

Special Session: Governance of Transboundary Waters: Roles of Young Professionals

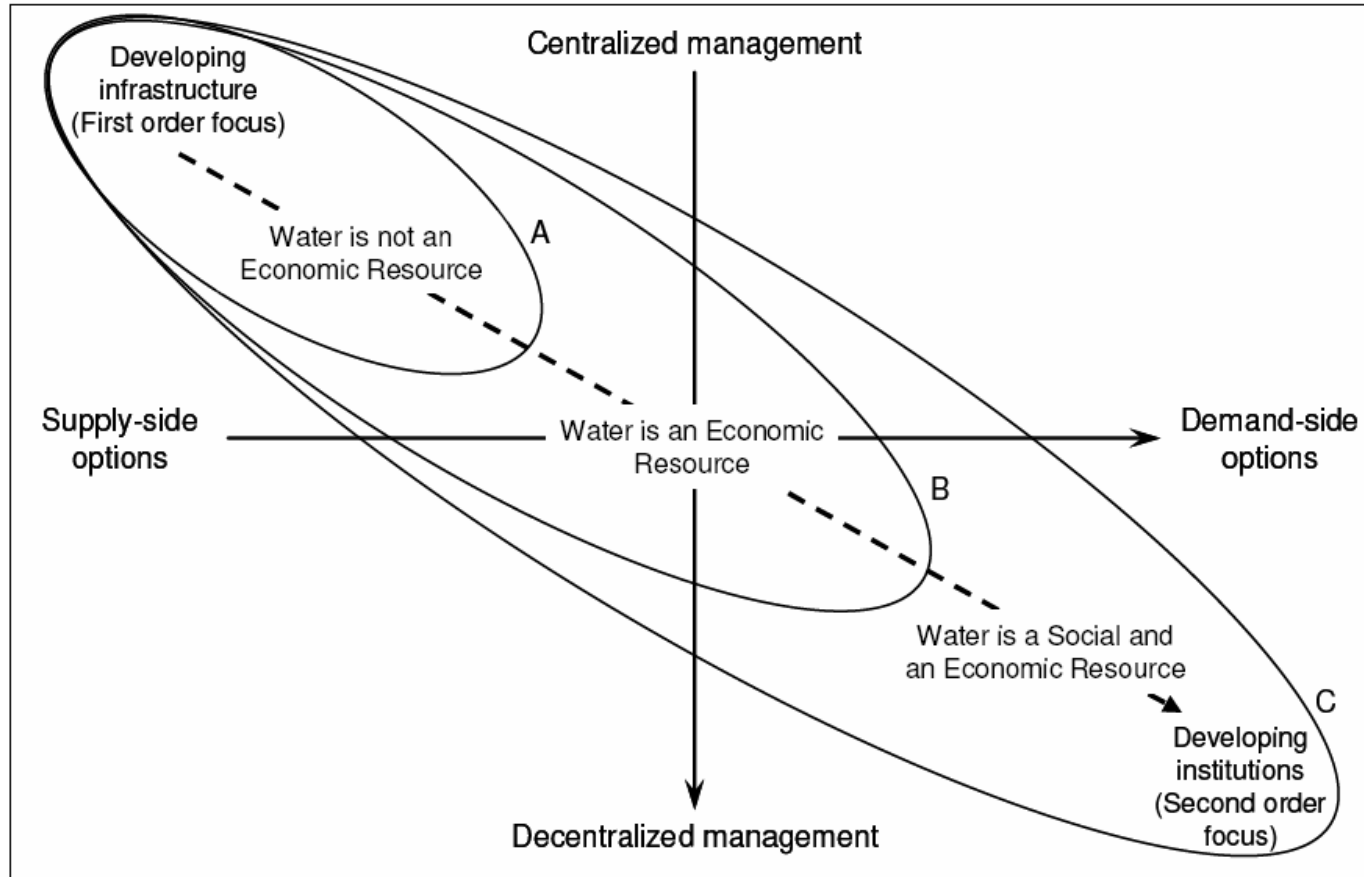
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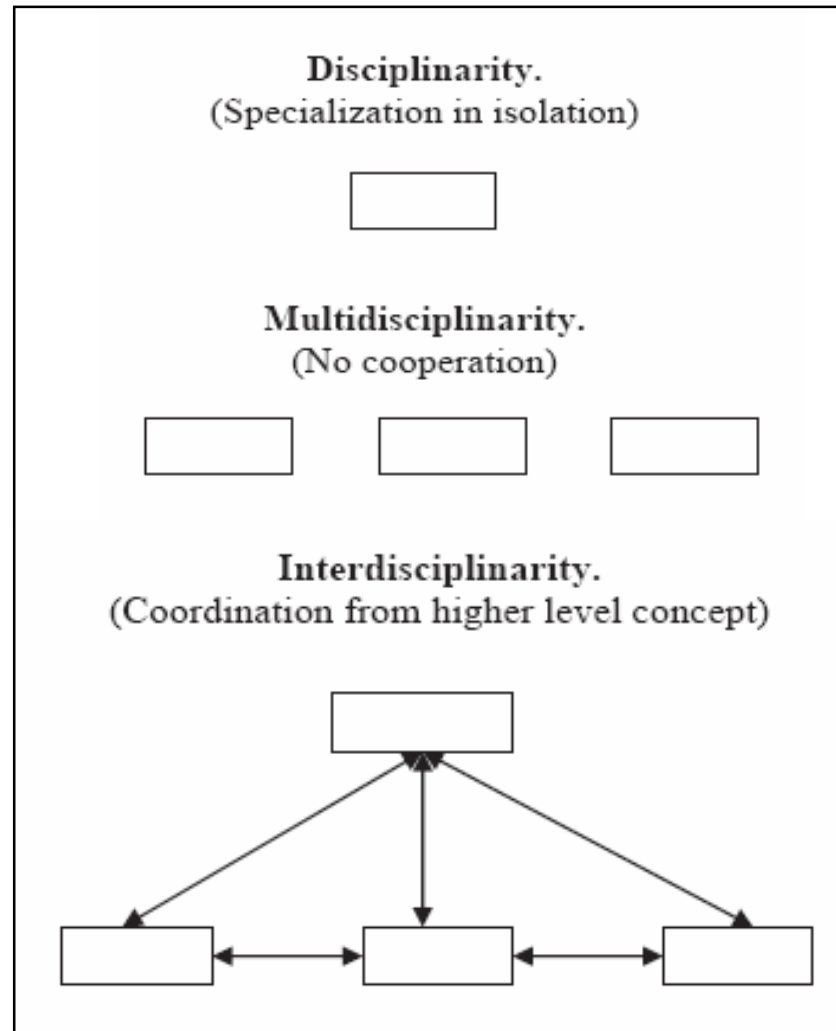
Changes in Water Resource Management Approaches



Interdisciplinarity and Beyond

Not simply “achieved through the accumulation of different brains. It must occur inside each of the brains”

(Max-Neef, 2005:5)



Interdisciplinary Hierarchies

- **Empirical hierarchy** - economics, ecology, sociology..
- **Pragmatic hierarchy** - engineering, architecture, agriculture...
- **Normative hierarchy** - planning, politics, environmental design ...
- **Value hierarchy** - ethics, philosophy, theology...

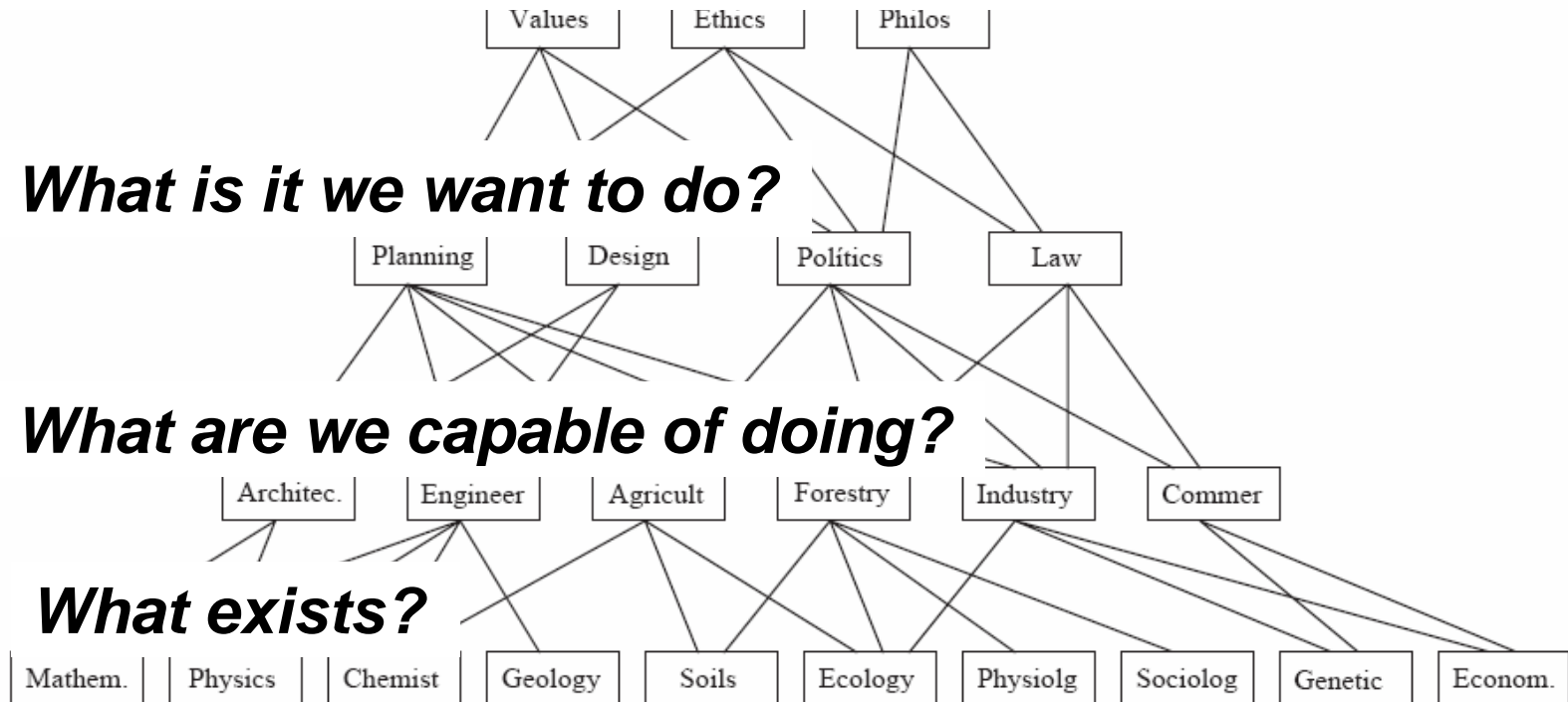
Transdisciplinarity

How should we do what we want to do?

What is it we want to do?

What are we capable of doing?

What exists?



Transboundary River Basins: The need for inter- and transdisciplinary approaches



53 countries in Africa
63 international river basins

More transboundary basins than sovereign states

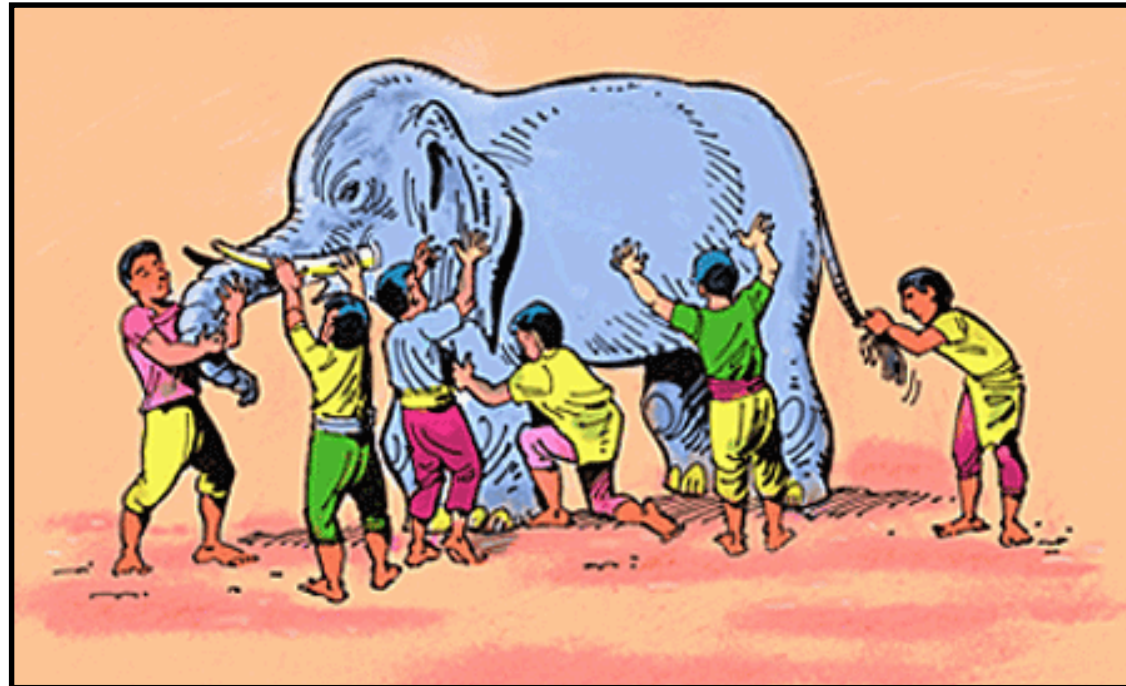
The Role of Young Professionals

- We are working in a complex environment which has significant implications for how the parameters and scope of our research is defined
- We need to take personal responsibility to ensure that we have a detailed understanding of the different philosophies and logic that give rise to assumptions in our research and the management approaches we recommend
- We need to recognise that our background training places limitations on our understanding and that we need to be open to new and different ways of understanding the world we live in
- We need to understand our own guiding ethics and value systems as they dictate our behaviour and thus influence our research.

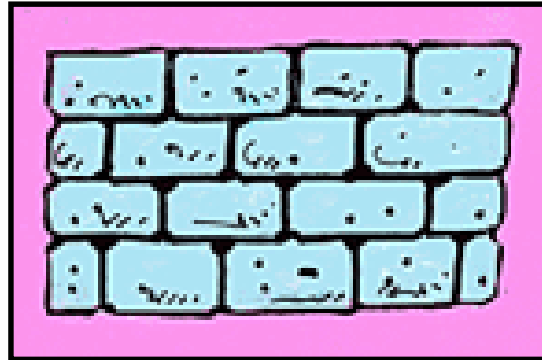
The Role of Young Professionals

- We need to design transdisciplinary research projects that are guided by the question ***How should we do what we want to do?***
- We need to network with each other to ensure shared learning and understanding of a global issue
- We need to identify those experts in this field that bridge the gap between disciplines and embrace the complexity of transboundary waters and develop mentoring relationships with them and learn from their experience and expertise
- We have an obligation to play a mentorship role to each other and the next generation of professionals in this field. Knowledge and understanding is not selfish, one way to break the silos of knowledge is be comfortable with the idea of sharing what we know and learning from others.

Blind Men and the Elephant (by John Godfrey Saxe)

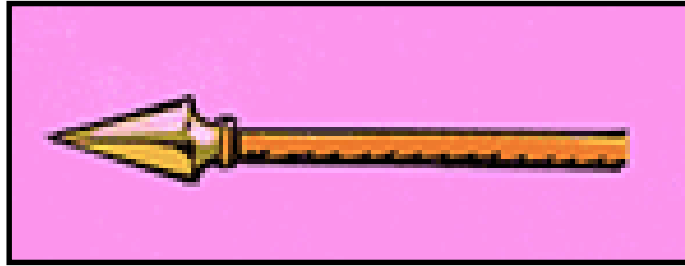


It was six men of Indostan To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant (Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation Might satisfy his mind



**The First approached the Elephant, And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side, At once began to bawl:**

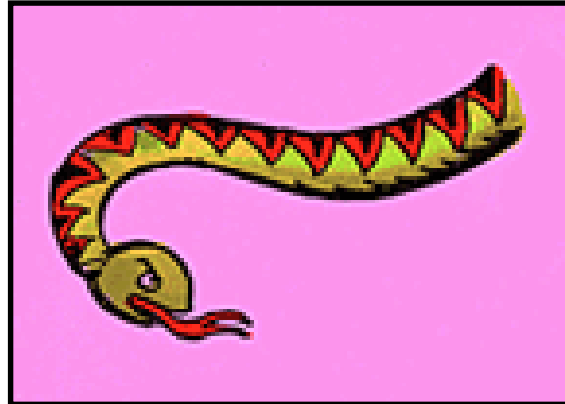
“God bless me! but the Elephant Is very like a wall!”



The Second, feeling of the tusk, Cried, “Ho! what have we here

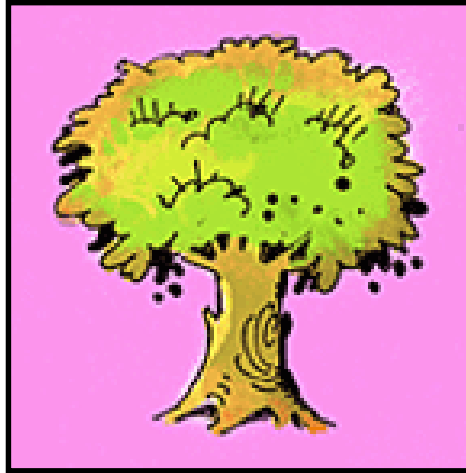
So very round and smooth and sharp? To me 'tis mighty clear

This wonder of an Elephant Is very like a spear!”



**The Third approached the animal, And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands, Thus boldly up and spake:**

“I see,” quoth he, “the Elephant Is very like a snake!”



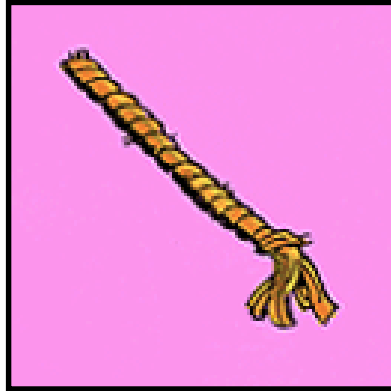
**The Fourth reached out an eager hand, And felt about the knee.
“What most this wondrous beast is like Is mighty plain,” quoth he;
“ ‘Tis clear enough the Elephant Is very like a tree!”**



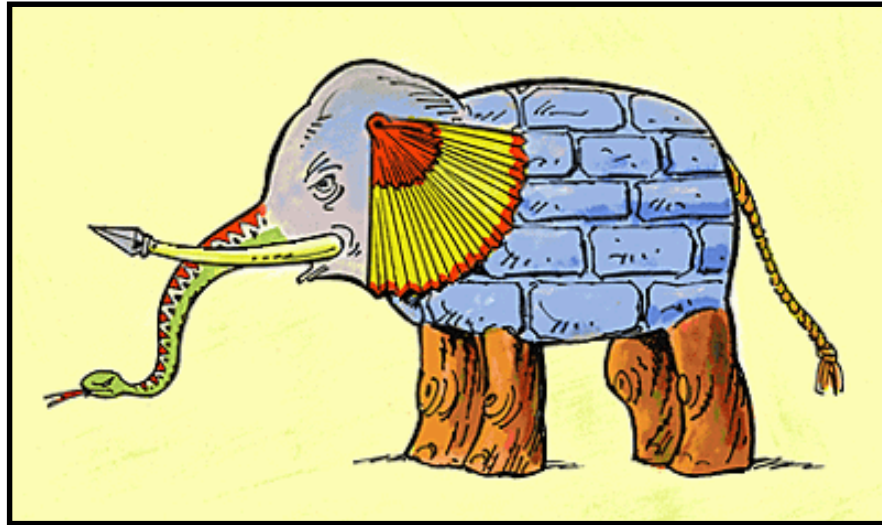
The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear, Said: “E’en the blindest man

Can tell what this resembles most; Deny the fact who can

This marvel of an Elephant Is very like a fan!”



**The Sixth no sooner had begun About the beast to grope,
Than, seizing on the swinging tail That fell within his scope,
“I see,” quoth he, “the Elephant Is very like a rope!”**



**And so these men of Indostan Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right, And all were in the
wrong!**

Conclusion: we need to work together in transdisciplinary teams if we are to understand and solve complex issues – if we work in isolation we only see one part of the problem and therefore potentially only one part of the solution

Thank you

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