

Practitioner's Workbook

A Workbook for Practitioners Training in the EcoPeace Middle East Environmental Peacebuilding Methodology

Adapted for Online Training



June 2021

Tel Aviv, Ramallah, Amman

Author: Sara Bachmuth Dayan, Writer, Consultant and Curriculum Developer

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ECOPEACE MIDDLE EAST is a unique organization at the forefront of the environmental peacemaking movement. As a tri-lateral organization that brings together Jordanian, Palestinian, and Israeli environmentalists, our primary objective is the promotion of cooperative efforts to protect our shared environmental heritage. In so doing, we seek to advance both sustainable regional development and the creation of necessary conditions for lasting peace in our region. EcoPeace has offices in Amman, Ramallah, and Tel-Aviv.

For more information on EcoPeace Middle East or to download any of our publications please visit: www.ecopeaceme.org

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Designed by: Ayelet Tikotzky

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Color Key

Orange	Skill Builders
Green	Reference Pages
Gray	Unit Headings
Pink	EcoPeace Presentation
Lavender	Experiential Activity
Yellow	Highlighted Components within Units

Part 1

Introduction to EcoPeace and Environmental Peacebuilding



Environment Quotes

1. You will be placed in Breakout Rooms in pairs.
2. Once in the Breakout Room, introduce yourselves to each other.
3. Read the quote together. Discuss: How do you believe the quote relates to the workshop?
4. Share in Full Forum

Environment Quotes

Breakout Room 1

“Our task must be to free ourselves from our prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace humanity and the whole of nature in its beauty.” **Albert Einstein**

Breakout Room 2

“The only way forward if we are going to improve the quality of the environment, is to get everybody involved.” **Richard Rogers**

Breakout Room 3

“We have flown the air like birds and swum the sea like fishes, but have yet to learn the simple act of walking the earth like brothers.” **Martin Luther King**

Breakout Room 4

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.” **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Breakout Room 5

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature he finds it attached to the rest of the world.” **John Muir**

Breakout Room 6

“The environment is no one’s property to destroy it’s everyone’s responsibility to protect.”

Mohith Agadi

Breakout Room 7

“The environment is where we all meet, where we all have a mutual interest. It is the one thing all of us share.” **Lady Bird Johnson**

Breakout Room 8

“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs but not every man’s greed.”

Mahatma Gandhi

Breakout Room 9

“Like music and art, love of nature is a common language that can transcend political or social boundaries.” **Jimmy Carter**

Breakout Room 10

“The earth will not continue to offer its harvest, except with faithful stewardship. We cannot say we love the land and then take the steps to destroy it for use by future generations.” **Pope John Paul II**

Breakout Room 11

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” **Margaret Mead**

Breakout Room 12

“Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.”

Harriet Tubman

Breakout Room 13

“Most people have lost contact with the natural world our vibrant culture, our way of life. We are endangered.” **Sheila Watt-Cloutier**

Breakout Room 14

“We never know the worth of water until the well is dry.” **Thomas Fuller**

Breakout Room 15

“Water is the soul of the Earth.” **W.H Auden**

Breakout Room 16

“When water goes, so does the wisdom.” **Sheila Watt-Cloutier**

Breakout Room 17

“Walk as if you are kissing the Earth with your feet.” **Tich Nhat Hahn**

Breakout Room 18

“Only those who go against the current will find the source of the river.” **Folklore**

EcoPeace Presentation – Opening and Introduction
PowerPoint Presentation

Reference Pages

EcoPeace - Introduction, Background and History Program on Water Security

The following pages are reference pages, that relate to this opening, introductory EcoPeace presentation. Those attending the workshops will learn these concepts in the EcoPeace presentation and therefore, these reference pages will serve as supplementary materials. For those not attending workshops, these pages will serve to elaborate on the topics covered in the EcoPeace presentation.

About EcoPeace

EcoPeace Middle East is an environmental peacebuilding organization that advances cross-border solutions to regional water-related issues. Recognizing that shared natural resources provide opportunities for cooperation and development of trust even in the midst of conflict, EcoPeace brings together Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli environmentalists to cooperate on protecting a shared environment. EcoPeace helps the different parties shift from conflict to cooperation, forging understanding and willingness to establish interdependence where there is traditionally disagreement and conflict. This interdependence lays the foundation for the development of mutual prosperity, trust and ultimately peace.

EcoPeace has a unique organizational structure with offices in Ramallah, Amman and Tel Aviv, where some 60 staff members are employed, including educators, planners, water engineers, architects and attorneys. Through EcoPeace's strong presence on each side of the border, it is able to raise awareness and advocate for policy change and practical solutions in ways that cannot be accomplished by any single country alone. The unique, collaborative cross-border approach successfully integrates bottom-up community-based action with top-down research and advocacy.

EcoPeace History

1994. EcoPeace was founded at a historic meeting of environmental NGOs in Taba, Egypt. For the first time, Egyptian, Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian environmentalists agreed to join forces to promote inclusion of the environment in the peace process, creating a regional strategy for responding to the water crisis.

2001. EcoPeace launched its **Good Water Neighbors (GWN)** project, bringing together communities in Palestine, Israel and Jordan to cooperate over transboundary water basins.

2006. The first **Memorandum of Understanding** to cooperate on shared water issues was signed by the Jordanian Governor of North Shuuneh and the Mayor of Pella, Jordan with the Mayors of Beit She'an and Beit She'an Regional Council, Israel. More such agreements have since been signed.

2010. EcoPeace established the **Sharhabil Bin Hassneh EcoPark (SHE)** on 100 dunams in Jordan, now expanded to 2,700 dunams to include the Ziglab Dam.

2013. Israel. The Israeli government released fresh water from the Sea of Galilee into the Jordan River for the first time in 49 years, committing to increase the allocation from 9 mcm to 30 mcm by 2015.

2016. A tripartite **water swap** agreement among Jordan, Israel and Palestine, included the doubling of water sold to Gaza and West Bank. The resumption of the **Joint Water Committee** enabled 97 infrastructure projects in the West Bank to proceed.

From 1994 to 1998, EcoPeace led efforts to develop sustainable livelihoods (e.g., UNEP report, OECD peace building pillars.) These efforts were aimed at protecting the environment from the lack of cross-border cooperation due to the conflict and overdevelopment. EcoPeace focused mainly on top-down programs, such as publishing policy briefs and events highlighting the national self-interest of each party.

From 1998 to 2001, the failure of the Oslo Accords to advance peace resulted in EcoPeace experiencing great turmoil, both internally and externally. EcoPeace was attacked as an arm of the failed peace effort, with Arab-Israeli cooperation accused of serving the interests of the other side.

In the **transitional period from 1998 to 2001,** EcoPeace refocused its environmental peacebuilding efforts on the renewed conflict, underscoring how the conflict was causing the pollution of shared environmental resources and the need for cooperation. As top-down advocacy work continued, EcoPeace introduced a new approach: **bottom-up** strategies to educate local constituencies to call for and lead cross-border solutions to regional water issues.

From 2001 to the present, EcoPeace reinvented itself in the midst of escalating violence. To maintain relevance, it took a leading role in peacebuilding through grassroots efforts that included dialogue, confidence building and cooperation with cross-border communities. Continuing in the midst of conflict, EcoPeace's bottom-up programming facilitates the advancement of community interests in cross-border environmental solutions.

Since 2017, EcoPeace has gone global, establishing the **Program on Water Security (PWS)**. PWS connects EcoPeace's 25-years of experience in the Middle East with the needs of civil society organizations around the globe. EcoPeace passes on its best

practices, helping to adapt the bottom-up and top-down programs for the specific organizations. Training includes site visits by organizations to the Middle East for hands-on training with EcoPeace professionals as well as international training in countries around the world.

Finding Common Ground in Conflict / The Program on Water Security

EcoPeace has spent decades aiding communities and governments in the Middle East cope with conflict and water insecurity, developing a highly-effective people-to-people model that stresses healthy interdependencies and mutual interests. The Program on Water Security (PWS) connects EcoPeace's experience with the needs of the civil society organizations around the globe. Complementing government-to-government water diplomacy, PWS helps civil society organizations in water-insecure regions develop their organizational capacity and advance security for their communities.

Water Insecurity: Threatening the Planet and People

Climate change and its disruptive impact on water resources is increasingly recognized as a threat multiplier that is a catalyst for conflict in areas around the world. In 2019, the World Economic Forum identified climate-induced water stress – which leads to increased resource scarcity, drought, flooding and water pollution – as the most significant threat facing the planet over the next decade.

Despite the urgent need for action, civil society organizations that focus on promoting water security in the midst of conflict face three major obstacles to making their communities more resilient:

- 1. Historically, organizations have been founded to either address environmental issues or conflicts.** It is increasingly clear that these two issues are inextricably linked. PWS offers strategies for organizations to make their programming more effective by addressing both environmental issues and conflict, whether social, economic or geopolitical.
- 2. Many organizations are not equipped with the tools and means necessary for improving the resilience of their communities.** PWS shares best practices with its partners, developing their capacity to face environmental challenges.
- 3. Organizations are often disconnected from one another.** PWS is building a global network that brings practitioners together to share and learn from one another.

Current Program Activities

The activities include both EcoPeace sharing its experience and methodology as well as allowing participants to contribute their own experience to build partnerships. This mutual learning results in new knowledge and insights that we constantly incorporate into the program.

- 1. Workshops in the Middle East:** We offer training of civil society organizations and practitioners. These include:
 - Meeting with local stakeholders, including government authorities, youth, religious leaders, experts and educators;
 - Attending expert presentations and panels;
 - Learning from EcoPeace's staff;
 - Visiting relevant regional sites;
 - Sharing insights from participants' own work and relating it to global efforts.
- 2. Global Workshops:** We organize international training in countries around the world, developing content relevant to the region and the needs of the organizations.
- 3. Exchange Visits and Mentorship:** Site visits are one of the most effective tools for visiting delegations to gain understanding. Delegations have the option to visit Jordan, Israel and Palestine to learn about the region's challenges. EcoPeace staff also participate in exchange visits to witness the challenges faced by our partner organizations.
- 4. Technical Advice and Strategic Planning:** We work with organizations to advise them on projects and assist in strategic planning. This often involves advising civil society organizations on how to develop projects based on EcoPeace's model and those of other organizations.
- 5. Manuals and Webinars:** Activities are supported by an environmental peacebuilding curriculum that includes a manual and multimedia content. Our constant hosting of researchers from academic and policy institutions worldwide allows us to remain abreast of the latest literature. Together with our methodology, we use this knowledge to advance civil society organizations in our network.
- 6. Networking and Partnership:** Our global network helps the civil society community stay more connected than ever before. By enabling organizations to share their experiences and best practices, we help one another enact change locally, regionally and globally.

Concepts: What is Water Security and why is it so important to discuss?

Water Security is defined as “the capacity of a population to safeguard sustainable access to adequate quantities of acceptable quality water for sustaining livelihoods, human well-being and socio-economic development for ensuring protection against water-borne pollution and water-related disasters, and for preserving ecosystems in a climate of peace and political stability.”¹

This definition highlights the importance of water security in attaining a greater sense of human security. Water is central for food security, maintaining health and hygiene and sustaining livelihoods and economic growth.

Water security takes into account not only a country’s water resources, but also the productive and protective actions a country takes to secure water. As the United Nations World Water Development Report pointed out, **a water crisis is essentially a crisis of governance and societies**. By improving currently unsustainable practices, enhancing national water governance and developing water diplomacy, nations can attain and maintain water security.²

An increasing number of studies show a correlation between climate change, water insecurity and political instability.³ National security is not solely a measure of military preparedness but one that takes into account the well-being of the people. A lack of water security means that a nation does not have adequate and sustainable water supplies and water treatment infrastructure for the needs of its people and industry. This very often impacts food security. Inadequate water and food security put enormous strain on the daily life of the nation and such scenarios affect national security.

An example of particular relevance is the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the most water-scarce region on earth. The region includes 5% of the world’s population with less than 1% of the world’s renewable water supply, with a total water demand exceeding available water supplies by almost 20%. The region suffers from inefficient water usage and mismanagement, antiquated water infrastructure and networks, a lack of legal, political and economic frameworks for management of transboundary water resources

1 Water Security and the Global Water Agenda,” UN-Water Analytical Brief, United Nations University, 2013

2 Water for People, Water for Life: The United Nations World Water Development Report.” World Water Assessment Programme, 2003

3 Peter H. Gleick, “Water and Conflict. Fresh Water Resources and International Security.” International Security, Vol. 18, No. 1, Summer 1993; Ido Bar and Gerald Stang, “Water and insecurity in the Levant, “ European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), April 2016; P. Vitel, “Food and Water Security: Implications for Euro-Atlantic Security,” Report to the Sub-Committee on Energy and Environmental Security of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, November 2011; “Water governance in the OSCE area – Increasing security and stability through co-operation,” Compilation of Consolidated Summaries, 23rd OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum, Office of the Co-Ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities, 2015.

and pollution. In a region as volatile as MENA where conflict, war and terrorism can often seem the norm, water security directly impacts national security. MENA countries with extreme water scarcity are vulnerable to conflict, war and terrorism. At the same time, most of the MENA nations share water sources. While shared water sources can lead to conflict and war, they also provide opportunities for cooperation.

Given its key role, water has the potential to act as a lifeline during conflict resolution and peacebuilding. The willingness to cooperate to resolve water challenges can, contrary to creating conflict, strengthen relationships and build bridges.



Source: UN – Water 2013 <http://www.unwater.org/publications/publicationsdetail/ru/c/210718/>

EcoPeace Presentation – Opening and Introduction
PowerPoint Presentation

Reference Pages

Environmental Peacebuilding

Environmental Peacebuilding

“The water problems of our world need not be only a cause of tension; they can also be a catalyst for cooperation.... If we work together, a secure and sustainable water future can be ours.”

Kofi Annan

Environmental Peacebuilding is defined as using the environment as an entry point for dialogue and cooperation between parties to a conflict.

The field of environmental peacebuilding has grown significantly as an approach to conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This positive trend can be seen in the establishment of environmental initiatives, funds and regulatory bodies and programs, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and national strategies.

Environmental Peacebuilding offers a platform for dialogue and a place of encounter with the goal of improving common environmental grievances as well as livelihoods. The creation of a safe space for dialogue is the basis for trust and confidence in cooperation. These encounters lead to the reduction of negative stereotypes and perceptions of the “other”. The focus on the shared environment combines forward-thinking and aligned interests and therefore has the potential to initiate the communities’ envisioning of a future.⁴

“Working on common environmental threats can be psychologically easier for adverse parties to accomplish in the beginning than searching for common ground to build upon.”

**Peter Haas, Professor of Political Science,
University of Massachusetts, Amherst**

⁴ Harari, Nicole and Jesse Roseman (2008) ‘Environmental Peacebuilding. Theory and Practice’. A Case Study of the Good Water Neighbours Project and In Depth Analysis of the Wadi Fukin / Tzur Hadassah Communities., Amman, Bethlehem, Tel Aviv: EcoPeace / Friends of the Earth Middle East.

Four environmental pathways to peace and confidence building:

Environment



Concepts:

Environmental Peacebuilding versus Environmental Conflict Resolution

The term environmental peacebuilding can be adapted to two different concepts. The first one is the concept that has been described in the previous pages, using the environment as one possible linking element between parties to a conflict to foster peace in an area of protracted conflict. The other is the more often discussed and researched idea of the resolution of environmental conflicts through the common management of natural resources.

The Role of Civil Society and NGOs

“In other words, civil society...is the process through which individuals negotiate, argue, struggle against or agree with each other and with the centres of political and economic authority. Through voluntary associations, movements, parties and unions, the individual is able to act publicly.”⁵

Mary Kaldor

Director of Conflict and Civil Society Research Unit,
London School of Economics and Political Science

NGOs, among many other roles, serve a bridging role in civil society. In so doing, they promote initiatives. These NGO initiatives can greatly benefit from using the tools of environmental peacebuilding. By using the environment as an entry point for bringing together parties to the conflict, the NGO has the opportunity to both help solve the shared environmental problems and eventually, help advance peacebuilding.

Because environmental problems are by nature transboundary and whatever harm one party causes to the environment, the other party will also suffer, the NGO can begin by showing the conflicting parties that it is in their own self-interests to work together to solve the shared environmental problem. Understanding that is in their own self-interests to cooperate in order to solve their problems – it is their own self-interests that they are working toward -- is a much easier shift for them to make than to look for common ground in their larger identity, territorial or other conflicts -- and as a result, is an effective strategy for the NGO. By focusing on shared environmental problems, the NGO can bring together the parties, create spaces for dialogue and trust building. These steps, working together to solve common environmental problems, are trust building measures in their own right – and can ultimately help advance peace.

With environmental issues at the forefront of global concerns, the tools of environmental peacebuilding can aid NGOs more than ever in bettering their societies.

5 Kaldor (2005)

In this context, NGOs, such as EcoPeace, take on the following four roles as external peacemakers:

Roles	Definition	EcoPeace Middle East
Enskiller (Empower)	Develops skills and competencies needed to enable parties to reach a mutually acceptable and sustainable solution.	Helps the parties initiate sustainable solutions that benefit all three communities by providing environmental and political education, intercultural competence skills and encounters, negotiation skills, etc.
Envisioner (Fact finder)	Provides new data, ideas, theories, and options for parties to select from. Facilitates further brainstorming on a range of possible options aimed at finding a solution.	Distributes important knowledge and facts about the environmental situation in Israel, Jordan and Palestine, such as economic and environmental studies.
Enhancer (Developer)	Provides additional resources and help.	Provides the communities with financial resources and guidance as well as knowledge of not only their own environmental situation, prospects and possibilities, but also those of the other parties.
Reconciler	Focuses on long-term initiatives that are aimed at changing the negative perceptions of the opposing parties. Facilitates new relationships based on a shared vision and future.	Challenges the negative stereotypes and assists in the creation of cooperation and long-lasting relationships. ⁶

EcoPeace Middle East is a great example of a facilitator of mutual cooperation between communities in conflict through successful implementation of projects within the scope of Environmental Peacebuilding. EcoPeace helps the three parties advance toward peace by empowering them and providing them with a platform for cooperation and dialogue.

⁶ Definition by Mitchel (1993) of roles and functions of external peacemakers, cf. Harari and Roseman (2008), p. 16

Change of Perception

Change of perception is one of the long-term aims of environmental peacebuilding.

Effective reconciliation requires reversing years, even decades of negative perceptions, from negative stereotyping and de-legitimatization to fear and hatred. The parties need to moderate their negative feelings, explore similarities, rather than differences (especially when focusing on the future) and develop mutual acceptance and hope. There are four processes necessary for a change of perception on a cognitive-affective level:⁷

- 1. Legitimization:** Conflicting parties accept each other within the boundaries of international law and norms, with which it is possible, even desirable, to end the conflict and build positive relations.
- 2. Equalization:** The parties – leaders as well as ordinary people - recognize each other as equals. Turning the rival into an equal partner enables significant interaction between past rivals.
- 3. Differentiation:** the heterogeneity of the opponent group is acknowledged. The other group is no longer viewed as a “homogenous hostile entity” but as “made up of various subgroups, which differ in their views and ideologies” Subgroups with similar values and beliefs are identified and recognized as partners for establishing peaceful relations.
- 4. Personalization:** The opposing groups view one another as individuals with human qualities, concerns, needs and goals.

7 Differentiation by Bar-Tal and Teichman (2005), cf. Harari and Roseman (2008), 13

“In all contemporary internal conflicts, the futures of those who are fighting are ultimately and intimately linked and interdependent.”

John Lederach (1997)

Professor of International Peacebuilding
University of Notre Dame

Pivotal notions in Environmental Peacebuilding:

1. Perception of the future

- Environmental cooperation can only lead to successful peacebuilding if considered in a **long-term** context. A short-term vision ignores the environment and potential consequences of environmental neglect. In addition, it's important to understand that in the long-term vision, the process is linear with obstacles along the way.
- Conflicting groups often have more in common when it comes to their future than when focusing on the violent past. Having a shared future vision provides a horizon for a shared journey.

2. Building Trust and Creating a Shared Identity

- Continuous dialogue on shared environmental issues and solutions will, over time, bring the adversarial parties to a more harmonious state that can advance conflict resolution. While adversaries might not be able to agree on points of political conflict, they can work together to solve common environmental problems, such as pollution in transboundary rivers and streams. Working together on environmental issues helps build trust between the parties and can pave the way for solving greater, more intractable problems in the future.

Skill Builder 1: Positional Bargaining vs. Interest-Based Negotiation- Scenarios

<p>Position: What you want. The stand you take in the argument.</p> <p>What are the parties demanding?</p>	<p>Interest: Why you want it. What are the core values your position represents? What are your concerns?</p> <p>What are the needs of each party?</p>
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Action: What could each side do in order to get what they want?

Scenario 1: Read the following case study and identify the positions and interests:

Town X and Town Y, share a cross-boundary river. For years, the waste from Town X flowed into the river, polluting the river as it flowed downstream through Town X.

An outside organization agreed to fund a wastewater treatment plant in Town X. To begin, the donor required that the plant management be set up and that Town X and Town Y decide on how they would share the management. Mayor X insisted his town be given the senior management role, as the plant would be located in his town. Mayor Y refused to allow this. This disagreement went on for a year and meanwhile the residents on both sides continued to suffer and fall ill from the exposed waste.

Eventually both sides realized that they'd been stuck on positions. "We want to be in charge of the project," stated Mayor X. "We won't allow Town X to manage the project," replied Mayor Y.

When they began looking at interests, it turned out that the Mayor of Town X, a very poor town, wanted to be in charge so that his residents would be the ones employed to build the plant. He felt that the only way to guarantee this was if his town held the senior management position. Town Y, a wealthier town with a strong economy, was concerned that the plant be built as soon as possible and Town X was known for not keeping to schedules. They had no problem with the plant being built by residents from Town X. Once these points were clear, the two sides quickly reached an agreement. Town Y assumed the management and Town X recruited the labor force to build the plant.

What are the positions and interests of both mayors with respect to holding this meeting?

Positions:

Mayor X: _____

Mayor Y: _____

Interests:

Mayor X: _____

Mayor Y: _____

Scenario 2: In the following example, what are the positions and interests?

Community residents were fighting the Mayor over the building of several proposed restaurants and commercial businesses on what had long been a quiet beach that attracts only locals for swimming and surfing. The community was hit hard by an economic recession and the Mayor wanted to develop the beachfront. The residents opposed this. For months they were demonstrating in front of the Mayor’s home with each side exchanging words through the press.

“The Mayor doesn’t care about the beaches, all he cares about is money,” claimed the residents.

“A small group of residents doesn’t realize how many jobs those restaurants will bring to this town’s hard-pressed citizens,” stated the Mayor in a press release.

The Mayor held a Town Hall meeting, and after months of stalemate the two sides were able to resolve the problem: instead of restaurants, a water sports school for surfing, sailing, and windsurfing was opened.

Positions:

Mayor: _____

Residents: _____

Interests:

Mayor: _____

Residents: _____

Part 2

Bottom-Up Actions – Long-Term Investment

*“Communal work is considered an environmental peacebuilding measure in its own right, but also as a means to an end, **namely to change the political level**”*

Sarah Henkel

A. Bottom-Up – Anticipating Bottom-Up Mechanisms
Education /Awareness-Raising/Outreach/Trust-
Building/Constituency Building

Part 1- Background of Jordan River Basin Simulation

Group Activity – 90-120 minutes

The Jordan River Basin – Background Information, Part 1

The **Jordan River Basin** is a transboundary basin: 40 percent is located in Jordan, 37 percent in Israel, 10 percent in Syria, 9 percent in Palestine (the West Bank) and 4 percent in Lebanon. The basin is part of a larger geographic area that includes all water sources and surrounding land. The Jordan Valley is a rich, wetland ecosystem with plants and vegetation, animals and birds. It is part of the Great Rift Valley.

The Jordan River is holy to half of humanity -- Jews, Christians and Muslims. For Jews it is where the Jews crossed into Israel, for Christians, it is where Jesus was baptized and for Muslims, close companions of the Prophet Mohammed are buried just east of the river.

In the story of the Jordan River Basin, we will be focusing on one section, the **Lower Jordan River Basin** that is shared by **Jordan, Israel and Palestine**. Before discussing the current state of the basin and its ecological degradation, it is helpful to understand the shared background of the three riparians.

Israel and **Jordan** are both sovereign states while **Palestine**, not an independent country, has been under Israeli control since 1967. Much of the shared history of these three riparians has involved conflict. Since Israel's declaration of independence in 1948, its territorial claims have been challenged by its Arab neighbors, including Jordan, leading to decades of conflict and a number of full-out wars. The outcome of one of these wars, in 1967, was Israeli control, among other areas, of the West Bank, home to a large Palestinian population. Since then, aside from some Palestinian self-rule, the West Bank has been under Israeli administrative control.

The following bi-lateral accords impact the current relationships:

Palestine and Israel: In 1993 and 1995, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization signed the Oslo Accords. The accords were meant to be temporary, to establish interim governance and self-rule by the Palestinians (with Israeli security arrangements). Even more, they were meant to pave the way for further negotiations and lead to a final status agreement within five years by 1999. Two decades later, all attempts at final status agreements have failed. Though both sides stand to benefit from it, there has been little to no progress.

Jordan and Israel: In 1994, Israel and Jordan established official relations and signed a Treaty of Peace. This led to a cessation of hostilities and a lot of promise of economic benefits and cooperation, most of which at the local, community level has not been realized. The ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of the major obstacles preventing

further development of Jordanian-Israeli relationships in many sectors, including economic and people-to-people exchanges.

The Jordan River Basin

The section of basin that we will be focusing on, the Lower Jordan River Basin, contains the Lower Jordan River, which exits from the Sea of Galilee and flows for 105 kilometers to where it empties into the Dead Sea, the lowest point on earth.

A stretch of the Jordan River forms the border between: 1) Israel and Jordan in the north; and 2) Palestine (the West Bank) and Jordan in the South. Because it forms the borders in this politically tense region, most of the Lower Jordan River is a closed military zone on both the Jordanian and Israeli sides.

This once “deep” and “wide” Jordan River, holy to Christians, Jews and Muslims – half of humanity -- is no more. Today, it is more like a creek than a river and is suffering from ecological collapse. Until 1960, it was a healthy river with 1.3 billion cm flowing annually, reduced today to 30 million cm. For 50 years, Israel, Jordan and Syria have been diverting almost all of that flow for agricultural and domestic use. Ironically, it is the sewage from surrounding communities that is keeping the river alive.

Because the river is a border, rehabilitation can take place only under conditions of cooperation.

The rehabilitation of the Jordan River requires fresh water to flow into the river. As well, there is a need for wastewater treatment plants



to treat and purify the sewage that has been flowing into the river from all three riparian countries.

The area has great potential for development and tourism with many historical, scenic and religious attractions. The Jordan River and its surrounding land contain important Christian baptismal sites and monasteries that draw pilgrims from all over the world. The valley contains many archeological sites, including sites near Jericho, the world's oldest continually inhabited city. But these days most visits to these areas are taken as single day trips as the region is still fraught with tension.

Jordan

There are 500,000 Jordanians, 250,000 of whom are foreign workers living in the Jordan Valley. The population is growing rapidly. Jordan is a Monarchy with Parliamentary System. The predominant religion is Islam, with a Christian minority. National authorities provide most of the local public services. In the Jordan Valley, the infrastructure is poor, with no rail service or airports and there are no big cities or universities in the region.

Most of the population, farmers and large numbers of laborers live close to or below the poverty line. Unemployment is high, with youth unemployment particularly high.

The main, almost sole industry in the Jordan Valley is agriculture; it is a major agricultural production region for Jordan. There is little other industry and there is a strong need for more diversification.

Jordan is considered one of the 10 most water-stressed countries in the world. While irrigation development expanded agricultural production in the area, it came at the expense of the flow of the Jordan River. Diversion of the Jordan River is one of the two main causes of its demise and Jordan is responsible for a significant amount of the diversion. Even with that, Jordan's agricultural sector suffers from water shortages that limit agricultural and economic opportunity in this key region.

Another major cause of the river's demise is pollution. The majority of Jordanian towns and villages have no sanitation solution. Most of the sewage is disposed of in cesspits, which seeps into the groundwater and eventually the Jordan River. Sewage runs through residential communities. There are there two small wastewater treatment plants. In this region, only 70% of the human water demand is met.

Palestine:

There are 62,000 Palestinians in the Jordan Valley. This section of the Jordan Valley includes 13 communities and is under Israeli control. It is governed by the Israel Ministry of Defense's Civil Administration that controls all security and land matters. The Palestinian Authority administers education and health. The exception is the city of

Jericho that is administered by the Jericho Municipality and the Palestinian Authority. Palestinians are mostly Muslim with a Christian minority.

Like Jordan, the Palestinian population in this valley is diverse in terms of socio-economic levels, ranging from wealthy to those living close to the poverty line. There is very little agricultural or industrial development in the area due to stringent Israeli restrictions and lack of access to the land. The main industrial activity is in Jericho where over half the Palestinian population of the Jordan Valley lives. There is one university in the area.

The majority of Palestinian towns and villages have no sanitation solution. All of the communities rely on cesspits for disposal of wastewater save for Jericho that has a central wastewater treatment facility that is linked to 20-30% of the homes.

Due to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Palestinians have limited access to water sources that are shared with Israel. The terms of access are regulated under the Oslo II agreement. Palestinians have no access to the Jordan River. For agriculture, Palestinians rely on small-scale irrigation of communal springs and privately owned wells. 80% of the human water demands are met though this takes into account that the amount of fresh water per capita in Israel is much higher than in Palestine.

Israel

There are 55,000 Israelis who live in a total of 68 communities in the Lower Jordan Valley, including 6,000 Israeli settlers⁸ who live in the Palestinian part. Israel is a parliamentary democracy. The predominant religion is Jewish with an Arab Muslim minority and a smaller Arab Christian minority. Local municipalities provide most of the local public services.

The Israeli part of the valley is the most economically advanced and diversified with agriculture, industry and tourism and a living standard comparable to some European countries. Many residents belong to kibbutzim (agricultural cooperatives) that have successful agricultural production and technology. Though more advanced than its co-riparians, within Israel, it is a peripheral region that is often viewed as irrelevant and forgotten.

Diversion of the Jordan River's waters is a major cause of its demise. Israel is responsible for a significant amount of the diversion. During the last 50 years, diversion prevented fresh water from being discharged into the Lower Jordan River. In 2013, for the first time in 50 years, Israel began releasing 9 MCM/year of fresh water into the river. However, rehabilitation of the river requires much more: 400-600 MCM of fresh water/year.

⁸ Israeli Jewish citizens who have settled on Palestinian lands controlled by Israel since 1967. EcoPeace Middle East, Regional NGO Master Plan for Sustainable Development in the Jordan Valley, June 2015

After years of water-stress, Israel has become a leader in water desalination and wastewater treatment and reuse which could be a game changer for relieving the severe water stress in the Jordan Valley. Israel has two wastewater treatment centers that treat the domestic waste water in the region. Wastewater from fish farms remain a major pollutant from the Israeli side.

In Israel, the human water demands in the Jordan Valley are fully met.

Background Information Part 1- Group Worksheet

1. Read the background information. Then with your group answer the following questions. Make sure your ideas and solutions relate to the local community level only.
 - What would you want for the people in these communities?
 - What do you think needs to be done in order for them to get this?
 - Please come up with as many ideas as you can!
 - How can we improve their lives? Livelihoods?

2. Choose a representative in your group to present your groups' ideas to the full forum.

Notes:

EcoPeace Bottom-Up Mechanisms – Reflection

Education/Awareness Raising and Outreach, Trust Building, Constituency Building

Please reflect upon and answer the following questions (in writing):

- What are the most important points you have learned from this exercise and introduction to EcoPeace’s bottom-up programming?
- What insights have you gained?
- How might you be able to apply these ideas to your own NGO work?
 - > What challenges might there be in applying them to your own work?
 - > What do you need help with?
 - > What questions do you have?
 - > What would you like to learn more about?

Skill Builder 2: Communication Skills - Active Listening

“In the realms of community involvement for environmental cooperation, needs are to be heard and no longer passed over political interests and boundaries.”

Harari and Roseman (2008)

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand, they listen with the intent to reply.”

Steven Covey

“Listening is the missing half of communication.”

William Ur

A. Active Listening – Icebreaker Activity 1 (10-15 minutes)

Procedure

1. Breakout Rooms: One practitioner plays **Person A**, the other **Person B**

Person B – This person will share something with Person A that is important to him/her or that he/she is passionate about. This can be family, kids, work, anything.

Person A – This person is the listener.

2. **Round 1 – Poor Listening Skills - 90 seconds**

- Bs will go first
- Person B – tells his/her story.
- Person A – does everything possible to **not** listen to and ignore B.

3. **Debriefing – back to full forum**

4. **Round 2 – Good Listening Skills -90 seconds**

Back in the Breakout Room with your same partner, you are going to do the the same thing again, in the same amount of time, with the same set up, Bs will speak, tell the same story, As will listen. **But this time, A will listen like it's the most amazing thing they've ever heard.**

Person B – Repeats same story as in Round 1.

Person A – This time, A listens to it like it's the most amazing, wonderful story he/she has ever heard in his/her life.

5. Debriefing – back to full forum

Active Listening Techniques

1. Encouraging:

To show that you are interested and are following:

- “Hmmm”, “Yes”, “I see”, “I hear you,” “Really?” “Is that so?”
- Nodding your head
- Eye contact – look at the speaker

2. Paraphrasing

To check that you have understood correctly by paraphrasing what the speaker said:

- “Let me see that I’ve heard you correctly...”
- “So what you are saying is...?”
- “Would it be correct to say...?”

3. Clarifying

To check when something is not clear:

- “Help me understand...”
- “Could you please explain that again, I’m not sure I understand.”

4. Eliciting

To obtain more information:

- “Please tell me more about...”
- “How do you feel about this?”

5. Empathizing

To show that you respect the other’s point of view:

- “I understand how you feel...”

6. Summarizing

To show that you’ve understood the conversation:

- “OK, I’d like to recap the main points...”
- “I’d like to summarize your main points...”

TIPS:

- The spotlight is on the speaker.
- You are listening to understand, not to respond.
- Don't judge, don't interrupt and don't disagree.
- People often just want you to listen to them and "get them." They don't want your advice or help solving problems. Refrain from doing this.
- The more you listen, the more you will learn. You already know your own ideas.
- If you listen, the chance that the other person will be open to listening to you later is much greater because they will feel acknowledged and respected.

Adapted from United States Institute for Peace (USIP), Peacebuilding Kit for Educators, <https://www.usip.org/public-education/educators/peacebuilding-toolkit-educators#>

B. Active Listening – Activity 2: Additional Practice (10-15 minutes)

In this activity, you will practice the Active Listening techniques that they have just learned.

Procedure:

1. In same pairs as above – 2 minutes

- **Partner A** – speaker - tells about a problem or conflict, related preferably to his/her NGO work.
- **Partner B** – listener – uses the active listening techniques as he/she listens.

2. Together partners debrief with one another:

- Partner A points out which active listening techniques he/she thinks that Partner B used.
- Partner B confirms or explains which ones.

3. Switch and Repeat–2 minutes

- Partner B – tell about a problem or conflict this time (related preferably to his/her NGO work)
- Partner A – Listener – uses the active listening techniques as he/she listens

4. Together partners debrief with one another:

- Partner A points out which active listening techniques he/she thinks that Partner B used.
- Partner B confirms or explains which ones.

5. Final Debriefing – Full Forum

Parts of this lesson were adapted from United States Institute for Peace (USIP), Peacebuilding Kit for Educators, <https://www.usip.org/public-education/educators/peacebuilding-toolkit-educators#>

Skill Builder 3: Communication Skills: Intercultural Communication:

Describe-Analyze-Evaluate (DAE) Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and Communication

Parts of this section were adapted from: edited, Berardo and Deardorff, Building Cultural Competence, 2012

“We don’t see things as they are, we see things as we are.”

Describe – Analyze – Evaluate – DAE - Group Worksheet

Level 1 Describe	Level 2 Analyze	Level 3 Evaluate
What I see (only observed facts). What I see/observe. What is going on?	How I explain (what I see) Why is it happening? (there are different possible explanations)	What I feel (about what I see) – positive or negative How do I feel about it? This is my opinion.
This is done using the five senses, see, hear smell, touch and taste.	This is done when we are trying to understand how an object is used.	This is our judgment, our opinion: For example, something is useful, useless, good, bad, etc.
Examples (see, hear, smell, touch, taste): This is very light weight. It's red and white. The girl's hair is yellow, the boy's is brown	Examples (alternative explanations possible): It is a toy. It's a Christmas decoration It's a cultural symbol because it's red and white. It's something people give to kids on holidays.	Examples (my opinion): It's cute. I've seen better Christmas decorations. It's a pretty useless toy.

Your group's photograph:

Describe: _____

Analyze (write down 2 possibilities): _____

Evaluate: _____

Bottom-Up -- Stakeholder Cards

C. Stakeholders – Bottom-up

Predicting Stakeholders

Preparatory Group Activity and Socratic Seminar

Bottom-Up - Stakeholder Cards

Jordan

For Jordanian bottom-up stakeholders, cooperation with Israel holds very little significance. Since signing the Peace Treaty with Israel in 1994, Jordanians at the community level have seen little to no benefits from the Peace Treaty. There was much initial promise, and currently, from their perspective, there is nothing to show for it. As well, in recent years, a strong anti-normalization campaign – the rejection of normalizing relations with Israel in any area – has taken hold, making regional cooperation with Israel even more challenging. This is mainly due to Israel still being viewed as an enemy because of its continued control of Palestine. However, Jordanians are willing to cooperate with Israel if they see clear, direct benefits.

The Jordanian stakeholders' interests in cooperating with Israel and Palestine in the Jordan Valley are based on their need for economic development. The population is struggling to survive. The poverty level is very high, with huge numbers of youth unemployment. Scarce water resources limit economic opportunities. Agriculture is the main industry with all other industry totally absent. There are no big cities and no universities. There is no sanitation; sewage is disposed of in cesspits, which then seeps into the ground and eventually into the Jordan River. There is a great need for wastewater treatment and reuse. There is a great need for investment programs to help diversify the economy (beyond agriculture) and improve infrastructure.

Mayors – Mayors can play an important advocacy role in lobbying the top-down sector. They want to advance the economy. Most of the population is poor, with scarce water sources and poor infrastructure.

Local residents / farmers – Most of the local residents are farmers. Their interest is in a larger water supply. Currently, it is intermittent with water supplied every 2 weeks. Such limited water prevents economic development and opportunity. Farmers also want access to export markets. They've lost huge export markets due to the Iraqi and Syrian wars.

Residents also suffer from a lack of sanitation facilities. Sewage is disposed of in cesspits and runs through the streets of their communities.

Religious community – The Jordan River is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims. For Jews it is where the Jews crossed into Israel, for Christians, it is where Jesus was baptized and for Muslims, close companions of the Prophet Mohammed are buried just east of the river. Religious leaders can access populations that are not aware of the environmental issues and activate them.

In Jordan there are important Christian pilgrimage, monasteries and a Baptismal site. This small community is involved with these sites and tourism. They would like to attract more visitors to the Baptism site. It is important to them that there is a cleaner, stronger flow in the river.

Youth – Jordanian youth see cooperation as a way of gaining better skills, employment and a higher income. They want to advance.

Tribal Leaders – Jordanian society is tribal. Strong tribal affiliations are a major determinant of socio-political action in all areas. These affiliations can be both helpful or a hindrance to shaping policy.

Local Private Sector – This sector's core concern is economic advancement. This group has the ability to make things happen more quickly than the slower, more bloated public sector.

Environmental groups - These organizations boycott any cooperation with Israel. At the same time, they want to gain more water from Israel.

Peace Groups – These groups support a two-state solution (a Palestinian state and an Israeli state). They do not want Jordan to be considered as a future Palestinian state.

Palestine

All Palestinian bottom-up stakeholders express a strong position on the Jordan Valley: they want their land and water rights. They want to end the Israeli occupation and the settlements removed. Once they had villages on the banks of the Jordan River that were destroyed. They want their right to return to these villages. They want their riparian share of the Jordan River and the water in the West Bank. They want access to religious sites, including the baptismal site, Qasr al-Yahud, which is currently under Israeli control. They want their land back which they claim Israel has designated as nature reserves to prevent them from developing their own lands. They don't want to be employees of Israeli settlements; they want land rights.

They will not cooperate with Israeli settlers (Israelis who live in Israeli settlements located on occupied Palestinian land). However, they will cooperate with Israelis in Israel proper. Through such exchanges, they will acquire skills and advance. They see this as in their interests as it strengthens their resilience to fight for their land.

Mayors – Palestinian Mayors do not have a lot of authority or power. Nor do they receive independent income through municipal taxes. However, if their interests override their positions, they can play an important advocacy role in lobbying the national government.

Their position is to not cooperate with Israeli mayors and citizens, they do not want to be seen as normalizing relations with Israel. At the same time, their interests are to cooperate provided that it is based on opportunities for improving the livelihoods of their residents and is in line with advancing Palestinian water rights and greater access to land in the Jordan Valley.

Tribal Leaders – Palestinian society is tribal to a certain degree. In terms of the Jordan Valley, tribal leaders are important stakeholders in smaller, rural towns only. In larger urban areas, such as Jericho, they are not relevant.

Farmers – They are interested in economic advancement. Cooperation with Israel speaks to their needs as they can gain knowledge and skills through training, technology, agricultural technology and marketing of crops. Also they would like to export more to Jordan, Europe and Israel. They are in need of a larger water supply.

Local Residents – The local residents are very diverse in terms of their socio-economic status, with pockets of underdevelopment in the rural areas and a wealthier middle class population in Jericho. Poverty is generally seen as an outcome of the occupation. The residents want economic development. They are in need of better education, better roads and infrastructure and greater water supply. They are also in need of sewage treatment and reuse facilities.

Private Sector – This sector in Palestine is more diversified than in Jordan because of Jericho, which is the 2nd greatest tourist city in Palestine after Bethlehem and under the self-rule of the Palestinian Authority. The rest of the Palestinian Jordan Valley is ruled by the Israeli Civil Administration, where development is severely limited. The private sector sees working with Israel as a way to advance, deriving benefits from exporting their goods, exchange of knowledge, acquisition of technology and experience.

Youth – The youth cooperate with Israelis who live in Israel proper because they want to better understand their reality on the ground, such as their water rights, as well as understand the other side and then argue for their national case. The youth won't meet with settlers. They are concerned with being viewed as normalizing relations with Israel. There is a branch of Al-Quds University in Jericho in the Jordan Valley.

Local media – The local media report and highlight the Palestinian narrative. They do not report on regional cooperation at the community level. Local media portray the hardship as well as highlight Palestinian ingenuity and leadership, for example, new developments in farming and youth winning prizes.

Religious communities/tour guide – The Jordan River is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims. For Jews it is where the Jews crossed into Israel, for Christians, it is where Jesus was baptized and for Muslims, close companions of the Prophet Mohammed are buried just east of the river. In Palestine, both Muslim and Christian religious leaders can access populations that are not aware of the environmental issues and activate them.

In the Palestinian section of the Jordan Valley, Israel controls the Christian holy sites, but Palestinians can train as tour guides and benefit from this.

Peace groups – There are a large variety of peace groups in Palestine. They are very diversified in terms of their focus – some work on reaching out to the other side, Israel, and creating dialogue, others do not, with different levels of cooperation between the two sides. These groups aspire to achieve a two-state solution (a Palestinian state and an Israeli state). Their interests are in obtaining Palestinian rights.

Environmental Organizations – There is not a strong environmental movement in Palestine. But there are groups that tend to boycott cooperation with Israel. Their interests are in gaining the environmental rights of a Palestinian state.

Israel

At the community level, Israel has a great interest in cooperation, especially with Jordan, which is not reciprocated on the Jordanian and Palestinian sides. Israelis are pro-active in their desire to develop a warm peace with Jordan. At the same time, they see the Israeli settlements as strategic to Israel's interests and don't want them removed, a position that is unacceptable to Jordan and Palestine.

Israel sees cooperation as bringing economic opportunities, for example, exporting to Jordan and via Jordan to the Arab world. Israel would like to expand its export market of agricultural produce, technology and know-how. Like their co-riparians, they often express that they are working for their own benefit.

Mayors – Israeli municipalities have considerable authority and have independent income through municipal taxes.

Mayors are subject to condemnation for cooperating with Jordan and Palestine and are concerned that this could impact their chances for reelection. Like the Palestinians and Jordanians, Israelis residents are fearful of meeting their counterparts, afraid that they will be attacked. When cooperation occurs, mayors explain to their constituencies that they are seeking cooperation because it is in their interests, that it is to their benefit. Israeli towns in the Jordan Valley are in Israel's periphery and only by cooperating with their co-riparians, fighting to clean up the river, advancing their economies, can they become a center, rather than remain irrelevant peripheral communities.

Local Residents – Their position on environmental cooperation, especially with the Palestinians, is based on their political viewpoints, with some more in favor and others less or not at all. Their interests are in cleaning up the Jordan River and creating greater prosperity for their communities.

Religious community – The Jordan River is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims. For Jews it is where the Jews crossed into Israel, for Christians, it is where Jesus was baptized and for Muslims, close companions of the Prophet Mohammed are buried just east of the river. Religious leaders can access populations that are not aware of the environmental issues and activate them.

In Israel, the leaders have an interest in gaining access to the river to increase tourism. The Lower Jordan River is only accessible at 3 points, which is not enough. In order to truly develop tourism, they need access to the river, to help clean up the river and to cooperate with their co-riparians and develop the area.

Local Private Sector – Israel is by far the most diversified of the 3 riparians in terms of both its agriculture and agricultural technology sector as well as other industry, tourism and more. Their position is to not get politically involved. They want to create business opportunities through cooperation.

Youth – Israeli youth see cooperation as a way of solving environmental problems. Some are open and interested and even embrace the idea of meeting and cooperating with youth from the other sides, others less so.

Local Media – The positions of the media are based on their political outlook. The left-wing media is more humanitarian and liberal-minded and the right wing looks at environmental issues through the lens of security.

Environmental Groups - Most of these organizations try to avoid the politics of the conflict and relate to environmental issues as non-political. They are concerned with environmental protection.

Peace groups- Some are committed to a two state solution; others would agree to one state or different types of confederations. They want to obtain an end to the conflict.

Socratic Seminar 1– Bottom-Up Stakeholder Cards Group Worksheet

Part 1 – Preparation in Groups

1. All group members in your group read the **Stakeholder Card**. Then together discuss the pros and cons of each stakeholder. You may use the following questions as a guide:

- Why is this stakeholder valuable to engage with?
- Why would NGOs not want to engage with him/her?
- Why would they?
- What kind of population do they have access to?
- What tools do they have access to?
- What would they bring?
- What are the salient (most important) points?

2. Choose 1 spokesperson from your group to present a general summary of your stakeholders in the Socratic Seminar (1-2 minutes).

Questions for the Socratic Seminar Leader – Bottom-up:

- What are the most important points you learned?
- What challenges would you anticipate in terms of dealing with certain stakeholders?
- What insights do you have in terms of ways to succeed – in spite of difficulties?
- (Spiral in negotiation skills): How would negotiation skills of position-interest be helpful in dealing with the stakeholders? How? Explain.
 - > Do you see areas in which the positions (the stances they take) are problematic?
 - > Do you see places where progress could be made by examining the interests of the different sides? (Remember: to get to interests, ask WHY?)
 - > For example: you think your position is non-negotiable – for example, you need water. Can this change? How?
- (Spiral in active listening)- Were you able to practice active listening skills? Explain how it added to the discussion.

Bottom-Up - Stakeholders Reflection Page

1. What were the most important things you learned about bottom-up stakeholders?
2. What insights can you draw from that?
3. What are the important points for you in EcoPeace’s choice of bottom-up stakeholder groups that you worked with in the Socratic Seminar?
4. Take a moment to identify in your own countries/regions/communities who you think are the major local stakeholders and why they are important as stakeholders. Then answer the following:
 - Who are the bottom-up stakeholders in your community/region/country?
 - What is the importance of the different stakeholders?
 - What ideas do you have for engaging the stakeholders?
 - How would you make this happen?
 - What more do you need / need to know in order to make this happen?

C. EcoPeace Presentation - EcoPeace Model Bottom-up & Stakeholders

D. Reference Pages

Bottom-Up Community Work – A Long-Term Vision

Environmental Peacebuilding and Public Participation

In peacebuilding, three levels of stakeholders can be considered, the *grassroots* participants, whose intimate experiences influence their communities and personal relationships; the *mid-level* stakeholders, such as teachers or local authorities; and, the *top-level* elite members who have the potential to widen the group's ideas, practice and values.”⁹

Over time, more and more emphasis has been put on the grassroots stakeholders with the expectation that they will shift the balance towards ending conflict from below. In utilizing the advantages of strategic engagement among stakeholders, EcoPeace performs a boundary role by “bridging different arenas, levels or scales”¹⁰ and facilitating cooperation over environmental issues in the conflict-ridden societies of Israel, Palestine and Jordan. Interaction and participation across vertical and horizontal boundaries enable understanding and trust which in turn lead to common understanding, goals and values.

EcoPeace strategies combine bottom-up community work with top-down advocacy, together leading to the successful implementation of projects, thus fulfilling important characteristics in the performance of a bridging role:

“1) **accountability to both sides of the boundary**; 2) the use of **“boundary objects”** such as **maps, reports** and **forecasts** that are **co-produced** by actors on different sides of a boundary; 3) **participation across the boundary**; 4) **convening**; 5) **translation**; 6) **coordination and complementary expertise**; and 7) **mediation**.”¹¹

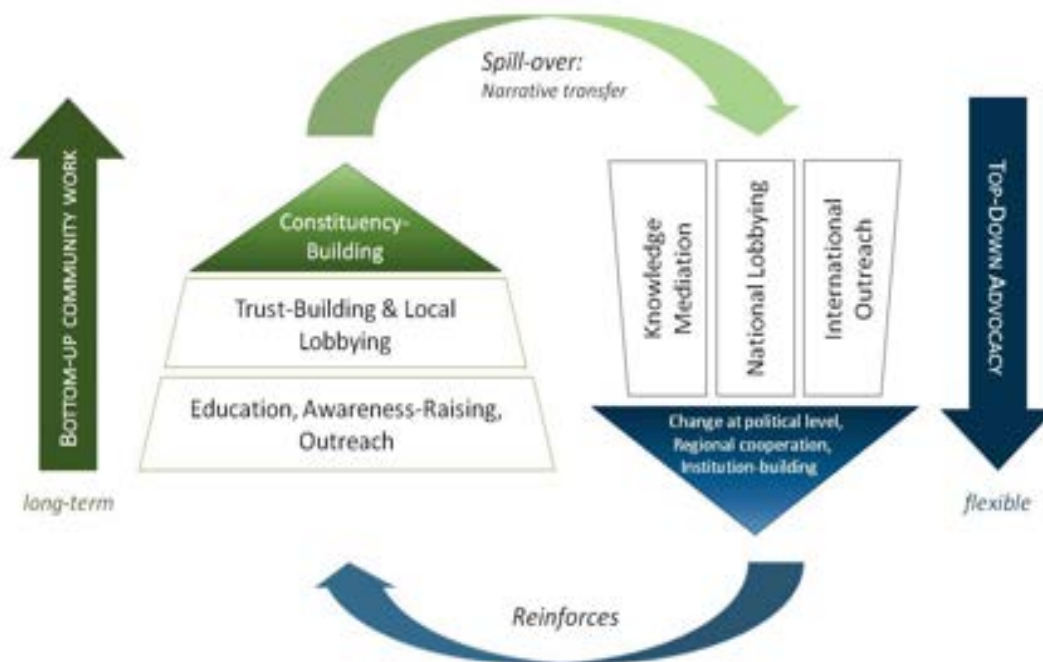
9 Garfinkel (2004) 3.i

10 Medema et. al. (2014), 30

11 Medema et al. (2014), 30, referring to Cash et al. (2003).

Bottom-Up Community Work – A Long-Term Vision

EcoPeace Model



Bottom-Up (needs to be long-term)

The EcoPeace bottom-up approach educates local constituencies to call for and lead cross-border solutions to regional water and environmental issues.

This requires a long-term approach as success is only achieved after years of investment and requires long cycles. EcoPeace seeks to create educated constituencies that will advocate for political change that will have an impact on the environment. These goals, achieved by educating youth and their communities, local authorities and businesses and engaging with the widest possible number of stakeholders, yield results in the long run.

EcoPeace’s Bottom-Up activities comprise three main mechanisms: *Education, Awareness-Raising and Outreach*; *Trust-Building at the Community Level*; and *Constituency-Building* and the *Spill-Over* effect.

Outreach, Education and Awareness-Raising

EcoPeace’s work at the community level involves educating the public about the opportunities of a shared environment and creating awareness of water as a source of regional cooperation. This begins by reaching out to different stakeholders and

the general public in an attempt to educate them. This is accomplished by sharing information about the environmental problems of which these target groups are not aware. As they gain awareness, they come to understand their own needs and interests in relation to these environmental problems.

All educational and awareness-raising activities involve conveying an inclusive discourse on water. Curriculum includes the importance of the environment, broadening knowledge on environmental issues in general and in particular, water as a limited, shared resource.

Education and awareness can take place separately at the national and/or regional (cross-border) levels. This may include campaigns and outreach to the public. Raising awareness can also refer to fostering acceptance among communities for environmental measures such as the construction of sewage plants and so forth.

Trust-Building

Trust building involves organizing cross-border encounters of communities (youth, activists, local authorities, politicians and religious leaders). These encounters reduce stereotypes and fear of the other. They are characterized by an inclusive, non-conflictual discourse on the disputed water resources in which water is framed as low-politics.

Constituency Building

As a result of education, awareness-raising and trust-building, the community groups develop into constituencies that in turn advocate for necessary change at national and regional levels.

Spill-Over

The constituencies of support transfer their message from local community to higher political levels and national decision makers, carrying out a narrative transfer.

The Spill-Over mechanism is given legitimacy by virtue of the local constituencies. Stakeholders include mayors, tribal and family leaders and religious leaders who act as intermediaries between the local political and higher political levels.

Bottom-Up Community Work

Stakeholders

EcoPeace actively seeks to engage with all possible stakeholders. At the local, community level, this includes stakeholders in all areas from local residents and youth, religious and tribal leaders to mayors and local authorities. This horizontal expansion is key in creating opportunities; the greater the number of stakeholders that EcoPeace engages with, the greater the number of opportunities for EcoPeace to get its message out and effect policy. If one stakeholder declines to help, then others may be found. NGOs frequently express frustration after receiving negative responses from stakeholders that prevent them from advancing their agendas. EcoPeace's method is to engage with additional stakeholders to increase the chances of finding support. As well, NGOs often do not consider engaging with particular stakeholders, such as those regarded as enemies or obstacles. EcoPeace, on the hand, sees value in engaging with such stakeholders as they too can prove valuable in ways that can't always be foreseen. This open, flexible approach has proven key in advancing EcoPeace's message and policy.

Community level stakeholders can include any person or group at any local level, including but not limited to: local government authorities and mayors; residents; farmers; the local private sector; religious leaders and communities; tribal leaders; the education sector including youth, teachers and parents; environmental and peace groups; and, local media. The list will also vary according to the environmental project at hand.

The following includes a summary of a few key stakeholders with whom EcoPeace engages, together with relevant descriptions of EcoPeace community programming.

1. Local Advocacy and Cross Border Cooperation

Local Authorities

In terms of the highly unstable environment caused by intractable conflicts, working with local authorities often has greater leverage regarding urgent challenges for development and involvement than more inflexible national authorities. Mid-level leaders are positioned in such a way that they are connected to both the grassroots and elite levels. They have the advantage of not being controlled by the national authorities and at the same time, they know the reality and experiences of local residents struggling with environmental hazards. As mid-level leaders, they are neither in the national or international spotlight. They tend to be more flexible regarding shifting attitudes and

concrete action than top-level leaders. This flexibility is important for building vertical and horizontal relationships that are necessary to sustain a process of change.

EcoPeace works closely with the mayors of communities in Jordan, Israel and Palestine. Local authorities hold a key position in conflict situations and can be part of the establishment and maintaining of peace.

As part of EcoPeace’s strategy, mayors of partnering communities sign Memorandums of Understanding in which they commit to cooperation and engagement in shared environmental challenges. While these MOUs are not official agreements, they mark the first step in establishing long-term relationships and trust between communities. By signing such documents, local authority leaders communicate the conviction to their residents that cooperation with former adversaries is the right path to solve ecological problems and build sustainable peace in the region. In this way, Priority Initiatives, environmental challenges of cross -border communities in need of joint attention, become subject to municipal and local authority commitment and action. EcoPeace provides support by initiating meetings and providing publications of updated data available to the public.

Such activities not only influence public attitudes toward cooperation but may also advance national political will, as they are a “statement to the outside world that will and belief for cooperation and peaceful coexistence do exist.”¹²

2. Education

EcoPeace’s work in education occupies a place of special importance. The stakeholders include high school students and teachers, alumni, parents, young professionals and educational institutions and ministries.

The 26 years of experience of EcoPeace has led it to understand that an essential ingredient needed to create top-down political will is a long-term investment in bottom-up community-based environmental and climate education. Educational programs that link peace and sustainability issues, at both the national and regional levels, help create the needed public constituencies that support leaders to move towards cooperation and reject unilateralism. When communities living on either side of a shared water basin come to understand that their futures are dependent on the actions of their neighbors, as much as their own behavior, then they can become powerful actors calling on their leaders to cooperate across the border, as a matter of self-interest, if not survival, of their own communities.

12 Harari and Roesman (2008), 18

Education provides democratic structures for social-learning processes, open discourses and communications, repeated interaction and work toward sustainability, collective goals, creating meaning, trust-building and feelings of ownership of solutions and decisions for environmental challenges.¹³

Environmental peacebuilding education promotes critical thinking, encouraging youngsters to ask questions and discover interconnections. This learning process results in a shift to seeing great challenges as opportunities for change. It allows for dialogue and interaction and insight into the realities of neighboring communities across the border that are coping with the same issues. They acquire knowledge and awareness that is combined with personal experience and experimentation that help develop activist capabilities and willingness to cooperate with their peers.¹⁴

Education is a core component of environmental peacebuilding in both enhancing society as well as the ability to change local forms of knowledge and concerns that feed into the ongoing decision-making processes.¹⁵ Only when the affected communities are involved, the robustness of knowledge, plurality of views as well as sharing responsibility and enhancing trust can be ensured.

Creating a regional perspective expands youth perspectives. “For youth in the formative years of identity consolidation and establishing their place in various groups of belonging, experiential learning on regional environmental issues allows them to expand their sense of belonging to include their immediate environment’s watershed and its complexities.”¹⁶

Good Water Neighbors

Good Water Neighbors is a cross-border education and community-based awareness program that has been running for nearly a decade. The program includes school programs that have educated thousands of Jordanian, Israeli and Palestinian youth about the interdependent nature of water resources, the environmental impact and need for cooperation.

13 Cf Medem et al. (2014:31)

14 Lipman Avizhar and Backleh (2013), 6. Cf Medem et al. (2014:31)

15 Cf Medem et al. (2014:31)

16 Lipman Avizhar and Backleh (2013), 6.

The main components of the Good Water Neighbors programming include:

- **National High School Programs – Youth and Teachers**

EcoPeace has developed national school programs for youth, ages 15-18 in Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli high schools. EcoPeace helps develop lesson plans that both expand existing school curriculum and introduce new curriculum. Adapting to the differing needs and circumstances, in Israel specifically, EcoPeace has developed a water diplomacy program that annually reaches over 3,000 high school students in 80 high schools, representing all sectors of Israeli society. In Palestine and Jordan, in a different configuration, EcoPeace has similarly helped develop unique interdisciplinary lesson plans that enable youth to become better informed and equipped to deal with environmental, water and climate challenges.

The high school students learn about the effects of long-running regional conflicts on transboundary water sources, including shared rivers, lakes and the Mediterranean Sea. The curriculum includes sections on water technology as well as negotiation skills that give students real-world tools for moving from a reality of conflict to one of cooperation. In addition, students are taken on water tours in which they visit the water sources to see first-hand the pollution and degradation as well as areas of restoration and success. They visit desalination and wastewater treatment plants and meet with local stakeholders. The programs culminate in **student projects** in which **students come up with and implement solutions** that will impact on these shared environmental problems.

Solutions that students come up include a broad range of advocacy actions. These include awareness campaigns and environmental actions, such as campaigning to clean up rivers, circulating petitions, asking municipal and national decision makers to invest in cleaning up waterways, creating workshops for others to learn about water conservation and shared water realities.

An extension of the high school programs includes additional EcoPeace support for programs initiated by students-- in response to what they learn in these programs -- and include events, such as Model United Nations conferences and Debating tournaments with environmental themes and topics. These initiatives further raise awareness in new student populations and allow students to advocate to their own peer groups.

- **High School Teacher Training – National and Regional**

The high school program includes both national and regional teacher training. In **National Training**, the teachers' understanding of the water diplomacy and environment curriculum is deepened through experiential workshops and national tours of shared water basins. In **Regional Training**, teachers meet with their peers (Jordanian, Israeli

and Palestinian teachers). For most of the teachers, it is their first encounter with peers from the other sides. It is an important step in trust-building, stereotype reduction and coming together to learn, reflect upon and look for ways to cooperate on shared regional environmental problems. These meetings are followed-up with online webinars and reunions.

- **Youth Water Trustees – youth (ages 15-18)**

Each year, EcoPeace creates groups of youth trustees from Israel, Palestine and Jordan (12 from each community) to focus on environmental education and join the regional Youth Water Trustees track. Transboundary water problems are recognized as a meeting point to create positive interaction amongst youth of the region. Trustees meet one another in person at regional camps in Jordan and participate in trainings, simulations, master classes and delegations that deepen their knowledge about shared environmental problems, climate change and regional security. They plan and implement climate change initiatives, focusing on developing ways to create dialogue with the decision makers and other stakeholders, while developing local, regional and global networks. The trustees are also deeply involved in national school programs as local organizers and guest speakers.

- **Water Diplomacy for Young Professionals (ages 21-35)**

The Water Diplomacy for Young Professionals track is a regional leadership group of young leaders from Palestine, Israel and Jordan. The young professionals are at the early stages of their careers and include university students, young water professionals and young political leaders. The program brings them together in a series of national and regional workshops where they interact and explore together solutions for transboundary environmental issues. Together with the Pathways Institute for Negotiation Education, EcoPeace developed a Climate Change Toolkit for use in training the Young Water diplomats. They learn of water realities and regional environmental issues; communication and negotiation skills; conflict management and resolution; and track II diplomacy. In the training they consider international cases, trends and developments, so as to position them as global agents of change.

- **EcoPeace Alumni**

The Alumni program makes it possible for participants to remain involved and to continue contributing to environmental peacemaking with the skills that they've built up through their years in the program.

Youth Water Trustee Alumni have the opportunity to go to camps and take part in delegations, both at home and abroad. The Alumni training program strengthens the entire project's effectiveness by keeping program participants involved as alumni and utilizing their environmental peacebuilding experience and training to expand capacity:

assigning them leadership roles at cross-border camps or other education events, providing skills and opportunities for them to guide environmental peacemaking hikes and outings, and assigning them with either teaching responsibilities or a teaching apprenticeship.

- **Green Social Entrepreneurship (ages 21-35)**

The Green Social Entrepreneurship track will be launched in 2021 and targets students and graduates from environmental science and environmental engineering faculties, young entrepreneurs and young water professionals. The program aims to advance innovative green enterprises that generate social value and create a cohort of young Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian entrepreneurs who cooperate to build shared prosperity and sustainable development in the region. The program will start with pre-incubation activities focused on the initial development of green initiatives, followed by regional workshops, the building of a regional network of entrepreneurs and a long-term program consisting of an incubator and a regional center of excellence.

- **Digital Activities and Virtual Technology**

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in early 2020, EcoPeace accelerated and expanded the scope of its digital strategy, adding a variety of virtual and online educational activities that will be integrated into existing programs. The EcoPeace strategy is not to just mitigate current challenges, but to develop a virtual immersive meeting environment for cross-border, people-to-people, activities. The content incorporates a combination of virtual and zoom-meetings, presentations and video clips as well as virtual versions of EcoPeace water tours / neighbors' path tours that can be experienced while in the virtual world

3. Interfaith Efforts

Religious Leaders

“The greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture.”¹⁷

An effective way to reach local communities is through persons of trust who have leverage to influence people and governments. Faith leaders fit this description, they have the potential to effect change at all levels, grassroots, elites and institutional structures.

In environmental peacebuilding, religious actors can serve as educators and institution builders. They address environmental challenges and develop long-term practices and institutions conducive to ecological well-being in society. For example, they can sensitize society to the inequities in the system, foster understanding of environmental degradation and build skills for advocacy and shared responsibility. As institution builders, they develop strategies for responding to environmental challenges by drawing upon related values and recommendations of their religious traditions.¹⁸

EcoPeace recognizes the importance of bringing together for peace and the environment the three most prominent faiths in the region. EcoPeace encourages activities and events in multi-faith group settings to increase tolerance and understanding. Additionally, EcoPeace provides materials and online resources that include faith-based declarations on the environment and how the environment is incorporated in the Abrahamic traditions. Religious leaders and educators receive guidance in teaching environmental issues, for example, the Jordan River’s current condition and relevance to religious, ecological and economic matters.

Jewish Tradition

“Look at my works! See how beautiful they are – how excellent! For your sake I created them all. See to it that you do not spoil and destroy My world; for if you do, there will be no one else to repair it.”

--Midrash Kohelet Rabbah

¹⁷ Lederach 1994, cited in Harari and Roseman (2008)

¹⁸ Wang (2014:74)

Christian Tradition

“...man’s dominion cannot be understood as license to abuse, spoil, squander or destroy what God has made to manifest his glory. That dominion cannot be anything other than a stewardship in symbiosis with all creatures...At the risk of destroying himself, man may not reduce to chaos or disorder, or worse still, destroy God’s bountiful treasures.

Father Lanfranco Serrini

Muslim Tradition

“Verily, this world is sweet and appealing, and Allah placed you as vicegerents therein; He will see what you do.”

Sahih Muslim, Musnad Ahmad Bin Hanabal

E. After EcoPeace Presentation - Personal Reflection on stakeholders / Sharing ideas

G. EcoPeace Presentation - Good Water Neighbors

H. Reference Pages – Practitioners’ Workbook

Bottom-Up Programming

Good Water Neighbors

Good Water Neighbors

The Good Water Neighbors (GWN) is a project in which **Palestinian, Israeli and Jordanian communities are partnered with a neighboring community on the other side of the border / political divide**. They are paired up based on shared watersheds and/or water sources, including rivers, lakes and seas. The project includes 28 cross-border communities in the region: 11 Palestinian communities, 9 Israeli communities and 8 Jordanian communities. The project utilizes the mutual dependence on shared water resources as a basis for developing dialogue and cooperation. In each community, field staff work in close partnership with youth, adults and municipalities to create awareness of their own and their neighboring community’s water and environmental reality. By undertaking concrete activities, highly relevant to the needs of the communities involved, the project aims to promote common understanding as regards water and environmental issues and build trust between communities as the basis for conflict resolution and peace building.

Components of Good Water Neighbors include:

Youth Water Trustees

EcoPeace creates groups of youth in the participating communities that focus on environmental education. Transboundary water problems are recognized as a meeting point to create positive interaction amongst youth of the region.

Regional Youth Meetings

These youth participate in cross border camps that provide an opportunity for youth to cross the conflict divide and gain a real sense of how their neighbors live. They learn what their communities look like and gain an understanding of their neighbors’ water reality.

Resource Guide for Environmental Educators

EcoPeace has written a resource guide for educators that includes a wealth of hands-on environmental activities for youth as well as promoting EcoPeace’s environmental

peacebuilding messages. The program comprises experiential activities through which middle and high school age youth learn topics related to the resource of water, promoting conservation, shared responsibility and regional water management. The guide is geared toward developing tolerance and openness among neighboring communities in Israel, Palestine and Jordan and understanding the vast potential of the environment and water as a tool of mediation and connection among these communities.

Eco Facilities

An important component of the Youth Water Trustees educational program involves learning about ecological building practices that cater to the everyday needs of communities. They learn the importance of minimizing negative environmental impacts and creating and sustaining mutually beneficial relationships with all elements of local ecology. Examples of model Eco facilities built over the years that showcase water conservation include, rainwater harvesting systems, grey water recycling facilities, mud-building techniques used for outdoor seating areas and outdoor classrooms.

Community GIS (youth)

The community's involvement in creating GIS maps was one more step in raising local awareness about the state of the environment in general and water issues in particular.

Part 3

Top-Down Advocacy – Must Be Flexible

*Communal work is considered an environmental peacebuilding measure in its own right, but also as a means to an end, **namely to change the political level.***

A. Skill Builder 4 – Narrative Construction/Storytelling

“The narratives that EcoPeace conveys to decision makers in the three countries adapt to the respective context and interests but serve a joint goal: facilitating cooperation. All three EcoPeace entities seek to convince their governments and decision makers that it is in their interests to cooperate regionally.”



Constructing Narratives – Practitioner Worksheet

1. You are an NGO. Reflect back on the three different riparians that you learned about in the bottom-up section. You will focus specifically on mayors – a Jordanian mayor, an Israeli mayor and a Palestinian mayor. How do their interests differ in terms of rehabilitating the Jordan Valley? As an NGO, how would you persuade each mayor to become interested in regional cooperation for rehabilitation and development of the Jordan Valley?

How would you express this? How would you appeal to the mayor? Construct a narrative for each mayor and write it in the lines below.

You may use the following to help you construct your narrative:

- **Jordan:** Jordanian mayors can play an important advocacy role in lobbying the national government. They want to advance the economy. Most of the population is poor, with scarce water sources and poor infrastructure. Jordanian mayors do not want to be officially in contact with Israelis because of the anti-normalization pressure in Jordan. However, they very much want to advance the economy.
- **Palestine:** Palestinian mayors can play an important advocacy role in lobbying the national government. They refuse to cooperate with Israel as they do not want to be seen as normalizing relations. At the same time, they will cooperate if they see that cooperation can improve the livelihoods of their residents and help advance their water rights and access to land in the Jordan Valley.
- **Israel:** Israeli mayors can play an important advocacy role in lobbying the national government. Israel mayors in the Jordan Valley very much want to cooperate with Jordan and Palestine. They understand that their only way to advance is through cooperation by fighting to clean up the river, advancing their economies and making the Jordan Valley a center. Mayors are subject to condemnation for cooperating with Jordan and Palestine and are concerned that this could impact their chances for reelection. When cooperation occurs, mayors explain to their constituencies that they are seeking cooperation because it is in their interests, that it is to their benefit.

2. Construct your own autobiographical timeline _____

3. Practice constructing a narrative/s for your own NGO _____

Part 2 - The Jordan River Basin – Background Information

Though the Lower Jordan River Basin is a transboundary water basin, shared by Israel, Jordan and Palestine, there is no regional authority, such as a joint Jordan River Basin commission, that governs and works with all three riparians. Instead, what governs water issues are the two bi-lateral agreements introduced in part 1 of the background information. Both agreements are ineffective for properly regulating the shared Jordan River Basin, in which actions of each riparian either harm or benefit the others. The result is that the Jordan River, a river that is holy to Christians, Muslims and Jews, half of humanity is in dire jeopardy:

Israel-Jordan: The 1994 Israeli-Jordanian Peace Treaty established a Joint Water Committee and includes a provision for the handling of water issues. However, it does not include anything specific about joint regulation of the Jordan River. Part of the peace treaty includes a fixed amount of water that Israel delivers to Jordan every year. However, Jordan finds itself with a huge water deficit and in need of renegotiating the water agreement with Israel.

Palestine-Israel: Part of the Oslo Accords known as *Oslo II*, includes Article 40, a set of provisions for the joint Israeli-Palestinian governance of water which included the establishment of a Joint Water Committee. Like the Oslo Accords in general, Article 40 was meant to be an interim measure for five years till 1999. Two decades later, there has been no progress, there is almost no cooperation between the two riparians and Article 40 – which was meant to last for five years only -- still governs water and sanitation issues between Israel and Palestine.

The Israeli government does not officially recognize Palestine as a riparian to the Jordan River. It maintains that this will be part of final status negotiations on borders and whether the Jordan Valley would even remain in Palestine or be annexed by Israel. For its part, the Palestinian government states that these points – riparian water rights and the Jordan River border – are not even up for discussion. In other words, there is an absolute deadlock and no progress, leaving in jeopardy the entire rehabilitation of the river and development of the valley – that could restore the flow of the river and bring economic relief to the valley and its populations.

Rather than regional cooperation, what exists among the three riparians is unilateralism: Each side blames the others for the demise of the Jordan River, the pollution, diversion and water scarcity. The three co-riparians are engaged in a blame game in which they

accuse and blame one another for the pollution and diversion. There is no precise understanding of exactly what the causes are for the demise and how much each co-riparian is contributing. For example, how much diversion of the Jordan River is each riparian responsible for? It is not clear at all; each country possesses its own data and information.

Jordan

Jordanian decision makers understand that the country must advance cooperation on a regional level. There is an existing plan. They understand that there is a need for a serious effort to restore the flow of the Jordan River. However, the reality is that understanding and support do not always get translated into action. Investing in the Jordan Valley is not a high enough priority for the government. They see it as a waste of money, with no benefits, pointing out that there have been no benefits from a peace treaty with Israel. They see it as a rural area that doesn't bring much political capital in the way of election victories. The result is a vicious cycle of a lack of political interest, under development and environmental demise.

Huge investments are required to develop the Jordanian section of the Jordan valley – to begin with, there isn't even a sanitation system. If Jordan were to cooperate regionally with Israel and Palestine, then such cooperation would be seen as a peace project and allow Jordan to receive international grants rather than loans which it cannot afford to pay back. However, the strong anti-normalization movement in Jordan against Israel makes any cooperation hugely unpopular.

Israel

In Israel, among decision makers there is general support for regional cooperation in developing the Jordan Valley. Israel shares its longest border with Jordan and benefits from the stability of Jordan in an unstable region. At the moment, Jordan is experiencing a huge influx of refugees from the Syrian and Iraqi wars, many of whom live in the Jordan Valley. An impoverished, financially stretched Jordanian Jordan Valley could destabilize the area and lead to radicalization, right on Israel's border. Israeli-Jordanian relations are very cold.

Israel has become a leader in desalinated water and wastewater treatment and reuse. It no longer relies on the Sea of Galilee, the main source of the lower Jordan River for drinking water. This means, as mentioned in part 1, the Israeli government was able to begin releasing 9 mcm of fresh water from the Sea of Galilee into the Jordan River. The government committed to 30 mcm but this is yet to be realized. This demonstrates Israel's position as a water tech leader and the potential this has to be a game changer in regional cooperation in this water scarce region.

Palestine

The Palestinian section of the Lower Jordan Valley, except for Jericho, is under full Israeli governance. The Palestinians have no access to the Jordan River and most of the land in their section of the Jordan Valley. Every large project, such as a water treatment facility, has to be approved by the Joint Water Committee and Israel Civil Administration. Most requests by Palestinians end up in long bureaucratic delays and are ultimately rejected mainly because of the Israeli government's policy to limit Palestinian development in the area.

While Israel recognized the Palestinians water rights in the West Bank, the current restrictions on Palestinian water use do not meet criteria for equitable sharing among riparian parties in the Jordan Valley.

Background Information Part 2- Group Worksheet – Top Down

1. Read the background information. Then with your group answer the following questions. Make sure your ideas and solutions relate to top-down level only.

In the bottom-up section, you have seen how the people at the community level are suffering. How can you help them at the political level?

- How do you change the political level?
- How do you persuade the top-down decision makers to make the Jordan River Basin development a priority?
- Spiral in Narratives: Which narratives would be effective in persuading the decision makers in Israel, Jordan and Palestine?
- How do you convince them that this needs to be done?
- What actions could be taken?
- How will this translate into change and policy change?
- How could this be funded?
- How could you deal with the blame game of the three riparians – each accusing and blaming the others for diversion and pollution?

2. Choose a representative in your group to present your groups' ideas to the full forum.

Notes:

EcoPeace Top-Down Mechanisms – Reflection Page

Knowledge Mediation, National Advocacy, International Outreach

Please reflect upon and answer the following questions (in writing):

- What are the most important points you have learned from this exercise and introduction to EcoPeace’s top-down programming?
- What insights have you gained?
- How might you be able to apply these ideas to your own NGO work?
 - > What are the challenges?
 - > What do you need help with?
 - > What questions do you have?
 - > What more would you like to learn?

C. Stakeholders – Top-Down

Predicting Stakeholders

Socratic Seminar - Preparatory Group Activity and Socratic Seminar

Stakeholders – Top-Down – Role Play Cards

Jordan

National Decision Makers / National Authorities – Public Sector

The stakeholders in this category are national governmental authorities that regulate environmental matters, and more specifically, water, energy and agriculture. As regards the Jordan Valley, these stakeholders tend not to advance things for several reasons: 1) they are inefficient and bureaucratic; 2) they do not have the budgets and need outside funding to advance matters. The anti-normalization pressure in the country makes them resistant to working with Israel. There are some who are more technically-oriented who understand the benefits of knowledge transfer and other areas from which they stand to gain by cooperating with Israel which is an agriculture and agro tech leader.

Examples of Stakeholders in this category include: The Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Jordan Valley Authority and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Politicians

Politicians are important influencers – they can speak to other important influencers and impact decisions. The Jordanian cabinet and ministries are constantly in flux, and the politicians usually serve about one year or even less. Therefore, these are important stakeholders but dealing with them is challenging. They also need to be convinced that regional cooperation to restore the flow of the Jordan River and develop the Jordan Valley will advance their interests.

Scientific Community - Academia

These stakeholders provide a scientific basis for the importance of regional cooperation in the Jordan Valley. Local Jordanian scientists are valuable for providing scientific data and studies on the transboundary Jordan Valley that are viewed as credible by Jordan. When there is joint fact-finding, there is political will, in other words, a willingness to

invest political capital to bring about change. The anti-normalization movement, which includes academic boycotts of Israeli academics, has limited Jordanian and Palestinian academic cooperation with Israel. However, this is not across the board; individual scientists can work as private consultants and not through academic institutions. There are some who are willing to do so when the project offers enough incentives and meets the interests of the scientists.

Strategic Partnerships - Think Tanks

These bodies are important because they write professional research reports that they disseminate to decision makers and media. In Jordan and Palestine, strategic partnerships that can advance rehabilitation of the Jordan Valley can involve partnership with certain research bodies on an ad hoc (case-by-case) basis.

National Media

Decision makers read the media and stories that highlight problems. This is an effective way of getting their attention and creating political support. At the same time, there is a risk that articles will lead to condemnation and criticism of regional cooperation. In Jordan, because of the anti-normalization movement, programs that involve cooperation with Israel are covered from a national, not regional perspective.

International Media

In the same way that national media can have an impact on decision makers, international media can too. Stories in international media get noticed by decision makers and help put pressure on them to move things.

Private Sector – national

These stakeholders have financing which is an important incentive for encouraging the Jordanian government to proceed. Unlike the central government, which tends to be weighted down with bureaucracy, the private sector has greater ability to streamline projects.

Donors

Huge investments are required to develop the Jordanian section of the Jordan valley – to begin with, there isn't even a sanitation system. There are many possible donors for Jordan, who are interested in supporting Jordan's stability. At the same time, outside donors hesitate to invest in such an unstable region. Donors want to see a future, a justification for their investment. This could entail for example, requiring that Jordan reform its water pricing system in which Jordanian farmers get fresh water for free, rather than using treated wastewater, which is half the price.

Jordan qualifies for international loans, which have to be repaid, as opposed to grants

which do not, because it is not considered a poor enough country. If Jordan were to cooperate regionally with Israel and Palestine, then such cooperative programs would qualify as a peace projects and enable Jordan to receive grants. However, the anti-normalization movement against Israel in Jordan makes cooperation hugely unpopular.

Foreign Governments and international organizations

Foreign governments and international organizations can lend support for policy positions -- on the need to restore and develop of the Jordan River Basin. This can influence and pressure Jordanian decision makers. Often, these bodies are also important donors as well. Foreign governments are influential in Jordan as many are also donors. Examples of influential donors include the United States, Germany and Sweden.

Palestine

National Decision Makers / National Authorities – Public Sector

The stakeholders in this category are national governmental authorities that regulate environmental matters, and more specifically, water, energy and agriculture. In terms of regional cooperation, like all other stakeholders in Palestine, the official position is that they will not cooperate with Israel, however in cases when it clearly advances Palestinian resilience, they are willing. There are some who are more technically-oriented who understand the benefits of knowledge transfer and other areas from which they stand to gain by cooperating with Israel which is an agriculture and agro tech leader.

Examples of stakeholders in this category include the Environmental Quality Assurance Authority, the Palestinian Water Authority, the Ministry of Agriculture and Palestinian Industrial Estate and Free Zone Authority.

Politicians

Politicians are important influencers – they can speak to other important influencers and impact decisions. The challenge is to convince them that regional cooperation to restore the flow of the Jordan River and develop the region will advance their interests. Palestinian interests are in receiving their riparian rights to the Jordan River, which Israel doesn't recognize, and reclaiming their land, which Israel controls.

Scientific Community – Academia

These stakeholders provide a scientific basis for the importance of regional cooperation in the Jordan Valley. Local Palestinian scientists are valuable for providing scientific data and studies on the transboundary Jordan Valley that are viewed as credible by Palestine. When there is joint fact-finding, there is political will, in other words, a willingness to invest political capital to bring about change. The anti-normalization movement, which

includes academic boycotts of Israeli academics, has limited Jordanian and Palestinian academic cooperation with Israel. However, this is not across the board; individual scientists can work as private consultants and not through academic institutions. There are some who are willing to do so when the project offers enough incentives and meets the interests of the scientists.

Strategic Partnerships - Think Tanks

These research bodies are important because they write professional research reports that they disseminate to decision makers and media. Strategic partnerships with these bodies open up further networks and contacts with decision makers and influencers. In Palestine, strategic partnerships that can advance rehabilitation of the Jordan River Basin can involve partnership with certain research bodies on a case-by-case basis.

National Media

Decision makers read the media and stories that highlight problems. This is an effective way of getting their attention and creating political support. At the same time, there is a risk that articles will lead to condemnation and criticism of regional cooperation. In Palestine, because of the anti-normalization movement, programs that involve cooperation with Israel are covered from a national, not regional perspective.

International Media

In the same way that national media can have an impact on decision makers, international media can too. Stories in international media get noticed by decision makers and help put pressure on them to move things.

Private Sector

There are a number of private investors who work in energy, water, green technology, agriculture and ecotourism. They are interested in helping to develop the Palestinian section of the Jordan Valley and some, are open to regional cooperation.

Donors

Palestine has many donors who are interested in helping it develop and prosper. It is eligible for foreign aid in the form of grants that do not have to be repaid.

Foreign Governments and International Organizations

Foreign governments and international organizations can support policy positions on the need to rehabilitate and develop of the Jordan River Basin. This can influence and pressure Palestinian decision makers. Often, these bodies are also important donors. For Palestine, many countries are important as they are also donors. Sweden, for example, is both a donor and the first country to recognize the State of Palestine and has influence on Palestinian decision makers.

Israel

National Decision Makers / National Authorities – Public Sector

The stakeholders in this category are national governmental authorities that regulate environmental matters, and more specifically, water, energy and agriculture. These bodies are open to regional cooperation, though some more than others.

Examples of Stakeholders in this category include the Israel Water Authority, the Israel Ministry of the Environment and the Lower Jordan Valley Drainage Authority.

Politicians

Israeli politicians look to be statesman-like and therefore come into play at the end. If they like a vision, such as the idea of rehabilitating and developing the Jordan River Basin, they can pressure the staff. Their interests are to be seen advancing major initiatives.

Opinion Makers

These can be prominent media personalities and journalists. They can also be senior writers and commentators, such as former army generals that head think tanks.

Scientific Community – Academia

These stakeholders provide valuable scientific legitimacy on the importance of regional cooperation. Local Israeli scientists provide scientific data and studies on the transboundary Jordan River Basin that are viewed as credible and accepted by Israel. When there is joint fact-finding, there is political will, in other words, a willingness to invest political capital to bring about change. The anti-normalization movement has greatly limited the number of Jordanian and Palestinian scientists who are willing to work with their Israeli counterparts. This issue can be overcome by Israeli scientists working as private consultants and not through academic institutions.

Think Tanks – Strategic Partnerships

Think tanks produce professional research reports that they disseminate to decision makers and media. Strategic partnerships with these bodies open up further networks and contacts with decision makers and influencers. In Israel, it is possible to form long-term strategic partnerships between NGOs and think tanks. (In Palestine and Jordan, the partnerships are on a case-by-case basis).

National Media

Decision makers read the media and stories that highlight problems. This is an effective way of getting their attention and creating political support. At the same time, there is a risk that articles will lead to condemnation and criticism of regional cooperation,

in other words, that regional cooperation is advancing Jordanian, Palestinian and at the expense of Israeli interests. The Israeli government's interests are in security and economic implications and media that present regional cooperation as not solely an environmental interest but a security interest for the country have more influence on decision makers.

International Media

In the same way national media can have an impact on decision makers, international media can too. Stories in international media that get noticed by decision makers help put pressure on them to move things.

Private Sector

These stakeholders have funds to finance projects. They are pragmatic by nature which enables them to streamline projects through more easily than the bureaucratic public sector. The challenge is to find ways to get them to invest in projects in the Jordan Valley that may seem risky in terms of investment. There is a market for agrotech, for example.

Donors

Donors are a critically important part of the rehabilitation and development of the Jordan Valley. Israel is not entitled to foreign aid, but development in Jordan and Palestine benefit Israel as it is a transboundary basin in which the actions of each riparian affect the others.

Foreign Governments

Foreign governments and international organizations can support policy positions on the rehabilitation and development of the Jordan River Basin. This can influence and put pressure on Israeli decision makers. Often, these bodies are also important donors. For Israel, the two most important countries that have influence on Israeli decision makers are the United States and Germany.

Socratic Seminar 2– Top-Down Stakeholder Cards Group Worksheet

Part 1 – Preparation in Groups

1. All group members in your group read the **Stakeholder Card**. Then together discuss the pros and cons of each stakeholder. You may use the following questions as a guide:
 - Why is this stakeholder valuable to engage with?
 - Why would NGOs not want to engage with this stakeholder?
 - Why would they?
 - Does this stakeholder have access to other decision makers or influential people?
 - What funds do they have access to?
 - What would they bring?
 - What are the salient (most important) points?
 - **Reinforce Narratives** – What narrative would be effective for addressing your stakeholders? (Your country ONLY)
1. Choose 1 spokesperson from your group to present a general summary of your stakeholders in the Socratic Seminar (1-2 minutes).

Notes:

Questions for the Socratic Seminar Leader – Top-Down

- What are the most important points you learned?
- What challenges would you anticipate in terms of dealing with certain stakeholders?
- What insights do you have in terms of ways to succeed – in spite of difficulties?
- **(Spiral in negotiation skills):** How would negotiation skills be helpful in dealing with the stakeholders? How? Explain.
 - > Do you see areas where the positions (the stance they take) is problematic?
 - > Do you see places where progress could be made by examining the interests of the different sides? (Remember: to get to interests, ask WHY?)
 - > For example: you think your position is non-negotiable – you won’t meet with Israel. Can this change? How?
- **(Spiral in active listening)-** Were you able to practice active listening skills? Explain how it enhanced / improved your discussion.

Top-Down Stakeholders - Reflection Page

1. What were the most important things you learned about top-down stakeholders?
2. What insights can you draw from that?
3. What are the important points for you in EcoPeace's choice of top-down stakeholder groups that you worked with in the Socratic Seminar?
4. Take a moment to identify in your own countries/regions/communities who you think are the major local stakeholders and why they are important as stakeholders. Then answer the following:
 - Who are the stakeholders in your community/region/country?
 - What is the importance of the different stakeholders?
 - Can you think of any other people, maybe they don't have a formal job title, but they have connections and influence?
 - What ideas do you have for engaging the stakeholders?
 - How would you make this happen?
 - What more do you need / need to know in order to make this happen?

E. Final Reflection – Top Down – After EcoPeace Presentation

Final Reflection

Take a few moments to reflect on both the bottom-up and top-down tools of EcoPeace programming. Reflect on how these tools might be applied to your own countries/regions/communities.

- What ideas and tools of EcoPeace’s bottom-up and top-down programming are most relevant for you and your own NGO work?
- Which of these tools can you envision applying to your NGO?
- How would you go about making this happen?
- What more do you need / need to know in order to make this happen?

Reference Pages

EcoPeace Top-Down Work

Top-Down Work – Needs to be Flexible

In order for EcoPeace to bring about the changes it envisions, in addition to its bottom-up community work, it must engage with decision makers at the national and international levels.

EcoPeace seeks good relationships with the three countries' governments in Jordan, Palestine and Israel, and the relevant ministries, such as water, irrigation, environment and energy ministries. EcoPeace aims to keep government actors and ministries apprised of and involved in its activities. With such actions and transparency, the goal is to foster preemptive approval and support of these national decision-makers.

EcoPeace frequently engages proxies, such as consultants, lobbying organizations or distinguished experts to facilitate access to decision makers. Such engagement can also include strategic partnerships, which give further legitimacy and authority to EcoPeace's policy. Supplementing this, on staff in each of the three offices are government affairs officers, professionals with previous experience in the governments, who have access and contacts to decision-makers. In Jordan and Palestine, tribal and family structures are also taken into account.

All of EcoPeace's policy work is aimed at creating a shift in the mindset of the decision makers in the three respective governments from one of competition and conflict to one of cooperation. The message is that cooperation enables a win-win rather than a zero sum game.

Strategies to reach decision makers include the use of specific tools, narrative transfer and pragmatism.

For EcoPeace, science is an important, diplomatic tool. EcoPeace prepares or commissions joint scientific reports and policy papers, involving the three respective governments and scientific communities by drawing on their data and feedback. The reports are then disseminated and discussed in national and regional round tables and conferences. The approach seeks to foster a common vision on the part of regional decision makers in combination with conveying the need for urgent action.

Another important strategy is EcoPeace's use of narratives to convey its messages and persuade decision-makers. Framing the issues is critical for advancing EcoPeace's messages. The narratives that EcoPeace conveys to the decision makers in the three

countries are adapted to the different contexts in each country, while serving the joint goal of fostering regional cooperation. All three EcoPeace offices seek to convince their governments and decision-makers that it is in the self-interests of the three governments to cooperate regionally. In Jordan, EcoPeace links the country's fate to the ecological health of the Jordan River, the country's namesake. In Palestine, EcoPeace refers to the government's mission to remain on its land until there is peace and argues that environmental protection is an essential part of this mission. In Israel, EcoPeace conveys the message that environmental demise of its neighbors is a security threat to Israel and thus requires cooperation instead of unilateralism and isolation.

EcoPeace narratives are interwoven into all of its campaigns: In EcoPeace's campaign to rehabilitate the Jordan River, for example, the message conveyed is that the Jordan River, which is experiencing extreme environmental degradation as a result of diversion and pollution, is holy to Christians, Jews and Muslims and as such, is holy to half of humanity. Such a perspective serves to disempower those who might object to the urgency of rehabilitating it or not see it as a priority.

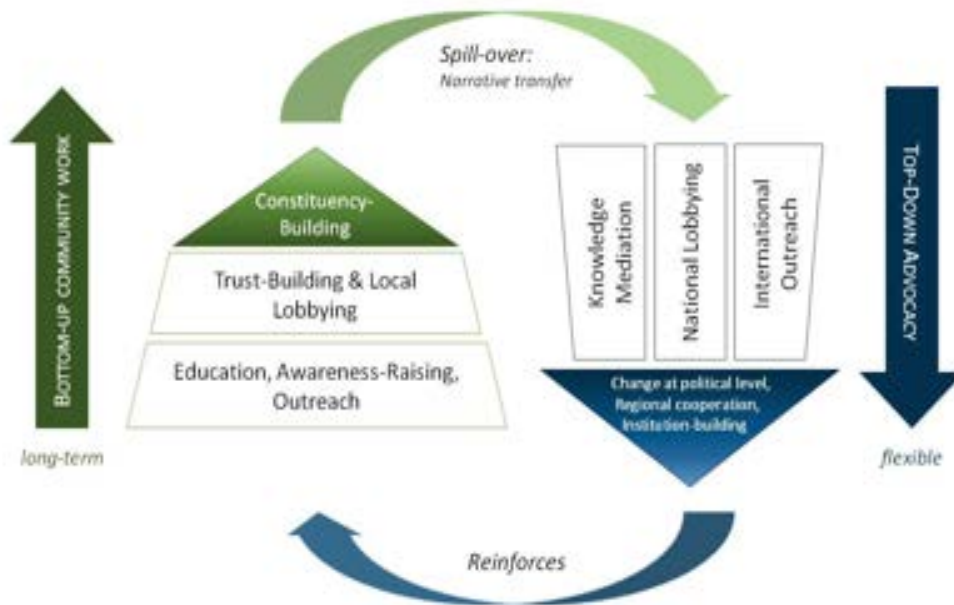
Lastly, EcoPeace's top-down work also relies on pragmatism. Rather than following a fixed strategy and given the volatile political context, governmental affairs officers at EcoPeace are concerned with scanning the political landscape to anticipate windows of opportunity for cross-border cooperation. If there is a demand for such cooperation, EcoPeace offers its assistance and expertise.

The constantly shifting political landscape results in windows of opportunity closing all the time. Within such limitations, EcoPeace's strategy of remaining pragmatic and flexible enables it, through discussion, to find windows that are open where it is possible to move its policy forward. Rather than focus on limitations or disagreement, EcoPeace seeks to find areas of agreement. It is not necessary for all windows to be open, just some.

Tangible top-down successes for the staff from all three EcoPeace offices include the building of a sewage treatment plant in northern Gaza as a result of EcoPeace advocacy. Other examples include the prevention of the construction of the separation wall at Battir; the successful lobbying of the Israeli government to release water into the lower Jordan River as well as furthering of EcoPeace policy in the form of resolutions by the European Parliament and letters from representatives of the US Congress. Other outcomes of its national advocacy work include EcoPeace bringing together government representatives from all three governments, Israel, Palestine and Jordan at EcoPeace events as well as fostering the support of high-ranking individuals. Finally, further tangible success includes the managing and maintaining of the Sharhabil Bin Hassneh EcoPark (SHE) EcoPark in Jordan.

The EcoPeace Top-Down programming implemented in its three offices in Jordan, Palestine and Israel comprises three main mechanisms: **Knowledge Mediation**, **National Advocacy** and **International Outreach** leading to **Political Change**, **Institution-Building** and **Regional Cooperation**.

EcoPeace Model:



Knowledge Mediation

- Issuing scientific reports and policy papers as tools for advocacy; creating shared visions: collecting data, promoting research and advancing policies.

EcoPeace’s top-down work strongly draws on the power of science as a tool for advocacy. It commissions reports, feasibility studies and policy papers that forge a common vision and urgency to act on the part of decision-makers.

As data is not always standardized and can be the basis for disagreement, EcoPeace commissions cooperative, joint reports from the scientific community in each of the countries. EcoPeace’s joint-fact finding results in the creation of political will on all sides. The reports are both prescriptive in that they include recommendations; as well, they are pragmatic in that all the recommendations, including projects, can be implemented.

The shared scientific reports serve as important advocacy tools for advancing EcoPeace’s policies. These reports are disseminated at all meetings and forums, including EcoPeace’s own conferences, which include the presence of national and international decision-makers. The reports are further disseminated through channels such as newsletters and other media.

National Advocacy

- *Engagement and involvement of relevant decision-makers; employing consultants or lobbying groups to gain access to decision-makers; framing a narrative of interdependence, self-interest and mutual gain; scanning political landscape for demand for cooperation.*

This second major element of EcoPeace's top-down work is lobbying and advocacy at the three national levels. This includes keeping ministries and other relevant decision makers informed and involved in EcoPeace's activities to prevent contestation and increases the likelihood of buy-in. When directly approaching decision-makers may be counter-productive and unpromising, EcoPeace works via proxies, such as consultants, lobbying groups and scientists. Each national lobbying effort relies on a narrative that highlights interdependencies and the self-interests of each side.

EcoPeace understands that that decision makers will not consider its initiatives at certain times, but this does not mean that they won't be considered later. Therefore, EcoPeace's strategy is to lay the groundwork: introduce the initiatives and ensure the relevant decision makers are familiar with them. Then, when opportunity arises, these plans can be retrieved right away, with no need for introduction or study, and lead to potential breakthroughs. What is important is to keep the issues on the table.

Another important EcoPeace strategy is seeking partnerships. These partnerships can be in any field, for example, scientific, academic, governmental or private. They can be with government authorities in water, energy or agriculture or private think tanks. The partnerships can be ad-hoc or long-term. These partnerships give legitimacy, authority, validation and endorsement to EcoPeace's message and EcoPeace as an organization. This elevates the status of EcoPeace and its credibility.

Finally, an important aspect of EcoPeace's top-down work is bringing together government ministers and decision-makers and providing them with space for dialogue. This occurs in different types of events, for example, EcoPeace's annual conference allows decision-makers at the national level to meet.

International Outreach

- *Involve international institutions to boost political support and financial resources. Bodies include the United Nations, the World Bank and foreign governments.*

This mechanism of EcoPeace's top-down work involves connecting with international organizations, foreign governments or international media to widen its constituencies of support and attain financial resources. These organizations include the United Nations (e.g., the UN Security Council (UNSC) and UN Environmental Program (UNEP)), the World Bank and foreign governments.

This arm of EcoPeace's top-down work is advanced by the three EcoPeace Directors in all three offices, Jordan, Israel and Palestine. The directors work in tandem, agreeing in advance to the policy positions for which they will seek international support. Many of these international bodies are also donor countries that provide EcoPeace with foreign aid.

When it comes to fundraising, unlike many NGOs, EcoPeace seeks out what it believes to be the right donor for its initiatives, donors that will be interested in the projects and also see things similarly. This catapults the donors into the role of partners, who have a deeper understanding of the initiatives and at times, the need for flexibility.

Political Change, Institution-Building and Regional Cooperation

In an ideal outcome, the top-down advocacy (in some cases underpinned by bottom-up community work and spillover) brings about change at the political level in favor of the EcoPeace mission and vision. Whether through political change or not, successful top-down advocacy fosters institution-building, regional cooperation and healthy interdependencies in the long run.

Top-Down Work

Stakeholders

As with its bottom-up programming, in its Top-Down work, EcoPeace actively seeks to engage with all possible stakeholders. At the national level, this includes governmental authorities and ministers, politicians, the scientific community and the media. At the international level, this includes international bodies, such as the UN, the World Bank and foreign governments. As with bottom-up programming, this horizontal expansion is key in creating opportunities; the greater the number of stakeholders that EcoPeace engages with, the greater the number of opportunities for EcoPeace to get its message out and effect policy. If one stakeholder declines to help, then others may be found. NGOs frequently express frustration after receiving negative responses from stakeholders that prevent them from advancing their agendas. EcoPeace's method is to engage with additional stakeholders to increase the chances of finding support. As well, NGOs often do not consider engaging with particular stakeholders, such as those regarded as enemies or obstacles. EcoPeace, on the hand, sees value in engaging with such stakeholders as they too can prove valuable in ways that can't always be foreseen. This open, flexible approach has proven key in advancing EcoPeace's message and policy.

Top-down stakeholders can include any decision maker or influencer at the national

level including but not limited to governmental ministers and authorities that regulate environmental matters, such as water, energy and agriculture; politicians, the scientific community; research bodies, such as think tanks, the private sector and national media. At the international media this can include foreign governments and international organizations, such as the UN, the World Bank and international governments; donor organizations; and international media. The list will vary according to the environmental project at hand.

The following includes a summary of a few key top-down stakeholders with whom EcoPeace engages.

Government Authorities and Ministers – Public Sector

A critical part of EcoPeace's top-down work is spent engaging with government authorities and ministers that regulate environmental matters, and more specifically, water, energy and agriculture. Here EcoPeace relies on its narrative that highlights interdependencies and the self-interests of each side.

Scientific Community

Academia plays a key role in the production of environmental and decision-making knowledge. Contributions, such as studies, reports and policy papers have the “potential to enhance legitimacy and the quality of decision making processes, especially under conditions of uncertainty and conflict.”¹⁹ The involvement of *local* researchers and academics increases the public's perception of ownership of problem-solving and decision-making processes. This important process can be key in offsetting what are governments' increasing use of water as a tool of coercive diplomacy, injecting tensions into international diplomacy and complicating opportunities to find cooperative water solutions.²⁰

The interaction between these academic contributions and decision makers takes place on both the grassroots level where the experiences of the local researchers originate, as well as on other levels where public participation and decision-making gain legitimacy and contribute to policy and structural change.

Media

It is very important for EcoPeace to have press. The press raises new ideas and through its reporting, gets the EcoPeace message out. Furthermore, decision makers read the

19 Hage et al. (2010: 254)

20 Conca (2012), 44

media and stories that highlight problems. This is an effective way to get their attention, create political support and put pressure on them to move things forward.

Examples of media reports and articles on environmental peacebuilding that EcoPeace has been active in include:

- Several media outlets covered the worsening of floods in *Wadi Fukin* due to the expansion of Jerusalem suburbs, reporting on EcoPeace's cooperative projects.
- A *Science* article discussed the benefit of scientific cooperation in the peace process and cited the *Wadi Fukin* projects as an example.²¹
- Other media have focused on projects, such as the Regional Master Plan for the Jordan Valley and the Gaza Water and Energy Crisis. The latter appeared as a focus of public interest after EcoPeace revealed the closure of Israel's massive desalination plant in Ashkelon due to Gaza sewage polluting the seawater. The resulting hazards for public health were examined in an article that included input from the EcoPeace directors.
- Apart from critical coverage of current events, media outlets cover progress in peacebuilding processes, such as the Big Jump of mayors into the Jordan River and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between transboundary authorities.

Foreign Governments and International Organizations

Foreign governments and international organizations can support EcoPeace policy positions. This can influence and put pressure on the respective decision-makers in each of the three countries, Jordan, Israel and Palestine.

These bodies are often important donors and as well. Beyond this, these bodies often have particularly strong relationships with one or more of the riparian countries and have influence on their respective decision makers.

21 Bohannon, John (2006). Bridging the Divide in the Holy Land. *Science* 312: 352-356

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