Transboundary Water Management: Science and Politics

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Population explosion and its associated effects have already caused enormous stress on the world's fresh water resources. With the global climate change anticipated to have threatening consequences on the environment, there are good reasons to believe that the future state of the world's water will be a lot worse. There are even fears that water will be the source of violent conflicts between communities and nation-states. With over 300 rivers being shared by two or more states, management of transboundary waters will play a vital role in resolving the future water problems and conflicts. Despite the many existing international legal frameworks and regulations, however, there remain tremendous challenges in the management of transboundary waters. These challenges have many different facets: scientific, political, economic, social, cultural, racial, religious, and linguistic, among others. Any sincere effort to overcome these challenges must seriously take into account each and everyone of these factors, as relevant, and also in an integrated fashion. This study discusses these challenges, especially with a case study of the water dispute in an inter-state river basin in South India.

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