

European Union Award

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SESYNC affiliate scholar and postdoc alumnus Jampel Dell'Angelo and colleague win prestigious 4M Euro award to advance water governance

Equipping Water Governance Leaders with Interdisciplinary Skills to Tackle Global Challenges

Jampel Dell'Angelo knows a thing or two about the need to innovate water governance. He's worked on both the socio-economic and the biophysical sides of global water issues, ranging from community irrigation schemes in Rural Kenya to global water-related land grabs and trade interdependencies in the food-water-energy nexus, first at the Ostrom Workshop at Indiana University and then in global water grabbing syndrome research he started at SESYNC. He is now an Assistant Professor of Water Governance at the Institute for Environmental Studies (IVM) at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU). Water problems are political, messy, and potentially disastrous, he says, and are likely to worsen in the coming decade with large-scale, drought-induced food shortages, disastrous flooding, and climate change.



To address the sustainability of water governance of the future, Dell'Angelo, who is a SESYNC affiliate scholar and post-doc alumnus, and Dave Huitema, both from the IVM, have brought together a consortium of 29 participants including universities, research centers, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the public and private sectors from 14 countries to work on Next Water Governance (NEWAVE), a four-year education and research initiative that begins in Fall 2019. Moreover, NEWAVE will have an international advisory board with influential experts and scholars including SESYNC director Margaret Palmer.

Dell'Angelo explains that NEWAVE is based on the notion that future water crises are major socio-environmental challenges, and yet our capacity to address water governance is seriously inadequate, given the scale and challenge of the problems. The innovative approach of the NEWAVE program will bring together an international, interdisciplinary network of people and organizations; develop an actionable research agenda on key water governance priorities; and train a new generation of researchers to advance knowledge of water governance. The 4M Euro Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network (ITN) grant will support 15 PhDs to conduct research on various water issues.

Dell'Angelo says that key to his team's successful proposal, selected among more than 130 consortium proposals in all Europe, was its synthesis approach. "My vocabulary now includes so much of what I learned while an immersion postdoc at SESYNC," he says. "Thinking about actionable science, thinking about problems as interdisciplinary, and synthesizing them is now how I approach my work." Dell'Angelo and Huitema will approach the work through an organizing framework that future water governance leaders will need to have deep knowledge of the 3 P's: "Problématiques" - the nature of nowadays water challenges; "Paradigms" - the ideational underpinnings of current approaches to water governance; and "Patterns" - how newly proposed approaches interact with existing institutions.

The NEWAVE researchers will assess the sustainability of water governance in 25 countries. In Europe, they will examine European urban water demand and investigate the dynamics of the European Union water framework directive. Other areas of interest include national and local case studies in sub-Saharan Africa, agriculture infrastructure in Southeast Asia, and transboundary water conflicts in places like Myanmar. The team selected the variety of water governance case studies and field sites because they represent diverse thematic areas distributed across a wide geography that deal with concrete problems.

For information, read more [here](#) [1].

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