

(a) Abstract:

**ASPECTS OF TRANSBOUNDARY COOPERATION  
IN THE EUPHRATES-TIGRIS BASIN**

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**ABSTRACT**

Roughly 85 % of the Euphrates, 40 % of the Tigris waters originate from the upstream riparian Turkey in the Euphrates-Tigris basin. Turkey will ultimately use around 19 km<sup>3</sup>/y in Euphrates, 8 km<sup>3</sup>/y in Tigris subbasins. This corresponds, as long-term average, to 30 % of the water potential of the Euphrates-Tigris basin; and 70 % will be available for downstream riparians. Reservoirs in Turkey provide significant benefits of sediment retention, flood mitigation, flow regulation and temporarily low flow augmentation also to downstream countries. Discrepancies about the water potential of the basin should be clarified in the light of the three-stage plan of Turkey. The development of the Euphrates-Tigris basin is in fact, when tackled with sincere diplomacy, a means of cooperation rather than a cause of conflict in the region.

(b) 'Recommendation' proposal:

Turkey proposed in 1984, at the meeting of the Joint Technical Committee, a three-stage plan for the optimal utilization of the Euphrates-Tigris basin. This plan foresaw joint action and cooperation for: (1) the determination of the water potential at certain key locations; (2) the determination of irrigable land potential and requirements; (3) the preparation of a comprehensive master plan for optimal, equitable and reasonable utilization of the transboundary watercourses of the Euphrates-Tigris basin. Although the downstream riparians Syria and Iraq have not agreed in the past to cooperate on this plan, the efforts towards integrated water resources management in recent years, focusing on the 'basin' concept, favor the approach in Turkey's three-stage plan, developed already a quarter of a century ago. We believe, that a recommendation as stated below, will be appropriate in this regard.

[Recommendation] "With regard to the equitable, reasonable and optimal utilization of the waters in the transboundary Euphrates-Tigris basin, an integrated water resources management approach encompassing the entire basin, such as an elaborated version of the three-stage plan proposed at the Joint Technical Committee meeting between Turkey, Syria, Iraq in 1984, appear to be a relevant operational tool for sustainable development".