

WATER, AGRICULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT IN SPAIN: CAN WE SQUARE THE CIRCLE?

The world water problems are due to bad governance, not to physical water scarcity

This book is inspired by this statement and explores whether it holds in a specific country, Spain, where climatic conditions – as one of the most arid countries of the European Union – would fully justify saying that water problems are due to physical water scarcity. The metrification of water uses and their monetary value is a first important step in understanding how reallocation of water among uses could help mitigating many of the current water problems in Spain. However, water reallocation among users or from users to nature, is far from simple. Initiatives portrayed as the solution to the water governance ‘jigsaw’ – e.g. water trade, improved water use efficiency, users’ collective action, public participation – are not free of difficulties and shortcomings. The book explores the growing need for maintaining Spain’s natural capital and the human component of water governance – people’s needs, wishes, (vested) interests, aspirations – that often determine the result of decisions and, sometimes, lead water management to a deadlock. This book takes a step forward in showing a more complex picture – closer to reality – of water governance in Spain.

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