Hydro Politics Newsletter
by Hydropolitics Academy Centre of Hydropolitics Association
September 2021 Issue: 29

If we don't change, We lose

We have faced an increasing number of outstanding meteorological events and related disasters for decades.With the ongoing drought, projected population growth, and the impending effects of a changing climate, we must reexamine our relationship with nature

It is worthwhile to remember the promise attributed to Charles Darwin. "**It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is most adaptable to change..**"

Applying this theoretical concept to us as individuals, we can state that the civilization that can survive is the one that can adapt to the changing physical, social, political, moral, and spiritual environment in which it finds itself. After the industrial revolution, human beings forced the natural boundaries and balance of the natural environment.

Although the water management paradigm of the last century has enabled food production to largely keeping up with population growth, created safe water supplies for most developed countries, there have

also been serious consequences of this approach.This approach has also resulted in "the destruction of ecosystems, loss of fish species, dislocation of human populations, inundation of cultural sites, disruption of sedimentation processes, and contamination of water sources

Natural resources should no longer be thought of exclusively as a resource and the interconnected nature of the environment and society needs to be recognized.,

We must realize that natural resource systems are dynamic and prioritize sustainable and adaptive practices, and in recognizing this complex and dynamic system, we need to not rely exclusively on technical solutions or a single approach to management, but learn to collaborate and recognize the benefit of a diversity of perspectives.

Water-Food-Energy and Environmental Security Problems are getting more complex as the years go by. Therefore it is not easy to overcome these problems with older paradigms.

Our management perspective and management approach need to be change immediately

We lose if we don't change.

Best Regards

Dursun Yıldız

HYDROPOLITICS ACADEMY

A New Paradigm to Achieve Water Security and the SDGs in the Arab Region

8 OCTOBER 2019
Prof. Jamal Saghir, Eng. Hassan Aboelnga,

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Today, many countries are at risk of running out of water, especially in the Arab region – the most water scarce region in the world – with water availability now cited as one of the greatest risks to business continuity and growth.

We need a new paradigm to achieve water security - one that depends on greater than ever cooperation at all levels and integrated partnerships focused on a sustainable future for the region.

Water is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Securing water for people, productivity and the environment is a necessary condition for sustainable growth, ending poverty and hunger, and fully achieving the SDGs. Despite progress, billions of people still lack access to safe water, sanitation and handwashing facilities.

Today, many countries are at risk of running out of water, especially in the Arab region – the most water scarce region in the world – with water availability now cited as one of the greatest risks to business continuity and growth. UN-Water warns that progress on clean water and sanitation (SDG 6) remains uneven and that we are not on track to reach the 2030 Agenda. Failing to achieve water security will jeopardize the whole of the SDGs.

Diminishing Water Resources: A Risk to Growth and Security

Arab countries cover 10% of the world's area and are home to 6% of the world's population but receive less than 2% of the world's renewable water supply.[1] Two-thirds of the Arab region's water supplies (163.2 BCM) originate outside the region.[2] Consequently, Arab nations need to import more than half of their food; they are among the greatest importers of cereal in the world.

Water resources in the Arab region are being depleted by rapid population growth, the accompanying demands of urbanization, and irrigated agriculture. Moreover, climate change, bringing greater climate variability and more frequent and severe droughts and floods, will exacerbate the already precarious situation created by chronic water scarcity.

The Arab region is considered one of the world's poorest regions in terms of water availability and globally, is most likely to suffer from water crises. Over the next 20 years, freshwater per resources per capita are estimated to keep declining steadily unless a fundamental shift occursYet, the Arab world is undertaking the least planning and preparation to combat this coming crisis, especially those countries where limited financial capacity couples with limited water resources. Political turmoil and civil wars that prevail in some countries of the region exacerbate the situation. This in turn fuels political unrest, demonstrations and protests at the national level due to lack of water, or at the regional level due to tensions resulting from shared water basins across the Middle East.

The Tigris and Euphrates basin (Turkey, Syria, Iraq and Iran) and the Nile River basin between Egypt and the rest of the riparian's countries of the blue and white river basins of the Nile, as well as the Jordan River basin (Israel, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine) [3] are salient examples.

Development priorities must be defined and appropriate investment in water resources determined if Arab countries are to have a chance at "leapfroging" their water institutions and infrastructure so as to avoid the mistakes of the past.

Because the dominant threats to water security vary geographically and over time, water security is not a static goal. It is a dynamic process affected by changing climate, political set up, economic growth and resource degradation. Moreover, as social, cultural, political, economic priorities and values evolve, water security will evolve with them.

Thus, development priorities must be defined and appropriate investment in water resources determined if Arab countries are to have a chance at "leapfroging" their water institutions and infrastructure so as to avoid the mistakes of the past. Such objectives are achievable subject to additional focus on sound economic and financial principles. But it must be recognized that the Arab region will have to do more with less, given its complex water challenges, population growth, influx of refugees, food security demands, over-consumption of water resources and the impacts of climate change.

Going forward, we need a new paradigm to achieve water security – one that depends on greater than ever cooperation at all levels and integrated partnerships focused on a sustainable future for the region.

To achieve the water SDG, a paradigm shift in the Arab region means:

- Changing the **way we manage water today** (from a linear system of use and disposal to a circular economy model; from infrastructure delivery to more resilient infrastructure; to value water; and to diversify water resources);
- Changing **the way we finance water** (engaging the private sector, water pricing, reducing the high level of non-revenue water in the region);
- Changing **the way we collaborate at different levels** (leaving no one behind, shifting from silos of water management to a system thinking approach – the nexus approach -, regional cooperation and agreements); and
- Changing **the way we design our policies** (regulations and laws regarding water resilience, water security at national and regional levels, inclusive polices).

There are strong synergistic linkages between water, growth and security policies in the Arab region. If countries adopt water policies that support growth – and several countries have already done it – rather than ones that risk jeopardizing it, the resulting growth could, in turn, eventually resolve the region's water needs. However, this requires a new and radical approach to water resources management.

Yet, financing water development and delivery is not a panacea. To be effective, it must be complemented by tangible policy improvements on the ground. Arab countries will need to strengthen the capacity of their institutions for better management and development of water resources.

Both Arab countries and the international community need to comprehend water as a political, economic and security issue in the region. They need to understand that water plays a profound role in the future growth and development of the region and take more concerted actions now.

All of the above and much more will be discussed and deliberated on during the 5 November 2019 session titled, **'Water Security for Sustainable Development in the Arab Region,'** to be held during the 3rd Arab Sustainable Development Week organized by the League of Arab States.

Sources*:*

[1] The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (2013). AQUASTAT database; Rome, Italy.
[2] Third State of the Water Report for the Arab Region
[3] The Political and Economic Consequences of Groundwater Depletion in the Arab Region, by Dr. Hazim El-Naser; July 2019.

Prof. Jamal Saghir, former Director and Chair at World Bank Group's Boards for Energy, Transport and Water

Eng. Hassan Aboelnga, Advisory Board Member of Middle East Water Forum (MEWF)

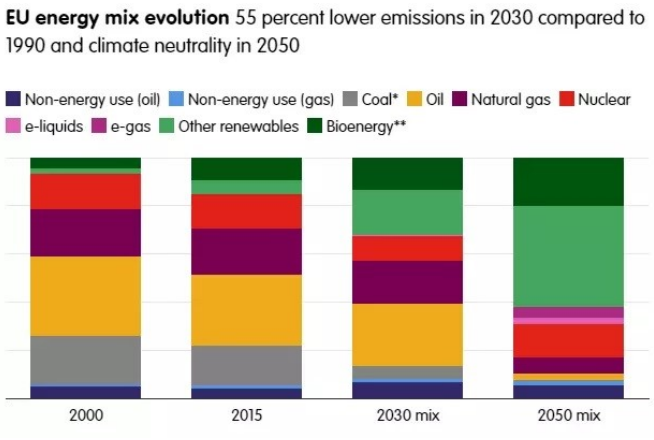
Source:https://sdg.iisd.org/commentary/guest-articles/a-new-paradigm-to-achieve-water-security-and-the-sdgs-in-the-arab-region/

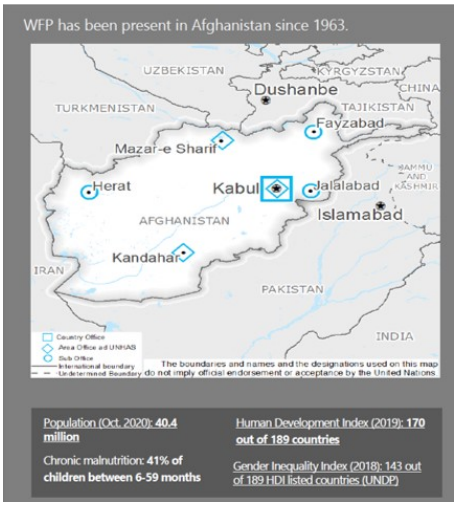
THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL

In December 2019, the European Commission introduced the European Green Deal, an ambitious policy package intended to make the European Union's economy environmentally sustainable. The goal is to reach climate neutrality by 2050, and to turn the transition into an economic and industrial opportunity for Europe. The deal is made up of a wide array of policy measures and subsidies aimed at cutting pollution while increasing research and investment in environmentally friendly technologies.

The Green Deal is at root an effort to transform the European economy and European consumption patterns. But, because it entails a fundamental overhaul of the European energy system and because it ranks so high on the EU policy agenda, it will also change the relationships between the EU and its neighbourhood – and it will redefine Europe's global policy priorities. As such, it is a foreign policy development with profound geopolitical consequences.

- The deal aims to achieve three main goals.
- First, it focuses on achieving net-zero emissions by proposing specific strategies that can help curb emissions across all sectors
- it plans to decouple growth from resource exploitation. While reductions in emissions have been achieved in the last decade, Europe remains one of the major contributors of resource consumption in the world
- Third is the need to foster an inclusive green transition and to leave none behind, supported through the Just Transition Mechanism, which will provide between 65€ and 75€ billion over the period of 2021-2027 to alleviate the socio-economic impacts of the transition.





Decades of **complex and protracted conflicts, combined with a changing climate, gender inequalities, rapid urbanization,underemployment and the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic pose considerable challenges** in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 2 on Zero Hunger and improved nutrition.

Over half of the country's population lives below the poverty line, and food insecurity is on the rise, largely due to conflict and insecurity cutting off whole communities from livelihood opportunities. **14 million people are identified as food insecure,** including 550,000 who have been displaced by conflict since the beginning of the year.

Undernutrition is of particular concern in women, children, displaced people, returnees, households headed by women, people with disabilities and the poor. Despite progress in recent years, undernutrition rates are now increasing and 2 million children are malnourished.

Every year, some 250,000 people on average are **affected by a wide range of environmental disasters** including floods, droughts, avalanches, landslides and earthquakes. The impact of disasters and dependency on water from rain or snowmelt severely limit the productivity of the agricultural sector, which provides a source of income for 44 percent of the population.

We need to built a future,
Where people live in harmony with nature

HPA

Think Forward ,Lead Forward

September 2021

News Coordinator: Assoc Prof. Dr. Nuran YILDIZ
Assoc. Prof.Dr. Doğan YILDIZ
Content : HPA Technical Unit – www.hidropolitikakademi.org
Editor: Dursun Yıldız
Design : ada Strateji Turkey