

6-11-2002

Horizontal and Vertical Coordination in River Basin Management: German Experiences and New Challenges [abstract]

Axel Klaphake

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholar.law.colorado.edu/allocating-and-managing-water-for-sustainable-future>

 Part of the [Environmental Policy Commons](#), [International Law Commons](#), [Natural Resources Management and Policy Commons](#), [Water Law Commons](#), and the [Water Resource Management Commons](#)

Citation Information

Klaphake, Axel, "Horizontal and Vertical Coordination in River Basin Management: German Experiences and New Challenges [abstract]" (2002). *Allocating and Managing Water for a Sustainable Future: Lessons from Around the World (Summer Conference, June 11-14)*.

<http://scholar.law.colorado.edu/allocating-and-managing-water-for-sustainable-future/28>



Axel Klaphake, *Horizontal and Vertical Coordination in River Basin Management: German Experiences and New Challenges* [abstract], in *ALLOCATING AND MANAGING WATER FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: LESSONS FROM AROUND THE WORLD* (Natural Res. Law Ctr., Univ. of Colo. Sch. of Law 2002).

Reproduced with permission of the Getches-Wilkinson Center for Natural Resources, Energy, and the Environment (formerly the Natural Resources Law Center) at the University of Colorado Law School.

Horizontal and Vertical Coordination in River Basin Management: German Experiences and New Challenges

By: Dr. Axel Klaphake

Dr. Axel Klaphake
Institute for Landscape and Environmental Planning
Department on Comparative Land Economics
Technical University Berlin
Sekt. FR 2-7
Franklinstrasse 28/29
D-10587 Berlin
Germany
Phone: +49 (0) 30-31421358
Fax: +49 (0) 30-31473517
Email: klaphake@imup.tu-berlin.de

Assistant Professor Axel Klaphake is engaged in environmental economic research at the Institute for Landscape and Environmental Planning, Technical University Berlin, with a focus on institutional and instrumental aspects of national and international water policy, evaluation of ecosystem management practices in Europe, and international environmental institutions.

He has a diploma in economics and political science from the University Cologne and a PhD in environmental management from the Technical University Berlin. Before joining the Institute for Landscape and Environmental Planning, he conducted studies in the framework of several projects, inter alia, on behalf of the Institute for European Environmental Policy (Bonn), the Institute for Economic Policy at the University Leipzig, and the Carl-Duisberg-Society (Mali).

ABSTRACT

The European Union (EU) Water Framework Directive, which came into force in December 2000, establishes the river basin as the relevant unit for water management and planning in the EU member states. For the first time, river basin management will be institutionalised throughout the European Union. The Directive intends to leave behind the common sectorial water management approaches and the management practices based on administrative borders. The EU member states are obliged to identify river basins within their territory and assign them to River Basin Districts (RBD). These River Basin Districts will be the relevant spatial unit for the ambitious environmental objectives and all measures (river basin management plans and programmes, economic analyses, participation, etc.) that are introduced by the Directive. In the case of transboundary rivers, International River Basin Districts have to be established. For all River Basin Districts, member states are obliged to set up appropriate administrative arrangements in order to ensure the practical implementation.

The implementation of this Directive is a remarkable challenge for all member states of the European Union but the necessary changes will be the greatest in those countries where water management is more decentralized and traditionally organized around political-administrative units. Germany is a prime example of this type of EU member

state. While the responsibilities for water policy and management are divided between the authorities at different spatial levels in accordance with the federal structure of government, within Germany inter-state cooperation is only partly assured and institutionalised.

Against this background, this paper deals with the necessary institutional change in water management in Germany. First, the institutional challenges for water management will be discussed in general terms. The theoretical background is the economic theory of federalism. Second, a case study on current river basin management practices in Germany will be presented and the challenges and obstacles for horizontal and vertical coordination in the federal political structure of Germany will be illustrated. Third, more general conclusions will be drawn concerning the establishment of river basin management in federal political systems. Finally, the new European approach and the relevant experiences will be compared to recent discussions in the US.