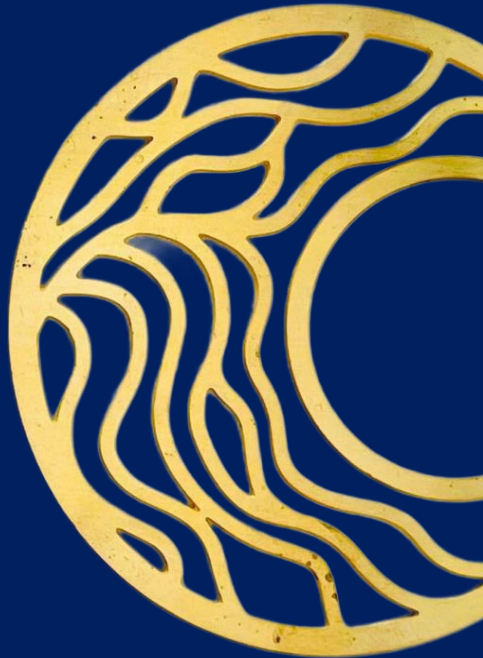


Elevating Critical Voices in Water Diplomacy



March 22, 2023 – World Water Day | 15:30-16:45
UN Water Conference | New York, USA | UNHQ Conference Room A

CO-CONVENORS:



WWDN CO-CONVENING PARTNERS:



WITH THE SUPPORT OF:



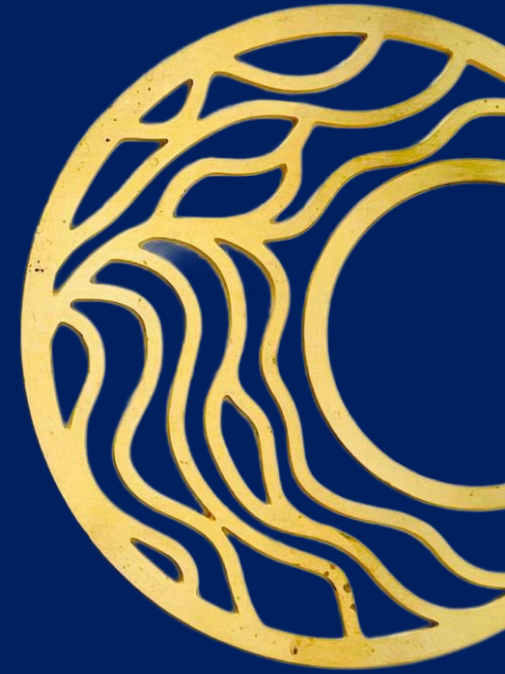
Welcome and Introduction



Phera Ramoeli, Executive Secretary, Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM)
on behalf of ZAMCOM and the many co-convening partners



Introduction to the Women in Water Diplomacy Network and Our Shared Commitments to the 2023 UN Water Action Agenda



Elizabeth A. Koch, Senior Manager, Environmental Law Institute and Process Support Team Lead for the Women in Water Diplomacy Network; and

Tais Reznikova, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) and Network Process Support Team



WOMEN IN
WATER DIPLOMACY
NETWORK & PARTNERS



ZAMCOM

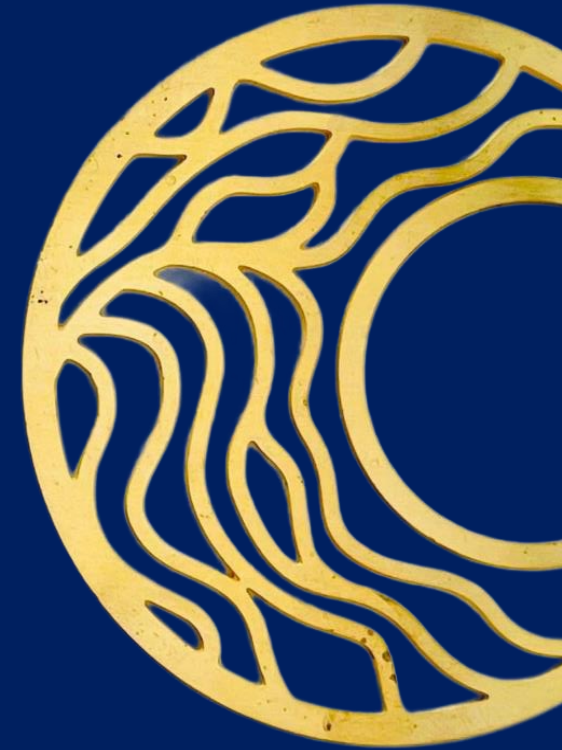


Global Diplomacy Lab

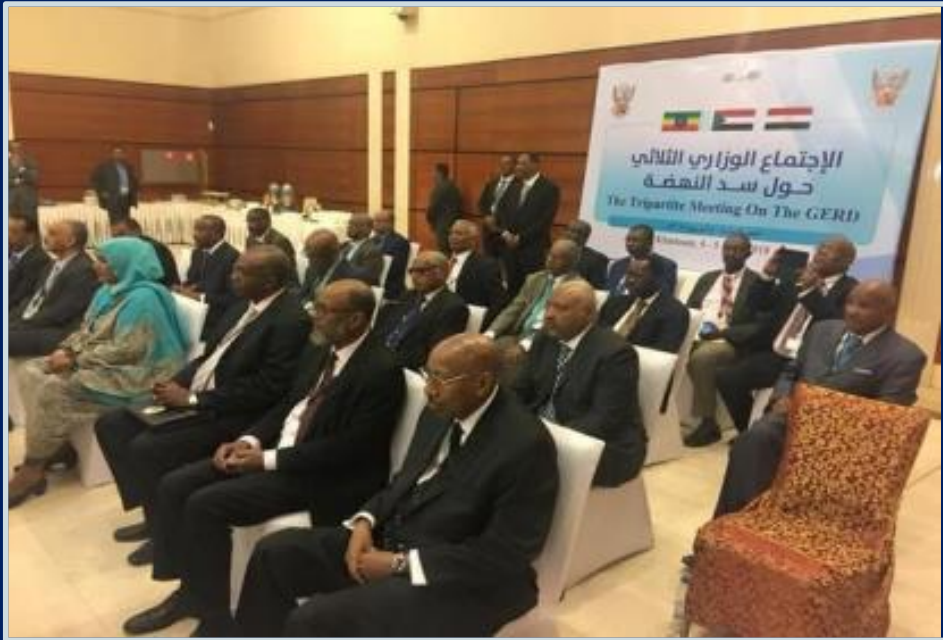
Red Dot™
Foundation

Before we move forward together...

**...let's remember some of the
Women in Water Diplomacy
Network's *#HerStory***



For many – transboundary water diplomacy forum often look like this



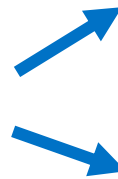
World leaders posing for a “family photo” at the COP27 climate conference in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, on Monday. Mohammed Salem/Reuters

The Women in Water Diplomacy Network was founded to change that picture.....

Why a focus on women is needed? Costs – Benefits – Opportunities



Failure to include women equitably

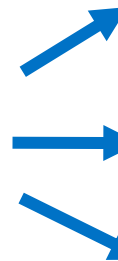


Has direct cost to political decision-making at transboundary level

Undermines progress toward cooperative and sustainable management



Support to women water experts



Opportunity to elevate distinctive knowledge, perspectives and experiences

More comprehensive understanding of relevant water issues and challenges

Broader set of **equitable solutions**

Resources are scarce



Investing directly in women is an easy choice

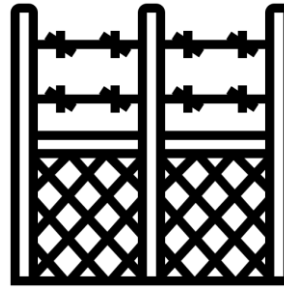
Persistent Barriers to Women Water Diplomats' Participation



Sponsored in person attendance is rare.



Women Water Diplomats have a lot of different responsibilities



Conflict Barriers restricting movement



Language Barriers

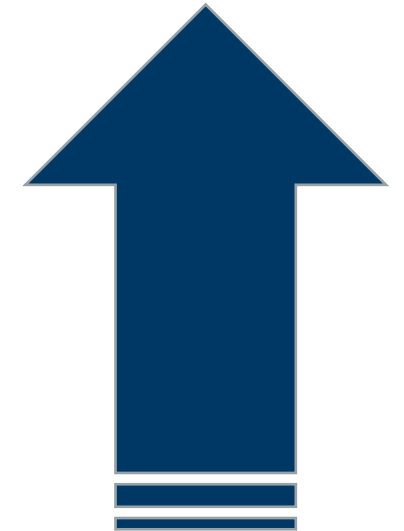


Internet connectivity



Political Barriers restricting movement

Result: Improved Inclusive Decision Making



Target: Removal of Participation Barriers



**The Woman in Water
Diplomacy Pilot Network
Forum; Uganda.
October 2017**



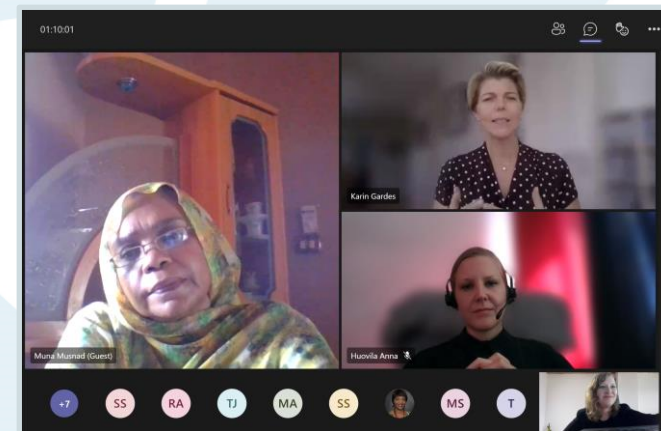
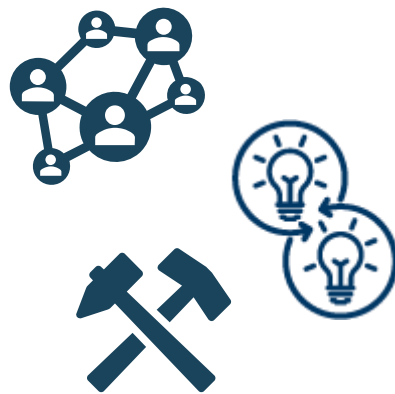


The second Women in Water Diplomacy Network Forum; Ethiopia, Dec 2018



Third Nile Network Forum, Jan 2020

2020 Digital Water Diplomacy Network Adaptions





Women in Water Diplomacy Leadership Council!



Yodit Balcha
Sen. Climate Change Adaptation Advisor, Ministry of Water and Energy (Ethiopia)



Jacqueline Nyirakamana
Transboundary Water Resources Cooperation Specialist, Min of Environment (Rwanda)



Theresa Khakasa Wasike
Director of Administration, Ministry of Water (Kenya)



Dr Tahani Sileet
Head, Central Dept. for Ext Cooperation in the Nile Water Sector, Min. of Water Res. & Irr. (Egypt)



Tumaini Mwamyalla
National Desk/ Focal Officer for the Nile Basin Initiative, Min. of Water (Tanzania)



Dr Muna Musnad
UNESCO Chair in Water Res., Omdurman Islamic University (Sudan)




Dr Zodwa Dlamini
Independent Consultant and Former Chief Del. and Per. Rep. on the Lesotho Highlands Water Com. (South Africa)



Nompumelelo Ntshalintshali-Motsa
Africa Regional Coordinator, Sanitation and Water for All (Eswatini)

Women in Water Diplomacy Network

#Herstory Resource Series



POLICY PAPER
Tapping our Potential: Women's Water Leadership in the Nile Basin

Women Have a Critical Role to Play in Inclusive and Effective Transboundary Water Governance

Cooperation over the shared water resources of the Nile Basin is essential to water security and development in the region. To mitigate and manage potential and actual drivers of water-related conflict in the region, improved and more inclusive resource decision-making is critical. Engaging a diverse cross-section of stakeholders in decisions around shared waters broadens the set of environmental and social impacts that are considered and the knowledge and skills employed to address them, thus increasing the likelihood of developing sustainable and equitable solutions. In the Nile Basin, NWI and partners initiated a growing network of women water professionals active in transboundary water management under the 'Women and Water Diplomacy in the Nile (WIN)' platform to enhance the collective capacity of women throughout the basin and to support the engagement of these women water leaders in decision-making and peace-building processes in the Basin.

From Policy to Action: Balancing Gender for Stronger Water Diplomacy

The critical role of women in water resources management and protection has been recognized and emphasized at the highest policy levels for over 25 years. The Dublin Statement on Water and Sustainable Development (see box) was only the first of countless national, basin-level and international policy statements and guidance documents that stress the need for more gender-inclusive water governance processes at all levels'. Yet, despite repeated, high-level commitments to engaging women in water governance, evidence reveals a persistent gender gap in the water sector. The gap is particularly evident at the transboundary level, where water governance processes continue to be dominated by men (Baill and Earle, 2013; IUCN, 2017).

Similarly, the transformative role of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding has been repeatedly demonstrated.


1

INCEPTION AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

Laying the Bedrock of Transformation

Women in Water Diplomacy Network 2013-2021


The story so far; how the Network came to be and how it has developed through the years.



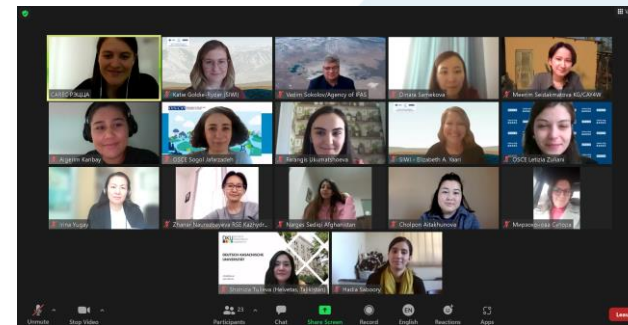
GLOBAL STRATEGY | AUGUST 2022

A Path Forward for Women, Water, Peace, and Security

The Women in Water Diplomacy Network Nile and Beyond Global Strategy 2022-2027



2021 Launch of the Women in Water Management Network in Central Asia and Afghanistan!!



Women in Water Diplomacy Global Network Forum 2022





THE **OVERARCHING GOAL** OF THE **WOMENS WATER DIPLOMACY NETWORK** IS:

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP
IN HIGH-LEVEL DECISION MAKING IN
TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS**

Which will be achieved through **objectives** and **activities**,
defined within **five strategic pillars**.



Achieved Through Five Strategic Pillars:

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN HIGH-LEVEL DECISION-MAKING IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS

PILLAR 1



GENDER AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

In transboundary
water decision making

PILLAR 2



PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

Capacity development &
experience exchange

PILLAR 3



RESEARCH COOPERATION

Supporting network
members & institutions

PILLAR 4



LINKAGES TO BASIN

Regional and
global processes

PILLAR 5



PROCESS SUPPORT

Strategic analysis; Design, monitoring & evaluation; Communications; Partnership development

Women in Water Diplomacy Network

A Growing Global Partnership



Shared Waters Partnership

supporting Women in Water Diplomacy in the Nile Basin 2017 - 2023



Government of the Netherlands

Women in Water Management Network

Central Asia and Afghanistan 2020-2022



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland



ENVIRONMENTAL LAW • INSTITUTE®



LM International

Together, we can do more!

High Level Panel: Elevating Critical Voices in Water Diplomacy

Introduction by:

Ambassador Igli Hasani,
Organization for Cooperation and
Security in Europe

Panel Moderated by:

Dr Saule Ospanova, Organization
for Cooperation and Security in
Europe, *with:*

Expert Panelists:

- **Johanna Sumuvuori**, State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland
- **Tanya Trujillo**, Assistant Secretary of the Department of Interior, United States
- **Yodit Balcha**, Women in Water Diplomacy Network Leadership Council, Ethiopia
- **Commissioner Merrell-Ann Phare**, International Joint Commission, Canada
- **Yogita Upadya Mumssen**, Practice Manager, Water Global Practice, World Bank
- **Dr Kathryn Bryk Friedman**, North American Arctic Policy Advisor, Ted Stevens Center for Arctic Security Studies

**Water intelligence:
A prerequisite for
addressing global
water crises**

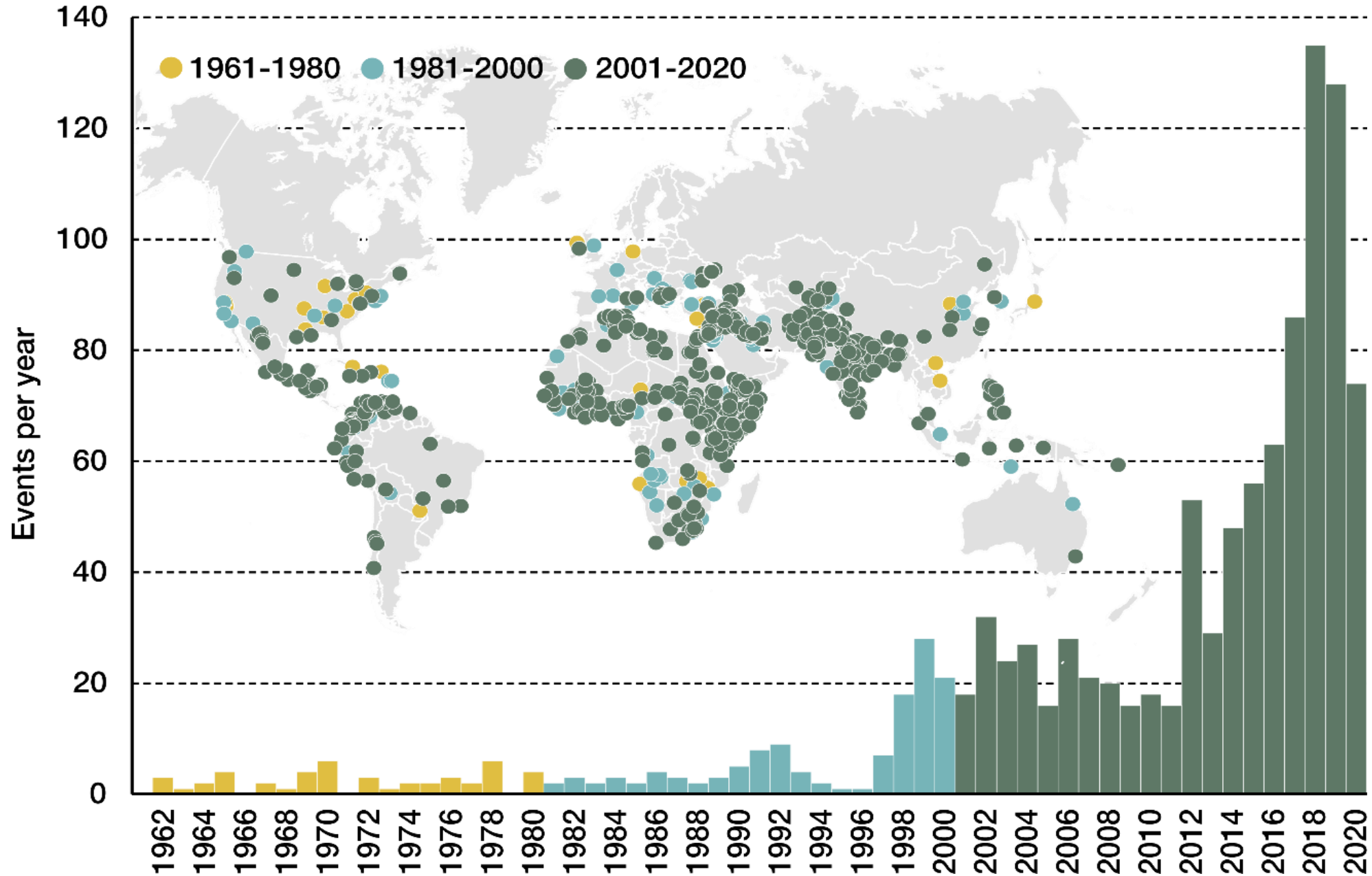
Dr Irena Creed,
Vice-Principal Research &
Innovation at University of
Toronto Scarborough

**Book Launch:
Recognizing Women
Water Thought
Leaders – from India
to Canada**

ElsaMarie Dsilva,
Red Dot Foundation

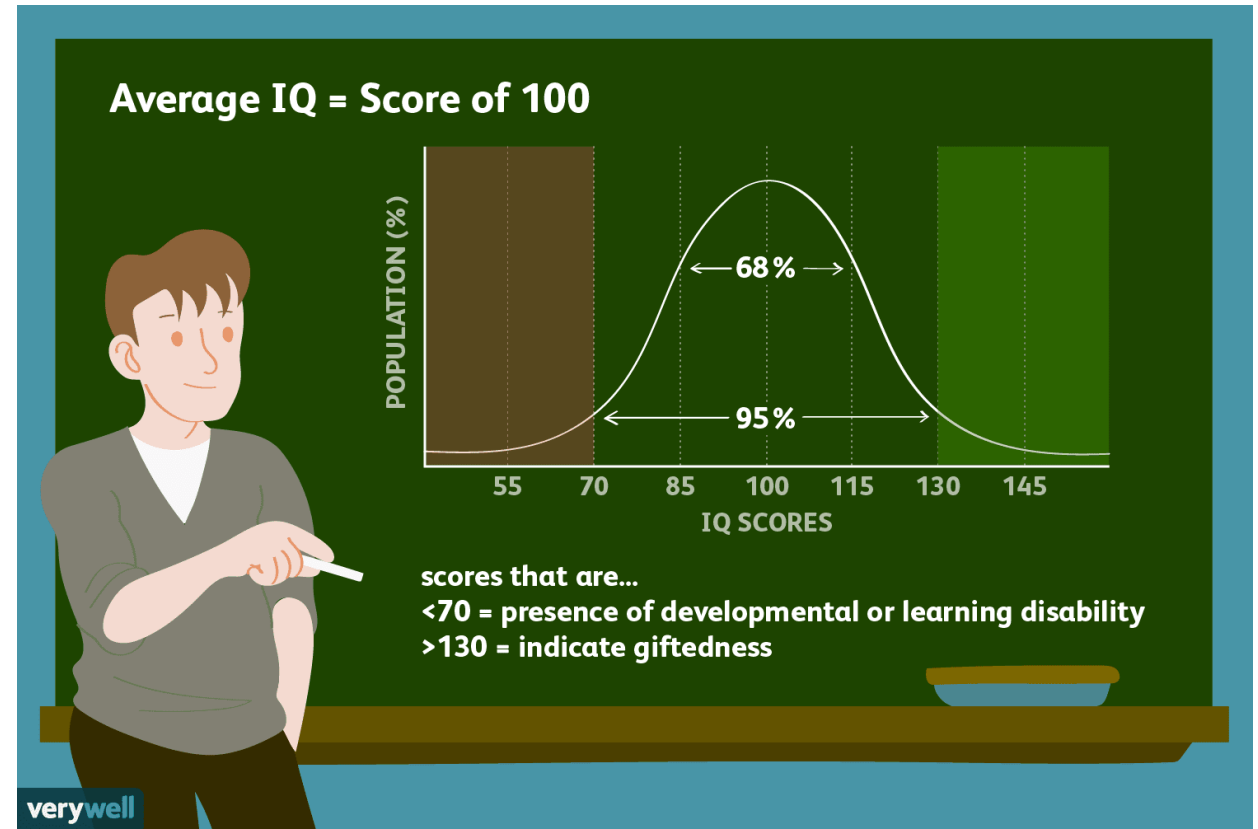
The world is facing a rapidly mounting number of water conflicts.

(Data source: The Water Conflict Chronology of the Pacific Institute, 2023).



A key element for success in defusing these conflicts is being overlooked
—a systems thinking, evidence-based understanding of the water cycle that is shared
by the parties to a conflict.

We argue that this understanding
is so important that it deserves a
name of its own
—*Water Intelligence Quotient*
or *Water-IQ*.



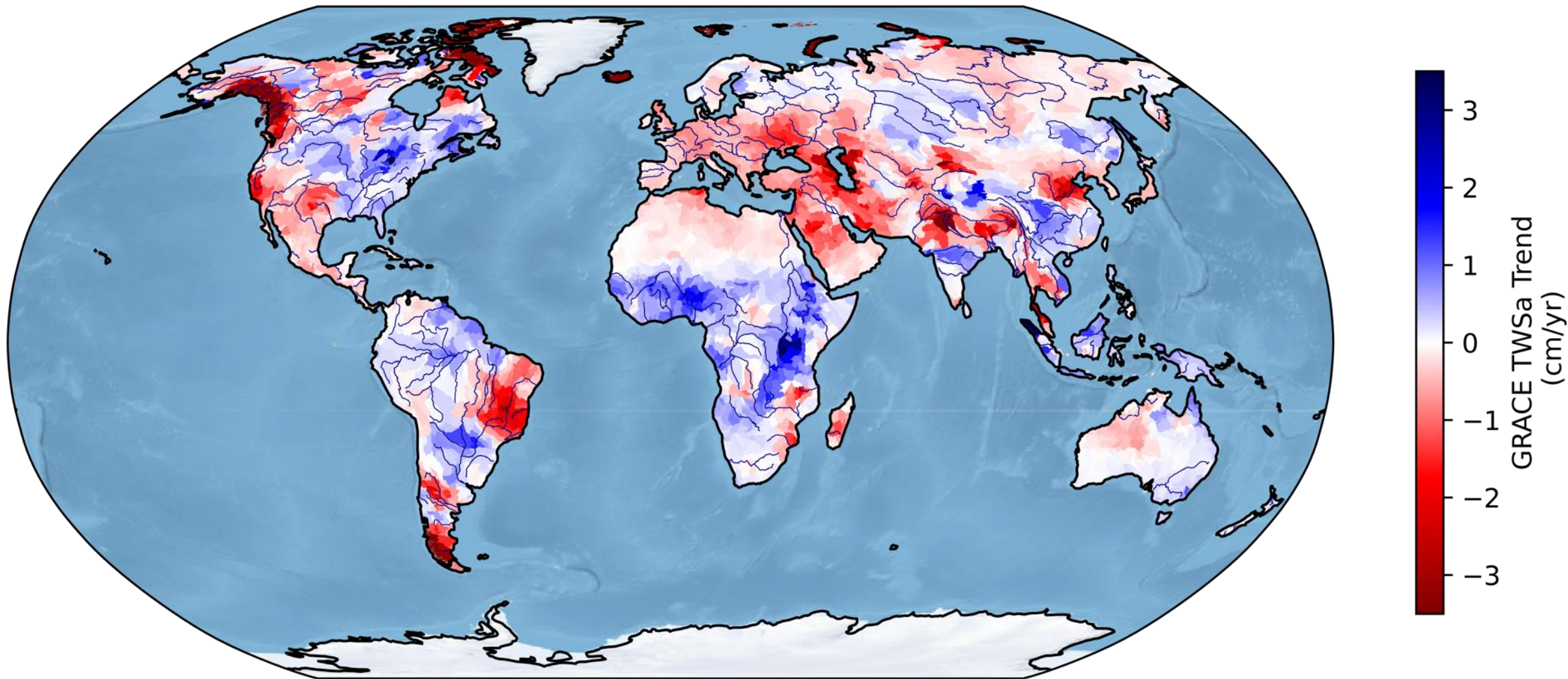
Water-IQ must also reflect a recognition of the myriad factors that are influencing the water cycle.

The amount of water on the Earth and in its atmosphere remains constant as it goes through the water cycle

But where it moves, when it moves, how it moves, and why it moves is changing.

The “**old playbook**” for water diplomacy is not working.

The water cycle being taught in school has fundamental omissions.
These omissions include: (1) how climate change is making wet areas wetter and dry areas drier.



Trends in total water storage from the NASA GRACE and GRACE Follow-On Missions from 2002-2022. Red areas have lost water over the last 20 years, while blue areas have gained water. Image: Map updated from Rodell, Famiglietti, et al. 2018 by Jay Famiglietti, Arizona State University; Hrishi Chandanpurkar, FLAME University; AJ Purdy, California State University, Monterey Bay; and Xander Huggins, University of Victoria

**(2) The importance of water's global connectivity
—how changes in one part of the planet impact those in another.**

This satellite footage shows the forests of the Amazon and Congo basins 'breathing' water vapor into the atmosphere.



And (3) How natural and human activities are homogenizing¹ the water cycle and altering global connections².



La Tuna wildfire in Los Angeles, CA in 2017
Photo © iStock: Jorge Villalba



Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) infestation in Baskerville,
British Columbia, Canada,
Photo © John L. Innes



The swidden-fallow mosaic landscape in Xishuangbanna of
China has been replaced by monoculture rubber plantation
Photo © Xiaobao Han



Water towers project in Mau Forest, Kenya - Eucalyptus tree
plantation
Photo © Patrick Shepherd/CIFOR

¹ Levia DF, Creed IF, et al. 2020. Nature Geoscience 13:656-658.

² Creed IF, et al. 2019. Frontiers in Forests and Global Change 2:64.

Why is a Water-IQ needed?

Our goal is to
water-proof our peace actions
and conflict-proof our water actions.



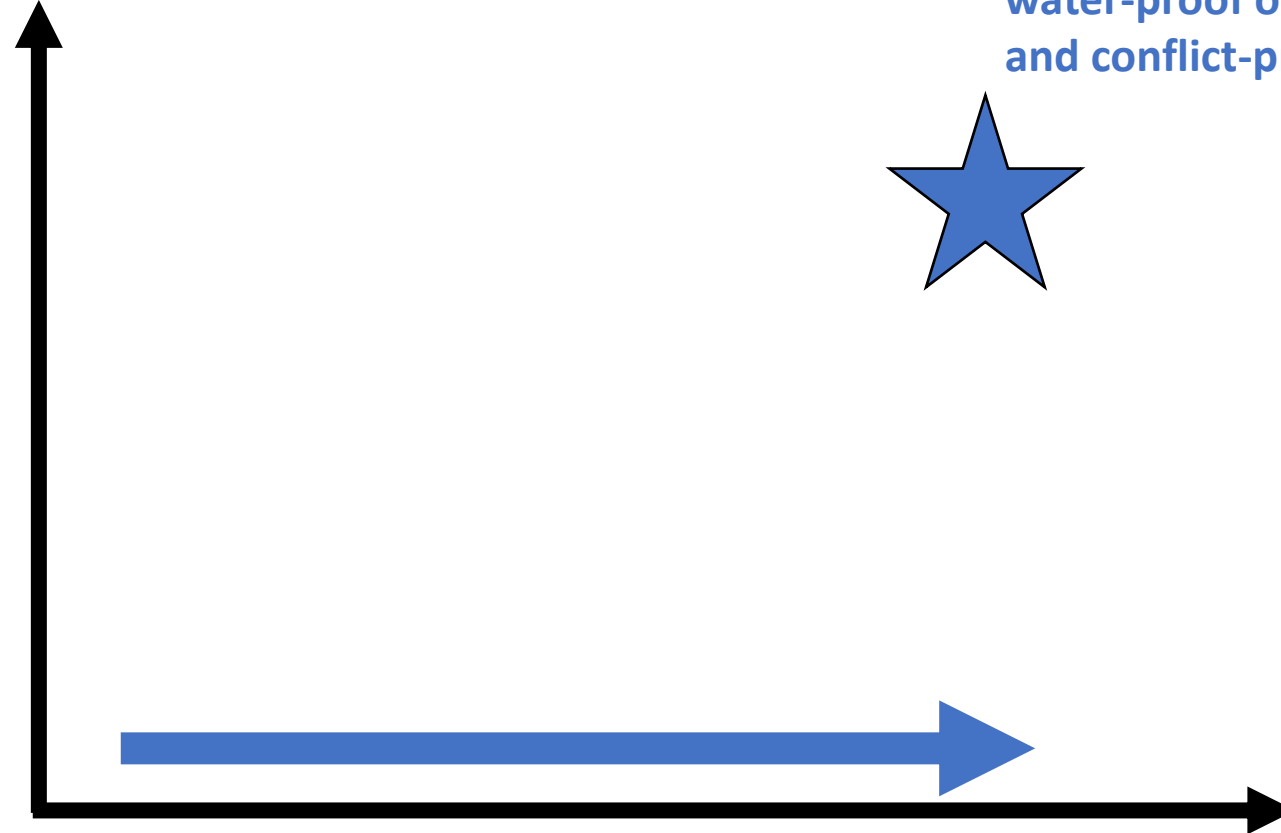
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Why is a Water-IQ needed?

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and conflict-proof our water actions.**

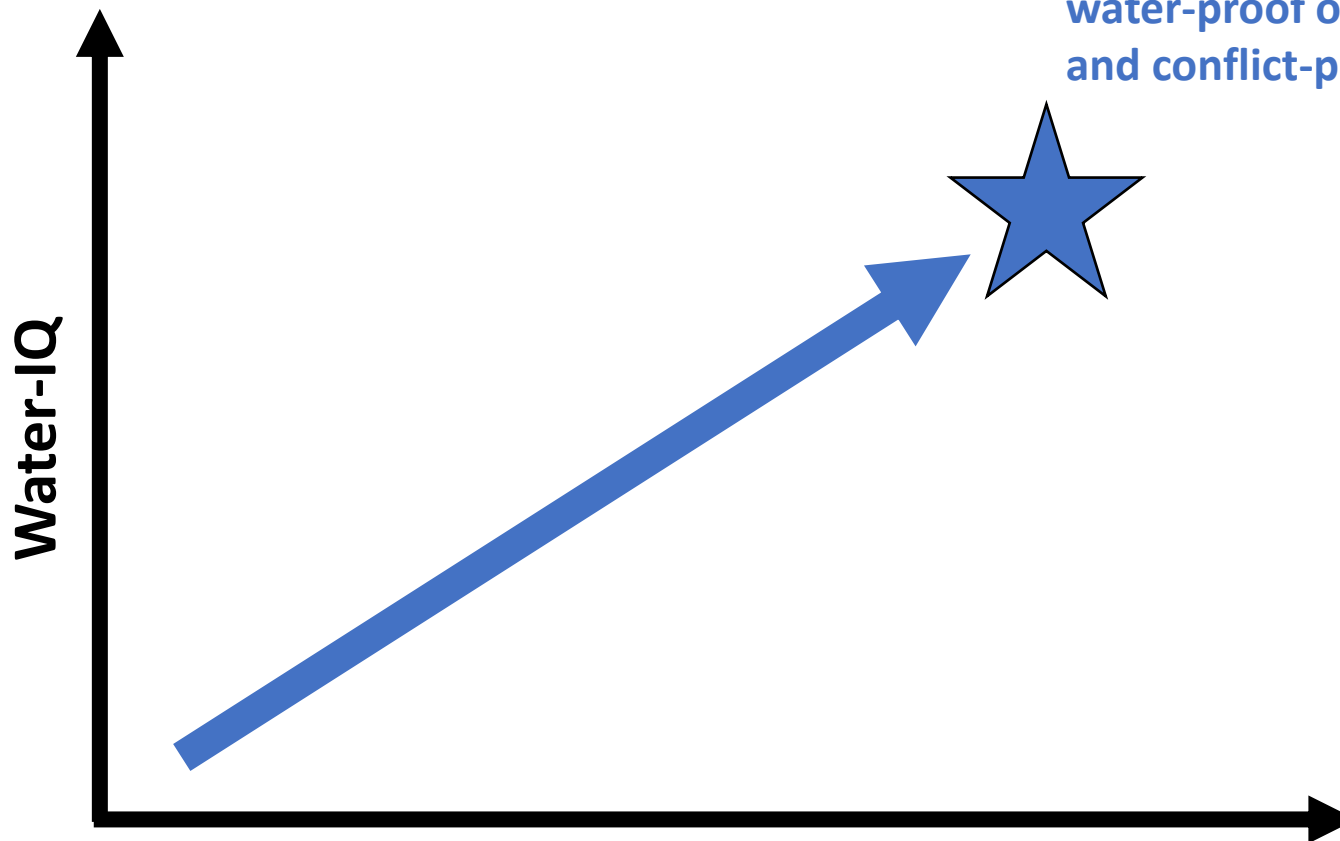


Critical voices in water diplomacy

- Respecting diverse and equitable voices.
- Women and gender minorities, Indigenous peoples, members of racialized minorities, persons with disabilities.
- Track 4 diplomacy.

Why is a Water-IQ needed?

- Empowering ourselves.
- The strength of data, data democracy, and data sovereignty.
- **The ability to use that data to solve complex problems, make decisions that benefit society, and to adapt to diverse environments for their survival.**



Our goal is to water-proof our peace actions and conflict-proof our water actions.

Critical voices in water diplomacy

- Respecting diverse and equitable voices.
- Women and gender minorities, Indigenous peoples, members of racialized minorities, persons with disabilities.
- Track 4 diplomacy.

What is the minimum Water-IQ needed?

Facts emerging from scientific advances must be included in a minimum Water-IQ.

But is this **minimum Water-IQ** enough?

Specialized experts and actors with professional and lived experiences contribute the knowledge needed to identify viable options in a water crisis.

And so, we also need the **collective Water-IQ**, which increases with the incremental Water-IQ added by specialized experts and actors participating in collective actions.

Who needs this minimum water-IQ?

Diplomacy has traditionally been the domain of a professional corps, but now a more inclusive view of diplomacy is emerging.

This shift in power structures—where all relevant experts and actors are given agency through an inclusive and equitable voice—makes it imperative for all members of society to have at least a minimum Water-IQ.

So, with diplomacy expanding its ranks, **Water-IQ needs to go mainstream.**

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN HIGH-LEVEL DECISION-MAKING IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS

PILLAR 1



GENDER AND YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

In transboundary
water decision making

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PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING

Capacity development &
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PILLAR 3



RESEARCH COOPERATION

Supporting network
members & institutions

PILLAR 4



LINKAGES TO BASIN

Regional and
global processes



PILLAR 5

PROCESS SUPPORT

Strategic analysis; Design, monitoring & evaluation; Communications; Partnership development

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP IN HIGH-LEVEL
DECISION-MAKING IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS**

Data, information, and Water-IQ

PILLAR 1



**GENDER AND
YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT**

In transboundary
water decision making

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PILLAR 5



PROCESS SUPPORT

Strategic analysis; Design, monitoring & evaluation; Communications; Partnership development

We are making a call-to-action to mainstream Water-IQ

Water-IQ needs to be raised across a broad front—and quickly.

This means that diplomats, decision-makers, experts, as well as civic society need to get up to speed with the “new” water cycle.

EVENT SESSION: A New Era in Water Intelligence Driving Collective Action
March 22, 2023 | 5:00 p.m. | UN 2023 Water Conference: Side Event Room A, New York, NY

We are mobilizing actors to raise our collective water-IQ.

SHE IS WATER SHEROES

SHE IS

WATER SHEROES



ElsaMarie D'Silva & Supreet K Singh

ElsaMarie D'Silva and Supreet K Singh
in partnership with Irena Creed



#SHELEADHERE



We are pleased to announce our new book

SHE IS - WATER SHEROES

In collaboration with the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India and the Consulate General of Canada in Mumbai.

An esteemed jury selected 29 wonderful women from India and Canada to be featured in the book.



- Aditi Mukherji
- K. Sri Bala Kameswari
- Natalie Ban
- Qurratulain Contractor
- Nupur Bahadur
- Nora Casson
- Akanksha Agarwal
- Garvita Gulhati
- Purnima Jalihal
- Annabelle Rayson
- Indumathi Nambi
- Ranjana Ray Chaudhuri
- Barbara Sherwood Lollar
- Kalpana Ramesh
- Riddhi Singh
- Bobbi Rose Koe
- Lori Elisabet Ann Bradford
- Roxane Maranger
- Charu Joshi
- Merrell-Ann Phare
- Sapna Sharma
- Chaya D Rao
- Merrin Macrae
- Stella Marguerite Bowles
- Chelsea Rochman
- Mita Dasog
- Suruchi Bhadwal
- Corinne Schuster-Wallace
- Nandita Basu

By - ElsaMarie Dsilva and Supreet K Singh
in partnership with Dr Irena Creed



Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India



SHE IS WATER SHEROES



ElsaMarie D'Silva and Supreet K Singh
in partnership with Irena Creed

Read today by Network Members and Supporters including:

Yodit Balcha, Women in Water Diplomacy Network Leadership Council, Ethiopia

Omair Ahmad, Third Pole, India;

Aziza Sharofova Khamza kizi, Women in Water Management Network, Uzbekistan;

Kerry Schneider, Senior Program Manager, SIWI, Sweden;

Viviane Kinyaga, Orange-Senqu River Basin Commission and Women in Water Diplomacy Network Member, South Africa;

The 2022 Global Women in Water Diplomacy Network Joint Statement

'A Rising Tide' of support for women in water diplomacy

With gratitude and recognition to the many women, water experts, diplomats, and leaders that paved the way before us, the Women in Water Diplomacy Network shares this Global Network Statement on the occasion of the launch of the Network's Nile and Beyond Strategy at the 2022 World Water Week.

The Women in Water Diplomacy Network is an informal community of practice comprised of both formal and informal women decision-makers and experts, representing over 500 years of collective experience and expertise in transboundary water management and decision making engaged in some of the most water insecure regions of the world. The Women in Water Diplomacy Network holds a cooperative vision recognizing the unique and intrinsic social, cultural, environmental, and economic values of the transboundary water resources that traverse the landscapes of our one shared planet. Despite challenges, we are bound together and jointly recognize the significant benefits that can result from improved transboundary water cooperation. Guided by our shared objectives, we discuss common challenges, share experience, enhance understanding of each other and our countries' perspectives, build trust, and support one another to seek mutually beneficial opportunities for cooperation to **achieve sustainable water for all**.

Shared surface and ground water resources unite and link our communities and lives in times of abundance and in times of scarcity. For communities who know well the deep insecurities of political conflict and non-cooperation as well as the true values of peace, increasing water and climate insecurities add a challenging complexity to already deeply consequential transboundary water relations. Sadly, water-insecure 'hotspots' are found on every continent today affecting the lives of roughly a third of humanity. Shared water resources that support, sustain, and enrich communities and nature, and drive economies in all corners of the world, **are reaching critical conditions**.

Women and children from vulnerable communities are bearing a heavy and disproportionate burden for unsustainable water management. Yet, women experts and decision makers are far from equally represented in transboundary water management decision making processes. While it has long been recognized that women play an essential role in both, the provision, management, and safeguarding of water resources, and all scales of development and peacebuilding processes, including conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction and recovery, rigid barriers restricting women's equal participation and influence persist.

The essential value of water to peace and human security spurs us to elevate our voices and knowledge in *a global rising tide* of water experts, peacemakers, mediators, and stewards. As leaders we know this to be true - **sustainable water for all is foundational to a peaceful, secure, resilient shared-future and to the full and effective enjoyment of human rights**.

Many women water diplomats are currently at the innovative fore of efforts to advance cooperative and inclusive transboundary water governance solutions in some of the most vulnerable countries and communities around the world. As decision makers and experts, we, members and supporters of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network, stress the urgency of action needed to address our shared water and climate challenges and, we commit, in our capacity as water leaders, to continue to work together to further this cooperation. **Through our collective strength and support to each other we affirm that a rising tide does, indeed, raise all. We ask you to meet our commitments with yours.**

To the young water diplomats, we have not forsaken future generations. The burden of sustainable development is not yours alone. We recommit to our shared responsibility to future generations – ours, yours, and those that will follow – **by ensuring young leaders are actively involved in water and climate decision making**.

To our brothers, we are grateful to those among you who even from a place of power conscientiously examine assumptions and who share our convictions. We invite your partnership and championship in **actively removing barriers to gender equality, enabling, and encouraging inclusive decision making**.

To our colleagues and peers, local, national, regional, global decision makers and development partners, we call upon you to commit political, financial, and other resources to frontline women water diplomats and stakeholders around the world to ensure that **all of society's available skills, experience, and resources are represented and empowered to meet our shared water and climate challenges**.

We all must take urgent and coordinated action to remove gendered barriers to equal participation and influence in water, peace, and security dialogues.

In partnership, the members and supporters of the Women in Water Diplomacy Network.

Women in Water Diplomacy Network

A Growing Global Partnership



Shared Waters Partnership

supporting Women in Water Diplomacy in the Nile Basin 2017 - 2023



Government of the Netherlands

Women in Water Management Network

Central Asia and Afghanistan 2020-2022



Women in Water Diplomacy Partners



Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland



THANK YOU!