



UNESCO-IHP: Fostering peace through water security

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Today, 90 percent of the world's population lives in countries which share water resources with another country. With over 276 transboundary river basins and 592 transboundary aquifers in the world, competition for shared and scarce resources presents critical challenges to Member States. Such challenges will exacerbate existing pressures on water resources already posed by climate change, population growth, migration, land use changes and other drivers of water insecurity.

Transboundary water diplomacy lies at the heart of UNESCO's governing mandate to promote peace and security among nations. By enabling collaboration and dialogue among Member States on the management of such critical resources, UNESCO not only aims to address water security but also to facilitate peaceful co-existence.

The International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of UNESCO has for several years been involved in the promotion of water security in the context of transboundary basins. IHP defines water security as the capacity of a population to safeguard access to adequate quantities of water of acceptable quality for sustaining human and ecosystem health on a watershed basis, and to ensure efficient protection of life and property against water related hazards and droughts.

Addressing water security is the overall goal of IHP's Eighth Phase of its Strategic Plan (IHP-VIII), and facilitating the peaceful management of transboundary water resources is critical to the achievement of this goal. IHP's approach to water diplomacy therefore seeks to foster dialogue, improve awareness and understanding of the benefits of collaborative management of water resources, and strengthen the capacity of water managers, decision-makers and other stakeholders to support this initiative. This presentation examines IHP's achievements in doing so over the years, and looks forward to how it can further contribute to this growing field by developing a new strategy on water diplomacy, building on its various programmes and initiatives including the Potential Conflict to Cooperation Potential (PCCP) programme.