

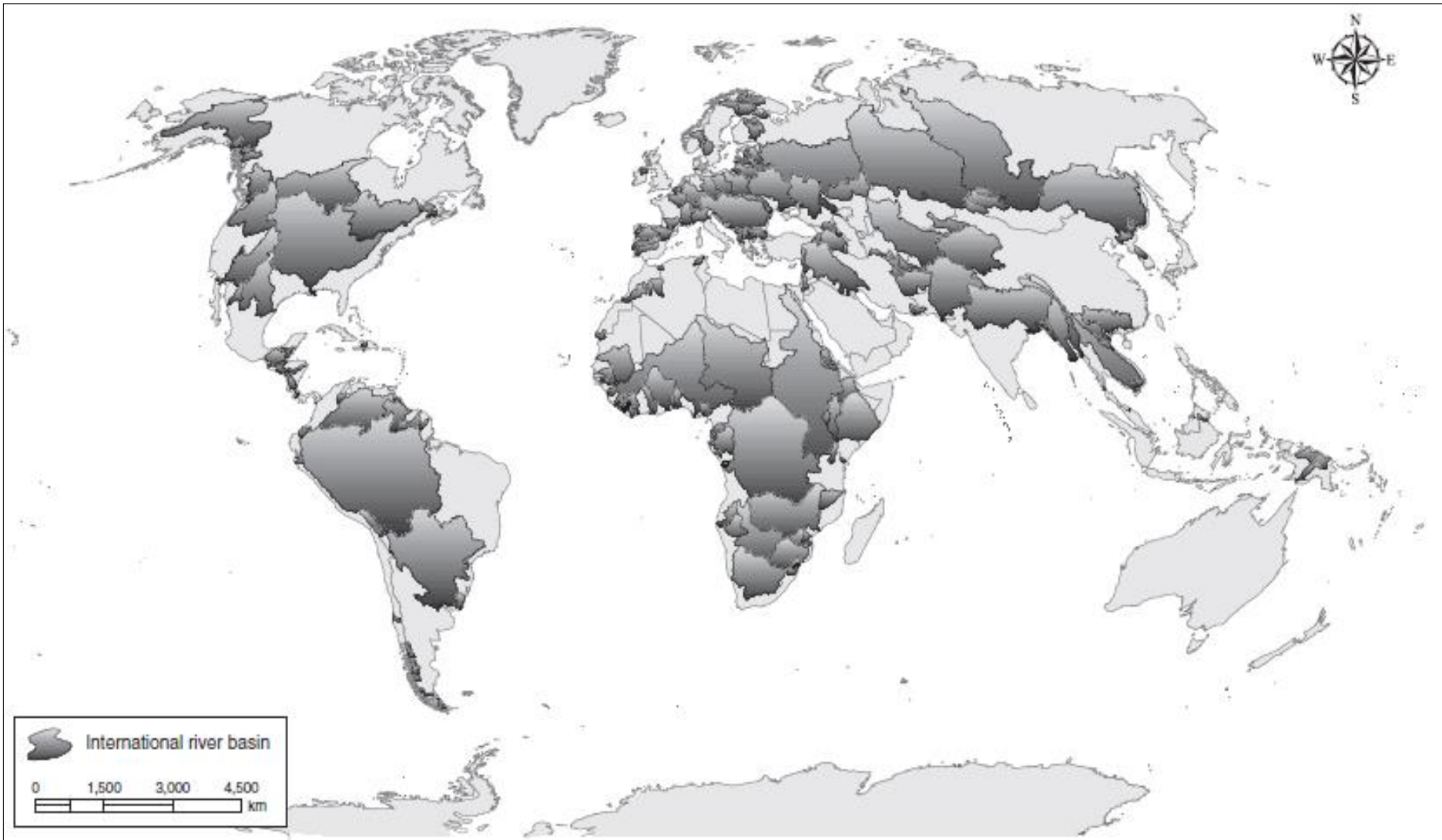
Sharing Basins, Sharing Destinies – International River Commissions

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Introduction



Shared basin – shared destiny

- Transboundary basins transcend the boundaries of nation states
- Can lead to disagreements that can lead to undesired costs for all states
 - Unequal distribution of water resources (or benefits)
 - Impacts of unilateral projects or activities
 - Non-complementarity of water uses
- Can generate benefits of cooperation that can only be harvested because of the transboundary nature
 - Integrated basin planning
 - Flood and drought management
 - Joint/coordinated water development projects
- Requires cooperation in basin management and development

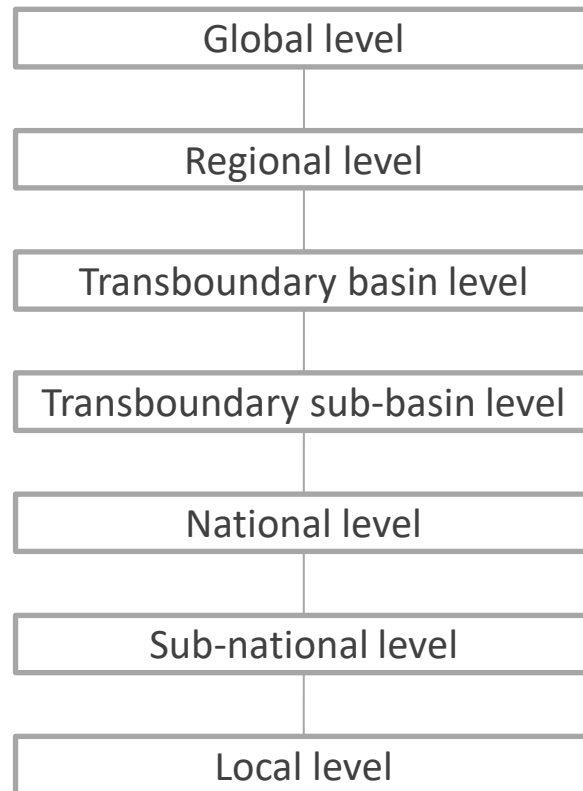


Institutionalizing cooperation

- A momentary commitment to cooperation is often insufficient to maintain cooperation over time and harvest benefits of cooperative management
- International water treaties and basin organizations can institutionalize cooperation further and
 - Define joint principles and rights and obligations of riparian states
 - Provide platforms for continuous exchange
 - Ensure implementation of joint activities/coordination of national activities
 - Contribute to data and information exchange



Basin organizations in the multi-level governance system



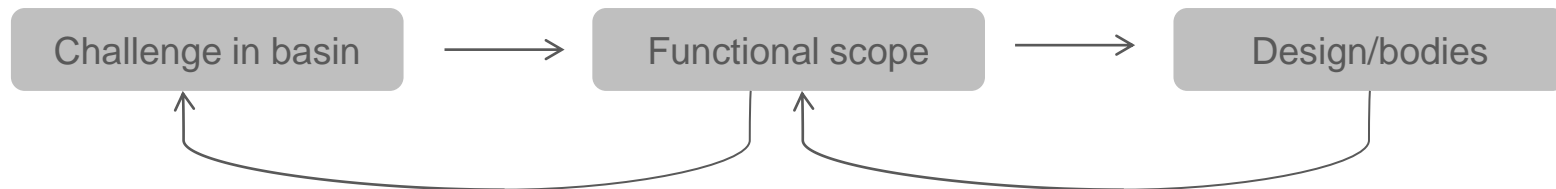
Key design features of basin organizations

Various design elements shape basin organizations

- Legal basis/international water treaty – legal personality
- Functional scope and mandate



- Organizational structure

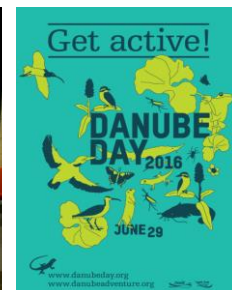
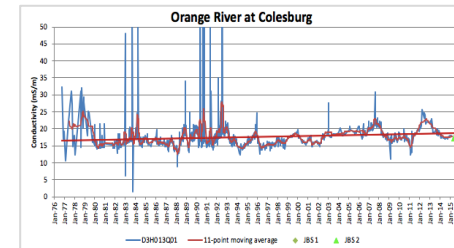


- Role of the secretariat
- Funding of the basin organization and its activities

Governance mechanisms of basin organizations

Basin organizations provide governance mechanisms to basin states and others

- Decision-making mechanisms
- Dispute-resolution mechanisms
- Data and information management
- Notification and consultation
- Accident warning
- Stakeholder engagement
- ...



What makes institutionalized cooperation effective?

- Effectiveness can mean many different things
 - Prevention/mitigation of conflicts
 - Sustainability and environmental protection
 - Water-related economic development
- Effectiveness depends on many different aspects
 - Internal factors
 - External factors



Conclusions

- Institutionalized cooperation provides benefits beyond simple commitment to cooperation and ensures
 - Agreement on water resources management principles, joint vision, RBMP, etc.
 - Regular exchange on (possibly contested) issues
 - Exchange of data and information
 - Availability of governance mechanisms
- Basin organizations play different roles – dependent on key water management issues in the basin
- Basin organizations need to be designed in way that allows them to do so (and be funded accordingly)
- Effectiveness of basin organizations depends on different factors – both internal and external

