



**RESOURCE**

# Water Diplomacy: Making Water Cooperation Work

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**Description / Abstract**

The availability, allocation and access of water resources determine the well-being, prosperity and stability of societies worldwide. However, the demand for water rises along with population growth, urbanization, and increased domestic and industrial use, while climate change acts as a threat multiplier for water and food insecurity. According to the UN,<sup>1</sup> in 2025 nearly 2 billion people will live in conditions of absolute water scarcity, and two thirds of the world's population will be in areas of water stress, which is already leading to situations of unbalanced distribution and tensions among users.

The scale, urgency and complexity of these challenges requires an inclusive, comprehensive and international approach combining diplomacy, innovation, partnerships and new funding mechanisms. Multi-track water diplomacy is required to navigate the complexities of building cooperation, undertaking collaborative or joint investments in shared river basins, and addressing local or community-based conflicts.

This policy brief reflects the outcomes of brainstorming sessions on water diplomacy during the World Water Week 2015 and the 'Water diplomacy in South Asia' workshop (WG4) during the Planetary Security Conference 2016 and presents an 'Agenda for Water Diplomacy'. The main objective of the policy brief is to foster knowledge exchange on how to improve multi-track water diplomacy and transboundary water cooperation, with some examples from South Asia. The main target groups are the larger communities of practice on water diplomacy, transboundary water cooperation, governance, security and justice.

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Tool

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