

Along the domestic foreign frontier:

Quebec and the management of the Great Lakes

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Conference on Trans-Boundary Environmental
Governance in Canada and the United States;
Woodrow Wilson Int'l Center, Washington, D.C.
May 8-9, 2008.

2 questions :

- What has been the nature and extent of Québec's engagement?
- How can it be explained?

OUTLINE

1. Geographical, historical & institutional context
2. Québec's regional cooperation on water issues
3. What explains Qc's involvement?
 1. Interdependence
 2. Identity



Geographical context

A river at the heart of Qc's economy & identity

- Québec = 3% of the world's renewable freshwater
- hydroelectricity : more than 96% of Québec's total electricity production (1997)
- The St. Lawrence River : 40% of Québec's renewable freshwater; provides drinking water to three million people in 100 municipalities
- Closely associated with Québec's identity

Expanding ties

- **Limited participation in the IJC**
- **Growing regional cooperation**

Expanding ties

- 1973: joins the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers**
- 1985: signs the Great Lakes Charter = beginning of Qc's direct participation in the management of the Great Lakes**
- 1997: becomes associate member of the Council of Great Lakes Governors**
- 1999: becomes associate member of the Great Lakes Commission (est. 1955)**
- 2001: signs the Great Lakes Charter Annex**
(2002: Québec adopts a water management policy)
- 2005: signs the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement**

An international Actor:

- **Gérin-Lajoie doctrine**
- **more than 550 int'l agreements concluded; around 300 bilateral agreements with nearly 80 countries in force;**
- **over thirty delegations, offices or local agents abroad**
- **2002: int'l commitments undertaken or (if signed by Canada) implemented by the Qc government must be submitted to the National Assembly.**

Shared responsibility, divided authority

Explaining Québec's involvement: interdependence

Proposition	Evidence	Conclusion
Is the effectiveness of Québec's policy dependent on cooperation with regional actors?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qc Gvt: cooperation strengthens norms and facilitates concerted action - No race to the bottom, rather: 	Evidence in line with proposition
Networks as facilitators	rising tide	Hard to say; more research needed
A response to perceived external threats?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared conviction that a threat exists - Clauses in sub-national agreements - Mobilization of civil society - Official pronouncements 	Strong evidence to support this hypothesis
A response to the mobilization of transnational	- Many organizations (Eau secours!; Mayors)	difficult to show a causal relationship but plausible

Explaining Quebec's involvement: Identity

Proposition	Evidence	Conclusion
Compensate for an imbalance in the Federal-Provincial relationship?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - collaborative rather than competitive federalism - regional coop : an indirect path toward harmonization 	Available evidence in line with proposition
a means to build international legitimacy?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - uses int'l agreements to assert its rights in its spheres of authority - PQ v. PLQ: different approaches, one goal 	Available evidence in line with proposition
Rôle as f(identity + status)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no clear & sustained external expectations - water: neglected in party platforms 	Internal : see above External basis: no strong evidence yet

Conclusion

- Quebec joined the Agreement mainly for reasons linked to interdependence issues, which enabled it to articulate a new role for itself at the regional level, based on status, and congruent with its identity aspirations.
- Although the two explanations are obviously complementary, interdependence seems more promising since it helps explain both the nature and contents of Québec's regional involvement