

## Book Review

# Transboundary Water Resources Management: A Multidisciplinary Approach

Edited by Jacque Gonoulis, Alice Aureli, Jean Fried, Weinheim, Germany, Wiley-VCH, 2011, xxxv+382 pp, hardcover, ISBN 3527330143

By paraphrasing statements made in the foreword and preface, it is obvious that rivers, lakes, mountains and plains, as well as ecosystems along with their environment, fall within the jurisdiction of different states, provinces and other administrative units. However, natural resources, running water in particular, do not know the man-made borders and, therefore, cross-border cooperation is essential in order to manage them sustainably and effectively. Transboundary waters have only recently gained significance in the international dialogue. Climate and other global changes are rapidly increasing pressure on water resources, which bring to the further increase in the need for cooperation in the field of water management among sovereign states.

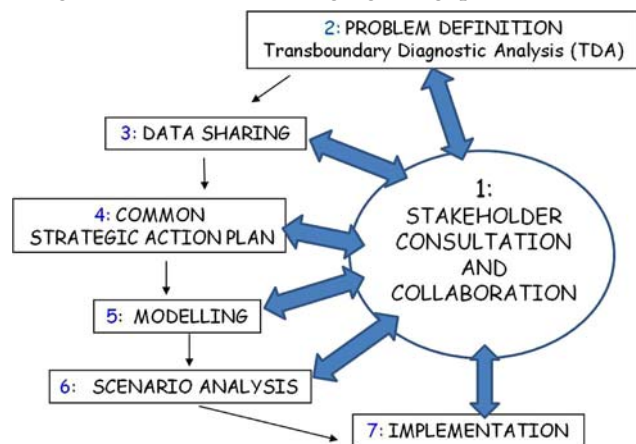
As almost half of the world's land is situated in transboundary river basins, the transboundary water resource management issues are gaining increasing attention in the recent years. The application of the principles of the integrated water resource management (IWRM) is faced with many challenges, e.g. the integration of the water policy into other sectoral policies within a country, financial and human resource constraints, institutional barriers for the implementation of the IWRM, etc. However, probably the biggest challenge is the implementation of the water management policies on transboundary water resources shared by two or more countries.

Many efforts have been made in the recent years to establish the framework for an effective transboundary water resources management (TWRM). Numerous legal, institutional, technical, environmental, economic and social issues have to be integrated into this framework, as only a multidisciplinary approach can result in an effective management framework. Although the principles of a sound TWRM may be universal, the

actual implementation of the transboundary water resource management greatly depends on local physical, social, economic and other conditions. The experience of different TWRM endeavours is therefore an invaluable resource in an effort to improve our current understanding of the problem and approaches applied at the transboundary level.

In this context, the publication can be perceived as a tool that may substantially upgrade the current practices of the TWRM. It presents various aspects of the transboundary water resources management from the perspective of scientists and experts who tackled this issue in specific TWRM projects. The topics are presented through series of essays and case studies, offering a detailed insight into the complex structure of the TWRM.

One of important attributes of the book is that it presents the TWRM experience from different regions of the world. The book suggests a conceptual model, as illustrated below, on how to foster cooperation and integration in TWRM (bridging the gaps).



Obviously there is no unique approach towards a sound transboundary water resource management as it depends on many regionally specific conditions, such as types of water-related problems, level of social organization, financial capacity to support the actions, public authority's technical capacity, etc. Although any specific TWRM effort must reflect local water issues and management conditions, the experience gained in apparently unrelated settings is a valuable asset that may help to significantly improve the TWRM plans and implementation actions.

The book also covers various aspects of TWRM, and in this regard, the book truly reflects its multidisciplinary nature. A multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach to water resource management is one of the

cornerstones of the IWRM at national but also at the international level. Only with the holistic approach, engaging professionals from different disciplines of technical, environmental, and social sciences, the TRWM can be effective and successful. The present book offers such multidisciplinary approach, which is presented on a case-study basis rather than through theoretical elaboration of the TWRM concepts. In this regard, the book's sub-title "A Multidisciplinary Approach" is fully deserved, as it accurately reflects the content presented to the readers.

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