



AN UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY

BLUE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST



Executive Summary

Around 25 experts and media persons from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey met in Stockholm on 30-31 August 2018 to discuss the transfer of the management of Blue Peace in the Middle East Initiative from Strategic Foresight Group to a cooperative regional mechanism. This was the third in a series of meetings convened with a view to take final decisions on the transfer of management. Launched in late 2009 and steered by SFG so far, it was decided to transfer the management of the initiative from January 2019 to a specially created regional network, with a representative Managing Committee and Coordination Office provided by the Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) in Istanbul. Switzerland and Sweden expressed interest in principle in supporting this new mechanism.

The meeting in Stockholm was co-hosted by Strategic Foresight Group along with Global Water Partnership, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Background

The Blue Peace in the Middle East process was initiated in 2009 and has been steered by Strategic Foresight Group. Over the course of 2017-18, regional experts from Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Iran, along with regional and international experts, met three times with the objective of transferring the management the Blue Peace Process in the Middle East from Strategic Foresight Group to regional institutions from the Middle East.

Three meetings took place in order to enable this transfer.

Meeting 1: Zurich

A group of regional experts from Turkey, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Iran met in Zurich, Switzerland on 21-22 August, 2017 for a strategy workshop with a main objective of exploring the future of the Blue Peace Process and ideas for the transfer of management leadership to regional institutions. The desired outcome of the workshop was to establish a coordinating committee or mechanism under regional management for the future of the Blue Peace initiative as well as to identify the road map for the next few years. The workshop was co-hosted by Strategic Foresight Group (SFG) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in cooperation with the Human Security Division of Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA).

Meeting 2: Istanbul

A planning meeting for Blue Peace in the Middle East was held in Istanbul on 26-27 February 2018, co-hosted by Strategic Foresight Group, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Turkish Water Institute (SUEN). The meeting brought together participants from Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan along with representatives of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and Strategic Foresight Group to discuss the institutional arrangements and thematic focus of the next phase of Blue Peace in the Middle East as previously agreed upon in Zurich in 2017.

Meeting 3: Stockholm

A group of regional experts from Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon met in Stockholm, Sweden on 30 and 31 August. The meeting was used to present the transfer to the broader Blue Peace community and gain their input on the changes that have been made thus far. The meeting was an opportunity for the regional institutions to present concrete proposals on the institutional mechanism that will coordinate the activities of the Blue Peace in the Middle East process going forward, as well as the thematic focus of these activities which is water use efficiency in agriculture. The workshop was co-hosted by Strategic Foresight Group, Global Water Partnership, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. Also present were representatives of regional and international organisations.

Objectives

The meetings in Zurich, Istanbul and Stockholm took place with the following objectives in mind:

- To transfer management of Blue Peace in the Middle East from SFG to a regional mechanism

- To form a regional managing committee from all concerned countries representing a blend of eminent individuals and institutional representatives
- To confirm the priority subject for research, mutual learning and confidence building
- To confirm arrangements for a Coordination Office for 2019-2020
- To confirm arrangements for institutional development including process for donor support for the new mechanism

Discussion in Stockholm

A View from Outside

Monika Weber-Fahr, Executive Secretary and CEO of Global Water Partnership and Esse Nilsson, Senior Program Manager dealing with the MENA region in Sida welcomed all participants of the meeting to Stockholm on behalf of their institutions. On behalf of the Government of Switzerland, Amb. Christian Schoenenberger, Ambassador of Switzerland to Sweden opened the workshop by outlining Swiss objectives in the water policy sphere. He focused on the pro-active approach that the Swiss have taken in the last few years in regional as well as global peace and the urgent need to get Sustainable Development Goal 6 on track.

Sundeeep Waslekar, President of the Strategic Foresight Group briefly highlighted the achievements of the Blue Peace process over the last 7-8 years. He explained that the process had been initiated at the explicit suggestion of several heads of states and heads of government in the Middle East in 2009-2010. Despite a decade of internal strife, civil wars, collapse of states, terrorism and breakdown of communications, the Blue Peace community has sustained as the only soft infrastructure of dialogue. It has established 7 Principles of Cooperation and facilitated dialogue between Iraq and Turkey on the management of Tigris River when there was no communication between the two countries. It has forged consensus among experts on priorities in the agenda of cooperation. He congratulated the Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) based in Istanbul for taking a lead role in the establishment of the new regional mechanism.

Esse Nilsson outlined the Sida Regional Strategy for MENA from 2016 - 2020, which focuses on water resources and trans-boundary water, regional economic integration, democracy and human rights. The aspect of poverty reduction and human rights, along with gender are at the top of their agenda. Daniel Magnusson of Sida's Peace and Security Unit outlined the strategy for Sustainable Peace 2017-2022, which focuses on peace building, state building and human security in 80 countries.

Eileen Hofstetter discussed SDC's Global Programme Water and its Blue Peace Middle East Initiative. With an overall mission of contributing to ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all people, the Global Programme Water's strategy to achieve this mission involves working on water governance, young people and gender equality, water solutions and water voice. This is enabled by policy, knowledge management, innovation, and leveraging partnerships. The Blue Peace Middle East Initiative incorporates the Blue Peace approach to contribute to peace building through combined political and technical dialogues. Several projects in this regard were highlighted, including Safeguarding Applied Management of Water Resources in Kurdistan (SAMoWaR), improving shared water resources management in the Tigris river basin between Iraq and Turkey, supporting participatory resource management to stabilize the situation in host communities, creating a

hydro-political baseline study of the Yarmouk Basin, the creation of a start-up programme and innovation trainings for humanitarian WASH in the Middle East and communications and media training in the Middle East.

Representatives of cewas Middle East, International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) and the Global Water Partnership shared details of their initiatives that focus on regional water issues.

Aline Bussman from cewas Middle East presented the organization's vision and work 'Towards a Regional Entrepreneurial Hub for Sustainable Sanitation and Water Management in the Middle East'. She explained cewas Middle East's approach, involving water entrepreneurship and innovation in the WASH sector, and centred around solutions that are appropriate for the customer, financially viable, sustainable and don't exist yet. Cewas Middle East is implementing the start-up activities in Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine, through 5 start-up programmes. As of 2018, more than 75 start-ups have been supported by the organization. One key lesson learnt from cewas Middle East's work is that private and market-driven approaches carry the potential of efficient management techniques and operations and can ensure the sustainability by developing commercially viable approaches, their replicability by naturally leading to imitation of successful business models by others and their innovation by requiring the development of customer-centred solutions. While there are challenges to converting potential into action, the strength of the existing start-up support ecosystem and the capacity of the market within which the start-ups are operating can prove to be key factors in determining whether such start-ups thrive or fail.

Khalil Ammar of ICBA made a presentation on the issue of 'Scientific Approach to Improve Collaboration Between the Riparian Countries in the Euphrates and Tigris Region', focusing on lessons learnt from the Collaborative Program Euphrates and Tigris (CPET) project, working between Turkey, Iraq and Syria. The collaboration also included stakeholders, representatives and institutes from Lebanon, Jordan, Kurdistan Regional Government and, for a short time, Iran. CPET had two objectives; one, to improve dialogue and trust in the Euphrates and Tigris region on the subject of water management and two, increase information and knowledge on water use, services and impacts in the Euphrates and Tigris. Some key achievements made by the CPET project include the improvement of trust, sharing of knowledge and data, including national data, a good assessment of the present situation and challenges faced in the Tigris-Euphrates basin and building relationships amongst the members of the group, from the different countries. Some lessons that can be transmitted to other similar contexts are that the scientific approach can improve trust and dialogue between the riparian countries and key messages to decision-makers and negotiators can be drawn based on the results achieved.

Global Water Partnership's vision of a water-secure world, achieved through the advancement of governance and management of water resources for sustainable and equitable development was presented by Michael Scoullios of GWP-Med. This work is achieved through 13 regional partnerships, 60 country water partnerships and over 3000 partners in 178 countries. The specific niche of the work performed by GWP-Med includes advocacy for improved water resources management, assistance to policy making, convening neutral power cross sectors and stakeholders, technical expertise, knowledge sharing and awareness raising, and capacity development. GWP's achieves its objectives by influencing regional and national political processes, following a vision-to-action approach and demonstrating practical solutions in the field, and mobilising neutral multi-stakeholder partnerships. On the

specific issue of transboundary water cooperation, GWP's achievements in the Drin River basin, on the North West Sahara Aquifer (between Algeria, Libya and Tunisia) and work on the Nestos/Mesta river were highlighted.

Leaders Panel

A panel of eminent policy makers and scholars held a discussion on global and broader regional context and their relevance to the core countries from the Middle East that are involved in Blue Peace in the Middle East.

H E Dr Danilo Turk, former President of Slovenia, Chairman of Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace spoke about the need for global discussion and understanding that will help projects on the ground. He reiterated Amb Schoenenberger's point that water is at the centre of the SDGs and this has to be given the highest level of political attention. He also outlined the 7 key recommendations of the Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace, which was launched in September 2017.

Dr Walid Saleh, Chief Technical Advisor, Food and Agricultural Organization, based in Cairo and Sana'a said that despite being one of the most water stressed regions in the world, there is not much cooperation seen on water in the Middle East. There is need for cooperation between countries as well as initiating local level initiatives that can impact the lives of people directly. In Yemen, the FAO has created 38 Water User Associations where 30 per cent of the boards are comprised of women. These boards decide their own priorities for use of funds at the local level.

Dr Hassan Z Sarikaya, former State Secretary of Government of Turkey said that when a region is water stressed, one expects better water governance because the resource is scarce. Unfortunately, this is not the case in the Middle East, where the capacity of the water sector is not well developed. The political situation has worsened in the Middle East since the beginning of the Blue Peace Process and therefore there is a need to limit the current sphere of cooperation to technical cooperation. The Seven Principles of Cooperation that were adopted by the Blue Peace High Level Forum in September 2014 has clearly stated that each country should manage its water efficiently. This has created the impetus for the stakeholders in the region to focus on the issue of increasing efficiency in the agriculture sector. Currently in Turkey, over 70 per cent of water is used for agricultural purposes.

Participants in the discussion felt that the SDG 6 could not be achieved by business as usual. The Report of the High Level Panel on Water and Peace could be the point of departure and help to refocus the attention of the world on water scarcity and conflict. Water can indeed act in a way to push broader regional cooperation, as even during the war years in Syria there was cooperation between ISIS and Damascus on issues of water and electricity. While it is not right to say that drought caused the Syrian war, reconstruction efforts will have to focus on energy, drinking water and food production in sustainable manner with ecosystem management.

There is hope for the future. There are signs that solutions to the Syrian conflict are being negotiated. Iraq and Turkey now have robust relations. Iraq, Lebanon and Turkey have recently gone through elections paving way for political stability in the next decade. This is the right time to activate the soft infrastructure of dialogue by regional and local catalysts by local actors invested in peace.

Anumita Raj presented SFG's research on Benefits of Cooperation in the Middle East in order to gather updated information on this issue from participants. The final research output will be a vision document for potential benefits for countries in the Middle East (specifically Iraq, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Iran), providing the institutional structures necessary are put in place and political will to move forward exists.

Based on the research, a benefit was defined to be one that would include wins for all parties, the exchange of benefits wherein parties receive benefits in an equal but not necessarily equivalent manner (trade-offs can be water for food, or water for energy, or hydropower for security, or knowledge for technology and so on) and ultimately, benefits promote social and economic development, improve the resilience of vulnerable communities and build peace in the region. With this definition in mind, benefits were outlined for the countries in the areas of hydropower, irrigation, food security, drought management, infrastructure protection and ecosystem protection.

Below are some, but not all of the benefits that could be achieved by the six above-mentioned countries through cooperation:

- The joint dam projects and the dams located in the border areas have a collective hydropower potential of 1400-1600 MW and water to irrigate thousands of hectares of land, which can improve the lives of around 32-35 million people living in the basin areas of the riparian countries. Cooperation could be achieved through the creation of a regional electricity grid.
- Total irrigated land in Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon and Jordan is roughly around 18 million ha, of which about 80% is still irrigated using traditional irrigation systems, causing water loss of 35-60%, and switching to modern irrigation techniques can reduce water loss in the region by 5-20%. This could be achieved by a regional knowledge sharing platform which can build capacity through training and the exchange of best practices between the countries.
- Regional cooperation can improve countries' capacity to monitor and better manage the impacts of the multiple droughts faced by these countries. This can be promoted if they develop a regional drought mitigation mechanism by establishing drought monitoring systems and early warning systems.
- Regeneration of Marshlands in the Tigris-Euphrates basin can help 500,000 Marsh Arabs and generate a potential income of USD 3.4 billion. Establishing a community-based conservation process could offer resilience during conflicts and provide tangible benefits to the local population.



Road Map for Transition of Blue Peace in the Middle East

Structure

The structure of the mechanism in the next two years will be as follows:



At the meeting in Stockholm, the Turkish Water Institute or SUEN made presentations on two aspects of the future of the Blue Peace in the Middle East.

On the issue of a regional institutional mechanism to conduct the activities of the process in the near future, a proposal of a Coordination Office, to be based out of SUEN for the period of 2019-20, was presented.

A proposal for the thematic focus of the Blue Peace in the Middle East's activities for the period of 2019-20 was also presented. This thematic focus was decided to be water use efficiency in agriculture in previous meetings. Based on inputs from members from some of the other countries, a substantive paper that would make key recommendations on the issue to regional stakeholders was conceived. The thematic focus was specifically chosen due to its wide potential impact as water use in the Middle East has a direct impact on the economy. The agriculture sector is the predominant consumer of water. 60-90 percent of the region's water is used for agriculture, 1-10 percent for industry, 3-10 percent for human consumption, and 3-20 percent for hygiene. A potential structure for the paper to be prepared by stakeholders in 2019-20 was presented as follows:

Executive Summary	
Introduction	Objectives of the project, outputs, etc.
Water Efficiency Definition	Literature review
Current Status of the Region (Diagnostic Analyses)	Information provided by TAC's
Case Studies and Good Practices from the Middle East	Information provided by TAC's
Evaluation of Case Studies	SWOT Analyses
Areas of Cooperation and Potential Benefits	Areas of cooperation defined and high-level estimations on the benefits of achieved cooperation and water efficiency targets
Future Perspectives and Policy Recommendations	changing crop patterns; increasing water quality; using non-conventional water resources for irrigation; adapting water management under changing climate conditions; modern irrigation techniques; renovating water networks, canals etc.
Strategic Plan of Actions	
Conclusion	

Roles & Responsibilities

Policy Advisory Committee

As mentioned previously, it has been envisaged that a Policy Advisory Committee would be formed. It was decided that HRH Prince Hassan bin Talal of Jordan should be invited to chair the newly established Policy Advisory Committee as he has been the Chair of the High Level Forum of Blue Peace in the Middle East. Other countries can nominate eminent persons to this committee to be finally accepted by HRH Prince Hassan bin Talal as the Chair.

Managing Committee

The Managing Committee will be constituted on the following basis:

- Combination of eminent individuals and institutional representatives who have shown commitment to the principles of Blue Peace in the Middle East
- KRG representation will be sought
- Parity for Iran and Syria in terms of number of members

The current Managing Committee (from September 2018 until the first meeting of the Managing Committee) will consist of the following persons:

Acting Chair – Dr Hasan Sarikaya

Iran – Members to be invited

Lebanon – Ms Zeina Majdalani (Office of the Prime Minister, Lebanon) and Dr Nadim Farajalla (Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut)

Jordan – Dr Hakam Al Alami (Office of HRH Prince Hassan Bin Talal of Jordan) and Ms Maysoon Zoubi (The Higher Population Council, Jordan)

Turkey – Dr Hasan Sarikaya and Prof. Ahmet Mete Saatci (SUEN)

Iraq –Dr Maha Alziydi (Dijlah University College) and Mr Dhafer Abdalla Hussain (Ministry of Water Resources, Iraq)

Syria – Dr Ihab Jnad (ACSAD) + 1 more member

Members who were not present in Stockholm will be approached shortly.

Terms of Reference for Managing Committee:

Vision – Blue Peace – transforming water from potential source of crisis into a potential source of cooperation through concrete actions in the Middle East

Mission –identify areas of concern and set priorities in the field of water resources in the Middle East

Mandate –

- Act as interface between Policy Advisory Committee and Coordination Office.
- Review outcomes of thematic studies.
- Yearly evaluation of Coordination Office and recommend on rotation or renewal of Coordination Office location.

Mode –

- Frequent Virtual Meetings and Annual Physical Meeting.
- Elect Chair of Committee and rotate on regular basis.
- Chair will act as Liaison with Donors, Coordination Office and Policy Advisory Committee.

Coordination Office

The Coordination Office will be SUEN for the period of 2019-2020. The following activities were proposed to be the main work of the Coordination Office:

- Preparation of a Joint Report on Water Efficiency with a particular focus in agriculture sector to present the potential benefits with support from actors and institutions in each of the six countries.
- Organisation of the trainings, meetings/workshops in cooperation/consultation with counterparts in each of the countries
- Conveying of strategic outcomes to and recommendations to the Managing Committee as well as decision makers and leaders in respective countries
- Strategic and secretarial support towards the Managing Committee for the overall coordination of the Initiative

Next Steps

The following is the roadmap of activities for the next several months until the new mechanism can be established.

SUEN will share project proposal with members of Managing Committee for comment before 15 September.

- Share Project Proposal (2 years) with SDC and Sida by early September for the following
 - Coordination Office (include Annual Meeting of entire Blue Peace community)
 - Technical Work – Project proposal for single thematic/substantive item
- Short Concept Note for funds for 1st Meeting of Managing Committee (1-page) – to be prepared by SUEN

The first meeting of the Managing Committee will be held, likely in Istanbul. Below are some of the decisions taken in Stockholm in this regard.

- Date of 1st managerial Meeting (TBC)
- Location of 1st Managerial Meeting – Istanbul (TBC)
- Role of Media to be decided at this meeting – media as a two-way participant and not just as public relations
- How to relate to other regional bodies
- Tentative Agenda
 - Information on Mandate
 - Information on Composition
 - Information on Tasks
 - Discussion on Terms and Selection of Members of MC
 - Discussion on Role of Media/Communication Strategy
 - Discussion on Financial Matters
 - Discussion on Decision-Taking Process
 - Information on Political Advisory Committee
 - Information and Discussion Secretariat of MC

Conclusion

Thus, for the first time a regional mechanism is being established for collaborative management of water resources in the Middle East. While it will benefit from external support, it will be completely owned and managed by a cluster of institutions and eminent individuals in the region. The mechanism is expected to begin its operations at the beginning of 2019 with SUEN functioning as its first Coordination Office. The Managing Committee with representation from other countries in the region ensures that the mechanism is steered by collective interests of all countries in a fair and equitable manner.

Key Outcome

The objective of the workshop was to transfer the management of a peace initiative from an international think tank to a cluster of regional actors. This was successfully achieved by SUEN taking on the role of the Coordination Office and a Managing Committee being selected from among the participants.

This report is a reflection of Strategic Foresight Group. It does not represent views of any of the above-mentioned organizations, nor does it indicate consensus of the participants.

Annexure I - List of Participants in Stockholm (August 2018)

Special Invitees

H E Dr Danilo Turk, former President of Slovenia, Chairman of Global High Level Panel on Water and Peace

H.E Mr Christian Schoenenberger, Ambassador of Switzerland to Sweden

Iraq

Mr Nezar Kadhim Neamah Al-Saeedi, Chief Engineer, Ministry of Water Resources of Iraq

Dr Maha Alziydi, Dijlah University College

Jordan

Dr. Hakam Alalami, Advisor to HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal on Water and Sanitation, Jordan

Dr Maysoon Zoubi, former Secretary General, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Jordan

Dr Muhammad Saidam, Former Chief Science Officer, Royal Scientific Society

Ms Hana Namrouqa, Senior Columnist, Jordan Times

Ms Reem Sharaf, Senior Columnist, Al Rai Newspaper

Lebanon

Eng. Zeina Majdalani, Economic Expert & Civil Engineer, Office of the Prime Minister, Government of Lebanon

Dr Nadim Farajalla, Program Director, Climate Change and Environment, Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut

Ms Marwa Osman, Journalist and University Lecturer, Lebanese International University, Lebanon

Ms Mey Al Sayegh, Communication Manager at Lebanese Ministry of State for Displaced Affairs (Syrian Refugees) and Freelance Journalist

Ms Sara Mattar, Communication Coordinator and Reporter at Qatar Red Crescent & Freelancer for Future Newspaper (Al Mustaqbal)

Turkey

Mr Hassan Z Sarikaya, former State Secretary of Government of Turkey

Dr. Ahmet Mete Saatci, President, Turkish Water Institute (SUEN)

Mr Mustafa Sarikaya, Turkish Water Institute (SUEN)

Dr Tugba Evrim Maden, Turkish Water Institute (SUEN)

Ms Elif Okumus, Turkish Water Institute (SUEN)

Dr Selmin Burak, Environmental Engineer & Professor, Istanbul University

Mr Mehmet Celik, Politics News Editor, Daily Sabah

Mr Fehim Tastekin, Journalist, Al-Monitor

Ms Ipek Yezdani, Journalist, Hurriyet Daily News

International Experts

Ambassador Babah Sidi Abdella, Director of External Relations and Communication, Global Dry Land Alliance (GDLA)

Dr. Walid Saleh, Chief Technical Advisor, Food and Agricultural Organization, Cairo/Sana'a

Dr Khalil Ammar, Principal Scientist - Hydrology/Hydrogeology, International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), Dubai

Mr Michael Kropac, Co-Director, cewas Middle East

Ms Aline Bussmann, Project Manager, cewas Middle East

Dr Martina Klimes, Advisor, Water and Peace, Transboundary Water Management, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

Ms Maria Vink, Director of the Transboundary Water Management Department, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

Mr Francois Muenger, Director, Geneva Water Hub, University of Geneva

Ms Natasha Carmi, Lead Water Advisor, Geneva Water Hub, University of Geneva

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

Ms Eileen Hofstetter, Deputy Head, Global Programme Water

Mr Mufleh Al Alaween Abbadi, Regional Water Specialist, Embassy of Switzerland, Swiss Cooperation Office, Amman, Jordan

Mr Ralph Bland, Middle East Region Water & Sanitation Programme Manager

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency

Ms Eva Gibson Smedberg, Head of Unit, Regional Unit Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Ms Esse Nilsson, Senior Programme Manager, Regional water, environment, climate change, renewable energy and food security Unit for MENA

Mr Daniel Magnusson, Programme Manager / Specialist, Peace and Human Security Unit, Department for Asia, North Africa and Humanitarian Assistance

Global Water Partnership

Dr Monika Weber-Fahr, Executive Secretary and CEO

Dr Yumiko Yasuda, Senior Network Officer

Mr Francois Brikké, Senior Network Officer

Prof Michael Scoullos, Chair, GWP MED

Mr Vangelis Constantianos, Executive Secretary, GWP MED

Dr Anthi Brouma, Senior Program Officer, GWP MED

Strategic Foresight Group

Dr Sundeep Waslekar, President

Ms Ilmas Futehally, Executive Director

Ms Anumita Raj, Senior Programme Manager

Annexure II - 7 Principles of water cooperation

The following are 7 principles of water cooperation as outlined in Strategic Foresight Group's 2011 publication, Blue Peace in the Middle East.

1. Water resources should be accepted as a common and shared responsibility.

There was a discussion on the merit and feasibility of treating water resources as a regional common drawing inspiration from the Senegal River Basin. However, participants felt that the Middle East was not yet ready to take such a leap. In the immediate future, it should be possible at least to accept the Principle of First High Level Forum in Istanbul Blue Peace in the Middle East Progress Report 9 Common and Shared Responsibility, though not of common ownership.

2. Confidence Building Measures such as data and technology exchange and the development of common methodology should be supported.

This principle is derived from a reality that you can only manage what you know, and therefore there has to be common understanding about what you know. Exchange of data is often a feasible first step on the long path of cooperation. Despite the difficulties in the Middle East, the Tigris Consensus Statement shows that there is a wide support for the principle of data and technology exchange.

3. Benefit sharing approach should be promoted through cooperation to achieve water, food and energy security.

Water is critical for life because it is the most essential ingredient for human needs such as food and energy. Instead of focusing on quantitative allocation of water resources, it is a lot more productive to focus on how to share benefits derived from water in different economic segments, particularly food and energy.

4. Riparian countries and communities should cooperate to manage climate risk.

The threat of climate change is real but the degree of global warming and its impact in the Middle East is debatable. Different scenarios about projected increase in temperature are projected by different scientific institutions. Despite such uncertainty about projections, there is a need to plan for response to climate risk in a collaborative manner.

5. Each country should manage water resources efficiently.

Trans-boundary cooperation will only be feasible if there is efficient utilisation of water resources within countries. In the absence of efficiency, risk associated with water will be exported across boundaries. Efficient utilisation also involves reducing dependence on high water intensive crops such as bananas and honouring cooperative agreements about extracting ground water. It is therefore essential to have a consensus on efficient utilisation by each country.

6. Water should not be used as an instrument of war and water resources should be protected from terrorist activities and violent actions.

There are indications of new risks to water resources such as occupation of strategic assets by illegitimate violent actors and terrorist groups. There are also risks of destruction of dams and other infrastructure, poisoning of water, flooding of downstream population and cutting off supplies when such illegitimate actors take control of strategic hydro-assets or areas around them. The High Level Forum in Istanbul particularly discussed concerns arising from the spread of the Islamic State

(DAESH) to parts of Iraq and Syria, and their control of Mosul and Haditha Dams in the past and Falluja Dam at present.

7. Sustainable water management should particularly address the situation of vulnerable communities.

Communities are made vulnerable due to natural factors such as drought and man-made factors including inefficient management. The participants particularly expressed concern about the current drought situation in Lebanon. Initially, such communities are vulnerable to water availability, then to active access to water and then to access to good quality water. This often results in migration. Conversely, refugees and internally displaced persons add a heavy burden to the water supply systems. In order to break such a vicious cycle, it is important to give due attention to water vulnerable communities in the planning process.

Annexure III – Publications and Conference Reports

Publications

The following relevant publications can be found on Strategic Foresight Group's website through this link: <http://strategicforesight.com/publications.php>

- The Blue Peace: Rethinking Middle East Water, 2011
- Water Cooperation for a Secure World -Focus on the Middle East, 2013
- The Hydro-Insecure - Crisis of Survival in the Middle East, 2014
- Blue Peace in the Middle East: Progress Report, 2014
- Water and Violence: Crisis of Survival in the Middle East, 2014
- The Blue Impact 2018

Conference Reports

The following relevant conference reports can be found on Strategic Foresight Group's website through this link: <http://strategicforesight.com/conference-reports.php?page=0>

- Water Security in the Middle East, Montreux, Switzerland, February, 2010
- Blue Peace in the Middle East: Media Conference, March, 2013
- International Conference on “Water Cooperation for a Secure World–Focus on the Middle East”, November, 2013
- Blue Peace in the Middle East High Level Forum, September 2014
- Blue Peace for the Middle East Roundtable on Israel-Palestine-Jordan, October 2014
- Blue Peace in the Middle East - Mekong Learning Journey in Cambodia and Lao PDR, November 2014
- Exploring the Water-Peace Nexus: Blue Peace in West Asia, March 2015
- Blue Peace in The Middle East High Level Forum, October 2015
- Women, Water and Peace Conference, March 2016
- Blue Peace in the Middle East: Nile Basin Learning Journey in Uganda, August 2016
- High Level Roundtable on Regional Cooperation in the Middle East: Water as an Instrument of Peace, September 2016
- Roundtable on the New Architecture for the Middle East, February 2017
- Strategy Workshop on Blue Peace in the Middle East, August 2017