

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
September 7, 2016

A World Full of Water.

[World Water Week](#) was last week! Organized by the [Stockholm International Water Institute](#) and held in (surprise!) Stockholm, this year's conference focused on the role of clean, accessible water in catalyzing sustainable growth. Outside of attracting thousands of water-minded individuals and [handing out some prestigious awards](#), the symposium reminded many of the critical importance that water plays in human development – from droughts in India to floods in Louisiana, [disappearing wetlands in South Sudan](#) to disappearing drinking water in Michigan.

These international water management issues require [cooperation](#) and mutual assistance. For better or worse, [natural resources](#), like water, do not confine themselves to the sovereign borders we've created. An abundance of resources can lead to exploitation of vulnerable populations and human rights violations, [such as those seen in Honduras and Guatemala](#). A shortage of resources, [as seen in Israel and Palestine](#), can exacerbate already existing conflicts.

This is particularly difficult on the least developed states, like the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#), where a rural town now has accessible water for the first time in generations, or large swaths of [south Asia](#), where the water supply is polluted by arsenic. Simply put, it's hard to focus on school or work when you're walking miles for clean water or more than half your groundwater is toxic.

So, what can we do? We can help by [raising awareness](#), [putting down your phone](#), and [listening to the Pope](#).

MEXICO!

[Less than .02 percent](#) of transboundary aquifers, which not only support agriculture and communities within one country, but can also impact development in [neighboring](#) states, are subject to cooperative management agreements and almost no data on these aquifers is shared between states. In the United States and Mexico, researchers are winding up an [aquifer research program](#) authorized by Congress almost ten years ago. The shared data focused on two aquifers help scientists and policy makers understand the ecological impacts of aquifer management and what condition these shared resources are in. This can help guide cohesive management policies for shared aquifers in the future.

The **Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy** is a program of the Tulane University Law School.

The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and stewardship of water.

Coming up:

[The 19th Annual Conference on Litigating Takings Challenges to Land Use and Environmental Regulations](#)

New Orleans, LA

November 4, 2016

[RAE/The Coastal Society Summit on Coastal and Estuarine Restoration](#)

New Orleans, LA

December 10-15, 2016

Water jobs:

[CLEE Water Fellow](#)

UC Berkeley School of Law
Berkeley, CA

[Executive Director](#)

Galveston Baykeeper
Houston, TX

[Energy and Climate Program Director](#)

Coastal Conservation League
Charleston or Columbia, SC

[Supervisory Attorney Advisor \(General\)](#)

US Army Corps of Engineers
Saint Paul, MN

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On that note...

A [new study](#) from the Bureau of Reclamation still predicts water shortages along the Colorado River Basin in the years to come. There are, however, signs that the conservation policies enacted in the states along the Colorado River Basin are having [positive](#) effects. A [recent optimistic take](#) on the Western water crisis predicts that enough cooperation on conservation efforts will prevent the need for restrictive use policies. [Others](#) see the environmental impact of diversion projects as more destructive than other conservation-based alternatives, such as curbing groundwater pumping and using water-friendly landscaping techniques like [xeriscaping](#). Some of these changes might require a [new outlook](#) on the “use it or lose it” mindset of Western water law, ensuring that those with rights are beneficially using diverted water for the benefit of the public.

Thinking with Water

In light of the recent flooding in Louisiana, flooding in South Carolina last year, and heavy floods in England last December, experts and interested parties are advocating for new methods of community planning that work *with* water rather than against it, an approach some counties in South Carolina have taken. For example, Richland County, hardest hit during the 2015 flooding, is mitigating future impacts by [building 17 greenways](#) that will replace commercial and residential development on floodplains. This is a strategy we can also use – adding greenspace and keeping up to date on emerging technologies (such as [these](#)), can provide a path to a more resilient Louisiana.