

## ***Interactive comment on “The “WFD-effect” on upstream-downstream relations in international river basins – insights from the Rhine and the Elbe basins” by S. Moellenkamp***

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I would like to thank the editors Dr. S. Barles and Dr. A. Ducharne, as well as the three reviewers for their thoughtful comments on my work.

Below I provide the answers to the comments and questions raised. Accordingly, I incorporated modifications and improvements in the new version of the paper.

The title of the article caused confusion about its main purpose. The main focus of the paper is indeed the study of important effects of the WFD on upstream-downstream relations. Reacting to this confusion the title was changed from “The WFD-effect” to “WFD-effects”, stating explicitly that there is neither one single effect caused by the

WFD (the paper discusses several changes) nor that all possible effects of the WFD are dealt with in the paper, which is not possible at this early stage of implementation of the directive and not aimed at. Instead, the paper aims at discussing three important effects of the WFD that were studied in the basins of the Rhine and the Elbe.

Further it is important to mention here, that the paper deals with the study of effects of the WFD and not with the WFD effectiveness, which is of course an interesting question to focus on, but not aimed at in this study. A misunderstanding in that direction motivated several comments and questions by the anonymous referee. The paper was clarified in order to prevent from confounding “effects” with “effectiveness”.

It was requested to change the size of the different sub-chapters; here, only slight changes were implemented, as one important aim of the paper is to show the changes that the WFD brought about for the upstream-downstream relationship. For this purpose it is of utmost importance to first show the previous status of upstream-downstream relations. The introductory chapter was not shortened, as the editors requested more detailed sub-chapters in the previous review, with what I agree.

The question was raised, why Germany is seen as an important country in the study. The focuses of the empirical study are indeed the Rhine and Elbe basins. In these basins, Germany holds different geopolitical positions (middle position for the Rhine and downstream position for the Elbe basin), which is an interesting setting that needs to be mentioned.

The arguments concerning Switzerland were clarified in the text.

It was also clarified that the empirical studies for this article were done in a broader frame. The study of the effects of the WFD is underpinned by empirical results of interviews in the Rhine and Elbe basins.

It was asked if the basin states enter into hard negotiations. They indeed do, but these take place with a general sense of community, which is not in contradiction.

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Referees asked if the WFD caused more administrative work. Indeed, the implementation of the new structures and procedures led to more administrative work during the first years of its implementation. This was included in the text.

Referees asked if non-compliance with the WFD can lead to infringement procedures. Indeed it can and the text was improved accordingly.

It was asked which trust-building measures the river basin commissions have undergone. There were no targeted trust-building measures, but in general an increase in co-operation.

It was recommended to integrate the work by Coase. Coase was integrated, but not put in the centre of the argumentation, as economics are an important aspect but not the main focus of the paper.

The context of industrial interests was integrated.

The conclusions were smoothened. It was clarified that the lifting of the downstream state onto the same level as the other basin states was meant from a hydropolitical point of view.

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