FINNISH-RUSSIAN TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION *WITH VUOKSI RIVER AS A CASE*

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From conflict to successful cooperation

VERY DIFFICULT STARTING POINT

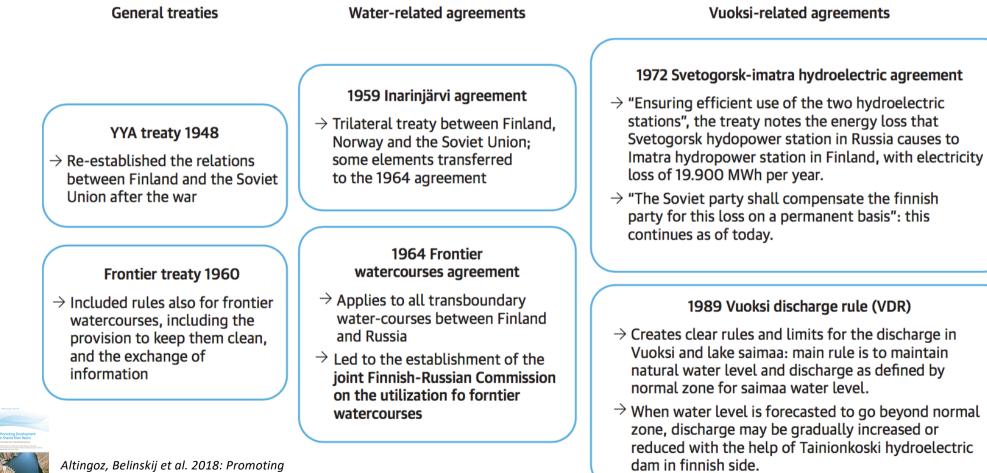
WW2: Finland lost land to Soviet Union = Vuoksi River Basin became transboundary, and Finland lost its new hydropower stations

- → Finnish-Russian transboundary cooperation, with Vuoksi River as its backbone
- → Now recognised as the most successful transboundary cooperation in the world (e.g. Strategic Foresight Group 2017)



Altingoz, Belinskij et al. 2018: Promoting Development in Shared River Basins (World Bank)

Joint treaties as a foundation



Development in Shared River Basins (World Bank)

Unique(?) characteristics

1964 Watercourses Agreement very advanced, even unique(?) globally

- Covers all transboundary watercourses between the two countries
- Includes a compensation mechanism (later further elaborated)
- Implemented through a joint Commission that has no Secretariat: operates through thematic Working Groups
- Well-established mechanisms to include private sector
- Has endured unchanged the tumultuous times between the two countries, including the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991

Enabling factors for the success

- Well-established regulatory framework and institutions, with formal and informal cooperation supporting each other
- Long-term, step-by-step process for building trust & cooperation
- Focus on technical aspects, but with strong political support
 → Particularly important at the beginning
- Focus on broader benefit sharing and minimizing joint harm, and clearly defined compensation mechanisms
- Engagement of all key parties, including private sector actors

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Thank you! Kiitos! Спасибо! Marko Keskinen (@aalto.fi) Europe-INBO - 19.6.2019