



Water Policy in Spain

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Though the modern Spanish State was formed in the mid Fifteenth Century, historical records show that water works, statues, and the utilization of water dates back to centuries BC. As a semi-arid country, the effort to control, store and assure water supplies to cities and fields is present in numerous historical and political landmarks.

Water policy in Spain has been the focus of Spanish-speaking scholars for decades, yet a comprehensive treatment of the subject has never before been published in English. *Water Policy in Spain* fills this gap by providing readers with a comprehensive, detailed account of the history of water policy in Spain from the beginnings of the 20th century to the present day.

Part one presents a synopsis of the physical, economic, environmental and climatic bases of Spain, also covering corresponding political topics. Part two reviews the major constraints and opportunities that are relevant to face major water policy challenges. And part three is an in-depth account of water policy in the country.

The issues closely examined include the way in which old water laws and institutions have been able to adapt to new sentimental and institutional challenges, including the significant change in the last decade to comply with the European Union's Water Framework Directive (WFD). Like many semi-arid countries, climate change, drought risks and water pollution are cause for growing concerns in Spain and the country is still struggling to define a consistent and widely accepted set of policies to combat these threats. Spain's current water policy is unique because it entails a complete tour de force with respect to what the country has been doing on water matters for centuries. As the WFD must be enforced in 27 States (representing 500 million Europeans), the lessons that can be learnt from the Spanish experience should catch the attention of water practitioners around the world.

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