

First  
Announcement

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# The Hague Water Peace Dialogues



# The Hague Water Peace Dialogues

## Water Diplomacy and The Hague

The city of The Hague has for almost one century grown towards “Legal Capital of the World” status. Prominent and renowned institutions such as the United Nations International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration and the Peace Palace, play a key role in dealing with international conflicts. The Hague is expanding its peace building activities into the area of (transboundary) water conflicts. The recently established “Water Diplomacy Consortium” includes The Hague Institute of Global Justice, the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, the Netherlands Water Governance Centre and the Netherlands Clingendael Institute of International Relations. It provides advisory services, works on research and methodology development, and on capacity building. In close cooperation with the Water Diplomacy Consortium, the University for Peace Centre The Hague, in short UPEACE The Hague, initiated The Hague Water Peace Dialogues.

In 2013, which is also the International Year of Water Cooperation, the Peace Palace will celebrate its first Centennial. This Centennial is an excellent opportunity for The Hague, the Peace Palace and the Water Diplomacy Consortium to highlight the importance of Water Diplomacy and its potential in water conflict resolution. UPEACE The Hague, together with the Water Diplomacy Consortium partners, will organize a high level international conference on Water and Peace to present and discuss concepts for water diplomacy that take into account science, policy and politics at the level of theory and at the level of practice in development.

The conference will present the results of “The Hague Water Peace Dialogues”. These are case studies of major transboundary river basins and aquifers around the world. It is foreseen that the outcomes of

the conference will be channeled into the thematic and political processes of the 7th World Water Forum to be held in Daegu, Republic of Korea.

The international conference will be held in the second or third week of September 2013, within the framework of the Centennial programme of the Peace Palace in The Hague.

At the theoretical level, growing populations, dwindling per capita water availability, changing diets and consumption patterns, growing economies as well as the impacts of climate change, result in increasing demand for water and complicate water allocation. The need for commonly agreed water allocation arrangements, as well as sharing benefits, in transboundary river basins and aquifers is becoming urgent and situations of international tensions are on the rise.



Solving the water, energy, food nexus is a key security challenge in many basins. The Hague expertise in arbitration and conflict mitigation, together with the Dutch reputation in integrated river basin management makes a unique and perfect match for Water Diplomacy in The Hague. Water Diplomacy is where engineers, environmentalists, lawyers and diplomats, as well as other stakeholders meet and cooperate.

Water diplomacy is a process through which actors of the international community interact, by peaceful means - directly or with the intervention of a third party - to find solutions to water challenges that affect the lives of their people. Water diplomacy happens at the intersection of scientific and societal knowledge. It builds on science, policy and politics. Water Diplomacy requires in-depth knowledge of both the physical and institutional setting of water systems before any meaningful policy dialogue can start. This understanding is to provide a basis, structure and guidance for negotiations and a benchmark for follow up decisions and processes. There are already many good examples to learn from. Telling water dialogues cases include the Convention on Protection of the Rhine of 1976, the Peace Canal Plan to Jordan, the India Pakistan Indus Waters Treaty, the Syrdarya Water Energy Agreement of 1998, the Brazil Paraguay Treaty on Hydropower from the Parana River of 1973

On the other hand there are negative examples as well, such as the decision on the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros in the heart of Europe that has not yet been implemented after nearly a decade.

The Hague Water Peace Dialogues will bring together major international experts and organizations working on water and peace in selected basins for a period of nine months. This process will be announced on the 20th of September, 2012 during the launch of UPEACE The Hague in the Peace Palace.

The outcomes of The Hague Water Peace Dialogues will be presented during the international conference in September 2013, to exchange experience and enhance relations with the Water and Peace community in The Netherlands and beyond. The intention of the conference is to show that conflict resolution needs a structured and transparent dialogue process that is built upon mutually trusted knowledge and information. In addition the conference is expected to further the cause of The Hague as the “Legal Capital of the World” within a new “water” perspective. It will show the ambition of The Hague to contribute to the enhancement of two essential public goods: PEACE and WATER. The conference will demonstrate the international opportunities for Dutch involvement in international Water Diplomacy, and will build international partnerships.

# EXAMPLES OF WATER PEACE DIPLOMACY IN PRACTICE

## *Convention on Protection of the Rhine*

Up until the nineteen seventies the Rhine was heavily polluted with salts from the potassium mines in France and municipal as well as other widespread untreated agricultural and domestic effluents. Especially the discharge from the Alsace Potassium Mines was causing severe problems downstream. Under a special convention on protection of the Rhine against pollution by chlorides the riparian countries agreed on measures to be implemented by France on a shared cost basis. In follow up to the convention it was agreed that an International Commission would present to the Contracting Parties, within four years of the entry into force, a Convention proposal concerning the means to achieve progressively a new chloride-ion concentration limitation over the entire course of the Rhine. One of the positive results is that the salmon is nowadays back in the Rhine.



## *The 1998 Water Hydropower Agreement on the Syrdarya River in the Aral Sea Basin*

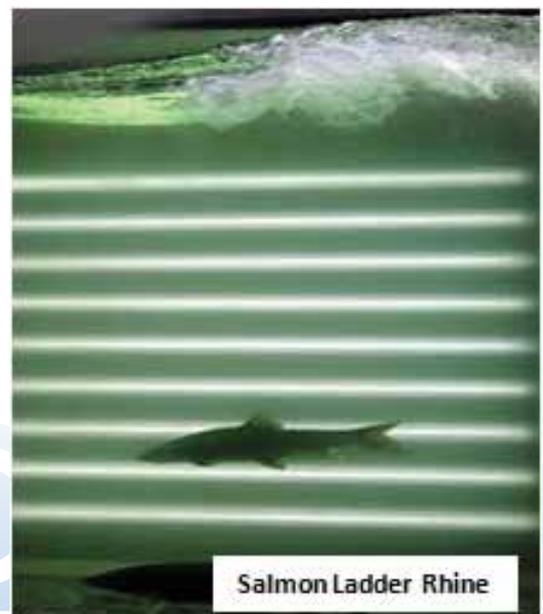
The 1998 Agreement on the Syrdarya agreed on barter relations to trade “water resources for hydropower” for “fossil fuel”. Already in 1999 the key article of this agreement was changed from “To approve specified limits for water diversion from the Amudarya and from the Syrdarya and the operation regime for the cascades” into “To approve the operating regime for the Naryn/Syrdarya cascade as a proposal for discussion at a meeting of experts representing the water management and hydropower departments to prepare a draft intergovernmental agreement”. As a consequence, the operational regimes for water release were to be submitted to the “Hydropower Council” and were to be decided upon in coordination with the other water management authorities. This completely changed the actual regime of water releases in this basin.



Nurek Dam Tajikistan - photo: András Szöllösi-Nagy

## *The European Water Framework Directive (EWFD)*

The European Water Framework Directive (EWFD) is a legally binding agreement to achieve agreed ecological standards of EU surface water bodies within an agreed time frame. The implementation of this EWFD shows many complexities both from the point of view of agreed quality standards as well as measures taken and investments required. The relevance and quality of the EWFD as a planning and management tool is widely acknowledged. The EWFD also takes a basin management approach. The conference will draw lessons from examples relevant to the practice of water diplomacy and international cooperation in the fields of: data and information monitoring, assessment methodologies, negotiations and legal mechanisms including enforcement, penalties and public participation.



Salmon Ladder Rhine

## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME AND ORGANIZATION

The conference will report on the variety of Water Peace Dialogues in 10 selected basins from around the world. For the selection of the 10 basins a call for concept notes will be issued in September 2012. The selection of the 10 best cases will be done by an independent international Scientific Committee co-chaired by Prof. András Szöllösi-Nagy and Ambassador Jack Maresca.

The 2013 conference will also have keynote addresses on the four essential elements of Water Peace Diplomacy, namely: data generation and sharing, assessment methodologies, negotiation processes and development and enforcement of agreements.

The 10 studies will provide best practice examples and insights in the four elements of the Water Peace Diplomacy process, in anticipation of the impacts of increasing pressures on scarce water resources. Thus, the 10 studies and the structured framework of the Water Peace Diplomacy will contribute to the exchange of experiences and learning. Participants will be leading policy makers and scientists from international organizations, research institutions and invited river basins and countries.

This conference is a first international conference on Water Peace Diplomacy of the Water Diplomacy Consortium and UPEACE The Hague. It is a most logical initiative in support of the recently published (Clingendael) report on the potential for Water Peace Diplomacy as a niche for the Netherlands, it is the first activity of the Water Diplomacy Consortium and it is serving the international ambitions of the city of The Hague.

## CONFERENCE OUTPUTS AND FOLLOW UP

The immediate result of the conference will be that the subject of water diplomacy and the role of the international institutions in this field have been highlighted, explained and confirmed. This will immediately and directly enhance the importance and effectiveness of the institutions involved in the Water Diplomacy Consortium and should lead to some first cases put forward for cooperation building/development with the legal and scientific capacities available in The Hague. The case studies presented during the conference will be brought together in conference proceedings and scientific publications on specific topics raised during the conference. The proceedings should have the content and quality to serve as reference material in the first years of operation of the Water Diplomacy Consortium and their international partners. In addition to the conference proceedings the Consortium will produce readers that will serve as base material for the development of lecturing and training notes to be used for capacity development activities of consortium

partners UNESCO-IHE, Clingendael Institute and their partners. Part of this material will be made available as reference material online. Expected outcomes will include the following:

- Based on an extensive analysis of case studies a critical review of past experiences and lessons learned; what worked where and why?
- Recommendations in the form of a Conference Statement, for the political and thematic processes of the 7th World Water Forum with respect to transboundary river basins and aquifers. Specific cases could even be contributions to the regional processes of the Forum.
- Public awareness raising and teaching materials based on the selected case studies.
- Edited and peer reviewed publication with contributions from partners.
- Initiation of operational relations and activities between the Water Diplomacy Consortium and international partners.

## TIME AND VENUE

The conference will be held during the second or third week of September 2013 in the Peace Palace, The Hague, the Netherlands.

### **Participation and key deadlines**

In total about 100 participants will be invited from international organizations active in water and peace issues. The participants will be a mix of scientists, policy makers, and water managers from governments, research institutions, basin institutions, private sector and NGOs.

## KEY DEADLINES

- 1. 20 September 2012**  
Announcement of the conference during the launch of UPEACE The Hague, and the issuance of the call for concept notes.
- 2. End November 2012**  
Scientific Committee meeting to decide on the cases to be selected (based upon the concept notes) and the programme outline.
- 3. June 2013**  
Submission of the full case studies
- 4. September 2013**  
Conference
- 5. December 2013**  
Publication Conference Proceedings

Contact information: UPEACE The Hague, [www.upeace.nl](http://www.upeace.nl) / WGC The Hague, [www.watergovernancecentre.nl](http://www.watergovernancecentre.nl)

For more information see [www.HagueWaterPeaceDialogues.org](http://www.HagueWaterPeaceDialogues.org)



#### **Recommendations Committee**

- Marius Enthoven (UPEACE The Hague)
- Eminent persons

#### **Scientific Committee**

- András Szöllösi-Nagy (UNESCO-IHE), Co-Chair
- Jack Maresca (UPEACE), Co-Chair
- Eminent scientists

#### **Organizing Committee**

- Henk van Schaik (UPEACE The Hague), Co-Chair
- Joop de Schutter (WGC and UNESCO-IHE), Co-Chair
- Jan Leentvaar (UNESCO-IHE)
- Corné Nijburg (WGC)
- Pieter van der Zaag (UNESCO-IHE)

#### **Reference Group**

- Léna Salame (UNESCO-IHP)
- Eminent operational experts

## ANNEX 1

### Potential River Basins, Aquifers and Riparian Countries

No	Basin	Riparians
1	Rhine river basin	Switzerland, the Netherlands, France, Germany
2	Mekong river basin	China and lower Mekong countries, MRC
3	Great Lakes	USA and Canada
4	Ganges / Brahmaputra river basins	Bangladesh and India
5	Indus river basin	India and Pakistan
6	San Juan river basin	Costa Rica and Nicaragua
7	Parana river basin	Brazil, Paraguay and Argentina
8	Aral Sea basin	Tadzkistan, Oezbekistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan
9	Niger river basin	Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Nigeria
10	Danube river basin	Hungary and Slovakia
11	Blue Nile river basin	Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt
12	Jordan river basin	Jordan, Israel, Syria
13	Euphraat/Tigris River Basin	Turkey, Iraq, Syria
14	European Union	Eu Com
15	Orange Senqu River basin	Lesotho, South Africa, Namibia
16	Orinoco river	Venezuela and Colombia
17	Inkomati river basin	South Africa, Swaziland and Mozambique
18	Nubian Sandstone Aquifer	Libya, Egypt, etc.
19	Guarani Aquifer	Argentina, Paraguay, Brazil, Uruguay, etc.
20	Illumedden Aquifer (?)	Mali, Niger and Nigeria
21	Mono river basin	Togo and Benin
22	Massacre river basin	Haiti and Dominican Republic





University for Peace  
UPEACE Centre The Hague



UNESCO-IHE  
Institute for Water Education



Water  
Governance  
Centre



clingendael  
netherlands institute of  
international relations



University for Peace



The Hague  
Institute for Global Justice



