

Patrik Stålgren (2006): *Worlds of Water: Worlds Apart. How Targeted Domestic Actors Transform International Regimes*. English text. Göteborg Studies in Politics 99. Department of Political Science, Box 711, 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden. Göteborg 2006. 228 pages. ISBN 10: 91-89246-26-8. ISBN 13: 978-91-89246-26-3. ISSN 0346-5942.

International regimes are developed by international experts and policy makers to encourage specific behavioural changes at domestic levels. With the aim of understanding and promoting the implementation of international regimes, this book presents a theory of domestic transformations of international regimes. Patrik Stålgren argues that the domestic implementation of international regimes is a process in which their meanings are transformed in ways that may result in behaviours that are different than originally intended.

This argument complements existing scholarship in International Relations which assumes that the understanding of international regimes during the implementation process is constant rather than constructed, and regards targeted domestic actors as passive recipients of external reform rather than subjects of change. Stålgren combines theories on international relations with social psychology and sociology to account for how actors in the targeted domestic policy area reconstruct international regimes.

At the heart of the analysis is a case study of the implementation of the international regime on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in Zimbabwe. IWRM was developed to address global water crises which cause the death of millions each year. IWRM resembles other international regimes in that it builds on the norms and ideas of ecosystem management, market economy and democratic participation. The United Nations and the European Union alike have recommended its members to adopt IWRM, and it is the foundation for most international development agencies supporting sustainable water use in the developing world.

Zimbabwe, setting out to reform its water sector in the early 1990's, was one of the first countries to explicitly engage IWRM as a template for the reform. The theory of domestic transformation of international regimes is used to analyse how the impact was contingent on transformations in relation to four specific constructions of reality – Water as Zimbabwe; Water as Gold; Water as Science; Water as a Gift from the Gods.

The analysis draws on a broad range of sources, including official documents, archival resources, and a unique set of interviews with actors in Zimbabwe and international development agencies.

Keywords: International regimes, implementation, norm diffusion, Integrated Water Resources Management, IWRM, Zimbabwe, Africa.