



DETERMINED STEPS

Follow-up activities and implementation of the recommendations of the Report of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace “A Matter of Survival”

This Report produced by the Geneva Water Hub has benefited from inputs from various actors, namely the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace panelists and the Strategic Foresight Group.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ECOSOC	United Nations Economic and Social Council	UNECE Water Convention	Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
EIU	Economist Intelligence Unit		
ESG	Environmental, Social and Governance Principles		
EU	European Union	UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
GHLP-WP	Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
GOWP	Global Observatory for Water and Peace	UNFCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
HLPW	High-Level Panel on Water	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
IFC	International Financial Corporation	UPWCD	Universities Partnership for Water Cooperation and Diplomacy
OAS	Organization of American States	WMO	World Meteorological Organization
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation		
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals		
UN	United Nations		
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund		

FOREWORD

This is a report about “determined steps” - the activities that followed the launch of the 2017 Report of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace.

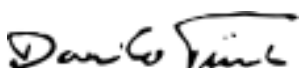
In 2017, the Panel decided to give its report a dramatic title “A Matter of Survival”, thereby emphasizing the urgency as well as the importance of international water cooperation. Consequently, and in sequence, the follow-up to the Panel’s report requires determined action. Hence the title “determined steps”. More importantly, the follow-up to the Panel’s report coincided with a number of other international initiatives related to water which confirm the need to greatly expand the understanding of water as a shared resource that requires strong international cooperation. The experience with the implementation of the Sustainable

Development Goals has enhanced the understanding of the centrality of water in the entire set of development needs of our era. Moreover, the nexus between water, peace and security is also increasingly recognized. This has been expressed in a number of meetings at the United Nations, including in meetings of the UN Security Council; and is equally well reflected in new concrete initiatives and at the global level.

The Musical Symphony for Water and Peace, created as a musical clone of the work of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, has been extended with a fifth movement: “A Call for Action”.

This is a report about first “determined steps” of a Blue Peace Movement, in which water is a tool and vehicle for Peace.

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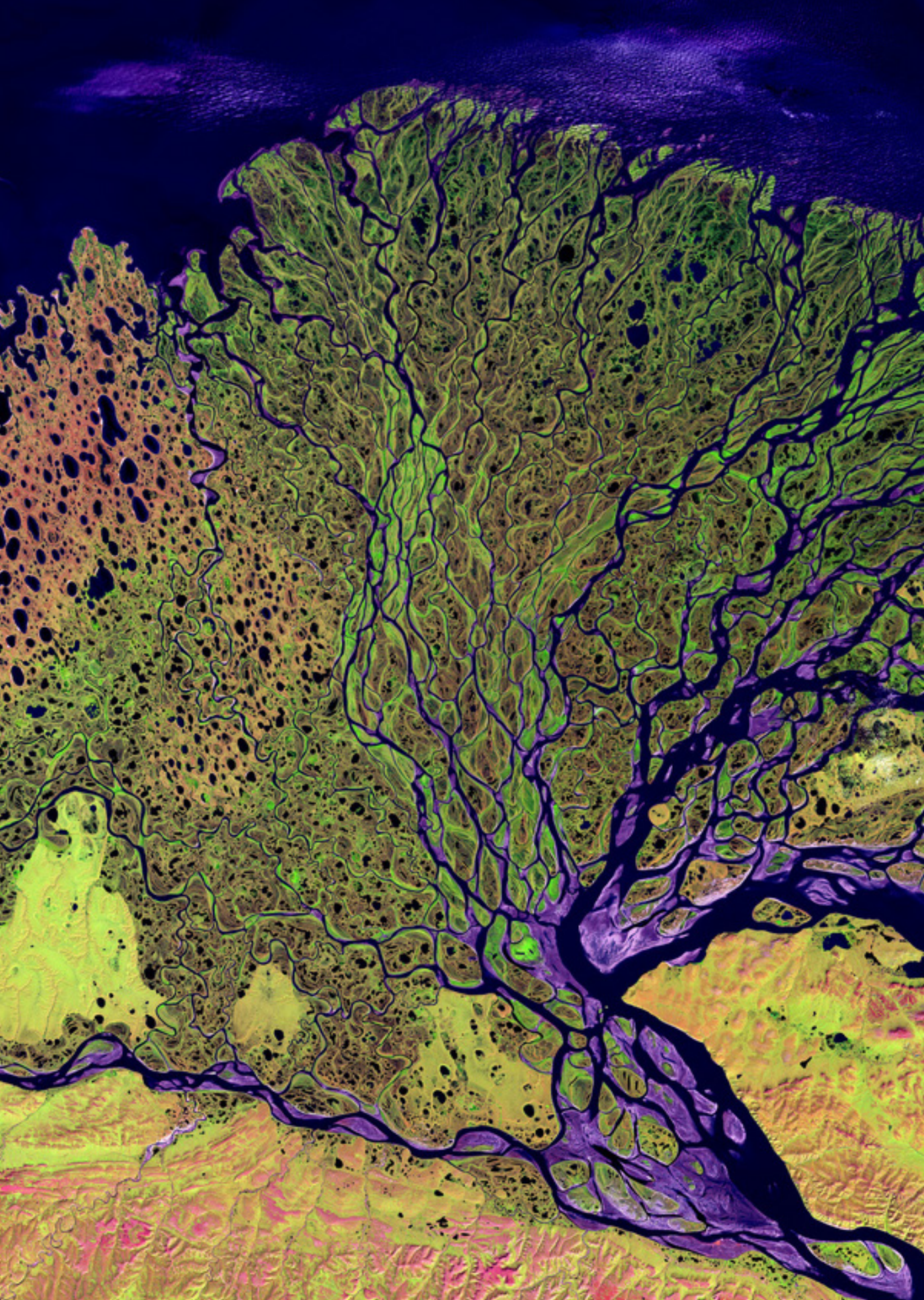




INTRODUCTION

This report is the first document of a series that will be produced annually, by the Geneva Water Hub, Secretariat of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace (GHLP-WP), to follow-up on the implementation status of the recommendations of the GHLP-WP, as defined in the report “A Matter of Survival” (genevawaterhub.org/panel-water-peace). It will cover the related progress and actions carried out by the Geneva Water Hub and its partners in support of these recommendations. It also provides an overview of global efforts towards advancing the water-peace nexus and discourse.

It is expected that the next reports will be produced by the Global Observatory on Water and Peace (GOWP).





1

GENERAL

Since the launching of the report of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, entitled “A Matter of Survival”, on 14 September 2017 (hereinafter “the Panel Report”), the feedback and endorsement of the Report and its recommendations have been overwhelmingly positive and it became clear that there is considerable interest in its recommendations.

The initial activities in January 2018 were the first and clear indication of the existing interest: Meetings were held in Washington and included over 100 experts as well as key counterparts of the World Bank, the IFC, the OAS and the State Department. In New York, the meetings included the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterrez, the UN Secretariat’s Department of Political Affairs, and the International Peace Institute which organised a special event involving New York based experts, NGOs and the media.

Building upon this platform, the subsequent months allowed for intense communications with various **UN organs, programs, funds and agencies**, which gradually set a place for the work based on the report’s recommendations within the UN System. The principal interlocutors include the UN Security Council (both armed conflicts and conflict prevention); the UN General Assembly (launching the UN



Water Action Decade on 22 March 2018); UNICEF (humanitarian work during armed conflicts); the UN General Assembly / ECOSOC (High-Level Political Forum for the Implementation of the SDGs in July 2018); UNECE (Helsinki Convention on Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, now open for accession by all UN Member states); WMO (hydrological data and security); UN Environment (water quality and environmental security), and UNESCO (general issues of water with a focus on groundwater).

In addition, **The European Union** adopted (in November 2018) the updated Conclusions of the European Council on water diplomacy which specifically made reference to the Panel Report, and the Conclusions themselves are generally in line with the Report's vision.

In relation to the **regional partners**, progress was made towards strengthening partnerships of the Geneva Water Hub with the relevant institutions in *West Africa* (in Dakar, Senegal), as well as in the *Middle East* (in Amman, Jordan). Progress was made *with Blue Peace Middle East* and close contacts are being pursued in other parts of the world: in *Central Asia* and in *Eurasia* with the International Association of lake Regions (based in Russia); in *Latin America* with the OAS and with Peru; and

finally in *South-East Asia* with the Mekong River Commission.

The Report and its recommendations were presented at various **global events devoted to water issues** including: the World Water Forum in Brasilia in March 2018, the Launch of the Water Decade by the UN President of the General Assembly on 22 March 2018, the High-Level Political Forum in July 2018, and the Stockholm Water Week in August 2018. Special events organised by the Geneva Water Hub were held on those occasions as well as a number of bilateral meetings and specialised panel discussions.

Similar presentations were made at **other relevant events**, such as the Global Horasis meeting, the Lugano summit on the Middle East and the Mediterranean, the Salzburg Forum organised by the International Peace Institute, the Bled Strategic Forum and the Geneva Peace Week. It is clear that the attention to issues of water and peace has grown due to the general consensus on its importance.

Last but not least, the Report and its recommendations were also referred to in other important panels or documents, such as the **High-Level Panel on Water** and its Outcome Report “**Making Every Drop Count**” or the Sustainable Finance Brief of the **Earth Security Partnerships** on “**The Finance Sector's Contribution to Water and Peace**”.



2

ACTIVITIES RELATED TO SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

The Panel Report includes seven substantive chapters and each of them includes several recommendations. Now, a little more than a year after the publication of the Report, it is possible to summarise the activities undertaken towards the implementation of various recommendations as well as the priority tasks. Specific examples are listed below:

Chapter 1 - The Drama of Water

This chapter was concluded with a recommendation to the UN General Assembly to convene a Global Conference on International Water Cooperation based on the experience of the 1977 conference in Mar del Plata, Argentina (the conference which firstly introduced the concept of “integrated water resources management”). The purpose of the future Global Conference would be to formulate “a strategic framework of global water cooperation and a programme of action defining specific priorities for the five-year period following the Global Conference”. This recommendation captured attention and interest of the UN diplomats and has, since July 2018, led to a discussion on the approach that needs to be taken towards meeting this objective.

The outcome of this discussion to date was the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/226 adopted in December 2018 entitled “Mid-term comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028.” This resolution represents a first step and further action is required to develop specific proposals on the objectives of a Global Conference.

On the other hand, the expected discussions will provide an opportunity to develop specific proposals further and test them both within the UN and in other international fora.

Chapter 2 - Into the Abyss: Water in Armed Conflicts

a) This chapter was concluded with a number of recommendations mainly directed towards the **UN Security Council**. Therefore, a large part of activities in 2018 was focused on the Security Council which held, in 2018 alone, two discussions on the issues of water in armed conflicts; one devoted to Lake Chad (in March) and the other to the general questions of policy (in October). Both meetings were initiated and chaired by the Netherlands. To date, the problem of water in armed conflicts is accepted as an issue requiring the Security Council’s attention and action. The debate will have to continue and

specific decisions regarding protection of water resources and infrastructures as well as post conflict reconstruction should be possible, and are foreseeable.

b) A specific aspect of this debate relates to the question of **protection of water and inter-related infrastructure in armed conflicts**. The GHLP-WP has discussed this question and has reflected on the need to improve the protection of water infrastructure in its recommendations. In addition, UNICEF has developed the concept of “no strike lists” of essential infrastructure, including water infrastructure. On 13-14 December 2018, the Geneva Water Hub convened a round-table of experts in Geneva to discuss the “Geneva List of Principles on the Protection of Water Infrastructures During and After Armed Conflicts”. The discussions and exchanges showed that there exists an important convergence between different organizations and experts regarding the need to establish such a list. Discussions on this will continue in 2019. The earliest upcoming opportunity, will be during the World Water Day, on 22 March 2019, during which the Geneva Water Hub and UNICEF intend to organise, in cooperation with the International Peace Institute, a further discussion on the

“Geneva List” as a reference document with a view to bring it closer to the decision making bodies of the UN.

- c) **Sahel:** Particular attention was given to the African region of Sahel which is characterised by water stress, by prolonged periods of tension and by armed conflicts. In November 2018, the Geneva Water Hub organised a safe space for experts to discuss the current situation and to make recommendations. The participants at the round-table (which worked under “Chatham House” rules) agreed that water is the key to peace and development in the Sahel. The “water-peace nexus” should be at the centre of policy making for the region. Moreover, political aspects have to be an integral part of decision making on water. In areas of armed conflict, a delicate balance has to be achieved between the basic humanitarian needs relating to water and the necessity that armed forces provide security of water resources or even water itself. Military forces have to limit their role in temporal sense and help transferring the responsibilities to the local actors and humanitarian organisations. Wherever economic and social development can be the priority, it is essential to include water related projects and ensure adequate financing.

Chapter 3 - An Ounce of Prevention: International Water Law and Transboundary Water Cooperation

While most of the follow-up activities relating to the Panel’s Report relate, in one way or the other, to transboundary water cooperation, the main focus of this chapter was to support the implementation of the Helsinki Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (UNECE Water Convention) which is now open for accession to all UN member states.

The UNECE Water Convention and its implementation process represent the single most important instrument of international law for transboundary water cooperation in the future. The Convention was quoted in discussions in the Security Council in 2016 and, more recently in October 2018. It is included into the process of implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (Goal 6.5) and the implementation of it will be an important indicator of the progress in international water management and cooperation generally. Its reporting system and the future work of its Implementation Committee offer opportunities to take the transboundary water cooperation to new levels.

In 2018, the Geneva Water Hub participated in a number of events of the Eighth Session of the Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention (Astana, 10–12 October). The Chairman of the Panel spoke at the opening of the meeting and presented the key ideas of the Panel. He also chaired the final meeting (“Moving Forward”) of the High-Level Workshop on Financing Transboundary Basin Development. The Geneva Water Hub organised a side event “Global Observatory on Water and Peace: Towards Effective Transboundary, Inter-sectoral and Local Water Cooperation”.

Furthermore, the Geneva Water Hub also collaborated with French and Swiss authorities to organize an international seminar on transboundary governance of a natural resource in the framework of the celebrations of the 40th anniversary of the world first groundwater transboundary agreement that occurred in the Geneva region in 1978. The creative exchanges of the seminar offered promising opportunities to replicate the institutional and technical solutions in other aquifer systems of the world.

In 2019, the Geneva Water Hub will continue and expand its work in cooperation with the Secretariat of the UNECE Water Convention and other institutions working in the field of transboundary water cooperation. This

should strengthen the synergies between the processes of implementation of the Convention on the one hand and the variety of activities assisting in the development of specific, geographically defined mechanisms of transboundary water cooperation.

Chapter 4 - Quantity and Quality: Strengthening of the Knowledge-Based and Data-Driven Decision Making and Cooperation for Security and Peace

The major focus of activities in this area was devoted to the current ongoing discussions in the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). WMO is intensely aware of the importance of water issues at the time of growing adverse effects of global warming. In 2018, WMO organised three high-level events relating to water issues with a view to refining its own role in the context of the implementation of SDGs. The Geneva Water Hub participated in the preparation of these events, at which the Chairman of the Panel made opening remarks. The discussion emphasized on the importance of improved technologies for the collection of data on water quantity and quality, the development of appropriate models, and the use of interdisciplinary approaches and

evolving technologies, including remote sensing. In relation, there exists the need to improve the general level of knowledge, in particular in the civil service and political decision-making. Hydrologists understand the importance of data, in particular data related to the long term water phenomena and the need to reduce the gaps in the existing knowledge. The role of WMO in this context is invaluable. The audience welcomes and appreciates that Australia has demonstrated special interest in these activities.

It is worth noting that, both the High-Level Panel on Water (HLPW) and the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace (GHLP-WP) agree on the importance of the availability of water data for peace and sustainable development. Furthermore, this need for water data for peace and security has been emphasized by global media during this year with devastating flood and drought events across the globe. To address this important issue and in support of the SDGs and the UNFCCC agenda, the German Government with the support of Australia, invited WMO and the Geneva Water Hub to organize jointly a mobilization for Water Data and Peace that would help create a coalition of Geneva Mission Champions to help push the agenda forward through their national governments. The first event

took place in November 2018 and will be continued in 2019. Such an important and needed mobilisation will have to not only focus on water quantity but also water quality and to consider the additional socioeconomic factors that influence the water-linked conflicts.

In 2019 it will be important to continue and deepen cooperation between the Geneva Water Hub and WMO and gradually combine the predominantly technical approach, which is the strong aspect of work of WMO, with knowledge gained by other actors in the field of studies of changes in water quantity and quality. They include, but are not limited to UNECE Water Convention reporting system and academic institutions with experience in this field such as the Oregon State University or ETH Zürich. The objective will be to improve the understanding of the interplay between the water changes and social situations and the consequent dynamic of existing and potential tensions and social conflicts (both inter-sectoral and transboundary). A specific focus will be placed on the questions of governance capacities and the adaptive quality of socio-political structures to sudden changes, either environmental or political.



Chapter 5 - People's Diplomacy, Inter-Sectoral Water Management and Decision Making

All the activities for the implementation of the Report's recommendations relate, one way or the other, to the engagement of civil society groups, grass roots movements, business and scientific communities and other non-state actors. However, a focused approach to recommendations under Chapter 5 requires specific situations to be approached from the perspective of the mentioned actors. In other words, the focus has to be on the specific instruments of decision-making. In 2018, the Geneva Water Hub has reviewed the current work undertaken for the formulation of a **code of conduct for gold and base metal extractive companies**. The work so far has enabled a broad overview of the major initiatives focused on responsible mining. A great amount of experience already exists with regard to the use of water by mining companies and alternative models of balancing those needs with the more fundamental needs for water by the affected populations and users, in particular with regard to human consumption and agriculture.

In the first half of 2019, the Geneva Water Hub will conduct an analysis of issues related to the future **code of conduct for gold and base metal extractive companies**, which will be discussed at

a specialized round-table involving the relevant sectors. It is expected that this discussion will help to formulate a relevant code of conduct.

Chapter 6 - Financial Innovation for Water Cooperation

A large part of the follow-up activities in 2018 was devoted to the recommendations of Chapter 6 on financial innovation. Those recommendations called for, in essence, a gradual inclusion of transboundary water cooperation in expanded Environmental, Social and Governance Risk Management Principle (ESG Principles), expansion of joint investment plans in shared basins, engagement of the private sector and non-traditional actors, and development of innovative financial instruments such as Blue Peace Bonds and a Blue Peace Fund to finance transboundary water cooperation as well specific projects. These recommendations also required considering the creation of a safe space for pre-negotiation consultations for joint investment plans and the use of the Blue Peace Fund. Various consultations were held to move the discussion on these recommendations forward. This process produced, inter alia, the publication of a comprehensive "Sustainable Finance Brief" entitled **"The Finance Sector's Contribution to Water and Peace: Risk management policies and impact**

investments to support transboundary water cooperation”. The Brief was published in December 2018 by the Earth Security Partnerships. It will be launched in Geneva back-to-back with a Geneva Water Hub event. It explains the rationale for enhancing the interest of the financial sector for transboundary water cooperation, and the ways in which the ESG Principles should be improved so as to include transboundary water cooperation. Based on these considerations, the Brief argues for strengthening the impact of investments in water, for intensified recourse to green bonds and the creation of the Blue Peace Bonds, all of them favouring development of water infrastructure and transboundary water cooperation. The Brief also discusses sustainable insurances and blended finance approaches (involving public funds) and argues for the establishment of a Blue Peace Fund or a so-called Blue Peace Finance Incubator.

In 2018, the discussion generated on Chapter 6 of the Report has become quite detailed and technical. It is clear that water cooperation projects require much more attention by the financial community as is currently the case. The climate related bond market is growing fast - it has doubled over the 2016/2017 period. However, water infrastructure represented only 4% of the USD 895 billion investment in the climate-aligned bond market in 2017. It is therefore important to better use the existing

financial potential, including the green bonds. In addition, it will be important to include water projects more fully into the **impact investing** which represents a growing proportion of the financial capacity of investors. Furthermore, there is clearly a need to develop new forms of blended, public/private financing instruments with more sustainable insurances, promoting multi sectoral transboundary investment plans and therefore transboundary cooperation. A coalition of partners, led by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and including the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Geneva Water Hub and others are working closely together on the development of such a new financing mechanism for transboundary water cooperation. SDC has a key role in getting access to high-level political and private actors and providing the necessary resources in terms of funding, know-how and networking for the set-up of such a new financing mechanism. In addition, SDC is also working with the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) to produce a new Blue Peace Index, which will also play a key role in the context of the new Blue Peace financing mechanism.

The Geneva Water Hub will play a key role in terms of mainstreaming, facilitating (round-tables and workshops) and research as well as building bridges between investors, facilitators of the new financing mechanism,

transboundary water organizations and people (beneficiaries) – also through the Global Observatory for Water and Peace and the Safe Space. In 2019, the Geneva Water Hub will be involved in an intensive communication and collaboration with above mentioned coalition and with other potential partners – governments, financial sector, analysts and others devoted to strengthening innovative financing of transboundary water projects.

Chapter 7 - In Pursuit of Agency: New Mechanisms of Water Diplomacy

Many existing organizations and mechanisms are contributing significantly to water cooperation to the extent possible at the current level of international cooperation. However, an important feature of discussions relating to international water cooperation is the limited capacity of international actors to act collectively and effectively at the political and diplomatic levels and the search for a global home of hydro-diplomacy. Accordingly, the Panel Report called for the establishment of the Global Observatory for Water and Peace (GOWP), as a global platform based in Geneva, to facilitate assistance to interested stakeholders in using water as an instrument of cooperation, in avoiding tension and conflicts, and to promote peace. The GOWP will adopt the knowledge management approach, and discreet

facilitation rather than the traditional dispute settlement, peacemaking or peace building approaches.

The GOWP will be made up of a network of regional and local implementing partners of existing well established, credible and neutral institutions committed to the agenda of peace, using water as a vehicle to achieve it. In 2018, progress has been made with three regional partnerships in Jordan, Senegal, and Latin America.

The partnership includes institutions, universities and think tanks that are specifically devoted to strengthening water cooperation as an instrument of peace. In the fall of 2018, a 2-day extensive mission was conducted to Jordan to exchange and identify potential cooperation venues with the different institutions and their roles in the development of the regional observatory. In addition, the GOWP has been presented to stakeholders interested in the water-peace nexus, both in bilateral forums, and in a side event at the UNECE Meeting of the Parties in Astana. The latter event also explored potential partnerships in Central Asia for the GOWP.

The GOWP will also help to the creation of a number of “safe spaces” upon demand and as needed, which aims to strengthen the capacity of international, national and local actors to communicate discreetly and to address incipient situations that might, if unattended, lead to friction and even

full-scale disputes. In addition, it would energize the inputs to the prevention of possible armed conflicts that specifically include tensions over water among the causes of the conflict.

In 2019, the GOWP will be officially launched through its regional partners, and through specific activities and the creation of safe spaces where needed.

Clearly, the opportunities seem to be emerging as a result of needs felt in different parts of the world. In addition to the most water stressed regions such as the Middle East and the Sahel, water cooperation is evidently a growing need in larger Eurasia and in Latin America. Individual initiatives that are emerging at present are different in their nature and profile. It is important to understand these specificities and design cooperation as required rather than follow a prescribed model. For example, environmental protection and conservation are gaining in importance in some regions in Eurasia, while in other regions, technical issues such as the filling of the dams constructed for energy

generation and irrigation creates the need for better understanding of interlinkages between the dams filling process itself and the broader transboundary water cooperation. Wherever the opportunity for a new mechanism of transboundary water cooperation presents itself, it should become the subject of concentrated action.

In 2018, the Geneva Water Hub has pursued a number of different initiatives. Its delegation participated with a Swiss delegation in the International Round-table Discussion on “**Great Lakes of Eurasia: Legislative Issues on International Economic, Cultural and Ecological Cooperation**” organised by the State Duma of the Russian Federation and, subsequently in the international conference on the subject in Irkutsk. It was a unique opportunity to present at such a high-level the Panel’s recommendations and the work of the Geneva Water Hub, also in the context of the recent Caspian agreement.

This dialogue should continue in 2019 and should include sharing of experiences on water cooperation around Lake Geneva and

Alpine lakes more generally. Similarly, the experience with the Geneva aquifer offers opportunity for exchange of experience and designing cooperation around aquifers in other regions of the world.

In addition, much of the Geneva Water Hub activity in 2018 was devoted to the strengthening of understanding of the importance of water cooperation. It included very active and visible participation at the Stockholm Water Week, the Middle East Mediterranean Summit convened in Lugano, Geneva Peace Week, Bled Strategic Forum, Global Horasis Meeting etc.

Furthermore, and in order to contribute to the definition of water diplomacy, the Geneva Water Hub participated in two conferences organised by the EU devoted to climate change and its effects on peace and security – both of which contributed to the revised Conclusions of the European Council on Water Diplomacy. In 2019, the Geneva Water Hub is expected to participate in the EU activities of the follow-up to these Conclusions.





3

NEW ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE REPORT AS A WHOLE

The Report of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace has catalyzed activities in several fields related to water. While some of them predate the work of the Panel, others are derived from the discussions generated by the Panel. The activities summarised below represent a sample of “cross-cutting” themes that relate to the Report and its recommendations as a whole.

1. Education

The importance of education is highlighted in the different chapters of the GHLP-WP Report. Many actors (academic, international organisations, NGOs) are active in that field and provide numerous courses and programs on the topic. In January 2018 at the World Economic Forum in Davos (Switzerland) seven key actors in the field of transboundary water cooperation (Geneva Water Hub, IHE Delft Institute for Water Education, Oregon State University, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, International Water Management Institute, University for Peace and German-Kazakh University) joined forces in order to launch the Universities Partnership on Water Diplomacy and Cooperation (UPWCD). This Partnership is open to all actors contributing to education on the water

and peace agenda. It will establish a new platform showcasing the different initiatives of the partners that focus on water and peace. It will also provide opportunities for exchanges and collaborations between researchers and students at the global level. In this framework, 2019 will be a key milestone with the materialisation of the platform and with several events and programs that will be launched in the framework of the Partnership.

2. Culture

The original musical *Symphony for Water and Peace*, an initiative of the Geneva Water Hub composed in parallel to the work of the GHLP-WP, has been played on various occasions with the presentation of the Panel recommendations. A new Movement has now been created with a new revisited jazz version of all previous Movements, in order to make a strong *Call for Action*.

3. Women

The presentations of the Panel Report and the work of the Geneva Water Hub has thrown the light and supported the importance of looking at the role of women water leaders in peacebuilding and resolution of conflicts. A basic geographically specific mapping has provided the seed for further investigation and empowerment of the role of women in water diplomacy.

4. Agriculture

Access to both water resources and land usually provide less motivation for migration and conflict at both national and transboundary level. There is a need to further investigate and incorporate the role of agriculture in ensuring stability and an equitable and acceptable quality of life. This is to be incorporated through the water-food-energy nexus and the water-peace nexus.

5. Blue Peace Movement

With the support of the Swiss Government and various actors, a Blue Peace Movement is taking roots at the global level based on a more positive approach to the importance of water issues.

The launching of this Blue Peace Movement, is inspired by the understanding that when countries and stakeholders actively work together to resolve water-related concerns, this decreases in general the potential of conflicts beyond water issues.

With population growth, climate change, and de facto overall development, sharing of water resources will be increasingly highly contentious. But these tensions can be defused by creating a space for dialogue and use of hydrodiplomacy between countries, and “people diplomacy” (as defined by the GHLP-WP) between communities and industrial user groups.

In this sense the engagements for water resource management and equitable water sharing are instrumental for peace building. The Blue Peace Movement encompasses the various initiatives created within this vision and framework.

The engagement of the Geneva Water Hub and the initiatives described in this report are all contributions to this Movement, that is meant to bridge the Global Peace Agenda and the Development Agenda- two vital agendas of the International Geneva.

**The impact of our activities from the perspective of one of our partners:
the Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Use of
Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention)**

“The Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace and the Geneva Water Hub have provided a strong, independent and respected voice on the importance of water for peace. This has initiated discussions at many different levels (from the Security Council, to the EU, to the Russian Duma). The flexibility and the capacity of the Geneva Water Hub and the Panel to engage with different actors ensured a broad and lasting impact.

The Geneva Water Hub was able to mobilize the diplomatic community in Geneva on the topic, among others, through the organization of high-quality debates. It was able to put topics which are not very “sexy” for diplomats on their radar (e.g. importance of information for water management).

The Geneva Water Hub and the Panel added their strong voice (but new and well-complementing the existing ones) on the advocacy on the benefits of cooperation, documenting well the arguments.

For what concerns international water law, the Panel and the Geneva Water Hub were able to

bring together political and legal arguments reinforcing the importance of international water law. From the perspective of the Secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), we appreciate this very much as normally it’s the legal community advocating for the importance of law while the rest of the international community (including UN organizations and other actors strongly engaged in transboundary water cooperation) tend to forget that rules and norms are actually meant to consolidate political will and prevent conflicts.

From the point of view of the Water Convention we see several benefits to our cooperation and opportunities to broaden it: from jointly developing and implementing initiatives (e.g. Senegalo-Mauritanian aquifer or workshop on the benefits of cooperation) to building on each other strengths and platforms to enrich, promote and increase impacts of each other work (e.g. dialogue with the Implementation Committee, at 8th session of MoP in Astana, etc).”





4

SUGGESTED PRIORITIES IN 2019

The summary report above identifies the main activities of 2018 and suggests the lines of action in 2019. At the same time, it is important to define, to the highest level possible, the priorities for 2019. Here is an attempt to suggest a hierarchy.

1. Define with the available clarity the priorities relating to development of the **Global Observatory on Water and Peace** (in particular the existing and prospective regional centres and partners).
2. Define the short-term objectives of substantive projects such as the Geneva List of Principles on the Protection of Water Infrastructures During and After Armed Conflicts.
3. (Continue to) engage with existing (and new) partners to develop a new financing mechanism for transboundary water cooperation.
4. Engage with the research institutes and think tanks such as the **International Peace Institute (New York)** to ensure that water issues are present in their activities relating to the problems of international peace and security.
5. Engage closely with the **EU efforts** to develop more effective water diplomacy.

6. Engage with countries *such as Russia, Turkey and Peru* who have expressed willingness to host visits and programmes of the Geneva Water Hub.
7. Define the *activities within the UN system* in a way that strengthens coordination among various UN organizations, organs, funds and agencies.
8. Elaborate the position of the Geneva Water Hub towards a *global conference on international water cooperation* as proposed in the report of the GHLP-WP in light of the current activities within the UN.
9. Prepare a *list of international events* (Davos, Horasis, Bled Strategic Forum, Geneva Peace Week etc.) where the participation of the Geneva Water Hub would be particularly important.

This list tries to identify only the main focus areas, given that the number of priorities should not be excessive. It will be important to distinguish the immediate tasks listed above and the set activities of the Geneva Water Hub, in particular: (1) Long term activities such as the media outreach and (2) Cross cutting thematic questions such as the situation of women and youth involvement with regard to water and peace. They should be present in all of our activities.

Photo credits

- Cover page Conga mine assembly, El Perol, Cajamarca, Peru.
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- p. 28-29 An aerial view of the area surrounding Anefis and Kidal, in northern Mali.
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The Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace was launched on 16 November 2015 in Geneva by fifteen co-convening countries: Cambodia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Estonia, France, Ghana, Hungary, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Oman, Senegal, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland. Each of those countries has nominated a panellist who has worked ad personam. The Panel has benefitted from the support of the Geneva Water Hub, who acts as its Secretariat.

The Report of the Panel “A Matter of Survival” contains the analysis and the recommendations adopted by the Panel after two years of work in order to prevent water-related conflicts and to make water an instrument of peace. It has the ambition to address the water challenges in an integrated and comprehensive manner, at multiple levels, whether it is by fostering new practices, new institutions, water diplomacy or strengthening international law, among others.

This report is the first document of a series that will be produced annually by the Geneva Water Hub to follow-up on the implementation status of the recommendations of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace.

The Geneva Water Hub

Secretariat of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace

