



# **A Science Based Approach to Influencing Water Policy and Trans Border Cooperation**

**Nader Al Khateeb**

**Palestinian Director  
WEDO/EcoPeace**

**USAID, Amman, Jordan  
March 13 – 16,2016**

---



*“from the American people”*



**EcoPeace**  
Middle East

# Environmental Flow Study

## WEDO/EcoPeace Case Study

## Jordan River Rehabilitation



# Friends of the Earth Middle East/EcoPeace

- **Friends of the Earth Middle East** is a tri-lateral Jordanian, Palestinian, Israeli **environmental peacemaking** organization.
  - Our **mission** is to promote cooperative efforts to protect our shared environmental heritage. Advancing both sustainable regional development and the creation of necessary conditions for lasting peace in our region.
-

# Advancing Scientific Research

WEDO/EcoPeace partners with leading experts from the region to advance scientific research related to trans boundary water resources.





## Environmental Flow Study

- **Seek Maximum Credibility**
  - **Use best science**
  - **One from each country in support of common fact finding**
- 
- **Sarig Gafny**, Ecologist, Ruppin Academic Center
  - **Samer Talози**, Hydrologist, Jordan University of Science and Technology
  - **Banan al Sheikh**, Botanist, Al Quds University



# Environmental Flows Project

## Goal

- Determine how much and what quality of water resources are necessary to rehabilitate the Lower Jordan River
- Propose regional rehabilitation goal

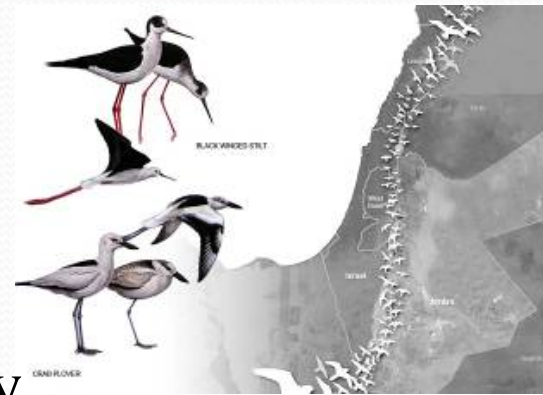


View from Peace Island



# The Lower Jordan River

- Rich Cultural, Historical heritage
- Holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims
- Unique Eco-System
- Meeting point for flora and fauna of three continents
- Migratory flyway for 500 million birds twice annually



# The Historical Lower Jordan

- Average annual flow of over **1.3 billion cubic meters** including:
  - Upper Jordan: 540 mcm
  - Yarmouk: 480 mcm
  - Side Wadis: 280 mcm
- Supports a wide variety of habitats/ rich biodiversity





# The Jordan River Today

- **Fresh Water Diverted:**  
An estimated **97%** of the flow is diverted by Israel, Jordan and Syria.
- **Polluted:** Saline water, raw sewage and polluted fishpond water discharged
- In danger of **running dry**



# Regional Rehabilitation Goal:

Jordanian, Palestinian and Israeli researchers worked together to identify regional goal:

- 400-600 mcm annually, one minor flood
  - Salinity level less than 750 ppm; primarily fresh water with only the highest quality of effluents allowed up to 25% of the LJR's base flow
  - This strategy would remove most of the disturbances, restore the river's structure and function, allow biodiversity to recover and achieve a fair to high ecosystem integrity.
- 





# Research Outcomes

- Model Lower Jordan River **Basin Commission** structure identifying best practices from the international experience.
- **Regional Master Plan** for the Lower Jordan River including tourism and landscape development plan.
- **Faith Based Jordan River Campaign**



# Conclusions/1

- Research can play a major role in the policy-making process and, thus, a greater emphasis should be placed on policy research, in order to help inform policy decisions, presently and future-wise.
  - Understanding and using research effectively can go a long way in helping individuals, organizations, communities, ministries, governments, and countries to impact the policy-making process, in order to bring about policy changes, with the end goal of sustainable development.
-



# Conclusions/2

- **Research Ways to Benefit Policy-Making:** There are, at least, four ways that research can be effectively and efficiently used within the policy-making process, which are : **1)** Recognizing and identifying problems and issues of concern, **2)** Understanding related key issues, **3)** Supporting selected plans for action, and **4)** Evaluating and monitoring progress.
- **Strategies:** Once policies are made, based on key-issues, short-term and long-term strategies can be presented in order to be implemented and accomplished.
- **Progress:** Monitoring and evaluation of progress should always be used to further refine the implementation process of policies and strategies, and to gain comprehensive understanding of how to better impact other policy and strategy issues, which may arise in the future and impact the society and the country.

**Working together we can make a new future  
for the Lower Jordan River!**



**For more information visit:  
[www.foeme.org](http://www.foeme.org)**

---