

Centre for International Development Seminar Series

The politics of international cooperation on transboundary rivers in Asia

International rivers in Asia are shared amongst many countries, most of which are facing growing pressures to react to global environmental change and industrialisation. These river basins, some of which are the largest in the world, are also amongst the least coordinated river systems. There is increasing concern that developing countries are unable to cope with the challenge of sustainable water resources management. There is also fear that political tensions over international waters will cause regional instability.



This talk will provide an understanding of water security in Asia by examining the politics of institutional cooperation in two river basins that China shares with its neighbours: the Ili (with Kazakhstan) and the Mekong (with the Lower Mekong countries). Not only is China here the upstream country, but China's international water policy is also at the core of Asia's water security. Nevertheless, the nature and outcomes of cooperation differs across basins. These differences stem from different rationales underlying riparian states' dynamically evolving policy practices in water management and foreign relations.

Biography:

Dr Lei Xie is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute of Geographic Sciences and Natural Resources Research at the Chinese Academy of Sciences. From 2010-2016, she was a lecturer in Politics at the University of Exeter. Her research focuses on transboundary water cooperation and transnational environmental movements. Dr Xie is author of *Environmental Activism in China* (Routledge 2009); and *China's International Transboundary Rivers: Politics, Security and Diplomacy of Shared Water Resources* (with Shaofeng Jia, Routledge 2017). Her articles have been published inter alia in *International Environmental Agreements*, and *New Political Economy*.

Venue: Squires Building, room 211 — Time: 8 February 2018, 12:30-2pm

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