



Problem Statement

A watershed as socio-nature or as a social-ecological-system (SES) develops over time via material practices (bio-chemical and physical processes) and representational practices (culture, social relations, discursive constructions, language, ideological practices; cf. Swyngedouw, 1996). With dramatic change of water management policies supporting compressed modernization of South Korea, Soyang Watershed has similarly been formed via a myriad of factors such as the changing political situation, ideological hegemony, global change and so on. By achieving a comprehensive understanding of the developmental path of Soyang Watershed, we can better understand the impact of water management policies on sustainability and risks to this SES, which is faced with unprecedented uncertainties such as climate change.

Objective

The influence of changes in water management policies on the process of producing different developmental trajectories for the Soyang Watershed will be examined from a number of perspectives.

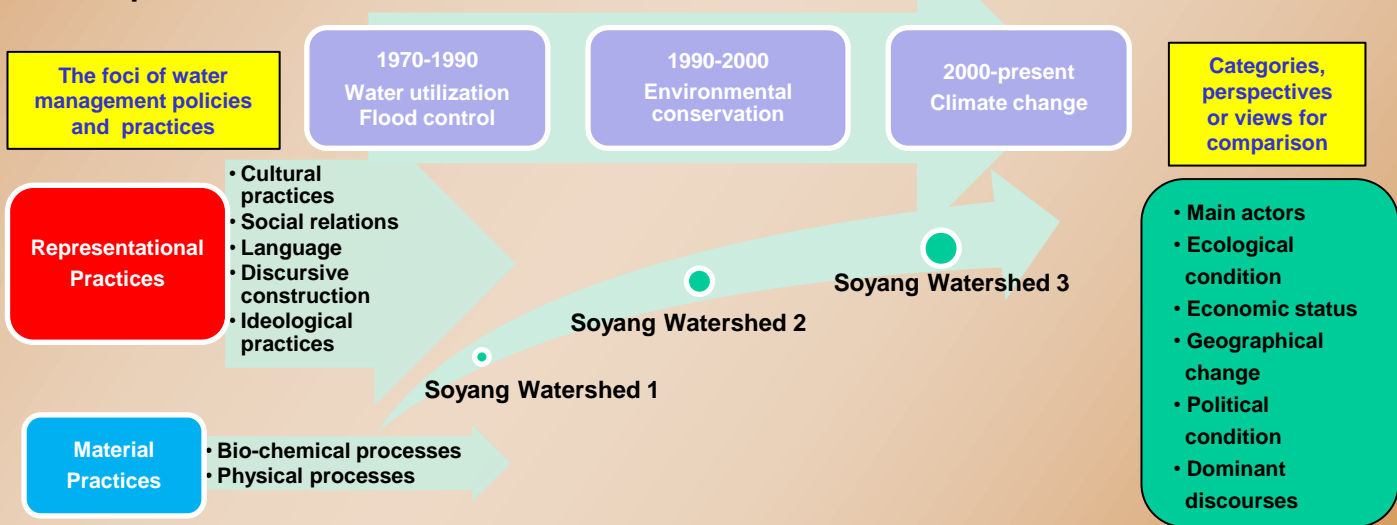
Research Question

What has been the role of water management policy in producing historically different types of Soyang Watersheds as social-ecological-systems?

Methods

- Study area: Soyang watershed (3 counties in Kangwon Province, South Korea)
- Data: KOSIS (Korean Statistical Information Service), National Assembly Library, WAMIS (Water management Information System), Counties' reports, White Books of related ministries, etc.
- Methods: Reviews and analysis of related materials (government reports, newspaper, thesis, etc.), in-depth interviews (residents of Soyang Watershed, local politicians, local civil service officers, activists, etc), participant observation.

Conceptual Framework for Research



Expected Results

1. Comparison of different views or interpretations (main actors, ecological condition, economic status, geographical change, political condition, and dominant discourses) of the impacts of changing water policy on the developmental trajectory of Soyang Watershed
2. Identification of the significant factors that influence or have influenced development of Soyang Watershed
3. Provision of a comprehensive explanation about the impact of water management policies on change of Soyang Watershed as a social-ecological-system

Contribution to TERRECO

This research will provide a forum where approaches from the natural and social science sides of the TERRECO project may be compared. By utilizing achievements in research from both sides, this project can provide a new understanding about the malleability of physical entities such as watersheds. The research implies that sustainability or risk in the context of Soyang Watershed is a matter of social choice. The research will contribute to the ability of the TERRECO project to suggest appropriate scientifically-based recommendations that allow for improvement of water management in South Korea.

Reference

Swyngedouw, E., 1996, "The city as a hybrid: On nature, society and cyborg urbanization", *CNS* 7(2), June, pp.65-80