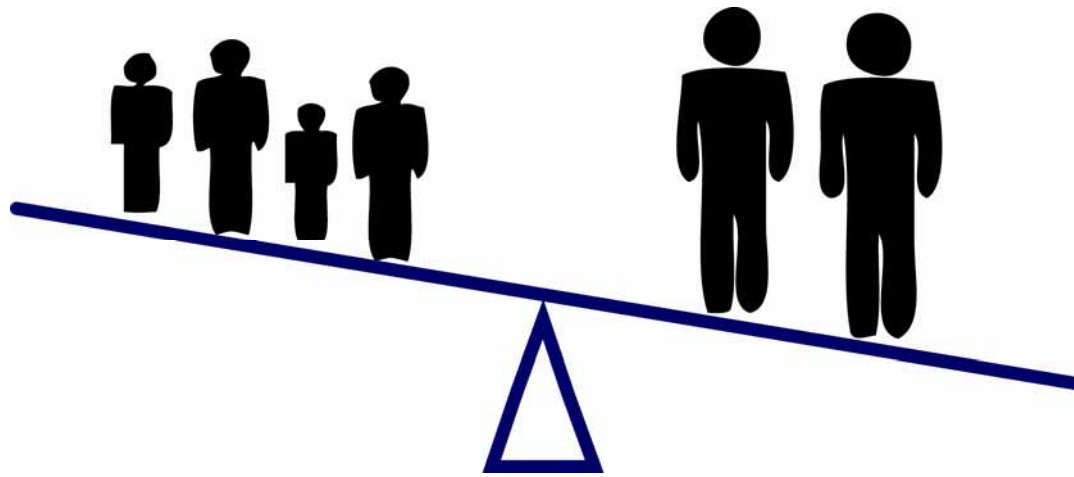


Presentation

Presentation from the 2009 World Water Week in Stockholm
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WORLD
in Stockholm,
August 16–22, 2009 **WATER**
WEEK



Perpetuating Water Conflict through Asymmetric Cooperation

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London Water Research Group

Session: Cooperation as Conflict? Towards Effective Transboundary Water Interaction

World Water Week 2009

PROBLEM:

Oversimplified analysis leading to perpetuation of conflict

1. Dichotomised perception of conflict and cooperation

→ *Conflict and cooperation co-exist*

PROBLEM 1: Dichotomised perception of conflict and cooperation

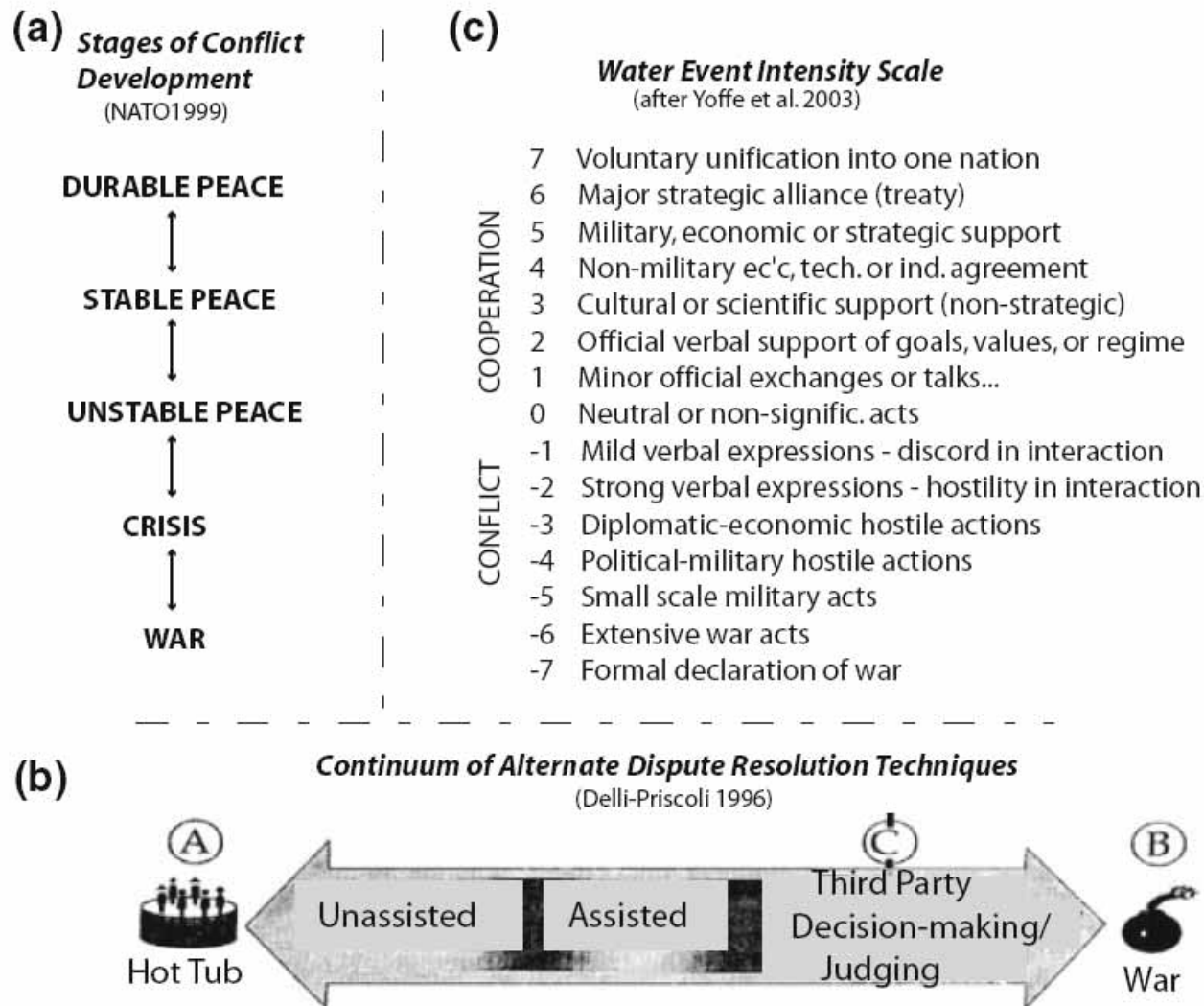


Fig. 1 Three continua of conflict \leftrightarrow cooperation: (a) NATO's 'stages of conflict development' (1999), (b) Delli-Priscoli's 'continuum of alternative dispute resolution techniques' (1996), and (c) Yoffe et al.'s 'water event intensity scale' (2003)

Conflict and Cooperation Co-exist: TWINS approach

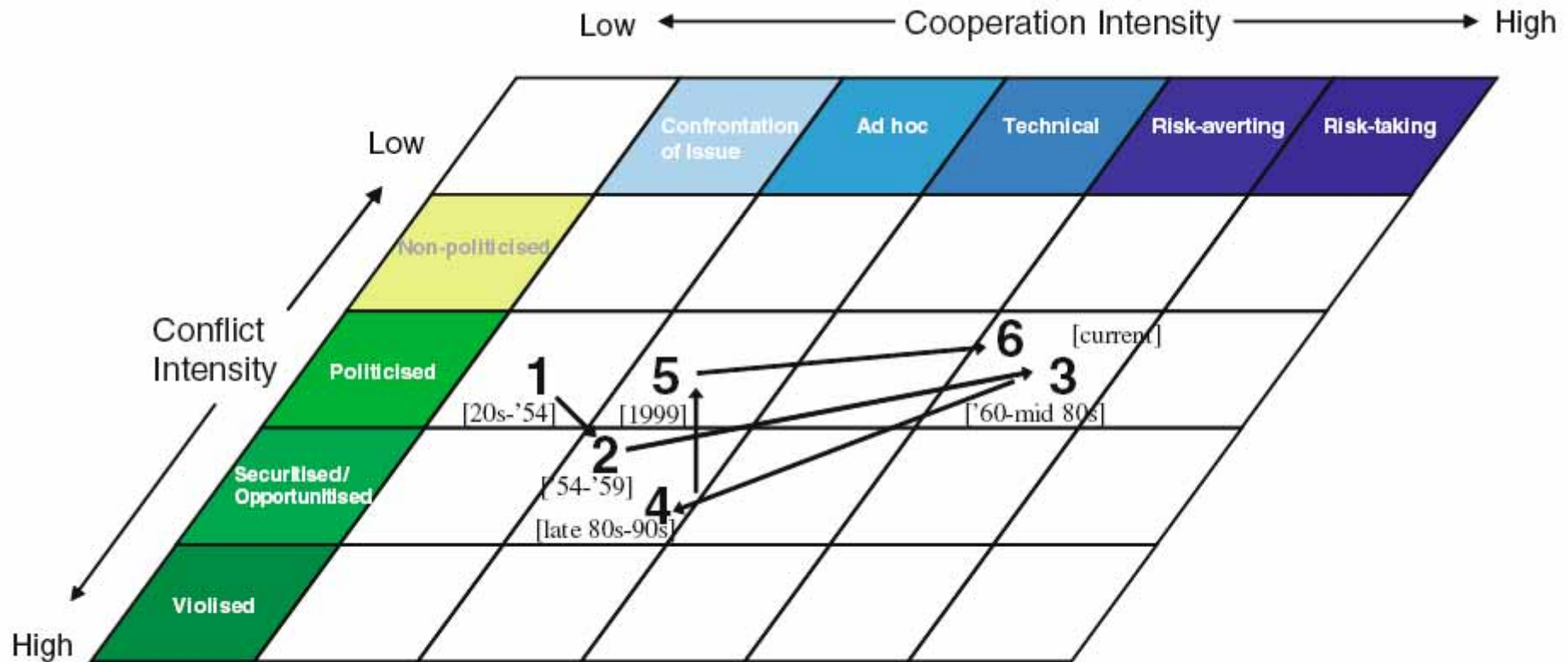


Fig. 3 The TWINS matrix of conflict and cooperation, applied to hydropolitical bilateral relations over time between Sudan and Egypt

PROBLEM:

Oversimplified analysis leading to perpetuation of conflict

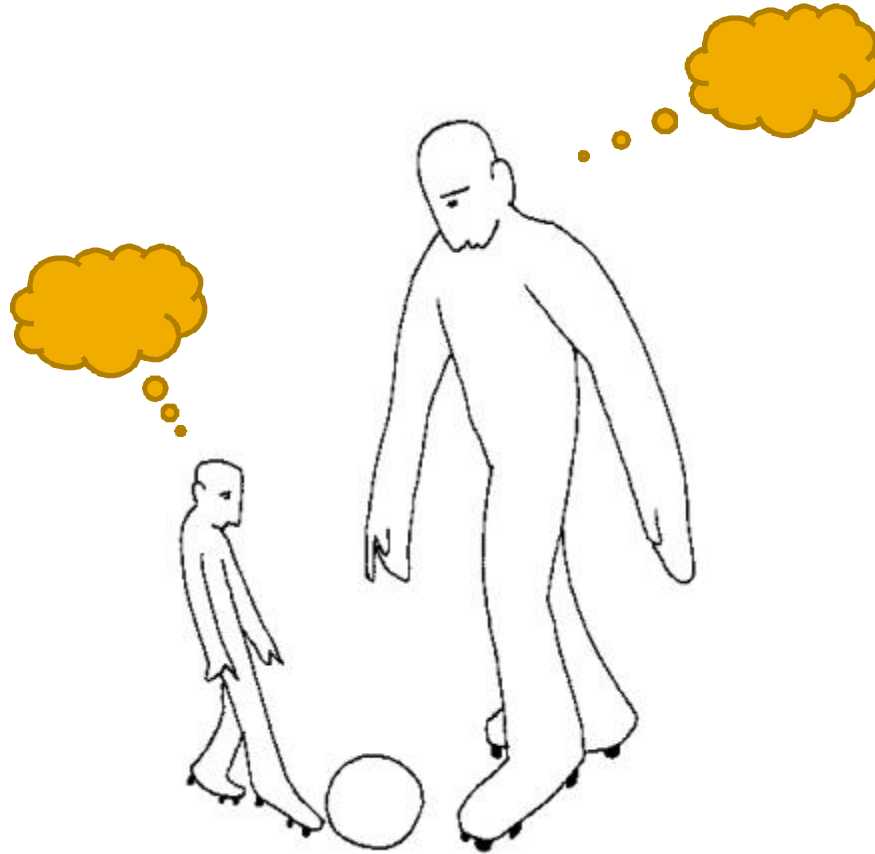
1. Dichotomised perception of conflict and cooperation

→ *Conflict and cooperation co-exist*

2. Poor understanding of ‘cooperation’

→ ***Transboundary interactions as the focus; cooperation is part of the interactive process***

PROBLEM 2: Poor understanding of cooperation



What's their intent on playing the game?

PROBLEM 2: Poor understanding of cooperation

Cooperation on equal terms
Cooperation across a broad range of issues

'Equitable' cooperation
(e.g. Orange, FOEME's initiative in Jordan)
Strategic/Instrumental Cooperation

Coercive cooperation
Dominative cooperation
Manipulative cooperation (tokenism)
Asymmetric cooperation

Same 'cooperation'
but different realities

Not all faces of
cooperation are
pretty....

PROBLEM:

Oversimplified analysis leading to perpetuation of conflict

1. Dichotomised perception of conflict and cooperation

→ *Conflict and cooperation co-exist*

2. Poor understanding of 'cooperation'

→ *Transboundary interactions as the focus; cooperation is part of the interactive process*

3. Under-emphasis of power asymmetry

→ ***Power asymmetry exists between riparian states. Soft power is prevalent***

Hegemon's prerogative:

- Cooperation becomes selective
- Riparians can choose to emphasise a certain conflictive or cooperative face of interaction

Meanwhile... options offered by non-hegemons are often ignored as 'unpragmatic' or 'unrealistic' (e.g. Palestine)

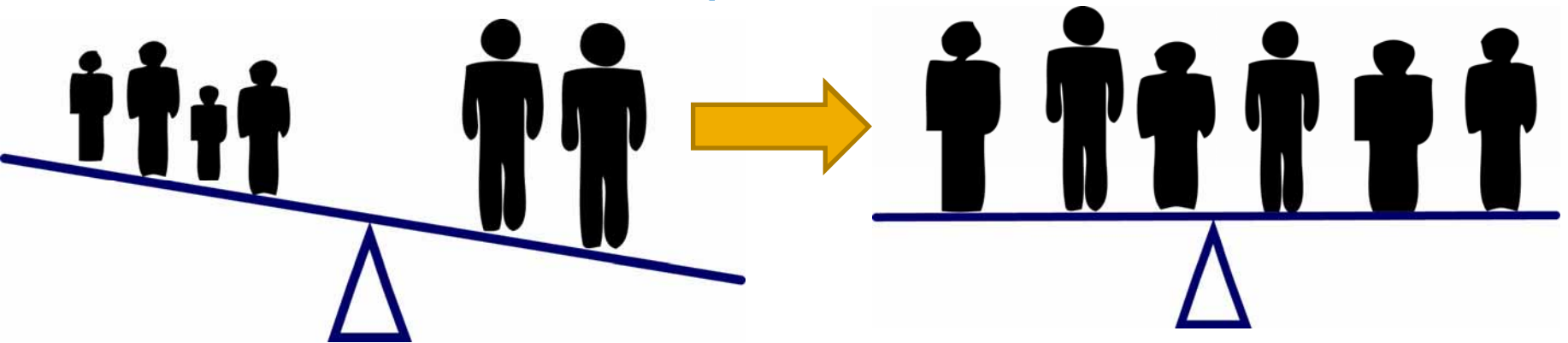


Analytical implications

1. Use the most appropriate methods
2. Political and power contexts must be understood
3. Critical observation of water allocation and management practices needed

Policy implications

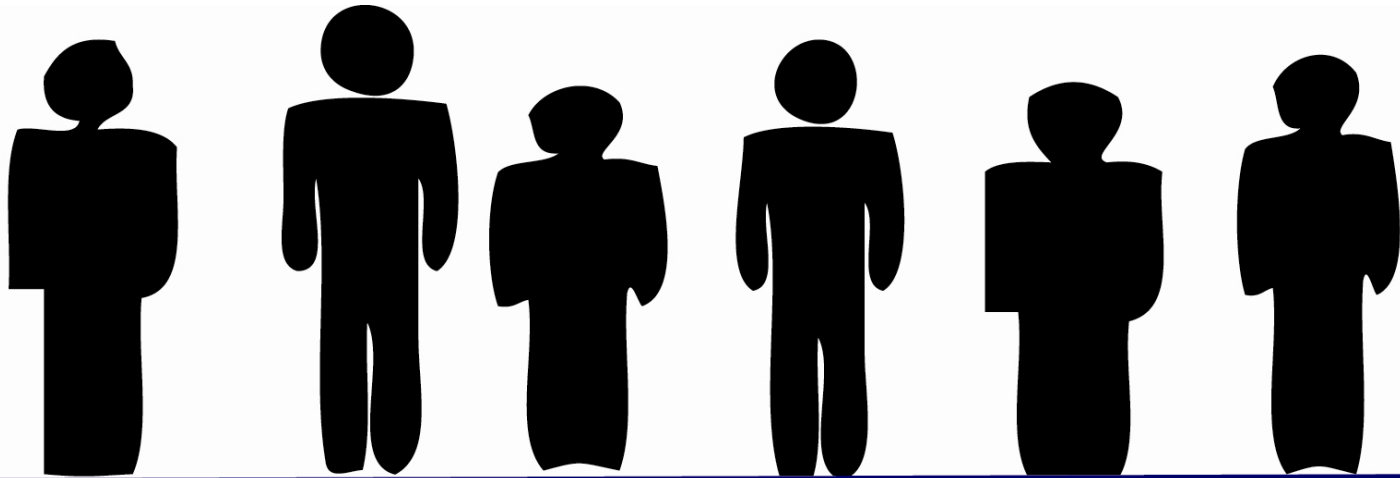
1. 'Cooperation' needs to be evaluated in the specific political context
2. Levelling the playing field and/or the players is a prerequisite to cooperative initiatives [or 'effective cooperation']



3. Critical observations of water allocation and management practices needed

THANK YOU !

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Further reading

- Zeitoun, M & Mirumachi, N 2008. “Transboundary water interaction I: reconsidering conflict and cooperation” *Int Environ Agreements* 8:297–316
- Zeitoun, M., Mirumachi, N. , & Warner, J. (submitted). “Transboundary water interaction II: Soft power underlying conflict and cooperation”. *Int Environ Agreements*