

Climate change and legal implications for adaptive freshwater management - a Nordic perspective on possibilities and restrictions in current legislation for water planning and concessions

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Abstract

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a Nordic perspective on possibilities and restrictions in current legislation for water planning and concessions

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NOTABENE: This abstract is a preliminary draft to be further developed in cooperation with the chairs of the conference to address relevant aspects of Nordic water legislation.

Climate changes such as higher temperatures, rising sea levels and periods of drought/increased precipitation, requires more adaptive water management than the traditional approach in public law. Important management instruments are land-use planning, permits and licenses to facilitate water use and protect against harmful extraction and pressures. These instruments must be designed and used differently to properly address climate change in an efficient manner. For instance, all groundwater extraction permits are usually authorized in Norway with an unlimited time frame, and consequently, the established rights through unlimited water permits are binding up valuable resources that might be needed for other purposes and also cause adverse burdens on local ecosystems. How can these public law instruments be designed to better adapt to climate changes? This contribution will discuss and offer critical reflections on the current Nordic legal framework for adaptive water management in the time of climate change.

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