Friends of the Earth Middle East

Share the Water – Build the Peace

IIEP-GWU & World Affairs Council

Washington DC

October 2011
• Unique organization that brings together Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian environmentalists

• Founded in 1994 to promote sustainable development and the protection of our shared environmental heritage

• FoEME has offices in Amman, Bethlehem, and Tel-Aviv
FoEME – How We Work

1. “TOP DOWN” - Research / Lobby / Advocacy
   - Dead Sea
   - Jordan River
   - Mountain Aquifer
   - Climate Change
   - Fair Water Accord

2. “BOTTOM UP” - Community / Grass Roots
   - “Good Water Neighbors”

This combination of lobby activities & community work has proved extremely successful…
Water Characteristics in the ME

- Scarce resource
- + Interdependent nature
- + Competing demands by countries and by sectors
- + Unequal distribution
- + Increasingly polluted
Shared Water Resources

- Sea of Galilee and Jordan River
- Mountain Aquifer
- Coastal Aquifer
The Mighty River Jordan
Not So Mighty Today
The Mysterious Dead Sea
• Dead Sea has lost 1/3 of surface area
• Dropping by over 1 meter every year
• Man made Tragedy of the Commons
The Drop

Over 2,000 Sink Holes

Fleeing Shoreline

The Drop
Current Water-Sharing Regime

• 1995 Oslo II accord (Art. 40 on water)

• Joint Water Committee (JWC)

• Effective Israeli veto on Palestinian access to shared water. For Areas C second layer of approvals – Civil Admin

• Israel extracts ca. 80% of Mtn. Aquifer

• JWC arrangement “interim” 5-year agreement btw. Israel and P.A.
Citizens Advocacy - Good Water Neighbors

- Established in 2001
- From 11 to 29 paired communities today
- Partner with municipality, school and community centers
Environmental Education

- Neighbors Paths
- WaterCare Book
- Env Hazards Mapping
Youth Water Trustees
Community Leadership

“Big Jump!” into the Jordan /Yarmouk
Municipal Leadership
Advancing projects for Jordan Valley communities

• Waste Water Treatment Plants in Israel, Jordan and Palestine
Advancing projects for Jordan Valley communities

- Jordan River Rehabilitation Research
  - USAID
  - Richard & Rhoda Goldman Fund
  - Global Nature Fund / Ursula Merz Foundation
  - Green Environment Fund
Advancing projects for Jordan Valley communities

- Auja - new water network, cutting 50% water loss –
Focused on solutions – Mountain Aquifer
FoEME JV EcoParks

• Ein Gedi EcoCenter, Israel

• Auja Environmental Education Center, Palestine

• Sharhabil bin Hassnen EcoPark, Jordan
Transboundary Jordan River Peace Park

- Rehabilitate the Lower Jordan River
- Eco-Tourism
- Natural and Cultural Heritage
- Shared Space to interact and learn
Parliamentary Action

- **US Senate** Resolution supporting regional effort to rehabilitate the Jordan River passed unanimously November 2007

- **EU Parliament** Resolution 2010

- Israeli Knesset Hearing Sept 2010

- **Jordan Parliament Water Committee** Feb 2011

Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME)
Extensive Media Attention
Donor support for GWN project

- USAID
- EU
- SIDA
- UK
- Belgium
- Goldman
- Green Cross

$3,000,000

- Including 42 eco-facilities in schools / public buildings; more than 20,000 participants in “Neighbors Paths”; cross border gatherings, public events

- Funds leveraged to advance projects in GWN communities: over $200 million dollars
Beyond Water

Zur Hadassa

Wadi Fukin
A MODERN AGREEMENT TO SHARE WATER BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS:
THE FoEME PROPOSAL

By
David B. Brooks and Julie Trottier

with
Gidon Bromberg, Nader Al Khatib and Munqeth Mehyar

and comments and critiques by Nadav Shelef and Hillel Shuval

November 2010

With the support of the European Union
• At the community level residents recognize urgency to solve common problem - suffer the consequences.

Need to empower local communities – educate as to interdependent nature of shared waters.

• Empower to be risk takers and speak out despite spoilers but only if can speak to concrete benefits.

• Need for Bottom Up and Top Down advocacy.
Need for new water arrangements now
One example of concrete people to people citizen diplomacy activities - building the peace
For more info - www.foeme.org