



Friends of the Earth Middle East



Transboundary Advocacy of Parliamentarians over shared water issues



EU Partnership for Peace



Transboundary Advocacy of Parliamentarians (TAP) is a new project of Water and Environmental Development Organization (WEDO) / Friends of the Earth Middle East (FoEME) operating simultaneously in Palestine, Jordan and Israel.

Objective of the project

The project aims at raising awareness among the elected representatives and decision makers in Palestine, Jordan and Israel, on the need to find sustainable solutions to the threats facing the region's shared waters.

TAP specifically aims to bring together, for the first time, members from communities across conflict divides to jointly advocate decision makers on the need to establish cooperative transnational mechanisms to jointly manage shared waters: the Mountain and Coastal Aquifers, shared streams, the Jordan River and the Dead Sea.

Uniqueness of TAP

TAP is unique in that it aims to raise this message not through standard lobbying methods, but by giving local residents who live next to these shared waters a chance to learn about their common problems and solutions and provide them with the tools to advocate for transnational solutions. Thus, farmers, teachers and other local residents from 25 communities in Jordan, Israel and Palestine will be given a platform to advocate on their concerns over shared water sources in face-to-face meetings with leaders of their parliaments and other decision-makers, as well as through the media.

Local water problems, regional solutions

TAP has set up small groups of concerned residents in communities where FOEME is active (eight in Jordan, eight in Israel, nine in Palestine). Each group is learning about their own water issues and how they are bound with those of

their neighbors across the border, hence linking local problems with the regional (trans-border) water situation. This includes visiting each other's communities and mutual visits of important regional water sites. Through the local water issues raised by each group, common challenges characterizing the shared waters in the whole region can be identified and the need for mutual, cross-border solutions addressed. TAP raises this link between local problems and regional solutions before the media, parliamentarians and decision-makers in all three countries.

TAP advocacy objectives

TAP advocates on two main messages:

1. To ensure the long-term sustainability of our fragile ecosystems and an equitable allocation of water, there is a need to establish transnational commissions for joint management of shared waters, specifically to rehabilitate the Lower Jordan River and save the Dead Sea (trilateral Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian commissions), and to prevent contamination and over-pumping of the Mountain and Coastal Aquifers (joint Israeli-Palestinian commissions).
2. There is a need for a more equitable allocation of Israeli-Palestinian shared waters, including an immediate increase of fresh water to be made available to Palestinians. Under the current arrangement, Israel has de facto veto power on extraction rates, takes up to 80% of the waters of the Mountain Aquifer and prevents Palestinians access to the Jordan River. This in return, leaves the Palestinians with little interest in preventing the contamination of these shared waters.