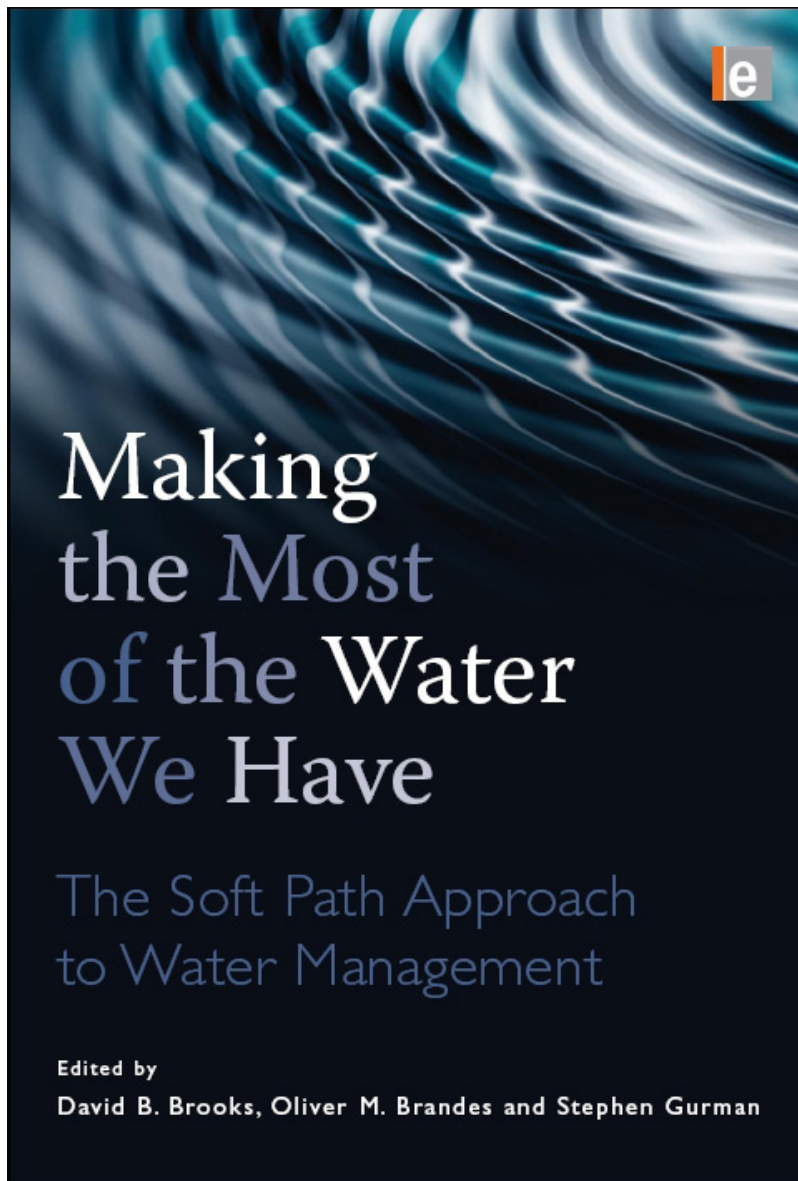


Making the Most of the Water We Have: The Soft Path Approach to Water Management

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Edited By David B. Brooks, Oliver M. Brandes and Stephen Gurman

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Demand for water is one of the major challenges of the current century, and past approaches are no longer sufficient. Based on the "soft path" approach to the energy sector, a transition is now under way to a soft path for water. This approach starts by ensuring that ecosystem needs for water are satisfied and then undertakes a radical approach to reducing human uses of water by economic and social incentives, including open decision-making, water markets and equitable pricing, and the application of super-efficient technology, all applied in ways that avoid jeopardizing quality of life. The soft path for water is therefore a management strategy that frees up water by curbing water waste.

This book is the first to present and apply the water soft path approach. It has three aims: to bring to a wider audience the concept and the potential of water soft paths; to demonstrate that soft path analysis is analytical and practical, and not just "eco-dreaming"; and to indicate that soft paths are not only conceptually attractive but that they can be made economically and politically feasible.

These goals are reflected by the scope of the book which is organized around the three aspects of any soft path: a vision of a sustainable water future based on the soft path concept; an analytic method to define alternative routes to get to that future (most literally, the soft paths), as illustrated by case studies in Canada and elsewhere; and a tool kit for planners and other practitioners.

David B. Brooks has worked for NGOs in Canada, Energy Probe and Friends of the Earth, and for IDRC (International Development Research Centre) on overseas projects on water and natural resource management. He has published extensively in the field. **Oliver M. Brandes** is Water Sustainability Project Leader and Associate Director at the POLIS Project on Ecological Governance, University of Victoria, Canada. **Stephen Gurman** is an environmental consultant and writer.

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