian states. The literature of transboundary water resources conflict has brought various approaches for allocating of transboundary water resources among riparian countries. Some of these approaches have focused on the negotiation process, such as the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR). Other approaches have analysed the economic dimension of transboundary water disputes, in an attempt to identify optimal economic criteria for water allocation, such as the “social planner” approach and the “water market” approach. A more comprehensive approach has been provided by game theory that has brought together the economic and political dimensions of the water dispute management. The study attempts to provide a map for the relation between theory and practice in the field of transboundary water conflict resolution. Therefore, it explores the approaches that have been used to analyse real transboundary water disputes management. Moreover, it examines the approaches that have been suggested in literature as mechanisms of transboundary water conflict resolution. Finally, it identifies the techniques that have been used in practice to solve transboundary water conflicts and attempts to evaluate the sustainability of the resulting regulatory institutional arrangements.