

Lascurain, C. F. 2001. The performance of the Mexico-United States environmental regime: Managing the water of the Rio Grande and the Colorado River. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Essex (United Kingdom).

There is a long standing regime of border co-operation between Mexico and the U.S. that was transformed during the twentieth century into a regime of international environmental management. This analysis reviewed the Mexico-U.S. Environmental Regime with particular focus on water resources. This regime does not conform to realist accounts of international relations when we look at the regime's performance in the Rio Grande and the Colorado River. First, there is no clear separation of international and domestic as would be implied by sovereignty thesis of neorealism. Instead there is a system of multilevel governance combined with an interactive decision-making process. Second, there is not the successful assertion of self-interest that neorealism would predict when we look at the performance of the regime in terms of the distribution of the water supplies between Mexican and U.S. citizens. There is more equity than neorealism would predict. However, the regime is not successful in environmental terms, that is, not successful in addressing the underlying problems related to water quality. Despite this performance, the Mexico-U.S. Environmental Regime has largely performed well during a forty-year period from 1960 to 1990. The analysis of this regime allows having a clearer view of the formation, the different transformations it has suffered and mainly its performance. That is why this regime analysis makes an important contribution for the study of other international environmental regimes.