

Call for case studies

Workshop on Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation: "Counting our gains"

Please send this form (1 or 2 pages), preferably by 28 February 2014, to the Water Convention secretariat: chantal.demilecamps@unece.org. For enquiries, please call Ms. Chantal Demilecamps at tel. +41 22 917 2468.

1. Name of the basin or sub-basin and riparian countries involved in the transboundary cooperation process

Environmental Peacemaking in the Lower Jordan River Basin - case study involving riparian countries: Jordan, Israel and Palestine.

2. Background: short description of the key elements of the transboundary water cooperation in the basin, including main progresses and challenges (*1 paragraph*)

The Jordan River is threatened by excessive water diversion, pollution and inappropriate development. Of the 1300 million cubic meters of water that would naturally flow down the River Jordan to the Dead Sea each year, approximately 96% is diverted for domestic and agricultural uses. What little water remains is polluted with saline and untreated sewage. The valley's wetlands have dried up, its springs are failing and half its biodiversity has been lost.

Political boundaries divide the river between Jordanians, Israelis and Palestinians. Instead of seeing the river as a single transboundary watershed, these nations have raced to capture the greatest possible share of the Jordan's water. FoEME estimates that Israel diverts about half of the river's average annual flow, while Syria and Jordan take about a quarter each.

Residents and tourists have little access to the river, due to military restrictions. Palestinians have no access to the river due to its control by Israel and do not receive water directly from the river.

Unilateralism is untenable – cooperation is a prerequisite for rehabilitation. The zero-sum struggle for the valley's water undermines the interests of all concerned. The river cannot be sustainably managed through a process of competition. None of the river's riparians have an incentive to contribute to the river's rehabilitation if they fear that fresh water contributed to the river will be diverted down-stream. But through joint management all can share in the benefits.

3. Type(s) of benefits which have been identified in the basin (*tick as appropriate; please describe the specific benefits identified¹ under each type, 2 lines maximum by type of benefits*)

Economic benefits within basin: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Economic benefits beyond basin: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Social benefits: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Environmental benefits: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Geopolitical benefits: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4. Benefits which have been assessed: types of benefits assessed so far, methodology used, challenges faced and good practices identified (*2 paragraphs max*)

¹ For more information about the types of benefits, please refer to the draft annotated outline of the Policy Guidance Note on identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation, available at: http://www.unece.org/env/water/workshop_benefits_cooperation_2014.html

EcoPeace/ Friends of the Earth Middle East has undertaken a [Regional Benefits Study](#) of the Lower Jordan River which provides a critical scientific tool to help decision makers determine how water resources should be allocated in the Lower Jordan River basin by identifying the benefits that can be derived from various rehabilitation scenarios. It's findings provide decision makers, donors, and regional actors with insight and appraisal of opportunities for development that would result from a rehabilitated Lower Jordan River. These results identify positive-sum outcomes to responsible river management and rehabilitation of the Lower Jordan River.

5. Benefits which have been communicated to influence the policy process: communication strategy used, stakeholders targeted, impact, main challenges and lessons learned (*2 paragraphs max*)

In EcoPeace/ Friends of the Earth Middle East's Jordan River work, as in all of its environmental peacemaking programs, we have adopted a two-pronged approach to create policy changes and a fundamental shift in the status quo towards the adoption of transboundary water resource management. FoEME seeks to identify points of leverage within the affected communities to transform environmental challenges to opportunities, identify and select points of entry that maximize mutual benefits, promoting the adoption of institutional reform, harness legal approaches, conduct regional research to fill information gaps and advise policy based on science, undertake high level advocacy campaigns and foster political partnerships and champions throughout a basin.

Submitted by:

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