

SEIZING THE MOMENT : A STEP CHANGE IN JORDAN'S WATER MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL TRANSITION

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Bern, January 24, 2013

Water, Trade and Sustainable Development Workshop

CONTEXTUALIZING JORDAN WATER SCARCITY: Recognising politics must drive solutions

CLIMATE CHANGE

- “Rio cannot afford to ignore politics”...Can we collectively challenge vested interests to move towards a more constructive politics?” (*World Today, 2012*)

MENA

- “Reforms need political as well as technical champions”
(*World Bank on MENA water , 2007*)

JORDAN

- “Jordan’s water strategy is politically challenged and its water crisis cannot be resolved by water reforms alone.”
- “There is urgent need for a bold new approach that links political reform.. to a mix of water solutions ..” (*Valerie Yorke, 2013*)

PRESENTATION STRUCTURE : Recognising politics must drive solutions

- Jordan's water problem
- Meeting the challenge : governance; part of the problem
- Political dynamics, 'political bargains', and water
- Politics must drive solutions

THE PROBLEM IS STRAIGHTFORWARD : DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY

Realistic picture of water balances 2015-2025*

Supply

- Safe yield + projects (committed / financed)
- No RSDS conveyor before 2025

Demand

- Capped agriculture - 700 MCM
- Demand exceeds renewable supply by growing margin

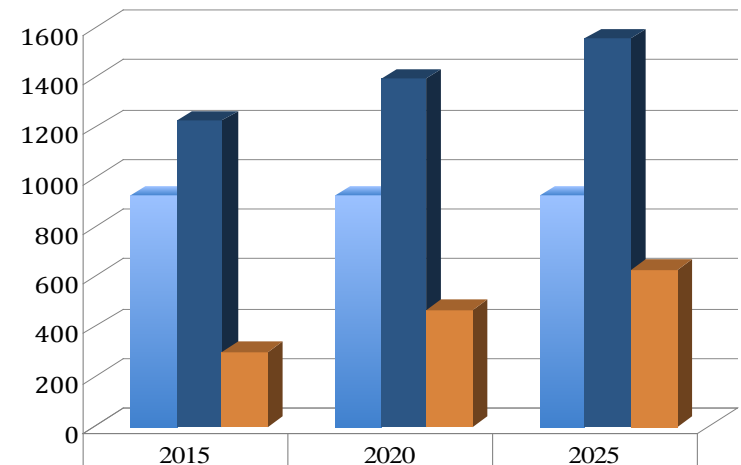
Deficit

- 2015 300 MCM
- 2020 469 MCM
- 2025 630 MCM

Virtual water (2008)

73% of water footprint (6.27 BCM)

Summary of Projected Supply (safe yield/projects underway) and Demand 2015-2025
MCM



	2015	2020	2025
Supply (safe yield/projects)	929	929	929
Projected demand	1229	1398	1559
Deficit	300	469	630

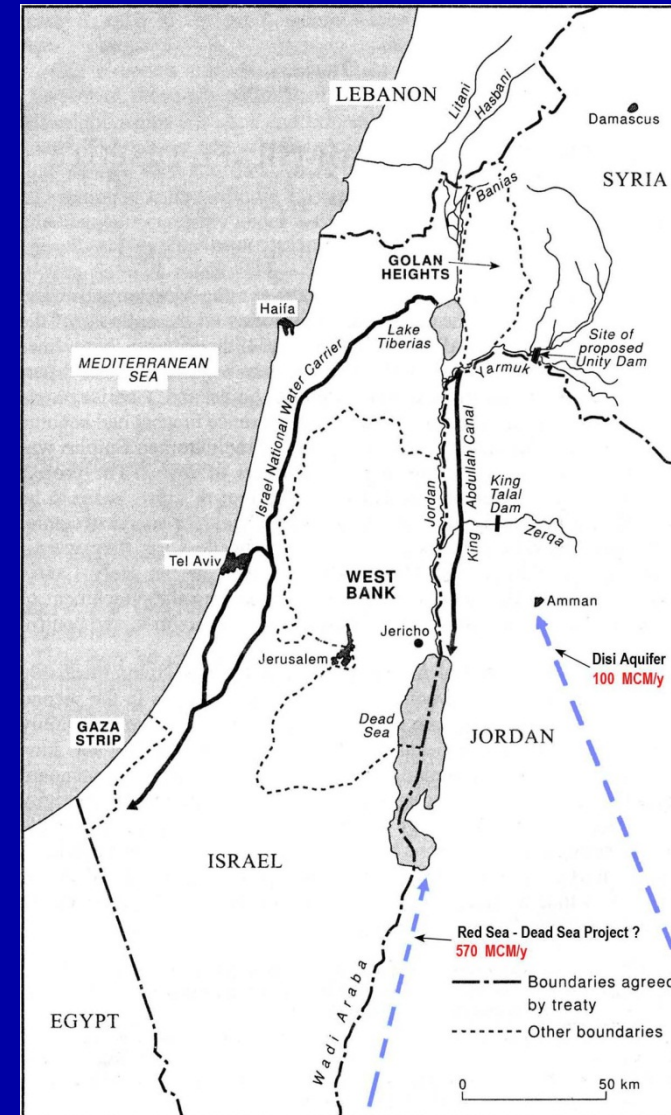
* Source:
 Author's projections based on MWI Water Balance 2010-25 (2012)

PROBLEM IS POLITICALLY COMPLEX

Power asymmetry, international cross border flows feed uncertainty

- 90% arid (ann. rainfall declining)
- 4th most water deprived (refugees)
-> per cap 145 CM / yr, and falling
- 80% supplies = surface & renewable groundwater,* but
 - significant proportion trans-boundary
 - Jordan downstream
 - no bilateral accord on joint management (Syria);
unsatisfactory accord (Israel)
- 8% supplies = fossil water* (SA / no accord)
- Climate change (threat multiplier)

* 2010 figures

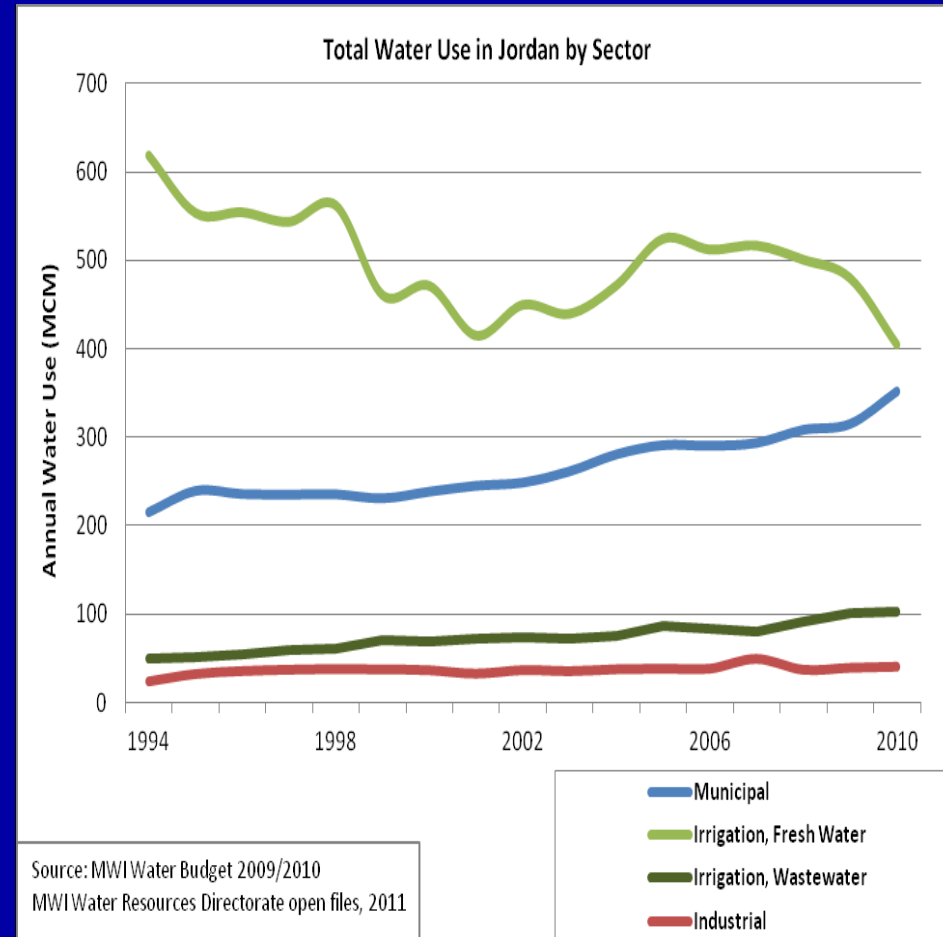


PART OF THE PROBLEM: GOVERNANCE

Policy record over two decades: disappointing outcomes

PLUS SIDE

- Commitment / strategies target:
- Demand management
- Reformists in sector
- Royal Water Committee
- Donor-Jordanian collaboration
- Some progress:
 - Senior decision-makers involved
 - Infrastructure (WWTPs)
 - PSP impacts – NRW reduction; safer drinking water
 - Slowdown in depletion of aquifers (Groundwater Law, HWF)
 - Modest decline in Ag's share to the advantage of municipalities



II. GOVERNANCE; PART OF THE PROBLEM

Policy record over two decades

BUT

- WRM efforts fail to produce hoped-for improvements
- Data reflect dangerous trends:
 - declines in precipitation, surface water
 - water use -> mainly low value & inefficient agriculture (66% water; 3.5% GDP)
 - groundwater over-abstraction -> depleting aquifers
 - municipal supply intermittent -> pollution & health risks
 - poor cost recovery; state subsidies unsustainable
 - widening deficits; water constraints inhibit growth

Explained by :

- Partial, uncoordinated reforms;
 - weak water institutions no match for powerful vested interests who resist reforms (tariffs, well regulation, crops, PSP)
- Impact of non-water policies (agriculture, trade, finance, interior) on outcomes
- Donors' failure to make conditionality stick

'AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH' : POLITICS DRIVE POOR WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Asymmetric power: Israel (hegemon); Syria (upstream); S. Arabia (shared aquifer)
- History of regime, survival strategy, cooption of social groups, patronage / rents
 - Political bargain ties traditional landowning elites /merchants -> networks of 'shadow state' social contract binds people to throne; with privileges / benefits exchanged for allegiance;
 - Water provision integral to exchange (political tool, asset, cheap service)
 - Restructuring of political bargain -1989 -> entrenching anti-reformist groups with interests in allocations, subsidisation, light regulation
 - Resilience of complex web of power in face of Arab Spring
 - ✓ Throne enjoys legitimacy; reluctant to devolve power ; divide & rule
 - ✓ Tribal elite want more power, but don't want to share it
 - ✓ Insufficient bottom up pressure – weak parties, communal divides; no agreed agenda
- Strategic location and donor support -> postpones crises / difficult choices
- Crises of monarchy and state only a matter of time?

WATER DEFICIT CHALLENGE CAN BE MET

Bold political approach - prioritising water - must drive solutions

- Only new 'political bargain' can drive 'step change' in water governance; technical solutions not enough
- National leaders must:
 - put water at top of national agenda (strategic significance for national security & socio economic development and centrality of non-sector policies for regional / national WRM)
 - formally mandate integrated planning - prioritising water at true cost, aligning management with policies to deliver economic growth
 - act now to put water sector on politically, financially, environmentally sustainable path, *priority* to:
 - A. Exploiting scope for indispensable demand / supply side efficiency improvements *(Short-long term)*
 - NRW reduction to conserve low cost water / raise revenues : 55->80 MCM (2020->2025)
 - Cross-sectoral Highlands Water Strategy with 'carrots and sticks' to increase irrigation efficiency & productivity, conserve renewable low cost supplies, protect aquifers, enhance adaptive capacity
 - Increased wastewater treatment / re-use in agriculture - 40->130 MCM (2015-2025)
 - Attention to revenue raising -> study of tariff & tax restructuring for fairer targeting of subsidies
 - B. Pursuing affordable new water supply projects *(Medium-long term)*
 - Desalination plant at Aqaba (100 MCM)
 - Public commitment to to RSDSWC subject to consultations (530 MCM)

WATER DEFICIT CHALLENGE CAN BE MET

Bold political approach, prioritising water to drive solutions

C. Endorsing / supporting regional initiatives to manage shared resources sustainably

(Medium-long term)

- pursue bilateral accords to close medium-term deficit (Israel - 50 MCM, Syria 100 MCM)
- Help lay foundation for Regional Water Community through supporting initiatives to advance regional vision on shared resources
- support studies on inward transfer of Turkish water, lest RSDSWC idea fails

D. Intensifying international diplomacy in support of above

(Short term->)

- Draw on improved inter-ministerial communications / shared single source data
- New PM to join Water Council; technicians posted to Royal Diwan, foreign & finance ministries;
- Negotiate new frame with donors for cash transfers & reform-related conditions / ensure it sticks

Thank you

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Total water resources 892 MCM (2010)

