

Water Talks Series, 4th Edition

“Anticipating transboundary water disputes: how to make use of hydro-political data?”

The Geneva Water Hub is proud to welcome you to the 4th edition of the Water Talk Series, on Thursday 1st February, between 19:00 and 21:30, RTS building, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, in Geneva.

This series is an open-speech opportunity for researchers to expose and explain their ideas, their stances on contemporary challenges linked to water governance.

The presentations, short and impactful, are in English. Following the discussions, our guests will have the opportunity to share their thoughts around drinks and snacks.

For this fourth edition, we will have the pleasure of welcoming the following speakers.

Prof Thomas Bernauer



Thomas Bernauer is a professor of political science at ETH Zurich. His research group is located at ETH Zurich's Center for Comparative and International Studies (CIS) and the Institute of Science, Technology and Policy (ISTP). He holds a doctorate from the University of Zurich and joined ETH Zurich as a professor in 1995. Prior to

that he was a researcher at the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, Harvard University, and the University of Zurich. His research and teaching focuses primarily on international environmental, trade, and technology policy. In 2005, he received the Don K. Price Award of the American Political Science Association for his book “Genes, Trade and Regulation” (Princeton University Press, 2003), and in 2012 an ERC Advanced Grant for survey and experimental research on the sources of legitimacy in global environmental governance. Since 2015, he is the founding director of ETH Zurich's Institute of Science, Technology and Policy (ISTP).

Measuring and Explaining Water Conflict and Cooperation?

The presentation starts with comments on challenges associated with measuring water conflict and cooperation. It then focuses on what can be learned from existing research on structural and policy-related drivers of water conflict and cooperation. It ends with comments on key challenges and pitfalls in such research, and what could be done to deal with them and come up with robust risk and opportunity profiling that is useful to policy-makers.

Dr Fabio Farinosi



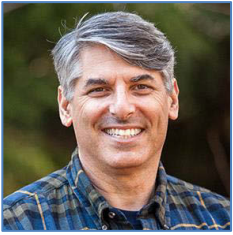
Fabio Farinosi is scientific officer at the EC Joint Research Center in charge of research on socioeconomic and bio-physical dynamics in water related issues. He holds a PhD in science and management of climate change and a MSc in environmental economics. He worked extensively on the assessment of the impacts of deforestation and climate change on water resources in

the Amazon, with focus on the consequences for agriculture and hydropower generation in Brazil. Prior to this, he worked as researcher in environmental economics, natural resource management, and disaster risk reduction at research institutions in Europe and Asia. His research interest is focused on the understanding of the physical and socioeconomic processes involved in the water dynamics at regional and basin level, and the consequent implications for an efficient and effective water resources management.

The use of hydro-political data beyond the transboundary concept.

Competition over limited water resources is one of the main concerns for the next future. The use of hydro-political data allowed in the past two decades to better understand the dynamics that push countries sharing the same watershed towards more cooperative or confrontational transboundary water issues. In this talk, he will explore the possibility to use transboundary hydro-political data to analyze the factors that are more relevant to determine water related management issues independently from their consequences in terms of cooperative or confrontational dynamics. The outcomes of the conducted assessment will then be used to analyze the distribution of hydro-political risk beyond the transboundary scale, with the possibility to identify water management hotspots in the areas where knowledge about water dynamics is limited or not available.

Prof Aaron Wolf



Aaron T. Wolf is a professor of geography in the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at Oregon State University, USA, whose research and teaching focus is on the interaction between water science and water policy, particularly as related to conflict prevention and transformation.

A trained mediator / facilitator, he directs the Program in Water Conflict Management and Transformation, through which he has offered workshops, facilitations, and mediation in basins throughout the world. He is the author, most recently, of *The Spirit of Dialogue: Lessons from Faith Traditions in Transforming Conflict*.

Early Warning Mapping for Anticipating and Preventing Water Conflicts

In general, most parameters commonly identified as indicators of water conflict are only weakly linked to dispute in reality. The world is rife with settings where water quantity and quality are being degraded to where shortages of clean freshwater threaten lives and human and ecosystem health. Yet these are *not* necessarily where geopolitical tensions and violence will result. Rather, there is a key relationship, derived empirically, underlying the hotspots we identify for early-warning mapping:

The likelihood and intensity of tensions related to water resources rises as the rate of change within a basin exceeds the institutional capacity to absorb that change.

This suggests that sudden changes, either on the physical side (primarily upstream dams or large-scale irrigation plans) or the institutional side (eg. new political boundaries, new governments) are more hazardous than “creeping changes” (eg. decreasing quantity or quality). Regions with the greatest potential for political tensions, then, are those with *both* rapid change and the absence of cooperative institutions, such as treaties, river basin organizations (RBOs), or technical working groups, or when relations are especially tenuous over other issues.

This 4th edition of the Water Talks will start at 19:00, doors will open at 18:30. They will take place at the RTS building, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, in Geneva ([access map](#)). Plainpalais underground parking is the closest. Free entrance. However, seating space is limited, we therefore ask you to register at the following page genevawaterhub.org/water-talks4-reg before 31 January 2018. Priority will be given in order of registration.