

# TOWARDS A FAIR AND FEASIBLE ALLOCATION OF CAUVERY WATERS

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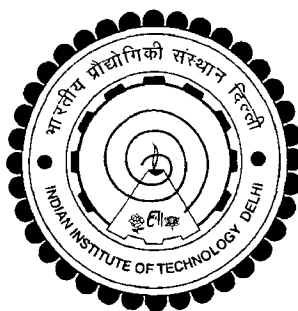
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Submitted in fulfillment of the  
requirements of the degree of

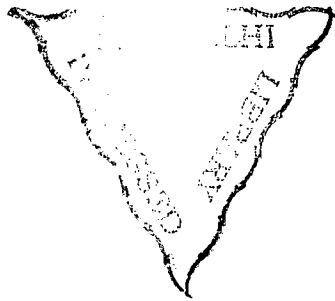
**Doctor of Philosophy**

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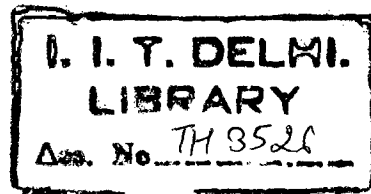


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To my beloved Teachers

## CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled "**Towards a Fair and Feasible Allocation of Cauvery Waters**" being submitted by **Ravi Kumar K.** to the **Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, New Delhi (India)** for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Civil Engineering Department is a bonafide research work carried out by him under our supervision and guidance. The research reports and the results presented in this thesis have not been submitted, in parts or in full, to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.



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Ravi Kumar K.

## ABSTRACT

In the history of water conflicts, various water appropriation doctrines and mechanisms have been proposed for the purpose of conflict resolution. Evidently, the interesting concepts of 'equity' and 'fairness' in water allocations were proposed as a preferred sharing doctrine but its translation beyond a mere theoretical enunciation has not been possible. Past investigators have not succeeded in their attempts to develop an objective frame work to define 'equitable apportionment' in real world water conflicts and this failure has been attributed to the largely perceptive nature of these concepts.

The present study has, appropriately therefore, attempted to address these and related issues with reference to the dispute over sharing of water resources of Cauvery basin in India between the states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and is presented in four parts. The issues studied in each part relate to the following:

- (i) Equity and fairness: Understanding the basic concept of equity and fairness; difficulties associated with its measurement; stakeholders' perceptions about this concept and formulation of a basis for quantification of 'Fair and Equitable' allocations based on the twin paradigm of distributional and procedural justice.
- (ii) Conflict situations with dominant socio-political dimensions in which all contenders have perfect knowledge of player options, strategies and priorities.
- (iii) Conflict situations with dominant socio-political dimensions but where contenders formulate their respective strategies based only on perceived notions of options, strategies and priorities in respect of contending players.

- (iv) Implementation of the derived water appropriations through derived regulatory regimes that define operating policies of four reservoirs in the headwater regions of Cauvery.

In the first part, the Principle of Equitable Allocation has been adopted as a preferred basis for arriving at appropriations and is in line with the recommendations made at the Helsinki Conference, (ILA 1966), and reiterated at the Dublin Conference, UNCIW 1997). A paradigm has been proposed to quantify these 'Fair and Equitable' also 'F&E') and it is averred that the proposed methodology addresses the issues of equity and fairness through proportional allocations for distributive fairness and a cooperative, equal opportunity, model for negotiations for the important but perception based notion of procedural justice.

In the second and third parts of the study, Conflict Analysis techniques such as Metagame and Hypergame Analysis have been used to model Cauvery conflict in which component of the study also dwells on the possible influence that the Cauvery Waters Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) may have on the outcome of the dispute. Literature study reveals that these Game Theoretic techniques are ideally suited in the study of conflicts that have a strong socio-political dimension and these latter aspects indeed provide the raison d'être for the role that these techniques can play in the study of water conflicts.

The technique of Hypergame analysis is a particularly attractive approach in water conflicts as, it often happens, the players in such a type of dispute formulate their respective strategies based only on their perceptions about similar strategies of other players. Misperceptions in a dispute charged with socio-political aspects such as a water related conflict is indeed a distinct possibility and Hypergame Analysis has been

applied to model possible misperceptions upto level 2 in the Cauvery dispute in order to evaluate how misperceptions at these two levels affect the conflict situation and its feasible resolutions.

Finally, in the fourth part, implementation of the derived water appropriations is attempted through regulatory regimes by developing appropriate multi-reservoir operating policies. Suitable operating policies have been designed for the integrated operation of four major reservoirs namely Hemavathy, Harangi, Kabini and KR Sagar situated in the headwater region of Karnataka state.

Some of the important highlights of the study along with an abstract of important findings are as indicated below:

1. Equity is sought through application of the principle of proportionality (distributional fairness) and the issue of fairness is addressed by using a cooperative, equal opportunity, model for negotiations (procedural fairness).
2. The fairness in procedural level is addressed by allowing each competing party the liberty to propose, without external coercion or influence, one or more factors that are most favorable to it, as a valid basis for apportionment.
3. Negotiations are open and transparent and each player has an inalienable right to seek proportional entitlements based on factors that maximize the given player's respective allocation. The factors admissible for selection must reflect hydrological, geographical and water use reality and follow the recommendations of the Dublin Conference (UNCIW 1997).
4. In this study, three factors namely, Drainage Area, Cultivable Area and Virgin runoff contribution have been adopted as factors for deriving 'Fair & Equitable allocations'

to the contenders. These, respectively, are the most preferred factors available individually to Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

- i. The need for compromise when total claims exceed resource availability is recognized by all contenders as an obligation and the corresponding action is voluntary.
- ii. The virgin runoff potential in the basin is a dynamic factor and 'Fair and Equitable' (or 'F&E') allocations are derived and subsequent analysis carried out for five flow categories namely maximum flow (MAX), upper quartile (UQ or 25% dependable flows), median flows (MED or 50% dependable flows), lower quartile (LQ or 75% dependability flows) and minimum (MIN) flows. For analysis, two cases are considered. Case -1 assumes spatial homogeneity in virgin runoff across the basin whereas in case-2, spatial non-homogeneity in virgin runoff potential is considered.
- iii. Besides annual considerations, separate allocations were derived for (i) Kharif season and (ii) Rabi season. The results suggest that allocations of 6887, 2124.55 and 5442.67 MCM respectively for Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu constitute 'Fair and Equitable' (or 'F&E') allocations in Kharif season when cultivable area outside the basin is excluded from the analysis. Similarly, as case-2, allocations of 6085.9, 1650.4 and 4472.0 MCM of water respectively to Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu constitute 'F&E' allocations for Kharif season with respective state flow contributions falling in quartile II, quartile III and quartile III respectively.
- iv. Conflict Analysis techniques provide a systematic framework for conceptualizing complex conflicts and predicting their possible feasible resolutions.

9. Conflict Analysis techniques have been used to evaluate feasible resolutions to the Cauvery conflict for each of the five categories of flows ranging from MAX to MIN for two specific cases. In the first case, as case-1, the derived 'F&E' allocations have been considered as one of the options to be exercised by the player in addition to their original claims. In case-2, however, only the original claims of the players are considered as credible options.
10. Changing dynamics of the conflict are recognized and in order to develop a proper insight into the Cauvery conflict, the analysis is carried out separately for three reference years of 1924, 1974 and 1990. Conflict models have been developed for both case-1 as well as case-2 corresponding to these years.
11. Metagame Analysis of the reference year 1990 of case-1 based on UQ flows identifies outcomes '296' and '725' as equilibrium outcomes of the game. Importantly, outcome '296' awards allocations to Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka according to the derived 'F&E' allocations whereas outcome '725' awards allocations to Tamil Nadu and Karnataka according to their claims bolstered by Prior Appropriation Doctrine with Kerala obtaining less than her 'F&E' allocation while the other states accordingly sharing the forsaken claim of the latter state .
12. Study reveals that when 'F&E' allocations are included as options for the states (case-1), both Metagame and Hypergame Analyses pick these 'F&E' allocations as possible equilibrium solutions to the dispute thus essentially validating these allocations.
13. In case-2 study, for the reference year 1990 and for median flows, outcome '47' is an equilibrium outcome and is able to support prescriptive rights of Tamil Nadu

whereas outcomes '55' and '117' support an allocation that is compatible with CWDT's Interim Award of 5805 MCM (205 TMC) coming from areas upstream of Mettur. For the same case, it is further observed that outcome '117' supports Karnataka's full claim of 8732.9 MCM (308.4 TMC), whereas outcomes '55' and '47' support only her prescriptive right of 5809.2 MCM (205.15 TMC). As far as the allocations to Kerala are concerned, outcomes '55' and '47' fully support Kerala's claim of 61.9 TMC from Kabini sub-basin, in addition to the allocations that the state will receive from Bhavani and Amaravathy sub-basins, whereas outcome '117' awards only 40.9 TMC to Kerala.

4. Analysis of the conflict for reference year 1924 shows that at least one equilibrium outcome predicts resolutions to the Cauvery dispute that is consistent with the actual evolution of the conflict.
5. The study reveals that 'F&E' allocations for Kerala can support the state's proposal to transfer 991.2 MCM (35 TMC) of water annually for hydropower purpose with at least 75% dependability without in any way affecting the respective 'F&E' allocations of other co-basin states.
6. The 2<sup>nd</sup> level hypergame study, with 'F&E' allocations as an option - case-1, for UQ and MED flows, favours Kerala because of her perceptions matching with perceptions of both Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. For example, outcomes '296' and '725' result as the equilibrium outcomes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> level hypergame based on UQ and MED flows are seen to match with the equilibrium outcomes '296' and '725' of Kerala's 1<sup>st</sup> level hypergame.

17. In the remaining three flow categories namely, MAX, LQ and MIN, equilibrium outcomes of the overall 2<sup>nd</sup> level hypergame match with the equilibrium outcomes of each player's respective 1<sup>st</sup> level hypergame in the corresponding flow category. Thus, it is observed that the game develops in a manner similar to a metagame situation where each player knows about the options and preference orderings of other players.
18. CWDT is introduced as a fourth player in the conflict and the resulting game analyzed for both cases 1 & 2. CWDT's apportionments, as proposed in their interim proposal of May, 2006, have been introduced as the latter's options. In both these cases only a 1<sup>st</sup> level hypergame based on 1<sup>st</sup> level misperceptions among the players are modeled.
19. Case-1 study with CWDT as the fourth player reveals that 1<sup>st</sup> level hypergame based on flow categories of MAX, UQ and MIN favor Kerala as her perceptions match with the perceptions of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, whereas 1<sup>st</sup> level hypergame based on flow categories of MED and LQ does not favor any player due to a mismatch in perceptions.
20. The impact of the need to meet water allocation requirements of Tamil Nadu on operating policies of four upstream reservoirs has been explored. For this purpose, the twin requirements of irrigation and out of basin transfer of 594.73 MCM (21 TMC) by Kerala for hydropower from the Kabini sub-basin have also been incorporated as a special case to explore its impact on these operating policies.
21. Operating policies have been designed based on four proposed decision criteria.

22. It is observed that, corresponding to each of the proposed four decision criteria, the net inflow requirements into Mettur can be met upto at least 95% of the proposed allocation for all five flow categories.
23. The results show that Kerala's sought hydropower generation requirement of 594.73 MCM (21 TMC) does not have any adverse impact on water usage in Karnataka.
24. It is observed that model criterion 1 performs better than all other models and across all the flow categories for case-1 with regard to water usage by Karnataka and Kerala and, importantly, with regard to inflow into Mettur reservoir as well.
5. The overall performance of model 1 seems to be better for flow categories UQ, MED, and LQ, whereas performance of model 4 is better in the years when flow is in categories MAX and MIN based on the model derived water usage in Karnataka and Kerala and the mandatory inflows into Mettur reservoir in Tamil Nadu.

# CONTENTS

Certificate	i
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	vii
<b>CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 General: Sources of Conflicts	1
1.2 Conflict Resolution Mechanisms	5
1.3 Water Laws	10
1.3.1 Indian Experience	17
1.4 The Principle of Equitable Apportionment	21
1.5 Objectives of the Present Study	23
1.6 Issues to be addressed in the proposed methodology	24
1.7 Structure of the Thesis	25
<b>CHAPTER 2: CAUVERY RIVER BASIN: GENERAL FEATURES</b>	<b>29</b>
2.1 Introduction to the Cauvery River Basin:	29
2.1.1 Tributaries of Cauvery	30
2.2 Climate and Monsoon seasons	31
2.3 Hydrologic data availability	33
2.3.1 Rainfall	33
2.3.2 Flow measurements	34
2.4 Anthropogenic branch cycle developments	34
2.5 Cropping Pattern	37
<b>CHAPTER 3: CAUVERY RIVER DISPUTE: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND</b>	<b>41</b>
3.1 General:	41
3.2 History of Cauvery River Waters Dispute	42
3.2.1 Irrigation Development prior to 1892 Agreement	43
3.2.2 1892 Agreement	44
3.2.3 1913-1914 Arbitration	46
3.2.4 The 1924 Agreement	49

3.2.5	Post 1950s difficulties, reorganization of Indian states in 1956 and other issues.....	51
3.2.6	Negotiations between 1968 and 1990.....	54
3.2.7	Post Independence Developments .....	56
3.2.8	Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT) and Interim Award of June 1991 .....	57
3.2.9	The Crisis of 1995 –96 and constitution of Cauvery River Authority .....	59
3.2.10	Interim stages and the final adjudication .....	60
3	Some key issues of three principal states .....	61
3.3.1	Main issues of Karnataka.....	61
3.3.2	Main issues of Tamil Nadu.....	63
3.3.3	Main issues of Kerala.....	63
<b>CHAPTER 4: REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....</b>		<b>65</b>
4.1	Equity and Fairness.....	66
4.2	Game Theoretic based Techniques .....	73
4.2.1	Metagame Analysis:.....	76
4.2.2	Hypergame Analysis: .....	80
4.3	Integrated Reservoir System Operation .....	85
4.4	Conclusions.....	91
<b>CHAPTER 5: CAUVERY FLOWS ASSESSMENT .....</b>		<b>93</b>
5.1	Hydrologic cycle and its context .....	93
5.2	Cauvery flows and basin status.....	94
5.3	Cauvery flows and yield assessment .....	96
5.3.1	Assessment by CFFC .....	96
5.3.2	Assessment by Prasad (1993).....	97
5.3.3	Assessment by Khosa (1997) .....	99
5.4	Model Selection for Present Study .....	101
5.5	Selection of Terminal Gauge Site: A Clarification.....	103
<b>CHAPTER 6: EQUITY AND FAIRNESS .....</b>		<b>107</b>
6.1	'Equity and Fairness': Concepts Revisited .....	107
6.1.1	'Equity and Fairness': Origin of the concepts.....	107

6.1.2	Notional measure of Equity and Fairness: Absence of Envy.....	108
6.2	The Normative Theory of Justice and Aristotle’s Maxim.....	110
6.2.1	Procedural and Distributive Justice: A basis for Equity and Fairness .....	111
6.3	Discussion .....	113
<b>CHAPTER 7: FAIR AND EQUITABLE ALLOCATIONS.....</b>		<b>115</b>
7.1	General .....	115
7.2	Fair and Equitable apportionment .....	117
7.3	Framework for procedural justice in negotiations .....	118
7.3.1	Assumptions .....	119
7.3.2	Factors for apportionment.....	120
7.4	Spatial and temporal variability in rainfall and runoff yield.....	123
7.4.1	Case (1): Temporal non-Homogeneity and Spatial Homogeneity in Rainfall and Runoff Yield.....	124
7.4.1.1	Modeling of Negotiations.....	125
7.4.1.2	Case Scenario: CS-1.....	125
7.4.1.3	Preference Table for CS-1.....	126
7.4.1.4	Procedure for negotiated (cooperative) solution.....	126
7.4.2	Case (2): Spatial Association in Flow Contribution from Co-Basin States .	129
7.4.2.1	Entitlements under Spatial Non-Homogeneity.....	135
7.4.2.2	Case Scenario: CS-2.....	136
7.4.2.3	Preference table for CS-2.....	136
7.4.2.4	Procedure for negotiated (cooperative) solution.....	137
7.5	Conclusions.....	140
<b>CHAPTER 8: CONFLICT ANALYSIS TECHNIQUES.....</b>		<b>143</b>
8.1	Conflict Analysis Techniques:.....	143
8.2	Terminology.....	144
8.3	Stability Analysis: .....	149
8.4	Metagame Analysis: A Sample Example application.....	150
8.4.1	The Chicken Conflict:.....	150
8.4.2	Setting up the Tableau:.....	153
8.4.3	Stability Analysis and Results: .....	155

8.5	Hypergame Analysis .....	157
8.5.1	1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergames .....	161
8.5.1.1	Stability issues in a 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame .....	163
8.5.2	Higher level hypergames .....	164
<b>CHAPTER 9: METAGAME ANALYSIS OF CAUVERY RIVER DISPUTE.....</b>		<b>171</b>
9.1	Introduction:.....	171
9.2	Framework for Metagame Analysis:.....	172
9.3	Case-1: (i) Reference year 1990; options include 'F&E' allocations.....	173
9.3.1	Issues before Kerala .....	173
9.3.1.1	Options for Kerala .....	177
9.3.2	Tamil Nadu.....	178
9.3.2.1	Options for Tamil Nadu .....	182
9.3.3	Karnataka.....	183
9.3.3.1	Options for Karnataka .....	185
9.3.4	Outcomes and infeasible outcome removal .....	185
9.3.4.1	Outcome representation .....	185
9.3.4.2	Options for analysis.....	186
9.3.4.3	Outcome Removal.....	187
9.3.4.4	Representation of feasible outcomes for stability analysis .....	192
9.3.5	Preferences for outcomes of case example (2).....	194
9.3.5.1	Preferences for Kerala based on options taken individually .....	194
9.3.5.2	Preferences for Kerala based on options occurring in combination.....	197
9.3.5.3	Preferences for Tamil Nadu and Karnataka .....	198
9.3.6	Stability Analysis .....	200
9.3.6.1	Stability Analysis and Results.....	200
9.3.7	Preference vector for outcomes of case example (1) – MAX flows.....	203
9.3.8	Options, and Preference vector for outcomes of case example (3) – MIN flows.....	204
9.3.8.1	Options of Players .....	205
9.3.8.2	Preference vector for Kerala.....	206

9.3.8.3	Preference vector for players based on options occurring in combination	206
9.3.9	Discussion	207
9.3.10	Allocation policy and feasibility of export for hydropower	210
9.3.10.1	Flow category – MAX	210
9.3.10.2	Flow category – UQ	212
9.3.10.3	Flow category – MED	213
9.3.10.4	Flow category – LQ	214
9.4	Case-1: (ii) Metagame analysis of the conflict for reference year 1974; options include 'F&E' allocations	216
9.4.1	Options of Kerala	216
9.4.2	Options of Tamil Nadu	217
9.4.3	Options of Karnataka	218
9.4.4	Infeasible Outcomes Removal	219
9.4.5	Preference ordering of outcomes	219
9.4.6	Stability Analysis and Results	221
9.5	Case-2: (i) Metagame analysis of the conflict for reference year 1990; options do not include 'F&E' allocations	222
9.5.1	Development of options for the Metagame model	224
9.5.1.1	Case for Interim Award as an option for Tamil Nadu	226
9.5.1.2	Estimation of balanced flows at LCA	227
9.5.1.3	Options	228
9.5.2	Outcomes and infeasible outcomes removal	229
9.5.3	Preferences ordering of feasible outcomes	229
9.5.4	Stability Analysis and Results	230
9.6	Case-2: (ii) Metagame analysis of the conflict for reference year 1974; options do not include 'F&E' allocations	231
9.6.1	Options	231
9.6.2	Outcomes and infeasible outcomes removal	233
9.6.3	Preference ordering of feasible outcomes	233
9.6.4	Stability analysis and results	234

9.7	Case-2: (iii) Metagame analysis of the conflict for reference year 1924; options do not include 'F&E' allocations.....	235
9.7.1	Outcomes and Infeasible Outcomes Removal.....	237
9.7.2	Preferences for feasible outcomes.....	237
9.7.3	Stability analysis and results.....	238
9.8	Conclusions.....	238
<b>CHAPTER 10: HYPERGAME ANALYSIS OF CAUVERY RIVER DISPUTE .....</b>		<b>241</b>
10.1	Introduction.....	241
10.2	Case-1: (i) 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame Analysis based on 1990 as the reference year with options including 'F&E' allocations .....	244
10.2.1	1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame ( $H^1$ ): Case example-2 [UQ, MED and LQ].....	245
10.2.1.1	Kerala's misperceptions on Tamil Nadu and Karnataka (Vectors $V_{21}$ and $V_{31}$ ).....	245
10.2.1.2	Tamil Nadu and Karnataka's perceptions on Kerala (Vectors $V_{12}$ and $V_{13}$ ) .....	246
10.2.1.3	Tamil Nadu and Karnataka's perceptions on each other (Vectors $V_{23}$ and $V_{32}$ ).....	247
10.2.1.4	Stability analysis and results for case example-2 [UQ, MED and LQ]....	247
10.2.2	1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame ( $H^1$ ): Case example-1 [MAX].....	251
10.2.2.1	True Preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ ) .....	251
10.2.2.2	Kerala's perceptions on preferences of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ ) .....	252
10.2.2.3	Tamil Nadu and Karnataka's perceptions on preferences of Kerala (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ ) .....	252
10.2.2.4	Tamil Nadu's and Karnataka's perceptions on each other (vectors $V_{23}$ , $V_{32}$ ) .....	253
10.2.2.5	Stability analysis and results for case example-1 [MAX] .....	254
10.2.3	1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame ( $H^1$ ): Case example-3 [MIN] .....	254
10.2.3.1	True Preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ ) .....	255
10.2.3.2	Kerala's perceptions on preferences of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ ) .....	255

10.2.3.3	Tamil Nadu and Karnataka's perceptions on preferences of Kerala (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ ) .....	256
10.2.3.4	Tamil Nadu's and Karnataka's perceptions on each other (vectors $V_{32}$ , $V_{23}$ ) .....	256
10.2.3.5	Results of overall 1 <sup>st</sup> level hypergame .....	257
10.3	Case-1: (i) 2 <sup>nd</sup> level Hypergame Analysis based on 1990 as the reference year with options including 'F&E' allocations .....	257
10.3.1	Overall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-2 [UQ, MED and LQ].....	260
10.3.1.1	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame of Kerala ( $H_1$ ).....	260
10.3.1.2	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame of Tamil Nadu ( $H_2$ ).....	261
10.3.1.3	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame of Karnataka ( $H_3$ ).....	262
10.3.1.4	Results of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-2 [UQ, MED and LQ] .....	262
10.3.2	Overall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-1 [MAX] flows.....	263
10.3.2.1	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame of Kerala ( $H_1$ ).....	263
10.3.2.2	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame of Tamil Nadu ( $H_2$ ).....	267
10.3.2.3	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame of Karnataka ( $H_3$ ).....	267
10.3.2.4	Results of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-1 [MAX].....	268
10.3.3	Overall 2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-3 [MIN] flows .....	268
10.3.3.1	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame of Kerala ( $H_1$ ).....	268
10.3.3.2	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame of Tamil Nadu ( $H_2$ ).....	270
10.3.3.3	Construction of 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame of Karnataka ( $H_3$ ).....	270
10.3.4.4	Results of 2 <sup>nd</sup> level Hypergame for case example-3 [MIN].....	271
10.4	Case-1: (ii) Hypergame Analysis for reference year 1990 with CWDT as the fourth player; options include 'F&E' allocations .....	273
10.4.1	Misperceptions of Players in 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergames.....	274
10.4.2	Overall 1 <sup>st</sup> level Hypergame for case example-1 [MAX].....	276
10.4.2.1	Options and feasible outcomes .....	276
10.4.2.2	True Preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ and $V_{44}$ ) .....	278
10.4.2.3	Perceptions of Kerala on other players (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ , and $V_{41}$ ).....	279

10.4.2.4 Misperceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on other two players (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ , $V_{42}$ , and $V_{43}$ ) .....	279
10.4.2.5 Misperceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on each other (vectors $V_{23}$ , and $V_{32}$ ).....	280
10.4.2.6 Misperceptions of CWDT on the states (vectors $V_{14}$ , $V_{24}$ and $V_{34}$ ) .....	280
10.4.2.7 Stability Analysis and equilibrium outcomes.....	280
10.4.3 Overall 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-2 [UQ].....	281
10.4.3.1 Options and feasible outcomes .....	281
10.4.3.2 True preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ and $V_{44}$ ).....	281
10.4.3.3 Misperceptions of Kerala on other three players (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ , and $V_{41}$ ) .....	283
10.4.3.4 Misperceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on Kerala and CWDT (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ , $V_{42}$ and $V_{43}$ ) .....	283
10.4.3.5 Misperceptions of CWDT on other three players (vectors $V_{14}$ , $V_{24}$ , and $V_{34}$ ) .....	283
10.4.3.6 Stability Analysis and equilibrium outcomes.....	283
10.4.4 Overall 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-2 [MED] .....	284
10.4.4.1 Options and feasible outcomes .....	284
10.4.4.2 True preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ and $V_{44}$ ).....	285
10.4.4.3 Perceptions of Kerala on other three players (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ , and $V_{41}$ ).....	286
10.4.4.4 Perceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on Kerala and CWDT (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ , $V_{42}$ and $V_{43}$ ).....	287
10.4.4.5 Perceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on each other (vectors $V_{23}$ and $V_{32}$ ) and perceptions of CWDT on other players (vectors $V_{14}$ , $V_{24}$ , and $V_{34}$ ) .....	287
10.4.4.6 Stability Analysis and equilibrium outcomes.....	287
10.4.5 Overall 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-2 [LQ].....	288
10.4.5.1 Options and feasible outcomes .....	288
10.4.5.2 True preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ and $V_{44}$ ).....	289
10.4.5.3 Perceptions of Kerala on other three players (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ , and $V_{41}$ ).....	290

10.4.5.4	Perceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on Kerala and CWDT (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ , $V_{42}$ and $V_{43}$ ).....	290
10.4.5.5	Perceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on each other (vectors $V_{23}$ and $V_{32}$ ) .....	290
10.4.5.6	Perceptions of CWDT on other three players (vectors $V_{14}$ , $V_{24}$ , and $V_{34}$ ) .....	291
10.4.5.7	Stability Analysis and equilibrium outcomes.....	291
10.4.6	Overall 1 <sup>st</sup> Level Hypergame for case example-3 [MIN].....	292
10.4.6.1	Options and feasible outcomes .....	292
10.4.6.2	True preferences of each player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ and $V_{44}$ ).....	293
10.4.6.3	Perceptions of Kerala on other three players (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ , and $V_{41}$ ).....	294
10.4.6.4	Perceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on Kerala and CWDT (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ , $V_{42}$ and $V_{43}$ ).....	294
10.4.6.5	Perceptions of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on each other (vectors $V_{23}$ and $V_{32}$ ) and of CWDT on other players (vectors $V_{14}$ , $V_{24}$ , and $V_{34}$ ).....	295
10.4.6.6	Stability Analysis and equilibrium outcomes.....	295
10.5	Case-2: (i) Hypergame Analysis for reference year 1990 with CWDT as a fourth player and 'F&E' allocations not included as options.....	296
10.5.1	Options and feasible outcomes.....	297
10.5.2	True Preferences of each Player (vectors $V_{11}$ , $V_{22}$ , $V_{33}$ and $V_{44}$ ) .....	298
10.5.3	Perceptions of Kerala on Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and CWDT (vectors $V_{21}$ , $V_{31}$ , and $V_{41}$ ).....	299
10.5.4	Perceptions of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on Kerala and CWDT (vectors $V_{12}$ , $V_{13}$ , $V_{42}$ , and $V_{43}$ ).....	299
10.5.5	Perceptions of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka on each other (vectors $V_{23}$ , and $V_{32}$ ).....	300
10.5.6	Misperceptions of CWDT on three principal players (vectors $V_{14}$ , $V_{24}$ , and $V_{34}$ ).....	300
10.5.7	Stability Analysis and equilibrium outcomes .....	300
10.6	Conclusions.....	301

<b>CHAPTER 11: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR FLOW REGULATION .....</b>	<b>305</b>
11.1 General .....	305
11.2 The Four Reservoir System.....	307
11.3 Hemavathy Reservoir.....	309
11.3.1 Irrigation requirements.....	310
11.4 Water Balance of the System.....	312
11.4.1 Water balance formulation for inflows into KRS Reservoir.....	313
11.4.2 Water balance formulation for inflows into Mettur reservoir .....	313
11.5 Decision criteria.....	314
11.6 Notations followed in the models.....	319
11.7 Model development.....	320
11.7.1 Model criterion 1 (after Al-Mohseen 2003).....	320
11.7.2 Model criterion 2 .....	320
11.7.3 Model criterion 3 (after Al-Mohseen 2003).....	320
11.7.4 Model criterion 4 (after Al-Mohseen 2003).....	321
11.8 Model constraints .....	321
11.8.1 Seasonal irrigation .....	321
11.8.2 Monthly irrigation.....	322
11.8.3 Reservoir continuity (water budget) .....	323
11.8.4 Constraints dictated by reservoir storage limits.....	323
11.8.5 Constraints admissible for Kabini reservoir.....	324
11.8.6 Constraints admissible for Mettur reservoir.....	326
11.9 Results and Discussion .....	327
11.10 Optimal operating Policies.....	335
<b>CHAPTER 12: UNDERSTANDING THE CWDT AWARD .....</b>	<b>337</b>
12.1 Introduction.....	337
12.2 CWDT Award: The missing 'Equity' and 'Fairness' .....	339
12.3 Proposed paradigm for allocation and its 'Equity' quotient.....	341
12.4 Conclusions.....	342
<b>CHAPTER 13: SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS, SCOPE FOR FUTURE WORK.....</b>	<b>343</b>
13.1 Introduction.....	343

13.2	Summary and conclusions .....	345
13.2.1	Fair and Equitable allocations .....	345
13.2.2	Metagame Analysis of Cauvery conflict .....	346
13.2.3	Hypergame Analysis of Cauvery conflict.....	348
13.2.4	Comparison of Metagame and Hypergame Analysis results for reference year 1990: A summary .....	349
13.2.5	Operating guidelines for Karnataka reservoirs .....	354
13.3	Scope for Future Work .....	356
<b>REFERENCES</b>	.....	<b>357</b>
<b>BIO-DATA</b>	.....	<b>375</b>