

12nd World General Assembly of INBO, Bordeaux, France

Thematic Session 1: International and transboundary cooperation for basin management



Presentation Title:

“IBWC framework and mechanisms for manage and utilization of the water resources in the transboundary basins along the United States-Mexico border”

International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC), United States and Mexico, Mexican Section
Comisión Internacional de Límites y Aguas (CILA) entre México y Estados Unidos, Sección Mexicana

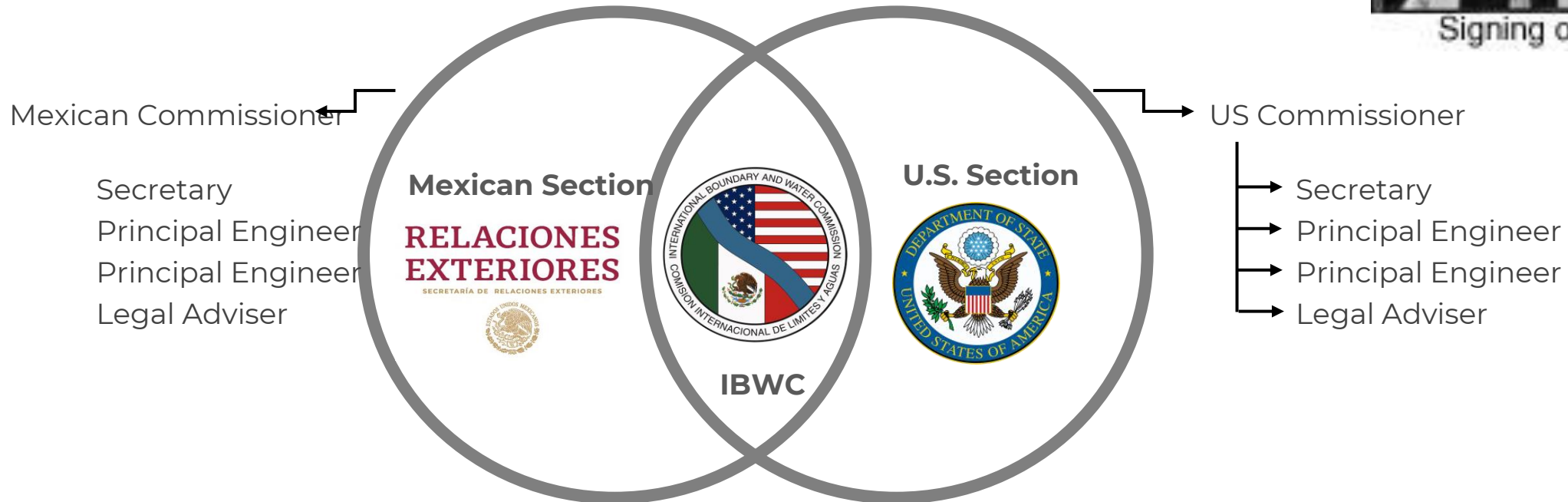
IBWC/CILA Legal Framework and Structure

- **International Body established in 1889**. As the International Boundary Commission (IBC).
- **1944 Water Treaty between Mexico and The United States of America for the utilization of Waters of the Colorado and Tijuana Rivers and of the Rio Grande**. Expanded the duties and responsibilities of the IBC and renamed it the International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC).

135 years of history!



Signing of 1944 Treaty



IBWC/CILA Jurisdiction and Faculties

International
organization

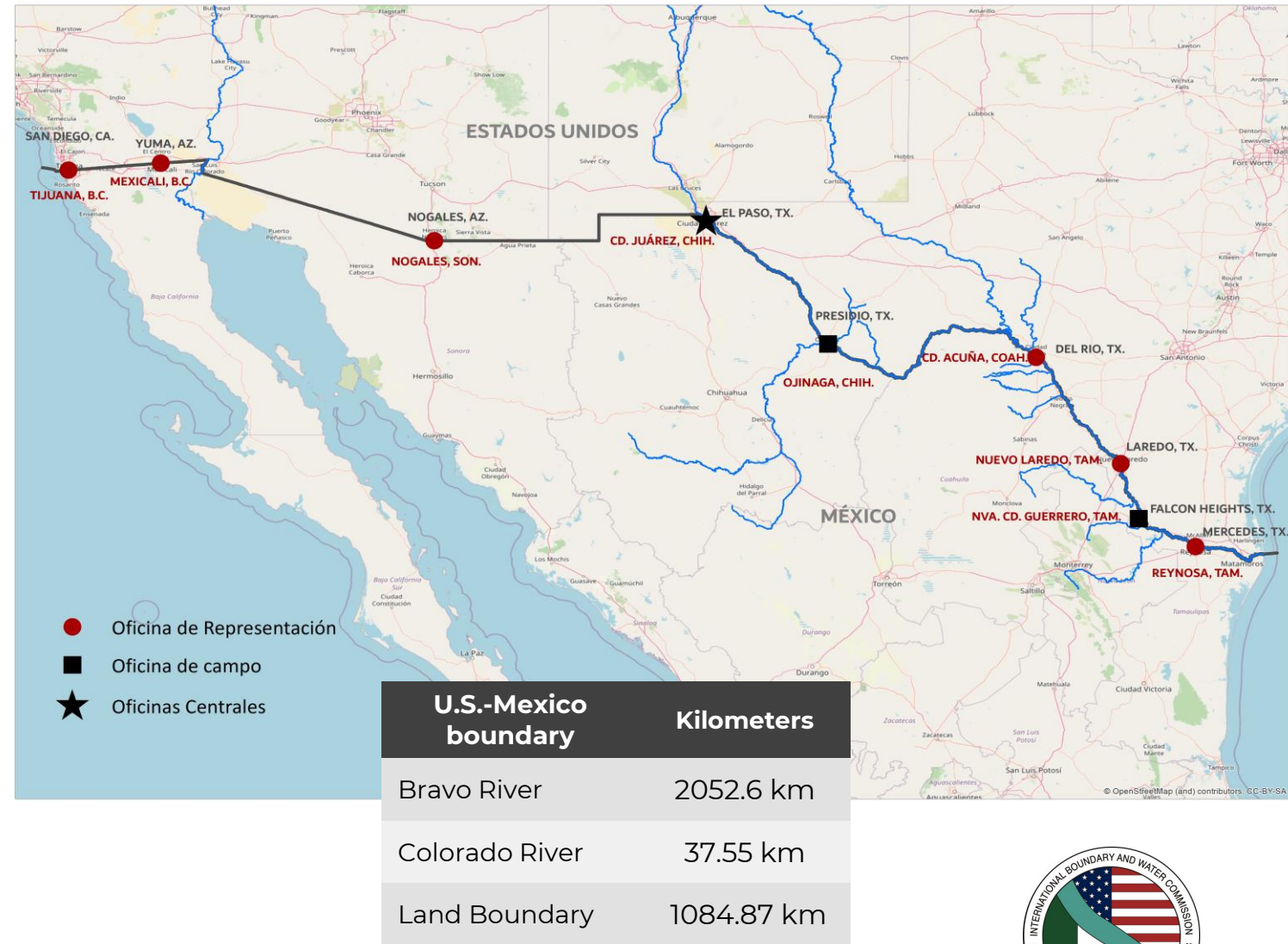
Territorial
boundaries

Surface
water

Groundwater

Sanitation
and water
quality

Projects on
international
boundaries

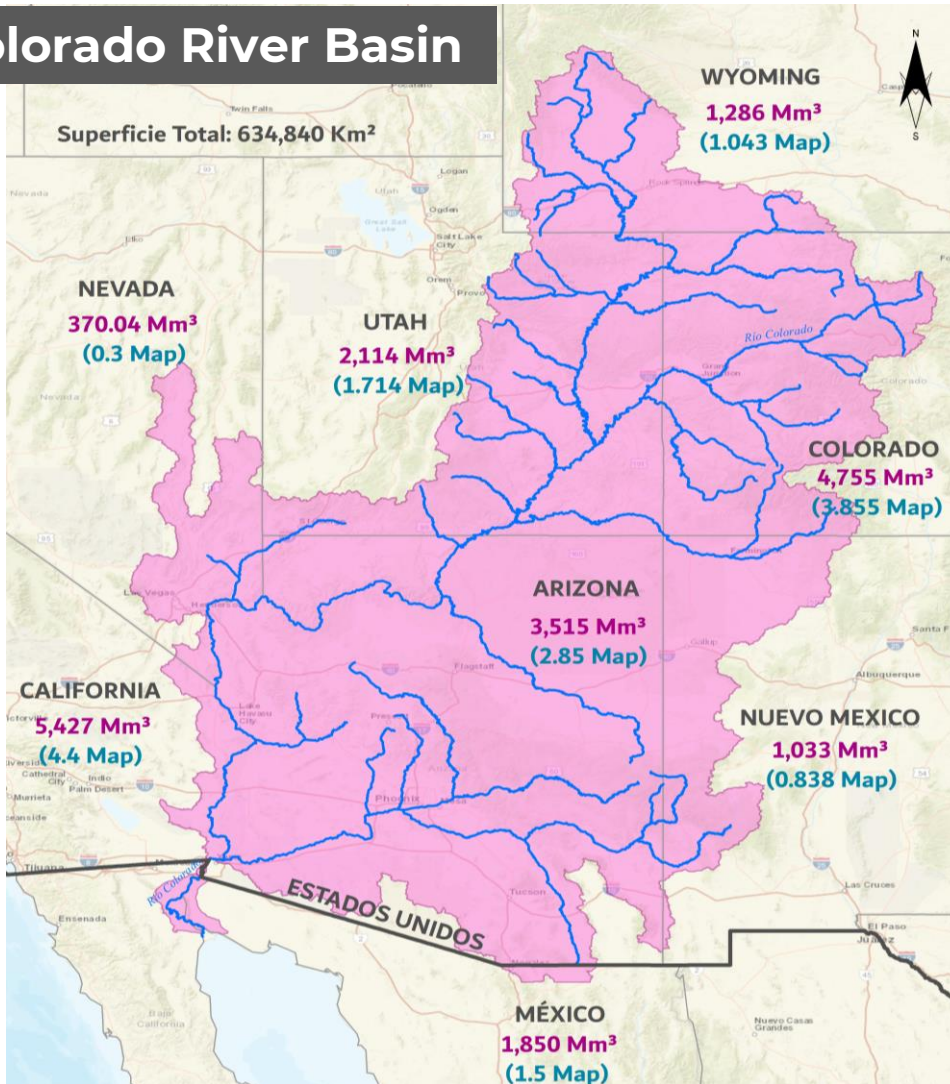


1944 International Water Treaty



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Colorado River Basin



The United States allotes to Mexico:

- An annual quantity of **1,850,234,000 cubic meters** (1,500,000 acre-feet) of the Waters of the Colorado River.

Rio Grande/Bravo Basin



Mexico allotes to the United States:

- One-third of the flow reaching the main channel of the Rio Grande/Bravo from 6 mexican tributaries.
- Third not less as an average amount in cycles of five consecutive years than **431,721,000 cubic meters** (350,000 acre-feet) annually.

IBWC/CILA mechanisms and tools



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Minutes

- In accordance with the **1944 Water Treaty**, decisions of the Commission are recorded in the form of **Minutes**.
- Minutes are binding agreements of the IBWC intended **to implement the Treaty**.
- They take effect once **approved by both Governments** through the U. S. Department Of State and Mexico's Foreign Affairs Ministry.
- A total of **330 IBWC Minutes** have been signed .

Some of the Minutes:

Minute 323.

Extension of Cooperative Measures and Adoption of a Binational Water Scarcity Contingency Plan in the Colorado River Basin.

Minute 328.

Sanitation Infrastructure Projects in San Diego, California - Tijuana, Baja California for Immediate Implementation and for Future Development

New Rio Grande/Bravo Minute.

We are working in a new agreement to improve the reliability and predictability of the Rio Grande/Bravo water deliveries to benefit the U.S. and Mexico

IBWC/CILA mechanisms and tools



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IBWC staff working together

- On a day-by-day and hand-by-hand basis, and on a cooperation and collaboration framework.
- Continuously exchange of information.
- Data jointly reviewed and validated.



*Amistad International
Storage Dam*



*International monuments and
boundary demarcation*

Main projects

Water accountability
(Gaging stations to
measure the
Colorado and Bravo
Rivers flows)

Water Operations
(Amistad, Falcon
international storage
dams)

Flood control
(Colorado and Bravo
rivers levee systems,
maintenance of
channels and sediment
remove works)

**O&M of International
Wastewater
Treatment Plants**
(Tijuana-San Diego,
Nogales, Nuevo
Laredo).

**Water quality
monitoring
programs and
special studies on
international and
transboundary
rivers**

**Cooperative measures
against drought and
high temperatures in
the Colorado River
Basin (water
conservation,
environment
restoration)**

**Projects on
international
boundaries
(international
bridges, hydraulic
models and
studies)**

**Demarcation of
the international
boundary on
bridges and ports
of entry.
Maintenance of
the international
monuments**

IBWC/CILA mechanisms and tools

Binational Policy/Core Groups

- Directors/High Level Groups to address and resolve the most relevant issues related international limits and waters along the U.S.- Mexico border.
- IBWC coordinates the operation of these Groups, within the regulatory framework and in compliance with the 1944 Water Treaty and the IBWC Minutes.
- Members of these Groups are capable to take important decisions.
- Decisions of these Groups are based on diplomacy and technical information.

Binational Technical Committees/Working Groups

- Members are Representatives from agencies-stakeholders from both countries, according to the nature of the project or issue to be addressed.
- Their work is based on science and engineering (Civil Engineering, Hydraulics, Hydrology, Earth sciences).
- They develop and/or evaluate projects and studies; and address the issues from a technical point of view.



Rio Grande/Bravo Policy Group meeting. El Paso, Texas, USA. September 12th, 2024.



IBWC/CILA short-term challenges



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- ✓ **Continue to comply the Rio Grande/Bravo and Colorado River water deliveries, addressing drought, water scarcity, and climate change:**
 - Development and implementation of new water conservation measures and projects in both countries.
 - Canal linings, on-farm conservation, regulating reservoirs, fallowing, modernization and technical improvements to irrigation districts, systems operational improvements, creation of wetlands and wastewater effluent reuse.
- ✓ **Construction and major maintenance works on key water infrastructure:**
 - Construction of a Composite Cutoff Wall to reduce the risk of failure at the “Amistad” International dam in the Rio Grande/Bravo.
 - Rehabilitation and expansion of the Tijuana-San Diego (South Bay) International Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- ✓ **Solution to border sanitation problems and water quality improvements.**
 - Control of the transboundary dry-weather flows in the Tijuana River, in the boundary area of Tijuana, Baja California, México - San Diego, California, USA.
 - ✓ Elimination of wastewater discharges into the Rio Grande/Bravo.

Lessons learned and Recommendations



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- ✓ **Sharing TRUE and GOOD INFORMATION** is crucial.
- ✓ **Build and keep TRUST.**
- ✓ **EMPATHY** is very important.
- ✓ **SCIENCE** and **ENGINEER** are the basis.
- ✓ **Do all (or at least almost all) the work JOINTLY**, with a high sense of **COOPERATION**.



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Thank you / Gracias!

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