Water ‘Wars’ or Water ‘Woes’?:
Water Management as Conflict Management

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The World’s Water

- 97% of world’s water is salty or brackish
- Of the remaining 3% that is freshwater, 99% is in inaccessible polar ice caps, glaciers, or deep aquifers
- 0.03% of total is easily accessible freshwater
1.2 billion without access to clean water
• 2.6 billion without access to sanitation

Results:
• 2.2 million deaths from diarrheas and other water-sanitation associated diseases

Source: UN World Water Development Report 2003
Water Wars Are Coming!
Water war makes small splash

Water war leaves Palestinians thirsty

County braces for a new water war

Coke, Suez face a water war

Water War May Extend Kashmir’s Dark Phase
“The next war in the Middle East will be fought over water, not politics.”
- Boutros Boutros Ghali

"Wars of the next century will be over water, not oil"
- Ismail Serageldin
1,800+ State-to-State Water Interactions in Transboundary Basins, 1946-1999

- International Water Treaty: 157
- Military Support: 7
- Non-military Agreement: 436
- Verbal Support: 628
- Neutral: 96
- Verbal Hostility: 414
- Hostile Acts: 56
- Military Acts: 37
- Formal War: 0

Source: Adapted from Wolf et al. 2003 in Water Policy
The Reality of Water Violence
Irrigation and agricultural use

Vs.

Industrial Use

Vs.

Household Use
Environmental degradation, resource scarcity, and climate change as underlying causes of conflict in dryland Sudan- including Darfur

- A 50 to 200 km southward shift of the boundary between desert and semi-desert has occurred since the 1930s
- Rainfall in Northern Darfur has dropped over 30% over 50 years
- Climate change and crop models forecast a drop of 20-70% in food production capacity in parts of the Sahel Belt by 2030
Privatization and Access
Dams
The Promise of Water
Peace
Water Management as Lifeline in Times of Conflict and Tension

- “Picnic Table” talks
- Good Water Makes Good Neighbors
- Nile Basin Initiative
Environment as Essential Ingredient to Achieving Peace

Water didn’t get you into this mess, but...

- Palestine-Israel
- India-Pakistan
Thanks and for More Information

Woodrow Wilson Center Web Page
http://www.wilsoncenter.org/ecsp

New Security Beat Blog
http://newsecuritybeat.blogspot.com