Third Annual Symposium on Water in Israel and the Middle East: Transboundary Disputes and Collaborative Solutions

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About EcoPeace Middle East

- **Environmental peacemaking** organization working in Jordan, Palestine, and Israel
- Our **primary objective** is to promote cooperative efforts to protect our environment and to promote lasting peace in our region
- **EcoPeace’s focus** is on transboundary water resources, including the Jordan River, Dead Sea, and Mountain and Coastal Aquifers
- EcoPeace is **change oriented**; we seek to shift the status quo through bottom up & top down strategies
- Sustainable use of transboundary natural resources
What is Water Security?
Source: UN Water
Water Security and National Security Concerns: Water Insecurity in the World

2017 US Global Water Strategy: There is a growing water crisis that may increase disease, undermine economic growth, foster insecurity and state failure.

World Bank: Issued numerous reports on climate change and water security in the MENA Region. A 2016 Report stated that water scarcity could cause economic losses, spur migration and spark conflict worldwide.

EU: Climate change exacerbates existing trends, tensions and instability (2008 policy paper).

NATO: Competition for resources has already contributed to increasing tensions in the MENA region (2017 report).

UN: The 2003 UN Water Development Report stated that “a water crisis is essentially a crisis of governance and societies”.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SETTING: British mandate period of the 1920s till 1948.</th>
<th>DIPLOMACY: • Early cooperation, construction of the first hydropower station in the region.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SETTING: 1950s, when the two countries were in a <em>de jure</em> state of war</td>
<td>DIPLOMACY: • A shared water security agenda emerged, informal and discreet cooperation: picnic table negotiations</td>
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<td>SETTINGS: Recent developments - 2013</td>
<td>DIPLOMACY: • RSDS: Water was sold to Jordan at a discounted rate. • Water for the benefit of Syrian refugees</td>
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An Analysis of Israel’s Perspective on Water Diplomacy and National Security: Israeli-Palestinian Water Relations

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<thead>
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<th>Setting</th>
<th>Diplomacy</th>
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<td>Yishuv and British mandate period – 1880 till 1948.</td>
<td>Development of water resources to facilitate Jewish immigration to Palestine</td>
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<td>1948 – 1967</td>
<td>No Diplomacy: State control of all water</td>
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<td>1967 – Oslo Accords II, 1995</td>
<td>No Diplomacy: Control over water resources and unilateralism</td>
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<td>Oslo Accords - 2012</td>
<td>Diplomacy: Palestinian water needs not met: Eastern Basin only, off setting taxes, building sewage plants on the Green Line, continued degradation of water resources, Collapse of water diplomacy: JWC stops meeting,</td>
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<td>2012 - present</td>
<td>Diplomacy: Incipient understanding of the importance of water security: 2012 Gaza Crisis, 2015 double water to Gaza, JWC renewal; and RSDS 33 mcm water sale</td>
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Current Water-Sharing Arrangement

- 1995 Oslo II accord (Art. 40 on water)
- Joint Water Committee (JWC) – required approval on all water and sanitation projects
- 2017 revised but still needs water extraction approval & CA approval in Area C
- **Effective Israeli veto on Palestinian access to increased shared water.**
- Israel continues to extract lion’s share of Mtn. Aquifer
- JWC arrangement “interim” 5-year agreement btw. Israel and P.A.
- JWC ignores Jordan River water
Figure 1: Israel and the PA's use of Mountain Aquifer's water. Source IWA
A thirsty neighbor will never be a good neighbor

Water Tanks & Water Tankers
1) Reevaluate the Israeli unilateral tax deductions from Palestinian tax revenue for the cost of Palestinian sewage treatment in Israel.

**ACTION:**
- Israel deducts the cost for treatment of Palestinian sewage that crosses the ‘Green Line’ from the taxes it collects on behalf of the PA.
- This measure has proven to be ineffective in preventing cross-border pollution which has been increasing in quantity. **The policy should be re-evaluated.**

**WATER AND NATIONAL SECURITY IMPACTS:**
- The deduction discourages Palestinian municipalities from treating their wastewater as well as the donor community from investing in the wastewater sector.
- The lost PA revenue weakens the PA in general, as well as the PWA’s ability to be effective in the sanitation sector.

**COMPARISON WITH JORDAN:**
- A similar requirement exists in the Peace Treaty that each side prevents cross-border pollution by sewage. But no equivalent action, instead cooperation is sought to promote the Jordan River’s rehabilitation.
2) Incentivize Palestinian accountability for pollution prevention.

**ACTION:**
- Allowing more water abstraction on the Palestinian side the Western Basin and reduce Israeli abstractions.

**WATER AND NATIONAL SECURITY BENEFITS:**
- Palestinians would have an incentive to treat their sewage, and would pay the price directly of polluted water.
- More plentiful water strengthens the PA and the economy, giving them access to cheaper water.

**COMPARISON WITH JORDAN:**
- Israel supplies Jordan with water at a minimal pumping cost. Israel is willing to replace water to be sold from the Sea of Galilee with increased Israeli desalination.
3) Increase Palestinian Domestic Water Supply

**ACTION:**
- Promote shared water security by implementing Steinitz’s Israeli-Palestinian water parity recommendation: either the Palestinians purchase additional desalinated water from Israel or natural shared water allocations are increased in favour of the Palestinians.

**WATER AND NATIONAL SECURITY BENEFITS:**
- Recognizing the security dividend will promote a stronger PA, PWA and Palestinian economy.
- The redistribution of natural waters would advance water security for Palestinians, and therefore national security interests of Israel.

**COMPARISON WITH JORDAN:**
- Full recognition of a security dividend with Jordan. RSDS: sale of 50 mcm of water to Jordan at the discounted price of 1.5 NIS/cubic meter. However, as part of the same agreement, Israel agreed to sell to the PA 33 mcm at the cost of 3-3.5 NIS/cubic meter.
4) Broaden security considerations beyond the military and tactical considerations

**ACTION:**
- Narrow security concern have hindered progress in advancing a shared water security agenda: ‘dual use’ materials slowed down the completion of NGEST; restriction in water and sanitation infrastructure in Area C.

**WATER AND NATIONAL SECURITY BENEFITS:**
- Broadening security considerations to include water security concerns would translate in a improved state of water security, strengthened Palestinian economy and stability.

**COMPARISON WITH JORDAN:** No parallel policy, because Jordan is a sovereign state.
A change in mindset is needed

Water security is central in achieving social and economic growth, political stability and ultimately peace and security.

States must realize that their own water security, as well as that of their neighbors, should occupy a place on their national security agenda:

- Both parties should stop the rhetoric of blame
- Palestinians should recognize their shortcomings in water management and realize that cooperation with water will serve Palestinian interests
- Israelis should regard water cooperation with Palestinian as of high strategic importance

Damage to shared environment; water insecurity; poverty in the Palestinian Territories, radicalization and more conflict with Israel.
Water Pollution between the State of Israel and the Palestinians

Annual Report 67b
May 2017
The Problem

Polluted basins

Water, air, animals and plants recognize no political borders

Water pollution is Israel’s severest trans-boundary environmental hazard

The pollution of groundwater and streams is a threat to the population and the environment in three main aspects:

- Ecological systems
- Public health, quality of life
- Available water
No government policy for cross-border environmental management

No coordination between government bodies

No effective conduct vis-à-vis international players

- Inter-ministerial team
- Comprehensive Government plan

Formulate Government Policy
Appoint leading integrating body
Enable complex problem solving
Encourage donor states’ funded projects
VIIRS_ June 5, 2017_ Chl-a (not calibrated)

VIIRS_ June 6, 2017_ Chl-a (not calibrated)
ברכה

[חתימות]

[昳 עולי]

[主营业]
נפח מים זמינים בכנרת בכל שנה ביחס לממוצע החודש
נתוני השיווק ההידרולוגי

![גרף נפח מים זמינים בכנרת](image)

- 2011 - 1.2
- 2006 - 0.5
- 2001 - 0.7
- 1996 - 0.6
- 1991 - 0.65
- 1986 - 0.7
- 1981 - 0.5
- 1976 - 0.6
- 1971 - 0.7
- 1966 - 0.5
- 1961 - 0.6
- 1956 - 0.7
- 1951 - 0.5
- 1946 - 0.6
- 1941 - 0.7
- 1936 - 0.5
- 1931 - 0.6
- 1926 - 0.7
- 1921 - 0.5

נתוני השיווק ההידרולוגי

- 1921
- 1926
- 1931
- 1936
- 1941
- 1946
- 1951
- 1956
- 1961
- 1966
- 1971
- 1976
- 1981
- 1986
- 1991
- 1996
- 2001
- 2006
- 2011
- 2016
5) Move towards a new Israeli-Palestinian agreement on water

Technological advances in the water sector: water issues are no longer a zero-sum game as they were in 1995.

All or nothing approach  Water First

While the advancement of Israeli-Palestinian water diplomacy will not alone produce peace, it will help build trust and confidence between the two parties, and between Israel and the region.
Thank You!

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