

Movik, S.; Mehta, L. and Manzungu, E. 2016. The flow of IWRM in SADC: The role of regional dynamics, advocacy networks and external actors. *Water Alternatives* 9(3): 434-455



The Flow of IWRM in SADC: The Role of Regional Dynamics, Advocacy Networks and External Actors

Synne Movik

Norsk Institutt for Vannforskning (NIVA), Oslo; synne.movik@niva.no

Lyla Mehta

Institute of Development Studies, Brighton, Sussex, UK; and Department of Environment and Development Studies (Noragric), Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Aas, Norway; l.mehta@ids.ac.uk

Emmanuel Manzungu

University of Zimbabwe, Department of Soil Science and Agricultural Engineering, Harare, Zimbabwe; emmanuelmanzungu@gmail.com

ABSTRACT: This article explores the entry and spread of IWRM in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. It traces how the idea of IWRM was promoted and sustained throughout the region by mapping key events, actors and networks that were involved in promoting the approach. It highlights the importance of regional networks in promoting IWRM and shows how regional dynamics, playing out at the interface between the global and local levels, influenced the adoption/adaptation and spread of IWRM. The article finds that the idea of IWRM 'hit the ground running' in SADC due to several contributing factors. These include: historical political connections between the member countries; historically rooted well-established channels and connections with bilateral and multilateral donors; the success of networks such as the Global Water Partnership and WaterNet whose mandate was to promote the concept; and the fact that two-thirds of the region's population live in transboundary basins with IWRM providing a suitable hook for transboundary cooperation, often inspired by European models. The article further argues that IWRM thrived because of strong donor agendas that were adapted by key SADC actors to suit strategic interests. It thus provided a platform for complex politically charged negotiations to reconcile apparently divergent goals such as infrastructure vs management and regional vs national interests. The practice of IWRM in the region is very much shaped by a conflation of regional, national and donor interests and has now acquired a life of its own, despite changing donor priorities.

KEYWORDS: IWRM, regionalisation, regionalism, SADC, southern Africa

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the International Conference on Water and the Environment (ICWE) was convened in Dublin in 1992, the idea of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) has had an impressive global influence. Attention towards formulating and putting into practice the notion of integration has been a key focus of water resources managers across the globe. Still, getting to grips with, and translating, a rather abstract concept has been challenging (see Bolding et al., 2000; Biswas, 2004; Cardwell et al., 2006; Hopper, 2006; Molle, 2008; Mehta et al., 2014). Moreover, the principles themselves are broad enough to appeal universally like a kind of 'nirvana concept' (Molle, 2008) or work as a 'boundary term' (cf. Gieryn, 1999) that different actors in scientific and policy worlds interpret and deploy in different ways in accordance with prevailing political interests (see Introduction to this special issue for more details).

This special issue explores the trajectory of IWRM – its emergence and spread – as well as how it has been translated into practice (or not) in southern Africa. Allouche (this issue) deals with the 'birth' and emergence of IWRM at the global level, while the country cases document how IWRM has been translated in different contexts. This article aims to fill the gap between these two focal areas. Between the global and national policy levels, there is another policy arena that can act as a link, fostering the downstream – or upstream – flow of policy ideas like IWRM at the regional scale. This article takes as its point of departure the question of how IWRM became entrenched in southern Africa with a particular focus on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, which in the past two decades has witnessed much cooperation and activity around water management, and IWRM more specifically. SADC is a political and economic grouping to which practically all the mainland and island states of southern Africa belong (see below for its history and composition).

This article asks: (i) How did IWRM unfold in southern Africa and through which key events and actors? (ii) Why did it become so popular in the region even though its popularity is on the wane in Europe and elsewhere? and (iii) How has it been shaped and adapted in interaction with the prevailing regional dynamics?

The article is structured as follows. First we present some conceptual ideas on 'regions' and how ideas and policies flow within a regional space. The article then provides a brief historical overview of the SADC region and water management before looking at the roll out of IWRM in SADC and the key role of transboundary waters. The article then looks at the diversity of external donor perspectives and practices and the key role played by regional networks such as the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and WaterNet, a major research and capacity building regional network. The final sections analyse the mixed bag of donor-led experiences and impacts and discuss how and why IWRM became so popular in the region.

METHODS

We used a mixed set of methods, combining semi-structured interviews of key informants with document analysis and internet searches to gather information on the events, processes and issues that were involved in the spread of IWRM across southern Africa. Key informants were identified through a 'snowballing' technique and we thus could map the actors who have contributed to the spread of IWRM within the region. We interviewed people through face-to-face interviews and via Skype from organisations such as the GWP, the SADC Water Division, Capacity Development in Sustainable Water Management (CapNet), the World Bank as well as bilateral donor agencies such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ, formerly GTZ), Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) and the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and a range of policy-makers, consultants and academics. In all, 30 key informants were interviewed. In addition, we participated in three (2012, 2013, and 2014) annual WaterNet symposia and also interviewed several actors present there. Further, we conducted textual analysis of relevant documents such as government policies, donor strategies, academic articles, SADC, GWP documents and assessment reports to gain an understanding of the life of IWRM within SADC.

REGIONAL INTEGRATION, REGIONALISM AND EXTERNAL ACTORS

Regions occupy a socio-geographical space but they are also socially constructed entities (Langeland, 2012). Much of the study on regionalisation or regional integration has tended to focus on the European context, in particular on the formation of the European Union (EU). Much less attention has been devoted to the process of regionalisation in Africa and early interest in the formation of regional organisations faded away only to re-emerge early in the 1990s (Mapuva, 2015). Studies of integration in southern Africa have largely tended to focus on the economic rationale of integration (Gibb, 2009;

Mapuva, 2015) and there has been a tendency to privilege the role of states in the process of integration (Söderbaum, 2004). However, as Chan (2011) notes, the independent states that emerged in the wake of colonialism – which largely inherited the boundaries and languages of the colonisers – suffered from problems of lack of institutional capacity and legitimacy. Moving away from the fixation with state-led processes of integration, Söderbaum's (2004) study of regionalisation processes in southern Africa proposed instead to draw on the notion of the New Regionalism Approach (NRA). This approach proposes that it is not only states that play a role in the process of integration – rather, there are several processes and actors at work, both formal and informal. In the context of southern Africa, Söderbaum identifies four such processes; market integration; regime-boosting; shadow regionalism; and informal economic regionalism. Söderbaum has focussed on the multidimensional and comprehensive nature of regionalism in contemporary southern Africa. These challenge positivist approaches with their narrow focus on formal and interstate frameworks that have traditionally focused on the economic relationships between South Africa and its neighbours. In understanding regionalism, then, it is important to better understand the role of other actors, such as donors, international financial institutions and civil society as well as particular dynamics such as transboundary waters which in southern Africa have also served to promote regional integration and cooperation.

The formation of particular regional entities, such as the SADC, then, should be understood not only as a process of state-led integration, but as much a result of the workings of other informal and formal processes and actors as well. The role of external actors – such as western donors and the World Bank – has also been immense in shaping SADC and its water management trajectories. While there is a tendency to look at donor – recipient state (African) relations in rather a static and top-down way, our approach draws on Whitfield and Fraser (Whitfield and Fraser, 2009) to analyse the complex negotiations between donors, national governments and non-state actors and how policies and processes are articulated as a result. We also use a historical and diachronic approach (see Introduction, this issue) to look at how current processes and policies play out against the backdrop of specific historical, economic and political trajectories. This path dependency is critical to understanding both regional integration and the related water management processes in southern Africa. While it is beyond the scope of this article to provide a detailed exposition of the emergence of SADC and other historical processes, we offer a snapshot of some of the elements involved in its creation and evolution as a regional entity through a water lens. This serves as a backdrop to the ensuing portrayal of the water governance trends in the region and how the idea of IWRM came to unfold over time (also see Appendix 1 for a historic timeline of key global IWRM dates).

Colonial legacies and the emergence of SADC

The contemporary southern African region was produced and consolidated through several hundred years of imperialism, colonialism, mining exploitation, racism, state-building, apartheid, anti-apartheid struggles, nonracialism, and black nationalism (see Swatuk, 2005, 2008). The emergence of the SADC cannot therefore be understood without an appreciation of the chequered history of the region and the multidimensionality of processes of regionalisation in a historical context.

The history of South Africa is important in understanding regional dynamics. South Africa was first colonised by Dutch descendants – the Boers who, overtime, called themselves Afrikaners – and then later by the British. The two groups vied for political and economic power: the Boers finished with political power, and the British with economic affairs. Southern Africa was the core of Anglo-Saxon Africa and attracted the lion's share of British investments (Birmingham, 2008). A key ingredient in the colonisation of southern Africa was the emphasis on large-scale transboundary transport networks, such as Cecil Rhodes's idea of building a railway to connect the Cape with Cairo (which never materialised). Further, Rhodes combined three territories: southern Rhodesia, northern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland – present-day Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi, respectively. The Portuguese, who wielded power in the then colonies of Mozambique and Angola in particular, were also enamoured like the

British, by hubristic transport projects that never materialised, e.g. the coast-to-coast network incorporating Angola, Zambia and Mozambique (see e.g. Birmingham, 2008).

Apart from physically linking territories together through large-scale infrastructure projects, a key emphasis was on economic integration. In 1910, the same year that South Africa achieved dominion status under the Commonwealth, the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) was established, the world's oldest customs union. In 1953, the Central African Federation (CAF) was created, consisting of Nyasaland and southern and northern Rhodesia, the three territories of the Zambezi valley that Rhodes had sought to dominate. Though Rhodes died in 1902, his legacy was long-lasting. Southern Rhodesia emerged as the economic, political and military powerhouse of the federation, with Nyasaland supplying cheap labour, and northern Zambia offering copper-based wealth. This union took place largely to reap the economic benefits of linking labour and wealth closer together. However, it was brought down by an increasingly disgruntled black majority in Nyasaland and Zambia only a decade later (Birmingham, 2008; Chan, 2011).

These historical trends implicitly began to pave the way towards regional integration before far more explicit political and security interests emerged. In the wake of the struggles for independence late in the 1950s and early in the 1960s, countries in the region started engaging in processes of forming political coalitions. The era of struggles for independence coincided with the Cold War, with the superpowers fighting 'proxy wars' that grew hot, particularly in Angola, Mozambique and South West Africa (Namibia). South Africa was the hegemon of the region, busily engaged in attempts to destabilise its neighbours (Chan, 2011). In 1976, a group emerged that became known as the Frontline States, making up a buffer zone against apartheid South Africa. The coalition consisted of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and eventually Zimbabwe. Thus, two diametrically opposed political, economic and security groupings existed in the region – on the one hand, there was South Africa and its homeland satellite system, and on the other there was the Frontline States (Evans, 1986). Subsequently, the latter became the driving force for the creation of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) in 1980, with the primary purpose of fighting against apartheid. The key elements were the mobilisation of international development assistance to the liberation movements and mobilising the international community to impose sanctions on the apartheid regime to isolate it. The Nordics and like-minded countries wholeheartedly embraced the SADCC, while the British used it as compensation for their reluctance to impose sanctions on South Africa. The Cold War came to an end at the same time as apartheid was brought to an end in South Africa.

In August 1992, the SADCC gave way to the creation of the Southern African Development Community, or SADC (Mandaza et al., 1994). Today, SADC embraces a huge area of 15 countries containing a wealth of diversity in terms of climate, topography, political, socio-economic and cultural characteristics. SADC is one of the most important networks in Africa, addressing economic, political and security and cultural issues of common interest to community members (Mapuva, 2015).

After the early 1990s, South Africa became a pivotal player in the newly emerged SADC, being the most successful in the group economically. While Mandela saw the role of the state as key for a country's development, his successor, Thabo Mbeki, was more concerned with giving the private sector a freer rein to attract foreign capital; his ambitions were not merely concerned with South Africa. His desire was to foster a new continent-wide African Renaissance, to demonstrate to the world that, in particular, South Africa and SADC were capable of becoming modern (Chan, 2011). SADC, in Mbeki's mind, was meant to be the demonstration vehicle of the African Renaissance project (ibid). The strong belief in the power of the private sector to kick-start struggling economies and to embrace neoliberal policies aligned well with global economic and political trends at the time. These in part were thwarted by Zimbabwe's economic meltdown in 2000.

The role of Western donors in the SADC region should not be underestimated. Donors were often fronting political and economic interests of their home countries – many Western countries moved

from Cold War and anti-apartheid interests to emphasising the supremacy of liberal democracy, economic liberalisation, and free markets. These 'Western' interests, which are by no means homogeneous (for instance, the US and European countries have widely different aspirations when it comes to energy and resource interests in southern Africa), have had to contend with counteracting the growing influence of other emerging players such as China (Austin et al., 2008; Meierding, 2011). The net result has been a move away from state-centric policies in favour of neoliberal policies and the formation of partnerships with states, private markets and civil society actors, which echo Söderbaum's point about the need to understand the process of integration from a less state-centric vantage point.

To sum up, a multiplicity of driving factors shaped the emergence of the SADC. These included imperial interests involving large-scale transboundary transport network plans to link the territories together more tightly, economic interests, (e.g. the creation of SACU), and political and security interests in the formation of the Frontline States as a bulwark against the regime in Pretoria. These colonial and historical legacies still very much shape the cultural, linguistic and political structures of the states that make up the community membership and had a bearing on water issues also, to which we now turn.

Trends in southern African water governance

The late nineteenth and early twentieth century were characterised by the emergence of what has become dubbed the 'hydraulic mission' (Waterbury, 1979; Allan, 2003; Turton et al., 2004; Molle et al., 2009). Nation-states and colonial governments engaged in efforts to develop large-scale infrastructure to increase the assurance of water supply for various purposes, such as irrigation, energy and mining. Powerful state bureaucracies, or 'hydrocracies' (Molle et al., 2009), were created during this period. The ethos guiding such developments was often one of conquering nature, and ardent advocates tended to "preach often in hyperbolic and lyrical style, the advent of an irrigated Eden" (Molle et al., 2009: 330). One of the grandest projects in the region at the time was the Orange River project. With respect to colonial governments' engagement, the British furthered their interests through engaging in the building of the Kariba Dam in the 1950s to serve the copperbelt and expanding industries in northern and southern Rhodesia (now Zambia and Zimbabwe, respectively). The Portuguese colonial government, for its part, ordered the building of the Cabora Bassa Dam (also modelled on the TVA), which was completed in 1974.

As outlined in the Introduction to this Special issue (see also Timeline in Appendix), in the 1990s, supply-oriented paradigms gave way to demand-led approaches. This led to the scaling back of government, the promotion of structural adjustment and the promotion of water as an economic good as well as approaches that used economic incentives to increase the so-called water use efficiency. These issues were firmly entrenched in dominant World Bank documents of the time (e.g. World Bank, 1993; Briscoe, 1996) as well as in the so-called Dublin Principles, which are considered by many as the 'birth' of modern day IWRM (see Allouche and the Introduction, this issue). However, some elements of IWRM were around earlier in the region. For instance, in South Africa, some elements of what came to be known as IWRM were already present in the 1970 Commission (Movik et al., this issue). This was also the case in Mozambique where the 1991 water law included IWRM principles before Dublin (Alba and Bolding, in this issue). It is also worth noting that some donors argued that they had been involved in IWRM ever since the 1960s or so.

The 1993 World Bank Water Resources Strategy promoted a particular version of IWRM based on the French/Ruhr models, which emphasised management at the river basin level and water pricing. Later that same year, the World Bank, along with the German aid organisation GTZ (later GIZ), took its strategic ideas to a meeting at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe with the aim of pushing the rationale of economic valuation. The fact that there was a drought in the region at the time forcefully brought home the challenges of water security, and also coincided with the collapse of the Soviet Union and

many countries in the region starting to 'look West instead of East' (interview with GTZ official, April 2014). Many countries started introducing market-based reforms. This brief overview shows how the initial emphasis on infrastructure and providing access to water faltered in favour of an increasing emphasis on market mechanisms and a neoliberal turn in thinking about water governance which allowed for a domination of the 1992 Dublin version of IWRM. These trends in water governance in part mirror the colonial project: from the hydraulic mission (even though this largely served the white minority) to state-led development, to the still prevailing neoliberal turn. These wider trends of course interacted with regional transboundary dynamics to which we now turn.

ROLLING OUT IWRM IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION

Transboundary waters as a catalyst for IWRM

The many shared river basins in southern Africa (SADC has 15 major river basins that are transboundary) are a (unintended) legacy from the scramble for Africa, hence the need to share water resources across nations. Today's global and national policy-makers are using the river basins to create integration in the region (see Swatuk, 2005). Transboundary issues have always been high on donor and SADC agendas. According to some authors, transboundary issues played a more forceful role than political boundaries (Asmal and Vale, 1999).

A Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems was created in 1995 and a revised version entered into force in the 2003 Framework (SADC, 2010). It originated out of earlier work and debates on the development of regional legislation for the development of the Zambezi River Action Plan (ZACPLAN) (Granit, 2000; Mohamed, 2003). The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was an important driver in the process of drafting the protocol based on the ZACPLAN experiences. The Protocol envisaged contributing to the development and management of shared international basins, suggesting equitable division and sharing of benefits. As the region's scarce water resources needed to be shared between different basin States, negotiation and cooperation were required to ensure no harm was done to any party (Mohamed, 2003).¹ The Protocol was drafted two years prior to the 1997 Helsinki protocol, and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses strongly influenced the revision of the Protocol (Merrey, 2009).

In the words of a member of staff at the GWP-SA head office in Pretoria:

Transboundary issues cannot be underestimated. The SADC has fifteen transboundary basins, and many of those basins have prepared development plans, which I would say to a greater or lesser extent are based on IWRM principles. Many start with IWRM plans so we could probably say that IWRM covers about 120 million people. They cover different countries, and are not local, but international plans. Transboundary issues hence have been very important in terms of driving the IWRM agenda. For instance, the Mozambican water policy on integrated water resources management was largely driven by concerns over shared watercourses, particularly with South Africa (Interview, July 2013).

According to a former member of the SADC Secretariat, who now works for a consultancy company in South Africa, the focus on implementing IWRM in transboundary basins clearly contributed to reducing conflicts. Even though he is critical of the concept of IWRM – perceiving it as being too broad to be of any practical use – he pointed out the beneficial ramifications of implementing IWRM plans in a

¹ The Protocol was also revised in 2000 (SADC, 2000) to accommodate the requests of the Mozambicans with respect to the possibility offered by the original text to carve river systems up in different watercourse systems. The latter could then in theory be unilaterally developed by one riparian state, evading the possibility of other riparian states to have a say in this. Mozambique as a downstream nation of many transboundary rivers was very keen on avoiding being left out of any upstream decision-making. The revised protocol was ratified in 2005.

transboundary basin, as these plans helped promote cooperation and defuse potential controversies between states (interview, July 2013).

The Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems had a galvanising effect on the establishment of river basin organisations (RBOs). There was a strong donor hand in all of them. For example, the Orange-Senqu River Commission (ORASECOM), which was established in 2000, continues to receive donor funding. ORASECOM was followed by Limpopo Watercourse Commission (LIMCOM) in 2011 and by the Zambezi Watercourse Commission (ZAMCOM) also in 2011 (see Appendix 2 for further details on key transboundary institutions in southern Africa). The contribution of RBOs to fostering regional cooperation cannot be underestimated. This process however entails intense negotiation as nations also try their best to protect national interests whilst participating in regional transboundary processes.

Take the case of the Zambezi River Basin, SADC's largest (in terms of size and number of countries) and Africa's fourth largest river basin. The Central African Federation (CAF) is engaged in its own hydraulic mission through instigating the building of the Kariba Dam on the Zambezi River between Zambia (then northern Rhodesia) and Zimbabwe (then southern Rhodesia) to supply electricity to the copper mines in Zambia and to the farms and cities of Rhodesia. Three decades later, in the mid-eighties, the donor-supported ZACPLAN initiative was launched to promote the integrated management of the Zambezi. Discussions began in 1999 and in 2004, the Zambezi River Commission (ZAMCOM) agreement was signed. Still it did not enter into force until 2011, mainly because the countries involved in the agreement were concerned about accommodating their own national infrastructure interests within the transboundary IWRM framework. Zambia, for example, was concerned that the agreement did not reflect the fact that most of the water flowing in the Zambezi originates in Zambia with up to 70.2% of the country's population of 11 million living in the basin and most of the country's electricity met from the basin's hydropower stations. In a sense, then, these protracted negotiations represent a confluence of the hydraulic mission and infrastructure development initiatives with the 'softer' aspects of creating a regional institutional platform for IWRM through ZAMCOM (see Chanda, 2004; Matemu, 2013; Gwaunza, 2014; Tauya, 2015 for more details on the ZAMCOM process). We now examine SADC's role in regional water management and also how it has dealt with and negotiated these various tensions.

The role of SADC

It can be argued that coordination and integration of the water sector were achieved in part because of the restructuring within SADC. Early on, each country was assigned a specific sector responsibility. The SADC's water agenda was driven by the Water Sector Coordination Unit (SADC-WSCU), which was set up in 1992 in Maseru, Lesotho. This approach resulted in a situation where countries pursued their own narrow interests within the sector mandate, rather than the collective good of the region (Isaksen, 2004; Söderbaum, 2004). This is why since 2001, SADC operations have been centralised at the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone, Botswana. The SADC-WSCU was dissolved in 2002 and staff relocated to Gaborone in Botswana to become SADC Water Division in the Directorate of Infrastructure and Services, one of the eight directorates.²

The SADC Water Division was co-responsible for the implementation of the SADC Protocol on Shared Watercourses, and water issues in the region. A year after the drafting of the 1995 Protocol, SADC

² The logic of placing water with the Directorate of Infrastructure and Services (IS) is not known to us. While housing all Secretariat activities in Botswana allowed for centralised coordination, challenges remained (Tjønneland et al., 2005). Take irrigation for example: It could easily fall in the Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources (FANR). But the southern Africa Regional Dialogue on Agriculture found that the intention to use water for irrigation was captured in the Regional Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resources Development and Management. Yet the responsibility of executing this vision rests with the Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources. Hence, many of our interviewees lamented that irrigation seemed to fall in the crevices of the two directorates.

decided on the necessity of developing Regional Strategic Action Plans (RSAPs) on Integrated Water Resources Development and Management (IWRM) that would provide direction and detail with respect to IWRM implementation in the region. The first RSAP was developed with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1997 (SADC, 1998).³ Under the auspices of the RSAP a regional water policy was promulgated, which sought to harmonise legal frameworks, served to consolidate policy provisions on water into one single document, and emphasised IWRM as an instrument of peace and reinforcement of regional integration (SADC, 2006). The Regional Water Policy was complemented and supported by a Regional Water Strategy (SADC, 2007).

The emphases of the various RSAPs illustrate the tension between the 'soft' water management issues promoted by donors drawing on IWRM and the 'hard' aspects concerning infrastructure and water resources development that member states favoured. In this regard, it is worth noting that IWRM under the RSAP includes (infrastructure) development, which was a hard-won concession SADC obtained from donors who were intent on the soft issues of IWRM (Swatuk, 2005). There has been what can be called a begrudging mutual acceptance on the part of donors that member countries are interested in 'hard IWRM', which includes infrastructure development.⁴

The first RSAP was all about creating an enabling environment for IWRM. This includes member states introducing water reforms and harmonising their water policies and laws. RSAP II, in addition to committing to creating an enabling environment, also boldly declared an interest in water resources development and not just water management. Infrastructure Development Support was identified as the centrepiece of the plan (SADC, 2005). RSAP III and RSAP IV have followed along similar lines. While it may appear that the move from the managerial and institutional aspects of water management towards a clearer focus on infrastructure development is not adequately supported by a concomitant surge in investments, it is important to bear in mind that RSAPs are supposed to create the enabling framework for infrastructure development. Financing infrastructure is the responsibility of national governments – they have the mandate to mobilise resources through the traditional vehicles such as the World Bank,⁵ African Development Bank, and bilateral arrangements. One might however ask what exactly has been achieved by this massive focus on creating an enabling environment and what it means for people on the ground. One of the key authors of the RSAP III said:

Of course, we've done a lot of work to create an enabling environment in SADC, to create plans, policies and also build capacity – but sometimes, I think the criticism is well founded. What is the point of getting locked into policies, plans, reform and building capacity, etc.; if people are still walking five miles for water? In SADC, most focus has been on getting the policy right and, of course, developing the right policies and institutions all take time. In sum, it's been a period of about ten or 15 years that has been used to create an enabling environment, but the time has come to move beyond the enabling phase to get things done on the ground and improve access to water (Interview with one of the RSAP authors, July 2013).

A GIZ staff member who spent seven years in the region explained the need to focus on both water resources development and management:

I agree with the criticism that IWRM can be a distraction from infrastructure development and water resources development. This is why we always made sure that we focused on distinct things in different

³ Since then there has been a steady stream of the action plans, such as RSAP II (2000-2005), RSAP III (2010-2015) (SADC, 2005; SADC, 2010) and RSAP IV (2016-2020) which is about to be published. RSAPs are credited with defining and promoting water-related aspects of Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP), the overall development plan of the region. The RISDP (2015–2020) prioritises industrialisation, infrastructure development, and market integration, alongside security and peace (see Ganetsang, 2016).

⁴ This is despite the fact that donors have not really committed to financing infrastructure under the auspices of the RSAP.

⁵ Of course, the World Bank plays a double agent role of promoting IWRM using grants and offers of loans to construct dams etc. The role of China and its Exim Bank in infrastructure development is massive but beyond the focus of this article.

phases and we also identified infrastructure needs at both the national and regional level and also went around all 15 member States at the level of the utilities. This is why the regional strategic action plans focused on both IWRM and development (Interview, April 2014).

There is thus an IWRM conundrum in southern Africa – while infrastructure development and particularly storage are regarded as important in a region where water availability is characterised by tremendous variability and where millions still lack access to water, it is not the conventional focus of the IWRM donors, unless the focus is on small infrastructure. Rather it is individual nations that either on their own or in cooperation with other countries fund infrastructure projects. This is illustrated by the fact that all infrastructure development projects are undertaken under the auspices of bilateral arrangements.⁶

There is also the wider political economy of SADC which cannot be underestimated. Due to its dependence on donor funding SADC can often struggle to implement its own priorities, which as outlined earlier, are by no means uniform given the diversity of its member states. Of the SADC funding 79% comes from donors (Ganetsang, 2016) with only 21% coming from member states⁷ and one can imagine that much of that funding is spent on personnel, travel and so on, leaving much less for programmatic activities. SADC needs an estimated USD500 million over the next few years to fund the current Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). There are calls to reduce dependency on donor funding and develop financial sustainability as articulated by the current Chair of SADC, Botswana's President Ian Khama, in August 2015: "While we recognize the support of our international partners, it is necessary for SADC to find other ways of financing our regional agendas" (quoted in Ganetsang, 2016). The next section continues the focus on donor priorities and perspectives.

Donor perspectives and projects

In this section, we highlight some of the perspectives held by former and existing, mostly bilateral, donor representatives on the role they played in IWRM roll out in the region. While this is by no means a comprehensive account of all existing donor-led projects and views, we use this material to offer an insight into how IWRM took on meaning and momentum in the region. As stated earlier, donor presence has been critical in water management in SADC, both around regional-level initiative to guide the reform of policies and laws in national contexts and in the establishment of River Basin Organisations and transboundary programmes. As we now outline, some donors were inspired by water management systems in their own countries and used those ideas in their work; others were starting *de novo* and were excited about the challenges of working both with national governments and other donors to kick-start new programmes.

In the early 1990s, some donor representatives were seconded to ministries, such as the case for the Germans and Dutch in Zimbabwe (Manzungu and Derman, this issue) and the Dutch in Mozambique (Alba and Bolding, this issue). One of our key informants, a German who worked in Zimbabwe for many years in what was then the National Coordinating Committee for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene remarked that "the Zimbabwean government definitely felt a sense of ownership over the programme; there were not many foreigners in the Ministry working on the policy side of things" (interview, April 2014). He explicitly said that they drew on German experiences, particularly regarding groundwater regimes but did not use the vocabulary of IWRM when working in Zimbabwe.

A Dutch academic who has been in and out of the region since the mid-1990s reflected on the Dutch influence on IWRM and water management in the region (see also Alba and Bolding, this issue).

⁶ The Lesotho Highlands Project is a good case in point.

⁷ The level of contribution depends on the size of the economy with South Africa accounting for 20% of the SADC budget, followed by oil-rich Angola (Ganetsang, 2016).

In the good old days before aid was tied, we had fantastic programmes around water supply and river basin organisations. Our experts were seconded to Ministries in African countries. I know some people in the World Bank think that the Dutch have promoted soft options in Africa while building dykes back home. But this is not true. Working under the umbrella of IWRM should not be seen to mean that water resources are not developed. Given all the challenges from climate change and seasonal variation, we need smart ways to enhance storage whilst reducing environmental costs. The Dutch impact in the region through WaterNet has also been immensely successful (Interview, November 2014).

Some would disagree and contend that IWRM pushed by the donors such as the Dutch in the region has led to the prioritising of environmental and management issues over infrastructure concerns. Other donors like the Danish had more diverse conceptualisations of IWRM. With regard to Danida's role in supporting IWRM in SADC, there seemed to be quite a heated debate within the organisation about what IWRM actually constituted. According to a key informant who was working with Danida at the time:

Danida supported IWRM and the SADC regional programme. However, the problem was that anything that had anything to do with water was considered to be IWRM. It could be irrigation, it could be crop rotation, it could be anything. The broad scope of IWRM led to it having a lot of meaning, it was like a religion, and Torkil [Jønch-Clausen] was one of the preachers (...) He was very stubborn and very pushy. But it was admirable too as he put in a lot of energy and travelled around the world. The bottom line is that you would not have an agenda without such individuals (Interview, April 2013).

As discussed by others in this Special Issue, Torkil Jønch-Clausen emerged as someone who wielded a great deal of influence, both at the Dublin conference itself and also through his work in Uganda in the 1990s (Allouche, this issue; Nicol and Odinga, this issue). Apart from this high-level strategic work, Danida also associated the IWRM concept with local-level livelihood generation projects and initiated a series of IWRM pilot projects in southern Africa (see Movik et al., this issue) that took IWRM to the ground, focusing explicitly on local-level water management issues. This was done together with the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) which has been prominent in advancing a livelihoods and African smallholder perspective on IWRM (see Merrey et al., 2005; Van Koppen, 2007; Merrey, 2008).

The Norwegians, through Norad, had a long history of engagement in water management in southern and Eastern Africa, particularly focusing on drinking water and hydropower schemes. In Tanzania, Norad had been involved in supporting various hydropower schemes such as Kidatu (1979), Mtera (1980) as well as the Pangani Falls (1995), largely drawing on their competence from building hydropower at home (see also Van Koppen et al., this issue). According to one of our interviewees, a former Norad employee who now works for the Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate, IWRM was something they had been doing 'all along' (interview, April 2013). Norad was a keen supporter of IWRM until about the end of the 1990s, when political support within Norway for water as a development theme waned.

In contrast, Sweden, through Sida, chose to take an explicitly regional focus in addition to funding some smaller projects, such as catchment councils in Zimbabwe. In 1995, Sida developed a strategy to guide its support for water resources management in the SADC region that emphasised two focal areas. One was competence in building and awareness-raising about the interconnected nature of water resources, and the other area concerned the need for IWRM-infused collaborative governance on shared watercourses as a means to avert potential conflicts (Granit and Johansson, 1995). The strategy states that "to ensure that the needs of all actors are met, integrated management of the drainage basin is the only point of departure for planning water resources utilisation" (Granit and Johansson, 1995: 10, authors' translation) and calls for "neutral support to regional river basin commissions" (ibid: 12). The strategy highlights how the idea of IWRM has developed over a long period of time, drawing attention to the overarching framework for management of shared rivers present in the report of the

Helsingfors committee (ibid). The collaboration between three Nordic donors supported the development of the Zambezi River Action Plan (ZACPLAN).

Sweden has had a long-term involvement in water resources management in the SADC region, building on well-established contacts as highlighted by a key informant from Sida based in Harare at the time:

There were already well-established networks in the region – it was very dynamic and very supportive.... there were already strong partners present, and a good dialogue. The main focus was on transboundary, rather than national-level IWRM, and there was a lot of activity in the late 1990s and the early 2000s with a lot of buzz and training (Interview, April 2013).

The Germans through GIZ (then known as GTZ) also focused on transboundary IWRM, in addition to working with national governments. One German key informant worked with SADC on transboundary issues for seven years (interview, April 2014). He helped set up the SADC Water Division in 2006 and was also involved in setting up the SADC Transboundary Water Management programme.⁸ The programme had three tiers: macro (SADC); meso (river basin); and micro (national).⁹ He also coordinated bilateral and multilateral donor efforts in the water sector in SADC amongst all International Cooperating Partners (ICPs) to monitor who was doing what around IWRM and in which country. All this work took place under the umbrella of IWRM – as he put it "like all other forms of development cooperation, we had to follow the Zeitgeist and the Zeitgeist then was IWRM". He related how the greater part of the GIZ-led programme got its funding from the Australians and the British and how there were a diversity of actors involved – NGOs, private companies as well as RBOs in Africa, Europe and Australia with a lot of cross learning. For example, the ORASECOM was directly influenced by the models followed in the Danube, Rhine and also Mekong cases.

As for multilateral donors, the World Bank exercised a great deal of influence in particular at the national level (see, e.g. Derman and Manzungu for Zimbabwe, and Alba and Bolding for Mozambique, this issue). The Bank has long emphasised regional integration in its strategies (SADC-WD et al., 2008; World Bank, 2010) and one outcome of this emphasis was the establishment of the multi-donor trust fund Co-operation for International Waters in Africa (CIWA) in 2011, in partnership with the Nordic donors (Sweden, Denmark, Norway) as well as the Netherlands and the UK. CIWA's focus is on fostering growth, strengthening institutions, and facilitating investments for transboundary water resources management, drawing on the Bank's technical expertise on international waters.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has also played a role in promoting IWRM. It launched its IWRM strategy in 2000, and IWRM continues to be emphasised in its long-term strategy (2013-2022). In an independent evaluation of the Bank's policy over a ten-year period (2000-2010), it is stated that though the policy is still relevant, it needs to be updated and adjusted to reflect the new challenges facing the continent, such as climate change, food security and inclusive growth. It appears that the AfDB's focus has very much been on single infrastructure projects, mainly drinking water supply with emphasised issues such as cost recovery and water pricing, a good case in point for which is Harare's water supply reform. When asked whether the emphasis had shifted from water resources management and development to water supply and sanitation, the official said that IWRM was still the guiding principle which allowed donors to (1) integrate water and sanitation rather than just look at

⁸ This was a GIZ technical cooperation programme between the German Bundesministerium für Wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit (BMZ, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Development Cooperation) and SADC.

⁹ Macro or SADC level; meso at the river basin level inspired by German transboundary river systems, which had successful twinning programmes between southern Africa and Europe; and finally, micro at the national level. When asked, he acknowledged that the 'local' - or community level - was missing from the 'micro' level apart from a few IWRM pilot projects focused at the village level that were led by the Danes. He also said: "In the early days it had been 'a one-man show' with 5 million Euros but when I left it had 10 staff members and a budget eight times bigger".

water; as well as (2) build capacity and institutional structures in-country; and (3) create better policies and facilitate a water reform process (interview with AfDB official, 1 November 2012).

The impressions we get from the submissions of donor representatives point towards a mixed bag of experiences. Some donors had close bilateral relations with particular countries, having worked, for instance, on water and sanitation and hydropower projects (such as Norad in Tanzania) or being seconded to water ministries as experts, such as the case for the Germans in Zimbabwe and for the Dutch in Mozambique. Many of the Dutch experts seconded to line ministries were there as a result of historical precedent, for reasons of solidarity with Mozambique and Zimbabwe in the anti-apartheid struggle. Some individuals played key roles as 'policy entrepreneurs' spreading the idea of IWRM. Some, such as the Swedes and Germans, chose to work at 'both ends', not only offering support at the national level, but also taking an explicitly regional view of water resources management. This resulted in a split between the national-level IWRM piloting and support projects and the more explicitly regional-level IWRM transboundary approach espoused by UNDP, Sida and GIZ among others. These efforts at transboundary institution-building were often couched in somewhat instrumentalist terms as promoting peacebuilding and reducing the risk of conflicts.

SADC played the role as a conduit for donor funds to set up the various River Basin Commissions as well as coordinating policy and legal reforms. It may be argued that while the early stages of support might have seen more leaning towards the advisory roles and direct government placements, the donor focus has increasingly become centred on SADC as a means of channelling donor funds, regional networks and transboundary commissions. These efforts reflected donor agendas and the prevailing zeitgeist of the times. The next section will explore in greater detail two of the most important regional networks in promoting IWRM, namely the Global Water Partnership (GWP) and the WaterNet.

THE ROLE OF IMPLEMENTING AGENTS: GWP AND WATERNET

In 1996, the same year as SADC's WSCU was set up, the Global Water Partnership (GWP) was created. GWP regional networks were established all over the world, one of the more dynamic ones being the Southern African network (GWP-Southern Africa, GWP-SA for short). GWP-SA was established in 2000 and was the first regional branch of GWP in Africa to be launched. In the 1990s, GWP-SA's regional head office was in Harare in Zimbabwe until it was moved to Pretoria in the early 2000s to be hosted by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). The GWP and its Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) played a key role in incorporating the Dublin principles on IWRM in SADC states and coordinated donor efforts in this area (see Savenije and van der Zaag, 2000).

Among GWP-SA's main activities are the SADC Water Day and the Annual Water Research Symposium, hosted together with the Water Research Fund for Southern Africa (WARFSA) and WaterNet, which also offers training in IWRM (see below). GWP-SA was appointed by SADC as an implementing agent for stakeholder participation and RBOs dialogue under RSAP II. In this way, GWP-SA works closely with the SADC Water Division in supporting regional water-related processes by ensuring stakeholder involvement and raising awareness of the importance of IWRM in regional development.¹⁰ A recent review of GWP (2008) brought to light a number of challenges, including high administrative costs, and the perception that regions are too autonomous and are not seen to follow the recommendations from the Secretariat.

Over the years, GWP-SA has grown rapidly into a regional network of over 350 Partner Organisations that, in turn, have formed a number of Country Water Partnerships (CWP), and 12 out of the 15 SADC

¹⁰ It is also the executing agency for Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)-funded Partnership for Africa's Water Development (PAWD). PAWD focuses on support to national IWRM frameworks, institutional development of multi-stakeholder national and regional water partnerships and the integration of water into PRSPs (CIDA, 2009).

countries now have their own CWP. The Partnership enjoys multi-donor support (e.g. from the Swedes, Danes, Germans and Dutch), contributions by governments and voluntary contributions from many partners to ensure a coordinated approach to water management and development.

Apart from mobilising regional and national multi-stakeholder platforms in national development planning processes, identifying IWRM training needs and target groups, and informing IWRM research priorities and policy content, a key activity of the GWP-SA is to provide technical expertise in regional/national water policy development and implementation processes. A key informant at the GWP-SA head office said that:

As GWP we advise governments to develop both IWRM plans and also enshrine them in policies; otherwise, it will be left to the whims of the current government. We are only an advisory body and we build the capacity of various members to roll out IWRM and to capture lessons from other countries for learning and sharing. But of course, there are challenges. Developing an IWRM plan in isolation of a national institution makes no sense – e.g. a catchment can cross three districts. Small countries do better than larger ones. Zimbabwe was a real success story in the 1990s due to its excellent policies at the catchment level, which however changed in the 2000s due to land reform; otherwise, it would still be the shining star of IWRM (...). In the beginning there was a sense that a Western idea was being rolled out but over time, people moved away from that viewpoint. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (Rio+10) in Johannesburg in 2002 changed that because in southern Africa we made a conscious decision to promote IWRM in the region. Water Ministers also welcomed the principle but it has been more difficult to get agriculture and irrigation ministers on board (Interview, July 2013).

In response to the question whether IWRM was too abstract, the same informant said:

We are criticised for only staying at the planning level and some say we need to move to the ground – but we don't have the resources to help with implementation. The key challenge is the lack of capacity amongst the various stakeholders. Also countries may not have the financial resources to undertake the change. In Botswana, it was only when the Minister of Finance had bought in the idea that things began to take off (Interview, July 2013).

Another key factor in the promotion of IWRM has been the technical and professional training provided by WaterNet, which has the status of a SADC subsidiary institution responsible for IWRM capacity building with a secretariat based at the University of Zimbabwe in the Civil Engineering Department in Harare. The largely Dutch (but also Swedish)-funded network has more than 70 members, most of whom are tertiary-level training institutions. The flagship for WaterNet is the regional IWRM Masters' degree programme. Core modules are offered at the University of Zimbabwe and University of Dar es Salaam with specialisations offered at other SADC institutions.¹¹ It is thus a quite unique regional programme as institutions offer course modules in which they have comparative strength (see Jonker et al., 2012). WaterNet seeks to "produce sufficient well-trained specialists as well as new type of generalists in water resources (...) expected to constitute the 'middle ground' in integrated water resources development and management" (Jonker et al., 2012: 4227). Between 2003 and 2011, 251 students from 18 African countries graduated with Master's theses on water and many of these are presented at WaterNet conferences (ibid). The Water Research Fund for Southern Africa (WARFSA), which was initially funded by Sida, has complemented WaterNet activities (Krugmann, 2002).¹² Its main objective is very specific to IWRM, namely to "promote and facilitate the implementation of

¹¹ Such as the Polytechnic of Namibia (Water supply and sanitation), the University of the Western Cape in South Africa (Water and society), University of Malawi (Water and environment), University of KwaZulu Natal (GIS and Earth Observation), and University of Botswana (Water and land).

¹² This explains the annual symposium dedicated to promoting IWRM in the region and known as the WaterNet/WARFSA/GWP symposium (see below).

multidisciplinary research projects in integrated water resources management in the [SADC] region" (Krugmann, 2002).¹³

Dutch academics have played key roles in the establishment of WaterNet. According to one of them:

The Maseru Statement highlighted the need for capacity building in the region. We used this to argue to our then Foreign Minister to justify the creation of WaterNet. In 2000, WaterNet was launched at Victoria Falls by the Prince of Orange, now King [Willem-Alexander]. We decided to focus at the Master's level and offer one integrated degree drawing on different perspectives rather than different disciplines. IWRM appeared to be the easiest way to organise this degree and nobody was against it then. The Prince had been influenced by the Dublin Principles, because he had been there. I consider myself as 'integrated' given my mixed educational background. From the beginning, I've been critical of the concept of IWRM and have always tried to find local equivalents. WaterNet links 65 departments and institutions in southern and eastern Africa. Apart from the Master's degree, it offers a platform for water professionals in the region to get together annually. The journal 'Physics and Chemistry of the Earth' does one special issue every year on southern African water issues and the papers are derived from the symposium. This journal includes 15% of all research on water in southern Africa. Thus, WaterNet has encouraged academics in southern Africa to get on with publishing in an international journal, something they were not encouraged to do earlier (Interview, November 2014).

Anybody who has attended a WaterNet symposium will agree that it is an inclusive network that encourages and builds research capacity and collaboration between senior and junior researchers who present their research in a collaborative way at the annual meeting. It also serves as an important vehicle to bring policy-makers and researchers together. However, it must be said that the scientific quality varies. IWRM is also used very loosely and rather vaguely for all sessions and papers, be they on hydrology, water quality, water and socio-economic development, climate change, modelling or on gender issues.¹⁴

There is no doubt that WaterNet and GWP-SA have promoted IWRM in the region and have had a lot of influence reflected in the fact that water laws, policies and institutions have been changed in line with IWRM in many southern African countries. What all this means to poor women and men on the ground will be the focus of the country papers that follow in this Special Issue.

DISCUSSION

This article analysed both policy development and interview material to ask why IWRM became so popular in the southern African region. We have highlighted the role of both formal and informal actors and processes as well as the role of non-State and external actors such as donors who facilitated the spread of IWRM. We have demonstrated that interpretations of IWRM differ in many ways, not least with respect to the role of infrastructure for development within IWRM. Also countries in SADC have approached IWRM in different ways and have progressed in different ways. Generally, however, policy, legislation and strategy are ahead of implementation. Only Zambia and South Africa have made real headway with regard to integrating water planning with broader economic development planning frameworks, and even there, there are challenges in integration as demonstrated in the South African cases in this special issue.

¹³ An evaluation undertaken in 2002 found positive outcomes such as the involvement of over 100 researchers (including young professionals) and the funding of many important research projects. The evaluation also found little collaboration across the region (only two out of 23 projects had aspects of collaboration with most funding going to Zimbabwe) and not much on the multidisciplinary aspects of IWRM (see Krugmann, 2002).

¹⁴ The 16th WaterNet symposium in Mauritius in October 2015 was the first that dropped IWRM from its title - instead, 'water security' figured in the programme heading.

The regional strategies of the SADC, while first concentrating on 'soft' issues of institutions and policies, have recognised the importance of 'hardware' within the IWRM framework. Infrastructure development is clearly a key regional interest, which explains the inclusion of 'D' in IWRM in SADC documents, which as Swatuk has highlighted, represented a triumph on the part of SADC to ensure that IWRM did not exclude infrastructure development, which donors were not keen on (2005). It is, however, ironical that the 'D' is silent because instead of IWRDM, it is IWRM which is emblazoned on SADC documents. This illustrates the delicate negotiations regarding IWRM in the SADC region where there is much dependence on donors. The multiplicity of transboundary river basins in the region has also been very important for the spread of IWRM which also adds yet another layer of complexity. While countries have had to share hydrological information and also cooperate on infrastructure development as in the case of the Orange, Komati and Zambezi basins, all these have been characterised by intense political negotiations. This is why commissions have taken long to come into force as illustrated by events in the Zambezi where it took two decades for ZAMCOM to come into force (see Chanda, 2004; Tauya, 2015). For downstream countries such as Mozambique, the entry point to IWRM was through transboundary concerns (see Alba and Bolding, this issue) and IWRM transboundary-style, was driven far more by internal concerns rather than being imposed from outside by donors and regional networks such as the GWP. In contrast, upstream riparian countries did not necessarily share the same interest in cooperation.

While national interests determined how particular trajectories of negotiations played out in specific river basins and in the various national spaces, the role of external actors in the form of bilateral and multilateral donors has been immense. The already extensive collaborative bilateral and multilateral networks existing in the region, partly due to the historical legacies of supporting anti-apartheid and decolonisation struggles, facilitated the activities of the donors in terms of promoting the IWRM message. According to several key informants, it was just a matter of using existing channels to promote a new message rather than forging new grounds of collaboration, which would have been much more time-consuming.

The global shift to neoliberal policies in the water sector from 1992 also chimed well with IWRM roll out and its emphasis on water permits, licences, etc. The involvement of external agents was further facilitated through the emergence and consolidation of the establishment of a defined political and economic identity through the formation of first the SADCC, and then the SADC. The SADC's explicit aim of engaging donors actively ensured that a vibrant network was established, which created the rudimentary infrastructures and nodes on which other initiatives could piggyback, as several of the informants from donor agencies have highlighted. This facilitated a form of both formal and informal integration, through the establishment of regional networks and nodes that were geared towards promoting water resources management. In a sense then, the SADC could perhaps be viewed as a donor construct that facilitated the spread of a particular discourse on IWRM. Donors also played a key role in reforming water legislations and policies, on creating the 'right' institutions, and building capacity and networks across basins and countries. Many Western water academics, for their part, seem to play a dual role. Despite being very critical of the concept, they are also at times part of the IWRM bandwagon, not least due to the opportunities offered to teaching in Master's programmes and being a part of the WaterNet fraternity (see Bolding and Alba, this issue, for reflections).¹⁵

While it may be true that the concept was first introduced as something imported from the global north, the impression among many of our interviewees was that it is no longer perceived as an imposed

¹⁵ For downstream countries such as Mozambique, the entry point to IWRM was through transboundary concerns (see Alba and Bolding, this issue) and IWRM transboundary-style, was driven far more by internal concerns rather than being imposed from outside by donors and regional networks such as the GWP. In contrast, upstream riparian countries did not necessarily share the same interest in cooperation.

concept. Instead, it has become internalised and is seen as a means of promoting better water management, and overcoming fragmented legislation.

The SADC experience shows IWRM can work and has opened the eyes of a lot of people in the region. It's wrong to say that it's just because of donor money. Of course, I am aware that development cooperation has the tendency to lose itself in papers, workshops, etc. If you do this, then there is no meaning at the grassroots. Regardless of the label, it is important to work in a multidisciplinary way and bring in the best people and address the key priorities of the people, member states and local communities. Overall though, we have moved from the early days when we wanted a 'one size fits all kind of solution' to now acknowledging that context matters, i.e. IWRM plans must address the particular country and also need to be relevant (Interview, November 2014).

Many of the donors as well as southern African policy-makers interviewed also saw IWRM as a set of principles and an approach rather than a blueprint. Despite the many problems associated with the framework, it is still held as a widespread attraction. They also pointed out to the positive spin offs, for example, the increased cooperation on transboundary rivers in the region, the increased acceptance of interdisciplinary approaches, and generally raising the profile of water in the various countries through reform processes.

However, many interviewees did acknowledge the problems with donor fads:

IWRM is still alive and kicking in southern Africa even though it may be dead in Europe with its obsession with Nexus, etc. We are at different levels with Europe. We had a meeting on the nexus, and a politician said – 'we are just grasping IWRM and now you are saying that donors want the nexus! What is the difference? And we haven't even sorted out IWRM as yet!' And of course, we have donors coming to us and saying 'give us a project on the nexus', and because we don't have the money, we have to find one (...) it's the same with climate change (Interview with GWP-SA representative, July 2013).

The donors we spoke to also echoed similar sentiments: "Everything is now climate change but I still make sure we are still talking about access to water" (interview, April 2014). While donors are moving onto other fads (such as water security, the green economy and so on), one wonders what will come next. Will the region be left to get on with its own concerns, or will it again have to negotiate and make sense of new fashions as they are mediated by donor-recipient relations and regional processes?

A recurrent sentiment among many of our interviewees, both from the GWP, WaterNet, SADC and donors, was the notion that "I wish we could have 30 years to prove ourselves, not just ten". Many other informants say that it's only been about ten years of reform, and that it is too early to say what the on-the-ground impacts are.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have demonstrated that regional dynamics have played a key role in IWRM's trip from the global level to southern Africa. The particular economic, political and colonial processes outlined in this article have led to a kind of path dependency that has shaped both regionalism in southern Africa and also allowed for donor-led initiatives to build on existing networks, some that go back to the anti-apartheid struggle. The geography of 15 river basins facilitated both cooperation amongst member states and attracted donor interventions which drew on the global zeitgeist of neoliberal water policies. National governments, for their part, were no passive spectators but often used IWRM to promote national interests in diverse ways, which often led to a tussle between the 'soft' and 'hard' aspects of IWRM. IWRM caught on in SADC due to the regional processes outlined in this article as well as strong donor agendas that were often aligned with existing national interests. While this is partly a story of an externally imposed concepts promoted through donor-funded processes, networks, fads and new and weak institutions propped up by donor money, it is also a story of negotiation and adaptation to

accommodate different and, often, diverging interests. Consequently, IWRM has now acquired a life of its own in southern Africa, despite shifting global trends and changing donor interests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to our colleagues in the Flows and Practices project for their stimulating ideas and research which inspired and informed the analysis presented in this paper and to the Research Council of Norway for their financial support. We would like to thank Alex Bolding and Alan Nicol as well as three anonymous reviewers for their useful comments. We must also sincerely thank all those we interviewed, who are too many to name or whom we leave anonymous. Thanks also to Kristi Denby for help with formatting, and Catherine Wilson for her fantastic research assistance. The usual disclaimers apply.

REFERENCES

- Allan, A.J. 2003. IWRM/IRWAM: A new sanctioned discourse? Kings College London. University of London. In *Occasional Papers No. 50*. SOAS Water Issues Study Group. School of Oriental and African Studies. London: University College London.
- Asmal, K. and Vale, P. 1999. *Water in southern Africa – The path to community and security*. South Africa. Cited in Mohamed (2003).
- Austin, A.; Bochkarev, D. and van der Geest, W. 2008. *Energy interests and alliances: China, America and Africa*. EastWest Institute, Policy Paper 7/2008.
- Birmingham, D. 2008. *The decolonization of Africa*. London: Routledge.
- Biswas, A.K. 2004. Integrated water resources management: A reassessment. *Water International* 29(2): 248-256.
- Bolding, A.; Mollinga, P.P. and Zwarteveen, M. 2000. Interdisciplinarity in research on integrated water resource management: Pitfalls and challenges. Paper presented at the Unesco-Wotro International Working Conference on Water for Society. Delft, the Netherlands, 8-10 November 2000.
- Briscoe, J. 1996. Water as an economic good: The idea and what it means in practice. In *Proceeding of the World Congress of the International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage*. Cairo, Egypt: World Bank.
- Cardwell, H.; Cole, R.; Cartwright, L. and Martin, L. 2006. Integrated water resources management: Definitions and conceptual musings. *Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education* 135(1): 8-19.
- Chan, S. 2011. *Southern Africa: Old treacheries and new deceits*. London: Yale University Press.
- Chanda, A. 2004. Zambia delays signing as it seeks national consensus. www.sardc.net/en/southern-african-news-features/zambia-delays-signing-zamcom-as-it-seeks-national-consensus/ (accessed 30 July 2016)
- CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency). 2009. *Canada's role in the creation of the World Water Council*. Ottawa: Canadian International Development Agency.
- Evans, M. 1986. *The front-line states, South Africa and Southern African security: Military prospects and perspectives* (Vol. 474). Harare: University of Zimbabwe.
- Ganetsang, G. 2016. Funding headache for SADC. Sunday Standard, March 3, 2016. www.sundaystandard.info/funding-headache-sadc (accessed August 2016)
- Gibb, R. 2009. Regional integration and Africa's development trajectory: Meta-theories, expectations and reality. *Third World Quarterly* 30(4): 701-721.
- Gieryn, T.F. 1999. *Cultural boundaries of science: Credibility on the line*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Granit, J. 2000. *Swedish experiences from transboundary water resources management in southern Africa*. Publications on Water Resources No. 17. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Agency (Sida).
- Granit, J. and Johansson, B. 1995. *Vattenresurser i Södra Afrika (SADC)*. Rapportert kring vattenresurser nr. 2. Stockholm: Sida.
- Gwaunza, M. 2014. Parly approves hosting of ZAMCOM. www.bh24.co.zw/parly-approves-hosting-of-zamcom/ (accessed 30 July 2016)

- Hopper, B. 2006. Integrated water resources management: Governance, best practice, and research challenges. *Journal of Contemporary Water Research and Education* 135(1): 1-7.
- Isaksen, J. 2004. *SADC in 2003: Restructuring and progress in regional integration*. CMI report series 2004: 3. Bergen: Christian Michelsens Institute.
- Jonker, L.; van der Zaag, P.; Gumbo, B.; Rockstrom, J.; Love, D. and Savenije, H.H.G. 2012. A regional and multi-faceted approach to postgraduate water education: The WaterNet experience in southern Africa. *Hydrology and Earth System Sciences* 16(11): 4225-2012.
- Krugmann, H. 2002. Water research fund for southern Africa (WARSA): Project evaluation. Sida Evaluation 02/2002.
- Langeland, O. 2012. Regioner og regionalisering. In Hanssen, G.S.; Klausen, J.E. and Langeland, O. (Eds), *Det regionale Norge 1950 til 2050*, pp. 25-39. Oslo: Abstrakt forlag.
- Mandaza, I.; Tostensen, A. and Maphanyane, E.M. 1994. Southern Africa. *In Search of a common future: From the conference to a community*. Gaborone, Botswana: SADC.
- Mapuva, J. 2015. Skewed rural development policies and economic malaise in Zimbabwe. *African Journal of History and Culture* 7(7): 142-151.
- Matemu, S.A. 2013. First workshop on river basin commissions and other joint water bodies for transboundary water cooperation: Legal and institutional aspects, 23-24 September, Geneva, Switzerland. www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/water/meetings/jointbodies/presentations/3.2.twm_presentation_geneva_sept.pdf (accessed 30 July 2015)
- Mehta, L.; Alba, R.; Bolding, A.; Denby, K.; Derman, B.; Hove, T.; Manzungu, E.; Movik, S.; Prabhakaran, P. and Van Koppen, B. 2014. The politics of IWRM in southern Africa. *International Journal of Water Resources Development* 30(3): 528-542.
- Meierding, E. 2011. Energy security and sub-Saharan Africa. *International Development Policy* [Online] 2 (2011). <http://poldev.revues.org/744> (accessed on 23 November 2015)
- Merrey, D.J.; Drechsel, P.; Penning de Vries, P. and Sally, H. 2005. Integrating "livelihoods" into integrated water resource management: Taking integration paradigm to its logical next step for developing countries. *Regional and Environmental Change* 5(4): 197-204.
- Merrey, D.J. 2008. Is normative integrated water resources management implementable? Charting a practical course with lessons from southern Africa. *Physics and Chemistry of the Earth Parts A/B/C* 33(8-13):899-905.
- Merrey, J.D. 2009. African models for transnational river basin organisations in Africa: An unexplored dimension. *Water Alternatives* 2(2): 183-204.
- Mohamed, A.E. 2003. *Joint development and cooperation in international water resources*. International Waters in Southern Africa, pp. 209-247. Tokyo [ua]: United Nations University Press (Water resources management and policy series).
- Molle, F. 2008. Nirvana concepts, narratives and policy models: Insight from the water sector. *Water Alternatives* 1(1): 131-156.
- Molle, F.; Mollinga, P.P. and Wester, P. 2009. Hydraulic bureaucracies: Flows of water, flows of power. *Water Alternatives* 2(3): 328.
- SADC (Southern African Development Community). 1998. *Regional strategic action plan on integrated water resources development and management, 2*. Gaborone, Botswana: SADC.
- SADC. 2000. *Revised protocol on shared watercourses*. Namibia: Windhoek.
- SADC. 2005. *Regional strategic action plan on integrated water resources development and management*. Annotated strategic plan, 2005-2010. Supported by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and European Union (EU). Gaborone, Botswana: SADC.
- SADC. 2006. *Regional water policy*. Gaborone, Botswana: SADC.
- SADC. 2007. *Regional water strategy*. Supported by Belgian Development Cooperation, InWEnt and GWP southern Africa. Gaborone, Botswana: SADC.
- SADC. 2010. *Regional strategic action plan on integrated water resources development and management, 2*. Gaborone, Botswana: SADC.

- SADC-Water Division, Zambezi River Authority, Swedish International Agency for Development, Danish International Development Assistance, Norwegian Embassy (Lusaka). 2008. *Integrated water resources management strategy and implementation plan for the Zambezi river basin*. Lusaka, Zambia.
- Savenije, H.H.G. and van der Zaag, P. 2000. Conceptual framework for the management of shared river basins; with special reference to the SADC and EU. *Water Policy* 2(1-2): 9-45.
- Söderbaum, F. 2004. *The political economy of regionalism: The case of southern Africa*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Swatuk, L.A. 2008. A political economy of water in southern Africa. *Water Alternatives* 1(1): 24-47.
- Swatuk, L.A. 2005. Geographies of cooperation: Water resources management in sub-Saharan Africa. Paper prepared for presentation at the 6th WaterNET/Warfsa meeting, Mbabane, Swaziland, November 2005.
- Tauya, E. 2015. The ZAMCOM process, a worthwhile journey. www.sardc.net/en/southern-african-news-features/the-zamcom-process-a-worthwhile-journey/ (accessed 30 July 2016)
- Tjønneland, E.N.; Isaksen, J. and Le Pere, G. 2005. SADC's restructuring and emerging policies. Options for Norwegian Support. In *CMI Report R 2005: 7*. Bergen: Christian Michelsens Institute.
- Turton, A.; Meissner, R.; Mampane, P.M. and Seremo, O. 2004. A hydro-political history of South Africa's international river basins. In *WRC report 1220/1/04*. Pretoria: AWIRU, University of Pretoria.
- van Koppen, B. 2007. Dispossession at the interface of community-based water law and permit systems. In van Koppen, B.; Giordano, M. and Butterworth, J. (Eds), *Community-based water law and water resource management reform in developing countries*, pp. 46-64. Wallingford, UK: CABI.
- Waterbury, J. 1979. *The hydro-politics of the Nile Basin*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press.
- Whitfield, L. and Fraser, A. 2009. Introduction: Aid and sovereignty. In Whitfield, L. (Ed), *The politics of aid: African strategies for dealing with donors*, pp. 1-26. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- World Bank. 1993. *Water resources management: A World Bank policy paper*. Washington, DC: The World Bank.
- World Bank. 2010. *The Zambezi River Basin: A multi sector investment opportunities analysis*. Summary Report, Vol. 1. Washington, DC: World Bank.

APPENDIX 1: IWRM TIMELINE

The timeline contains the key dates for some global key events, regional policy and strategies, as well as a selected overview of some key policies and laws from the countries studied in this Special Issue.

PERIOD	ACTIVITY	WHO/WHAT
1950s	Hydraulic mission (e.g. building of Kariba)	National governments and colonial administrations
1960s	Independence struggles and Cold War by proxy	
1970s	Commission report in South Africa	
1980s	SADCC created Start of Structural Adjustment Programmes Start of Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade	
1991	Mozambique: Lei de Agua	
1992	ICWE Dublin Conference UN Conference on Environment and Development Rio Earth Summit The SADCC becomes the SADC	
1993	World Bank Water Resources Strategy World Bank Meeting Victoria Falls	

1994	Lake Victoria Environmental Management Programme (LVEMP)	
1995	Protocol on Shared Watercourses in SADC region Uganda Water Statute Sida Water Strategy	
1996	SADC sets up WSCUs – Water Sector Coordination Units Council of Water Ministers decides to draw up first Regional Strategic Plan Global Water Partnership (GWP) created Initiation of CapNet	Set up in Maseru, Lesotho, but then moved to Gaborone, Botswana in 2002 Each country asked to come up with national situation report – SADC’s development partners financed several of these studies. Funded by UNDP
1997	EU-SADC Conference on Shared River Basins, Maseru, May 1997. UN Convention on non-navigational uses of watercourses South Africa Water Services Act Uganda Water Act 1st World Water Forum	UNDP support.
1998	South Africa National Water Act Zimbabwe Water Act (UNDP Roundtable in Geneva)	
1999	Expert workshop in Maseru First SADC (Water Division) Regional Strategic Action Plan I (1999-2004) WSRG formed at the initiative of UNDP	
2000	WaterNet and WARFSA created GWP-Southern Africa (GWPSA) launched, 1st regional arm of GWP 1 st WaterNet/WARFSA/GWPSA symposium Revised Protocol on Shared Watercourses in SADC region AfDB published IWRM strategy 2nd World Water Forum – World Water Vision	
2001	DANIDA water strategy	
2002	World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg CapNet launched	Renewed commitment to IWRM and agreement that countries should draft national IWRM plans Integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005

2003	IWRM figures as key issue in World Water Forum (and river basin management) Revised Protocol enters into force	
2004	South Africa: 1st National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS) published	
2005	SADC Regional Water Policy RSAP II	
2008	Conference on IWRM in South Africa GWP assessment of IWRM status and progress in SADC	
2009	Tanzania Water Resources Management Act	
2011	CIWA established RSAP III	The Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA) is a multi-donor trust fund established in 2011 and represents a partnership between the World Bank and the governments of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom 3rd RSAP emphasised and groundwater management

APPENDIX 2. TIMELINE OF TRANSBOUNDARY RIVER COMMISSIONS, AUTHORITIES AND AGENCIES

1969	Kunene Permanent Joint Technical Commission (PJTC)	
1983	Inco-Maputo Tripartite Permanent Technical Committee	The Tripartite Permanent Technical Committee (TPTC) was established in 1983 and is collaboration between three SADC member states namely, South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland. The committee manages the water flow of the Inkomati River and Maputo River specifically during times of drought and flood, and for recommending measures to protect and develop these water resources.
1994	The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) agreement signed	Sida heavily involved (through The Every River Has Its People Project).
1999	International Commission of Congo-Oubangui-Sangha (CICOS)	AfDB
2000	ORASECOM signed	Danube, Rhine, Mekong as models. GTZ heavily involved.

2003	LIMCOM Botswana, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe,	
2004	ZAMCOM agreement signed	ZAMCOM IWRM strategy supported by Norad, Danida and Sida
2008	Lake Tanganyika Authority	UNDP

THIS ARTICLE IS DISTRIBUTED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE CREATIVE COMMONS *ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL-SHAREALIKE* LICENSE WHICH PERMITS ANY NON COMMERCIAL USE, DISTRIBUTION, AND REPRODUCTION IN ANY MEDIUM, PROVIDED THE ORIGINAL AUTHOR(S) AND SOURCE ARE CREDITED. SEE [HTTP://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/LICENSES/BY-NC-SA/3.0/LEGALCODE](http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/legalcode)

