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River basins as new environmental regions? The depolitisation of water management

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Description / Abstract

The debate on water management is presently dominated by concepts of Water Governance, Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and River Basin Management. These concepts make apparent, that management approaches are based on a basin or a catchment area. This geographical unit is presented as the most relevant one for the delimitation of what and who should be integrated in the management institutions or governance structure. This paper questions the river basin as a “naturally” given geographical unit for water management and positions this attempt to naturalize the delimitation of water governance regions in a global trend of depolitising water management. This contribution is based on a set of reflections presented at the REGov Workshop. These reflections were offered as part of a panel discussion around the topic “Environmental regions in multilevel governance”.

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