Hydro Politics Newsletter
by Hydropolitics Association
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Water Management and Diplomacy

As the global population continues to grow, the demand for water increases. This, combined with the effects of climate change, has led to a worldwide water crisis. In many regions, water scarcity has become a source of conflict, as nations compete for resources and struggle to manage their shared water resources.

Water management and diplomacy are critical to resolving these conflicts and ensuring access to clean, safe water for all. Water management refers to the planning, development, and operation of water resources, including the distribution and conservation of water. Diplomacy involves the negotiation and resolution of conflicts between nations or groups.

Effective water management requires cooperation and coordination between governments, communities, and individuals. This includes the implementation of sustainable water use practices, such as rainwater harvesting and water recycling, and the development of infrastructure to improve access to water.

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Diplomacy plays a critical role in addressing water conflicts, as nations must work together to manage shared water resources. This requires effective communication and negotiation, as well as the development of international agreements and policies to ensure equitable access to water.

We urge governments, communities, and individuals to prioritize innovative water management and diplomacy. We must work together to develop sustainable water practices and resolve conflicts over shared resources. Failure to do so will only exacerbate the water crisis and lead to further instability and conflict.

Sincerely,

Dursun Yıldız

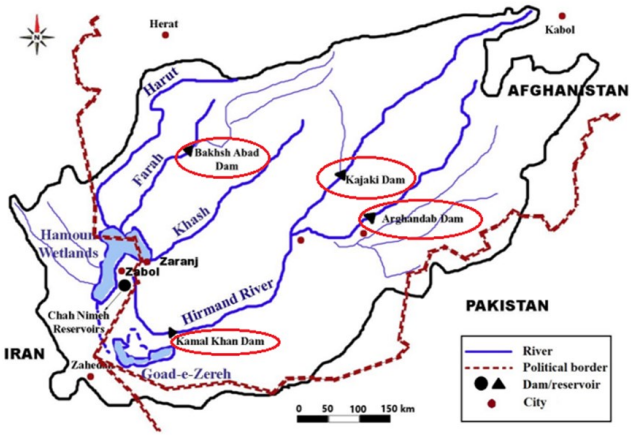
Iran and Afghanistan dispute over Helmand water rights

Hydropolitics Association

Tensions remain high following the deaths of troops from both sides on May 27, with Taliban and Iranian officials digging in on their positions with increased military activity and fresh warnings.

The water dispute between Iran and Afghanistan primarily revolves around the shared water resources of the Helmand River. The Helmand River originates in the Hindu Kush mountains in Afghanistan and flows through both Afghanistan and Iran. It is a vital water source for both countries, supporting agriculture, power generation, and domestic water supplies. The 1973 Treaty: In 1973, Iran and Afghanistan signed the Helmand River Treaty, which outlined the sharing of water resources. The treaty allowed Afghanistan to use a specific amount of water from the Helmand River for irrigation purposes, while ensuring a certain flow of water into Iran.

Over the years, both Iran and Afghanistan have faced water scarcity issues due to factors such as climate change, population growth, and mismanagement of water resources. Drought conditions have further exacerbated the situation, impacting agricultural activities and water availability.



Kamal Khan Dam

Iran has accused Afghanistan of not adhering to the terms of the 1973 treaty, particularly regarding the water flow into Iran. Iran claims that Afghanistan has been constructing dams and diverting water, significantly reducing the amount reaching Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province. Afghanistan, on the other hand, argues that it needs the water resources for its own development and agriculture.

Afghanistan has nevertheless decided to regain cont-

rol of its hydraulic potential in recent years by speeding up the construction of hydroelectric dams and irrigation systems.

The Kamal Khan Dam, which is situated on the border with Iran, was inaugurated in March 2021 on the Helmand River after six decades of construction work.

In the meantime, the Kajaki Dam, often a bone of contention with Tehran, has also undergone major work and was recently completed. The Kajaki Dam was built in the 1950s to help Afghan farmers for irrigation The latest round of construction work was completed in July 2022, increasing output from 33 to 100 megawatts

Environmental and Humanitarian Impacts

The reduced water flow from the Helmand River has caused significant environmental and humanitarian consequences. Wetlands and ecosystems in Iran's Sistan-Baluchestan province have been severely affected, leading to ecological degradation. The lack of water has also impacted farming communities and livelihoods in the region.

Water as a diplomatic tool

As Afghanistan regains control over the Helmand River's water supply, the precious resource is Some observers claim that the Taliban are using water to barter for oil, gas and electricity. In a tweet posted by Afghan media outlet Afghanistan International, the former spokesman of the Taliban police command in Kabul is said to have admitted to using water as a bargaining chip:

Tehran, however, is far from satisfied with the current situation as it continues to claim its right to water from Afghanistan.

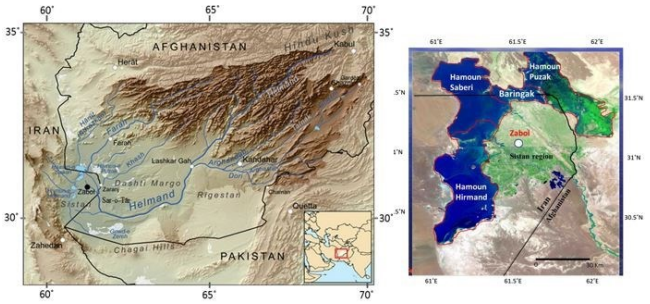
"In reality, the Afghan leadership has not honoured its commitments under the [1973] treaty and has not offered the necessary cooperation to provide Iran with its legal water rights," said the Iranian foreign ministry, adding that the situation has become "unacceptable".

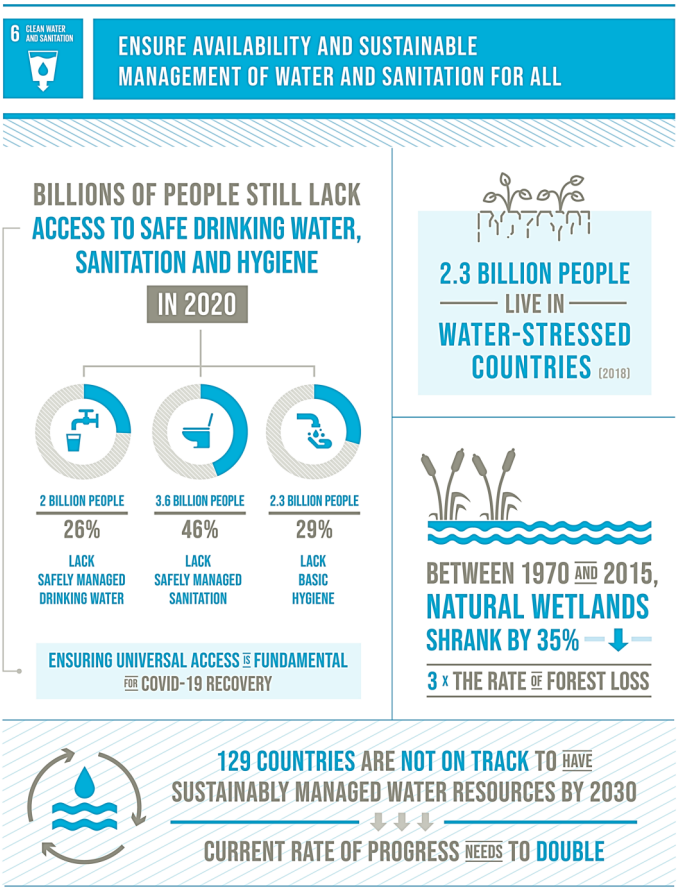
Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi said last month his government is determined to defend Iran's water rights, threatening action against the Taliban if they fail to release more water. Tehran has rejected Kabul's claim that lack of rainfall and a severe drought were responsible for the lack of water flowing to Iran.

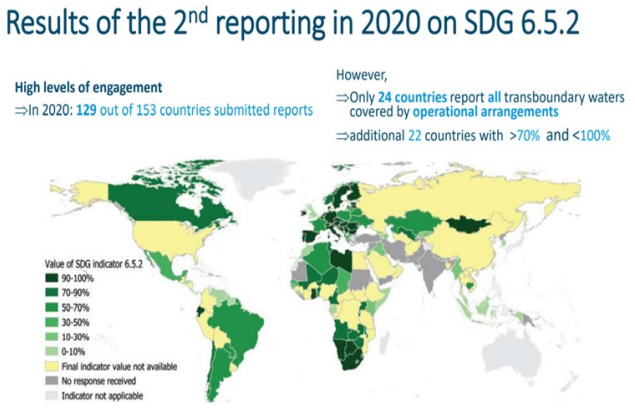
While Iran, which shares a border of over 900 kilometres with Afghanistan, does not recognise the Taliban government, it has so far maintained friendly relations with its new neighbours.

Tehran and Kabul immediately sought to calm things down after the exchange of fire at the border near the end of May.

"The situation (is) currently under control," said Taliban interior ministry spokesman Abdul Nafy Takor on the day of the incident, adding that his government "does not want war with its neighbour".







How to manage transboundary waters in a changing climate?

There is no specific international convention that focuses exclusively on transboundary water allocation in the context of a changing climate. However, several international agreements and frameworks address various aspects of climate change and water management, which indirectly influence transboundary water allocation. The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (UN Watercourses Convention) provides a framework for the peaceful, equitable, and sustainable utilization of transboundary watercourses. While it predates the significant focus on climate change, it acknowledges the potential impacts of changing hydrological conditions on watercourses and encourages cooperation among states sharing such water resources.

The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), focuses on the sustainable management of transboundary waters. It somehow recognizes the influence of climate change on water resources and encourages cooperation and adaptation measures among its member states. Climate change has significant implications for water resources, including altered precipitation patterns, changing river flows, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and rising sea levels. These changes affect the availability, quality, and distribution of water in transboundary basins. A convention that acknowledges and addresses climate change impacts would provide a framework for countries to assess and respond to these challenges collectively.

Therefore it is important to note that the field of transboundary waters allocation under the effects of climate change is still waiting for a comprehensive approach to avaid potential conflicts between riparian states.

A convention that integrates climate change considerations into transboundary water cooperation would foster greater collaboration among countries. It would encourage the development of joint projects, data-sharing mechanisms, and technical assistance programs to address common challenges. By working together, countries can optimize the use of shared water resources, minimize negative impacts, and achieve sustainable development goals in a changing climate. Overall, an international convention that includes climate change impacts for transboundary water cooperation would provide a framework for countries to address the challenges posed by climate change, promote cooperation and collaboration, and ensure the sustainable and equitable management of shared water resources.

Source : Yıldız D. 2023 " How to manage transboundary waters in a changin climate World Water Diplomacy & Science News-2023-10021 .www.hidropolitikakademi.org

Heavy rain disrupts daily life in Ankara

The capital Ankara has been hit by sudden downpours and hail, leading to flooding and chaos on the streets for citizens and drivers.

Rainy weather began to show its impact in the city center from noon, causing significant problems for residents and commuters. Streets and avenues transformed into lakes, with accumulated water reaching depths of up to 50 centimeters. Vehicles were unable to navigate through the flooded areas, exacerbating the difficulties faced by citizens.

The Ankara Municipality promptly dispatched teams to evacuate flooded areas and initiate necessary relief efforts.

One of the affected areas was Sıhhiye metro station, which became flooded as a result of heavy rainfall. Officials promptly evacuated passengers who were caught in the station when it turned into a waterfall.

Meanwhile, the Turkish State Meteorological Service issued a yellow-coded warning to 26 cities, predominantly located in central and western parts of the country. The bureau urged citizens to remain vigilant and take precautions against flash floods, flooding, lightning, local hail, strong winds, tornadoes, and disrup-

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CollabEO-Floods
Collaborative Analysis of Flooding Event

RESEARCH CALL for Collaborative Analysis of Flooding Events with Processing of Earth Observation Datasets

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Dear Colleagues,

Our workshop supported by ISPRS aims to gather MSc and PhD students on general flood risk and assessment knowledge. Our goal is to provide both a guide and research reference for flooding events.

This workshop will provide a research platform to the reserachers from varying disciplines to analyse Bozkurt flood and aiming to provide an examplary flood risk and assessment work by evaluating varying determinants including meteorological, related to city planning, etc.

The workshop will include two sections

1. Short tutorials instructed by the experts and each focusing on the analysis of a specific related case :

- Earth observation (EO) tools, data processing, Geoinformatics science details are given to the Climatologist
- Climate, atmospheric science theory, and applications are given to EO experts
- Establishment of a collaboration among the participants through the organized workshop.

2. Presentations of the case study. Oral and poster sessions.

Participation is free.

Deadline for abstract submission * : 10/08/2023

Workshop date : 02/10/2023 09.00-18.00 (GMT+3)

Location : Ankara- Turkiye / Turkish Cadastre and Surveying Engineers Chamber Headquarters Training Center

* Submission link will be provided to the interested participants.

The study area of Bozkurt, Kastamonu-Turkiye is highly recommended, but any other location is welcome, too.

After the workshop, the presentations and abstracts will be publicly available online and published on the workshop website for probable interest.

Other outputs of this workshop: The studies of the workshop can be published as full texts in a special issue of a ULAKBIM (a Turkish Scientific Index)-based scientific journal. The results and preliminary studies of the workshop will be transformed into a national report and shared with relevant public institutions/organisations and stakeholders. An expert network will be formed with the workshop participants and will be included in the networking platform to be established.

Looking forward to receiving your valuable contributions and seeing you in Ankara.

Dr. Nusret Demir / Akdeniz University

Dr. Fulya Kandemir / Hydropolitics Association & Academy

Dr. Doğuşhan Kılıç / University of Manchester

Deadline of the survey (form) : 10/08/2023

Kind regards.

Fulya (Aydin) Kandemir PhD.

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

HPA

Think Forward , Lead Forward