

Interactive comment on “Institutional design and regime effectiveness in transboundary river management – the Elbe water quality regime” by I. Dombrowsky

Anonymous Referee #1

Received and published: 4 July 2007

I found the paper to be interesting, informative and well researched. Moreover, it addresses an important topic, which, as noted by the author, has not been studied extensively.

However, it has several significant and substantive shortcomings. In particular, the conceptual framing of the paper is rather weak. In the Introduction, the author uses the asymmetrical conditions (and how they were overcome) as a point of departure. If this is indeed the study's anchor, it should be more rigorously followed and defiantly returned to at the paper's end. A table on how the different institutional faces offset the asymmetries can help here.

Full Screen / Esc

Printer-friendly Version

Interactive Discussion

Discussion Paper

A second point is that the literature review can be better connected to the Discussion. I also expected to find more on how regime set up affects effectiveness.

A third point concerns how the causal relationship between the effectiveness of the regime and the regime structure is presented. It seems a bit anecdotal, though it is depicted dryly. Again, using the asymmetries (or any other variable) as an anchor can improve this chapter.

Finally, the author should try and make his conclusions more pertinent to other cases, beyond the Rhine. If the ICPE is part of the EU Water Directive, and we are likely to see more such initiatives, discussing it can probably help here.

In addition, the paper has several other issues that should be clarified:

- The author can easily mention the global fashion of establishing basin commissions (also in Europe under the Water Directive) though their performance is not studied. Addressing this point will significantly improve explaining the motivation for the study stated in the Introduction.
- The literature review in the Introduction is far from being updated. Today we know much more on the connection between effectiveness and institutional design.
- The paper often, in order to justify the study on which it is based, addresses the Rhine regime as a model. This point should be further elaborated to help place the paper in a wider context.
- A sentence on the limits of using revealed versus stated behavior/reference (as a methodological approach) can help.
- The chapter on the Elbe water quality regime can be shorter; it would also be useful to include a table with the regime features.

Full Screen / Esc

Printer-friendly Version

Interactive Discussion

Discussion Paper

- In the discussion on upstream versus downstream, the following book should be cited: LeMarquand, D. (1977). *International Rivers, the Politics of Cooperation*. Vancouver: Wastewater Research Center, University of British Columbia.

In short, I would encourage the author to revise and resubmit this paper. After some revision, such a manuscript can make a contribution to the field.

Interactive comment on Hydrol. Earth Syst. Sci. Discuss., 4, 1625, 2007.

HESSD

4, S451–S453, 2007

Interactive
Comment

Full Screen / Esc

Printer-friendly Version

Interactive Discussion

Discussion Paper