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Rozemarijn works as a lecturer and PhD researcher at the Water Resources Management group at Wageningen University since October 2020. She researches how technologies, including models and innovations are shaped by, and in turn shape, science-policy processes related to shared waters. Her work focuses on everyday practices of those who do transboundary water governance, and seeks to expand theorization in the field of hydropolitics by building on Science and Technology Studies and constructivist theories. Rozemarijn's research interests encompass sociotechnical imaginaries, specifically how data and technologies play a role in identifying generally accepted options for development, understanding interactions between lay-people and experts as well as between different disciplines, the role of trust and (environmental) expertise, as well as how gender as other pervasive conditions such as class, ethnicity and wealth intersect and influence agency.

Before her work with Wageningen University, Rozemarijn has worked at IHE Delft on water diplomacy, and remains affiliated as Guest Researcher Transboundary Water Governance.

Do We Need a Feminist Approach to Transboundary Water Governance?

Transboundary water governance exists at the intersection of two highly masculinized fields: diplomacy/international relations and water resources management. In both fields, policy and academic positions are mainly held by men. Core ideas, norms, and guiding principles that are presented as neutral, are both shaped by men and are based on male experiences. However, beyond numbers, the processes, policy priorities and decisions of governance are also highly gendered. For instance, gender affects what is seen as 'normal' or adequate behaviour in negotiations for men and women, the reasoning about why to seek confrontation or compromise, and the priorities identified in water allocation questions.

With a few notable exceptions, research that addresses gender and water management or water governance has mainly focused on water supply and sanitation at the household level or on local management in the agricultural sector. However, empirical studies on the gender dimensions of water diplomacy, and the role of men and women in water governance and conflict resolution at an interstate level are widely missing.

To address this gap, we will review the (limited) existing academic research as well as our own current study that compares gender dynamics in transboundary water governance, and reflect on (1) different feminist theoretical approaches used in IR studies and their potential to study gender and transboundary waters; and (2) distinct feminist methodological approaches needed for uncovering hidden masculinities and structural gender inequalities in this context. Based on this assessment we will outline how feminist perspectives can enrich our understanding of transboundary water governance.

Keywords: transboundary water governance, gender dynamics, feminist theories and methodological approaches, literature review