



Proposal for a Master Thesis

Title: Recent changes in international river basin management on the Iberian Peninsula between Spain and Portugal

Background of the research

Spain and Portugal are members of the European Union and share several rivers. In the case of the Minho, Douro and Tejo Portugal is downstream, in the case of the southern-most Guadiana it is up- and downstream. Both countries face significant problems in implementing the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) as waters are intensely used. Water quantity as well as water quality establish important management problems. The problem constellation significantly varies in-between rivers. Water quantity is most disputed in the southernmost Guadiana river. Agricultural uses and hydropower are among the most important uses of water in the Iberian rivers. In 1998 Spain and Portugal agreed the Convention of Albufeira, which established a provisional flow regime, and created structures through which disputes between Spain and Portugal were to be settled and through which water management was to be coordinated (Thiel, 2000 & 2004). Never the less, the so called CADC (Commission for the Accompaniment and Development of the Convention of Albufeira) was only of limited success so far and its development is characterized by ups and downs whose underlying reasons are not yet clear. The research that is proposed here is to reconstruct and explain the development of the CADC and, possibly, subject it to a limited comparison to transboundary river basin management in the case of the Elbe, which Germany and the Czech Republic share. Background data on the latter will be provided by the supervisor.

Aims of the call for research:

The aim of the research is to understand the setting for transboundary river basin management on the Iberian Peninsula, to reconstruct its recent history, to explain the performance of the formal and informal institutions involved and to evaluate it. The evaluation is specifically to address the challenges posed by the European Water Framework Directive.

Methods

It is expected that semi-structured expert interviews will have to be carried out with Spanish and Portuguese officials and NGO representatives and experts as well as grey literature and newspaper cuttings will have to be evaluated.

Relationship to partners and support offered

The Division of Resource Economics has ample contacts in the region, including with some of the main individuals involved into the CADC. These will be put at the disposal of Master students that want to undertake this research. Nevertheless, Master Students will themselves be in charge of all major decisions throughout their research. Close collaborative assistance on all stages of the research, incl. theory and framework development, data gathering and analysis is offered. In addition, support in finding financial means, and for jointly publishing the results of the study, if they are of sufficient quality, will be provided.

Prerequisites: Sufficiently good command of Spanish and English in order to maintain conversation.

Starting date: According to needs of the study programme. Time to receive funding for travelling should be allowed before the study is undertaken.

If you are interested, please contact as "Advisor":

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