Exercise walk-through

2.1
Introduction to Global Issues

GAC Social Science

Method — Key knowledge: a shared issue connects places without making their situations identical

A **global issue** matters across many societies or connects places through causes, effects and responses. Local circumstances can still differ. A **shared resource** is used by more than one group. An **externality** occurs when an action affects others and its full cost or benefit is not reflected in that action. Identify the connection in the actual case; not every global issue has the same cause or a shared physical resource.

Method — Source A: text or task brief

Historical context, paraphrased from UN sources: the first United Nations Water Conference was held in Mar del Plata in 1977. In 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals included a dedicated water and sanitation goal, SDG 6. These milestones show sustained international attention; adopting a goal does not prove that it has been achieved. Sources checked 2 October 2026: UN water and sanitation topic and UN history of water cooperation.

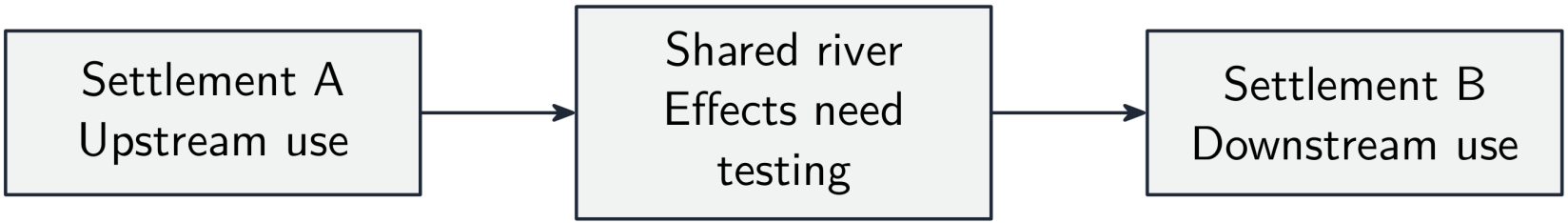
For the following original exercise, settlements A and B are fictional and lie beside the same river. A is upstream; B is downstream. A uses the river for irrigation. B draws water for household use. A proposed discharge permit could affect B, but no water-quality tests or discharge measurements are supplied. No finding of contamination has been made.

Method — Source B: response or review record

Fictional planning record: A wants reliable irrigation and affordable treatment. B wants reliable household supply and protection of water quality. Both propose sharing monitoring results. Who will pay for monitoring is undecided; neither settlement has approved the permit. A commentator writes: “The 2015 goal solved water access everywhere. Since B is downstream, A has already contaminated its water. B alone should collect data, because only B benefits.”

Method — Worked example: describe a possible effect without inventing a measured result

Known: A and B use the same river; the permit is proposed and tests are absent. Why discuss a possible externality? An upstream discharge could impose a downstream water-quality cost. This is a risk requiring measurement, not evidence that contamination has occurred. Shared monitoring can inform both irrigation management and household protection; payment and approval remain open.



Exercises 2.1·2.3

2.1 Name the two historical milestones and their years given in Source A. [2]

2.2 Identify the shared resource and ONE reason this case connects the settlements. [2]

2.3 Explain a possible externality and state why contamination cannot yet be claimed. [3]

Exercises 2.1·2.3

2.1 Name the two historical milestones and their years given in Source A. [2]

2.1

: first UN Water Conference, 1977.: SDGs with dedicated SDG 6 for water and sanitation, 2015.

2.2 Identify the shared resource and ONE reason this case connects the settlements. [2]

2.2

: the river.: upstream use or discharge may affect downstream supply or quality; both rely on it.

2.3 Explain a possible externality and state why contamination cannot yet be claimed. [3]

2.3

: a proposed upstream discharge might impose a downstream water-quality cost.: that cost may fall on B rather than only A.: no water-quality or discharge measurements are supplied; the permit is not approved.

Exercises 2.4·3.1

2.4 Identify THREE unsupported claims in the commentator's account. [3]

3.1 Evaluate shared monitoring as a response, including interests, evidence and two outstanding decisions. [6]

Exercises 2.4·3.1

2.4 Identify THREE unsupported claims in the commentator's account. [3]

2.4

each: the goal proves universal achievement; downstream location proves actual contamination; only B benefits from monitoring. Accept the associated precise correction for each.

3.1 Evaluate shared monitoring as a response, including interests, evidence and two outstanding decisions. [6]

3.1

each: A needs irrigation; B needs household supply/quality; consistent shared testing informs both; tests are needed before claiming contamination or success; monitoring funding is undecided; permit approval is outstanding. Accept a relevant consented sampling/reporting arrangement instead of repeating a stated interest.

Exercise 3.2

3.2 Write an 80–110-word briefing explaining the connection, evidence limits and a co-operative next step. [8]

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3.2

Local analytic rubric, 8 ×: identify shared river; explain possible downstream effect; avoid claiming contamination; distinguish goal from achievement; recognise both interests; propose shared measurement; preserve funding uncertainty; preserve permission uncertainty; coherent truthful 80–110 word response. Example: “The two fictional settlements depend on the same river for different purposes. An upstream discharge could affect downstream household water, so its possible costs deserve investigation. However, the supplied record contains no tests and does not establish contamination. International milestones in 1977 and 2015 show attention to water issues, not proof that every access problem is solved. Shared monitoring could inform both irrigation management and household protection. The settlements should agree on sampling, reporting and who pays before acting. They also need to decide on the proposed permit; the planning discussion is not an approval.”