

OCCASIONAL PAPER

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is twofold: First, it examines the preventive efforts taken by IGAD, EAC and ICGLR to prevent and manage water-related conflicts in the Eastern African Region, and second, it analyzes the extent to which these sub regional organizations have been able and are willing to mainstream prevention and management of water related conflicts in their institutional culture and work. Section one discusses the debates for and against water wars. In doing so, it demonstrates why cooperation is important while managing shared water resources. *Section two* offers regional perspectives on specific examples, causes, and impacts of the water-related conflicts in the Eastern African Region. *Section three examines how the prevention of water related conflicts within the sub regional organisations:* East African Community (EAC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and International Conference on Great Lakes Region (ICGLR). *Sections Four* shows the successes and challenges faced by these organizations and what needs to be enhanced to make the sub regional organisations more effective. This examination shows that great strides have been made by individual sub regional organizations to include the frameworks on the prevention of water related conflicts in their organizations. But what is lacking is the co-ordination across these sub regional organizations them. *The concluding section tries* to highlight the fact that, while each sub regional organization is characterized by its own constraints and opportunities, some key challenges are similar to all – among them, the necessity for local, national, regional and international stakeholders' coordination and cooperation when dealing with water –related conflicts. Key to this paper is the argument that prevention of water related conflicts in this region must produce results. Therefore, the sub-regional organizations have to be proactively engaged in the prevention of these conflicts.

There is much that these organizations can learn from each other's experiences in making the prevention of water-related conflicts in this region work. It is this exchange of experiences – of successes and failures –that will help determine if the prevention of these conflicts will indeed emerge as a core principal of regional interaction in the years to come.