The Transboundary Water Challenge

Anton Earle
Stockholm International Water Institute
Gaps in TWM security

- Indicators of improvement?
- Development of basin organisations
- Beyond state actors
- Orange-Senqu River case
Water Security

- Quality of water: the quantity may be fine – but what is the quality like?
- Quantity of water: dry and wet years, but also long-term changes in the amount of water available
- Vulnerability to risk: human and ecosystem resilience to hazard impact
Water: Too little, too much or too dirty...
What is “Success” in TWM?

• Will we recognise success in TWM when confronted with it?
• Finances – attracting funds or creating wealth,
• Strong Institutions,
• Infrastructure, energy & food production
• A healthy environment,
• Public involvement in decision making
• Access to safe and reliable water services
• Other factors?
Cooperation Prevails

- Over the past 50 years there have been 37 cases of reported violence among countries because of water.
- Over the same period more than 200 treaties were negotiated.
- Conflict (and its outcomes) is straightforward to recognise.
- Cooperation is multi-faceted – harder to recognise.
- Emphasis has largely been on the outputs of cooperation.
Results and Indicators of Cooperation

**Outputs**
- Agreements
- Organisations
- Dialogue Platforms
- Databases
- Studies, reports, strategies & plans

**Outcomes**
- Implementation of basin plans
- Use of shared data in basin management
- Regular meetings of political and technical representatives
- Participation of stakeholders

**Impacts**
- Infrastructure developed at TB scale (however defined)
- Improvement in state of environment – defined by basin states
- Water resource benefits create wealth for basin population
- Improved access to water services
- International public good protected
Impacts of TWM lagging

- Interventions in TWM are evident at the output as well as outcome levels – but little evidence at the impact level,
- Indicators are not positive:
  - No. of people living with water scarcity set to rise by 2025
  - Water withdrawals keep rising
  - Freshwater species populations continue decline
  - Increase in pollutants flowing into rivers
  - Water-linked diseases such as cholera more prolific
  - Access to water services still a major problem in many basins.
Beyond the state-centric approach

- States have final responsibility for TWM resources and create the conditions for cooperation – outputs
- A range of other actors need to be engaged to develop outcomes which lead to impacts
- RBOs are well-placed to facilitate cooperation between these groups & sectors
- Once cooperation is in place, incentives have to be identified to engage investors in the supply of energy, water, food, navigation and other water-related benefits.
TWM Process

Research, Academic & IFIs - developing new concepts, often based on the solutions developed by the WR community.

Water Resource Community - managers and users of water; developing pragmatic solutions on the ground.

Politicians - allocating values in society, protecting state interest, sovereignty, rights etc. Co-opt and support ideas from the Researchers on their terms.
Orange-Senqu River

- Four basin states – Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho & South Africa – river heavily used by individual countries
- Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM) formed in 2000 – government-led RBO

Impacts of cooperation mainly at bilateral level – Lesotho Highlands Water Project supplies water to users near Johannesburg
- Royalties earned by Government of Lesotho form water transfer

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Orange Senqu Processes

**Research, Academic & IFIs** – GIZ, EU, GEF support institutional development and basin planning

**Water Resource Community** – Nat Depts Water, Rand Water & city of Jo’burg, farmers, industry seek to influence process

**Politicians** – ministers from the 4 basin states provide overall direction – delegated representatives participate in ORASECOM activities & bilateral RBOs

**ORASECOM plays a role linking these actors & identifying incentives**
Conclusion

• The broader TWM community needs to shift from looking at and promoting outputs of cooperation and towards the outcomes and impacts
• For this to happen actors external to the basin need to work with the basin water-user community and the political decisions-makers
• RBOs can play a role integrating these various actors and identifying incentives for collaboration.
Anton Earle
anton.earle@siwi.org

Stockholm International Water Institute, SIWI
www.siwi.org