Future perspectives of the New York and Helsinki Water Conventions

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The legal architecture for transboundary water management is weak in many parts of the world

Lack of awareness a key factor in why we have no global convention on transboundary waters

Future role and effectiveness of the New York and Helsinki Conventions is therefore dependent on greater awareness raising in many part of the world

Future potential outputs of New York and Helsinki Conventions acting as a coordinated global framework instrument
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“Existing agreements are sometimes not sufficiently effective to promote integrated water resources management due to problems at the national and local levels such as inadequate water management structures and weak capacity in countries to implement the agreements as well as shortcomings in the agreements themselves (for example, inadequate integration of aspects such as the environment, the lack of enforcement mechanisms, limited – sectoral – scope and non-inclusion of important riparian States)” – (UN-Water, Transboundary Waters: Sharing Benefits, Sharing Responsibilities, Thematic Paper, 2008)
Lack of awareness a key explanatory factor in why we have no global convention on transboundary waters.
Future role and effectiveness of the New York and Helsinki Conventions is therefore dependent on greater awareness raising in many part of the world.
Future potential outputs of New York and Helsinki Conventions acting as a co-ordinated global framework instrument

- *Address* fragmentation in legal architecture and harmonization of policies and agreements;

- *Catalyst* to support the adoption and implementation of basin/sub-basin agreements;

- *Develop* international water law in a co-ordinated manner, e.g. groundwater, stakeholder participation, and operationalise concrete policies (e.g. water and health protocol);

- *Establish* a focal point (+ regional hubs?) for knowledge exchange/advocacy/training on transboundary water issues;

- *Provide* a legitimate forum to promote (transboundary) water resource issues within global policy forums/agenda.
“International law is clearly much more than a simple set of rules. It is a culture in the broadest sense in that it constitutes a method of communicating claims, counter-claims, expectations and anticipations as well as providing a framework for assessing and prioritising such demands.”

THANK YOU!