

International water negotiations under asymmetry, Lessons from the Rhine chlorides dispute settlement (1931-2004)

Abstract

Negotiations concerning the quality of international rivers are not easy, as incongruence in preferences between upstream and downstream countries generally exists. The Rhine Chlorides dispute is a clear example of this. The chloride issue has been on the international water agenda of the Netherlands and the upstream Rhine riparian states for more than 70 years. The aim of this paper is to give a historical overview of the settlement of the Rhine chlorides dispute in order to draw some lessons for negotiators who have to work under comparable conditions of asymmetrical international water pollution. The case not only shows the complexities in reaching acceptable solutions for asymmetrical transboundary pollution, but also the importance of sound argumentation, institutions, side payments, issue framing, issue linking and arbitration.

The full paper has been published in *International Environmental Agreements* and can be found on <http://www.springerlink.com/content/106601/>

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