



UNITED NATIONS
Economic and Social Commission
For Western Asia (ESCWA)



Federal Institute for
Geosciences and
Natural Resources



*Ministry of Water and
Irrigation in Jordan*

**TRAINING ON NEGOTIATIONS
AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION OVER
INTERNATIONAL SHARED WATER
RESOURCES IN JORDAN**

*12-17 June 2007
Kempinski Hotel
Amman, Jordan*

Information Note

I. Background

Technical cooperation on the regional level between ESCWA and the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources in Germany (BGR) started in 1992 and was re-launched in 2005 with the overall objective to improve regional cooperation in the water sector among the ESCWA member countries. This project promotes the initiation and application of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) processes in member countries, with special emphasis on the management of shared ground water resources.

Early cooperation and negotiations between riparian states are key to reaching an equitable management and utilization of shared water resources, thus maximizing benefits and preventing potential conflicts. With the aim to assist the member countries in enhancing their negotiation skills, the Water and Environment Issues Team at ESCWA, in cooperation with BGR, took the lead in organizing respective training courses for Lebanese (2003), Syrian (2004), and Palestinian (2004) delegates.

Jordan is facing a future of very limited water resources, as it is ranked amongst the lowest in the world on a per capita basis. The available water resources per capita were 160 m³/capita/year in 2002 and are expected to fall, as a result of population growth, to 91 m³/capita/year by 2025. Current water use already exceeds the recharge of renewable water supply. The annual deficit has been satisfied by overdrawing highland aquifers resulting in lowered water tables and declining water quality (MWI, 2002)¹.

The usable surface water is distributed among 15 catchment basins, whereas groundwater resources are distributed among 11 basins (MWI, 2002). An appreciable amount of surface water comes from the Jordan and Yarmouk rivers. The Jordan River is shared by Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan and Palestine, whereas the Yarmouk River is shared by Syria and Jordan (ESCWA, 2003).² Furthermore, Jordan and its neighboring countries share several important groundwater resources such as the Basalt and Disi Aquifers.

Therefore, it is essential that Jordan develops, coordinates with its neighbors and implements a comprehensive strategy towards shared water resources in order to safeguard future water supply for the growing Jordanian population. Decision makers and professionals involved in issues related to shared water resources need to be equipped with the necessary tools and information to initiate or continue a process of dialogue with riparian countries and to conduct successful negotiations to avert any potential shared water conflict.

This activity is a central part of the ESCWA-BGR project initiative to support cooperation among ESCWA member countries on shared water resources within the context of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). Furthermore, the training workshop should be seen as an integral element of a potential wider support

¹ Ministry of Water and Irrigation of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, a report on "Water Sector Planning and Association Investment Program 2002-2011" Amman, Jordan, February 2002.

² United Nations Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia, "Updating the Assessment of Water Resources in ESCWA countries, United Nations, New York, 2003.

offered by the ESCWA-BGR project to Jordan and other member countries in this important field of regional integration.

II. Objectives of the training workshop:

The objectives of this advanced-level training are to:

- Strengthen the participants' capacity on how to develop a comprehensive vision and strategy for international negotiations on shared water resources involving a multi-disciplinary inter ministerial team.
- Familiarize participants with international law, resolutions, and standards related to the management of international waters.
- Train participants on the actual negotiation process, based on one or more real life case studies catered towards the actual situation in Jordan.

III. Themes of the training workshop

- International legislation, treaties, norms and conventions governing use of water resources, relevant to Jordan and the ESCWA region;
- Challenges and problems related to management of international water resources and the environment
- Concepts, tools and approaches for negotiations on shared water resources, with special reference to cases from the region
- Negotiation theory and practice
- Development of a negotiation strategy – how to translate concepts and policies into an operational strategy
- Lessons learned and best practices

The workshop will capitalize on an interactive and participatory approach involving simulation exercises, role-play, discussions and debates, presentations, skills and mechanisms for establishing multi-disciplinary national teams for shared water negotiations.

IV. Organization of the workshop

The Water and Environment Issues Team, Sustainable Development and Productivity Division at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), in partnership with the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany (BGR), are organizing this training, in collaboration with the Ministry of Water and Irrigation in Jordan.

V. Target Group

This training is intended for up to 15 decision makers and water professionals who are actively involved in issues related to shared-water resources in Jordan.

The Ministry will coordinate the respective nominations of participants from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, including Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) and Jordan Valley Authority (JVA). In addition, the Ministry will invite up to 5 participants from other relevant institutions (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of

Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Royal Palace, Universities and research institutes, etc.) as a representative group of inter-ministerial multi-disciplinary negotiation teams.

The training is an advanced level; participants are expected to meet the following criteria:

- Should have the legal and/or technical background in water resources management
- Have had previous training or work experience in international water issues
- Are currently working or expected to work as part of negotiation teams or committees on shared water basins from the Jordanian side.

VI. Administrative issues

1. Date and Venue

The training will be held in two modules during the period from 12-17 June 2007 at the Kempinski Hotel in Amman, Jordan.

The first training module from 12-14 June will focus on negotiation skills; while the second module from 16-17 June will focus on international water and environmental law. Friday 15th of June will be a break.

VII. Correspondence

All correspondences should be forwarded to ESCWA at the following addresses:

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