

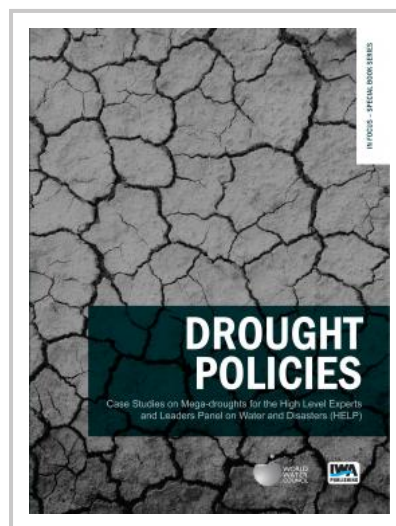
Drought Policies: Case Studies on Mega-droughts for the High Level Experts and Leaders Panel on Water and Disasters (HELP)

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This book focuses on mega-droughts of the past 20 years. Twelve cases from both developed and developing countries are elaborated in the book. Its intention is to draw lessons from the cases of extremely severe water shortages so that countries and stakeholders can be better prepared for extreme drought events in the future.

Several recurrent themes emerge from the diverse case studies and descriptions of programs. For example, most chapters discuss the necessity to move from reactive (compensatory) to preventive policies. This theme has implications for use of insurance in developing countries, e.g. is insurance encouraging investments to help countries avoid disasters or is it acting mostly in a humanitarian way to compensate for losses to help people? Several authors point to the importance of risk assessment and to developing risk based policies for drought. This raises statistical issues of how such assessments of uncertainty and risks are done and how they relate to actual occurrence of events. Most chapters call for more inter-sectoral policies, policies which integrate water resources management approaches and to the necessity of raising public awareness of droughts in times of no drought. The issue of structural versus nonstructural is clear in most cases. While often cast as 'either/or' the message that emerges is more one of how do you integrate these approaches. Finally, a few chapters bring to light how prevention is needed for national security as well as water security.

In Focus – a book series that showcases the latest accomplishments in water research. Each book focuses on a specialist area with papers from top experts in the field. It aims to be a vehicle for in-depth understanding and inspire further conversations in the sector.



Publication Date: 15/11/2019

ISBN13: 9781789061178

eISBN: 9781789061185

Pages: 264

Print:

Standard price: £125 / €156 / \$188

Member price: £94 / €117 / \$141

eBook:

Standard price: £125 / €156 / \$188

Member price: £94 / €117 / \$141