Scalar politics

WITH EXAMPLES FROM TURKEY AND The METHERLANDS

Jeroen Warner
Associate Prof of Disaster Studies
Social Sciences Group
Wageningen University

Hegemonic constellation in water management, 2000s

- `Holy Trinity` (Warner, Wester, Bolding 2008)

(1) stakeholder participation for (2) integrated water resources management (IWRM), conceived at (3) the watershed or river basin level.

This obfuscates how boundaries are often manipulated for political ends and how different stakeholders frame the ‘natural’ scale in quite different ways.

Performativity of scale

- Naturalised scale – the 'right scale'

Social magic: Speech act 'makes it so'

Security, crisis discourse elevates statement above politics

but:

Hegemony can always be contested with alliance and shared agenda

Lebel: crisis stories legitimise interventions

- to manufacture consent for otherwise controversial solutions
- Scalar fix: stability, fixity rather than fluiduty to hold out prospect of solution

(McCann 2003)

=> scale framing matters

Politics of scale or politics about scale?

- Scale is always contestable
- Mekong literature: `politics about scale`?
- Politics is not always about scale.. .but pursuing and framing interest has 'scale effects' (mismatches)
- Scale instrumentalised to achieve certain outcomes

State formation through infrastructure

Netherlands

- 11-18th century: Thousands of water competing boards
- 1798 French occupation – Etatism – creation ofPublci Works dept
- 1936 Closure Dam
- 1950s Delta Plan – poldering for settlement by the 'best'

US Army Corps of Engineers 1920s New Deal: TVA

Turkey: DSI since 1922; River development;Ex - GAP (Southeast Anatolia) project, Turkey: develop (elevate) region, gain control of Kurds, buffer against '`terrorists`

Biro: Watershed or basin-level (that is, bioregional) governance.. would incorporate human alterations (dams, canals, and reservoirs, for example) into environmental regions.'

Pipelines of power, district demarcation: Bracketing people in or out

Infrastructure and state making

- Wittfogel: unruly water, unruly people. Infrastructure for state building
- Ferguson: state reaches into backwoods through development projects
- L Harris: `Environmental and developmental transformations and associated infrastructural works are part and parcel of what makes ´the "boundary" between state and society appear`

Example: Flooding, space and equity

‘...flooding is not fair *per se*: the inherent natural spatial inequality of flood frequency and extent, plus the legacy of differential system interventions, being the cause’.

(Penning-Rowsell and Johnson)

Counterscaling

Dutch flood planning stops at the border while transboundary hydrological connections are obvious

Border communities mobilise expertise, forge alliances across border to resist a planned intervention/reservation

Scale conflicts (position)

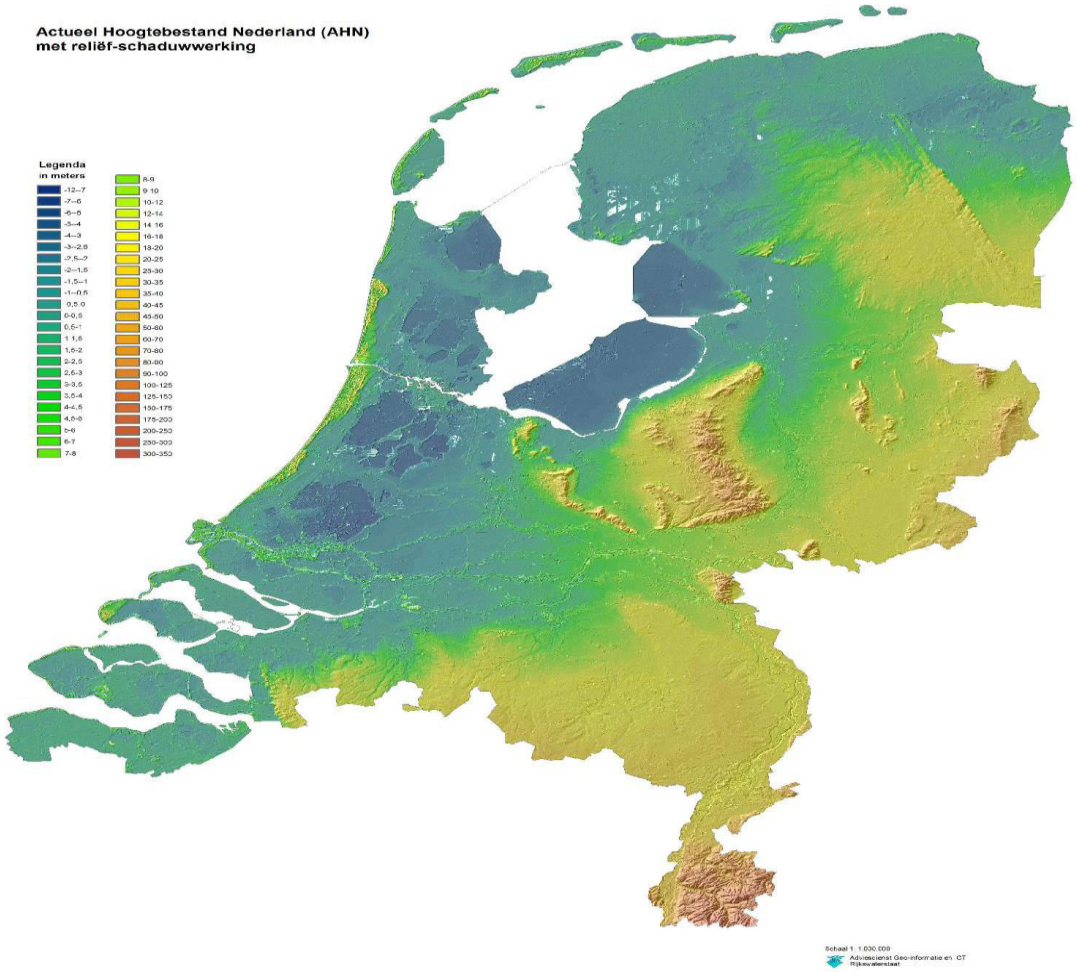
Spatial scale - Achieving safety: Sacrifice upstream for downstream? Periphery for core? Country side for urban (or: harbor) expansion?

Time scale ~ Sacrifice present for future?

Or present for past? (shadow of the past prejudices project legitimacy)

Two centuries or two months ahead?

Is Limburg part of the delta?



Ooij polder: flood storage

Germany doesn`t count?

IWRM, Nexus

Integrated basin/delta approaches criss-cross/ignore sovereignty and admin boundaries as one *ecoregion* – sovereignty as 'the problem'

ex. (Granit) ecocentered nexus for Euphrates/Tigris vs absolute water sovereignty (`Turkish river`)

Transboundary cooperation

- P. Williams (2003): You can only go it alone for so long
- Hijacking water is uneconomic and often impractiable
- Downsides of polluting downstreamers and blocking sea access
- Cooperation (regime building) shortens shadow of the future = uncertainty. Predictable behaviour.
- Coordination, agreements, treaties, integration

- Groundbreaking: ICJ Gabcikovo Nagymaros ICJ adjuciation in late 1990s (Slovakia/Hungary)

Magic formula: 'Benefit sharing'
- Lesotho&SouthAfrica and - Egypt&Ethiopia hydropower for freshwater swap
- Turkey&Iraq cheap food for accepting scarcity swap - 'adaptive';)

GAP

Region of
Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP)

Counterscaling against GAP

Turkey: 'peace project', 'regional development' (TVA/Dniepr model) for Southeast Anatolia

vs.

'genocide' - Kurds

`Water theft` - alliance with Syria, Iraq

'destruction' of cultural heritage, environment – international community, lobby donors

Opening up the box?
Water-food-energy nexus

- If no solution can be found over quantitative water claims, the bargaining package could be expanded by inlcuding
  - – food (virtual water)
  - – energy (hydropower)

A different transboundary river: Meric

Mud