

Discussion question



Lidia M. Lujan W13D2 Water, Water everywhere and not a drop to drink! It has been d that while water resources have rarely, if ever, been the sole source of violent conflict of war, the next major war could be a water war. Due to climate change and population growth, some countries could run out of water within 40 years (Soffer 2). The demand for fresh water is ever growing and together with natural disasters and armed conflicts, it's hard to predict or plan any projects involving water shortages (ICRC 2). Being a very tense area, the Middle East will suffer as one of the first areas of the world from water shortage. Especially when the conflicts and tensions go on like they have been doing for the past several years. These areas are very dry and, due to the fact that armed forces changed their way of warfare by getting 'mean' and just cutting areas off from water supplies, people are more likely to suffer from fresh water shortage, irrigation problems and all kinds of water related diseases. Since there is not really any proper solution, and maybe not a 'real' threat yet, water wars may develop in countries or regions with high populations in combination with low fresh water supplies, like the Middle East. International water resources: Another conflict variable Not only are the conflicts over water coming from within one country threatening societies, other countries and the shared water resources are a threat to fresh water supplies in the future as well. Some scholars have been saying for many years now that either scarcity can contribute to conflict and other scholars have argued that scarcity can contribute to a solution (Dinar 35). Factors and variables that influence the conflict or the solution of these international water problems are mentioned by Dinar (35). These factors are for example the mismanagement of water, the interdependence of the states, the geographic and historic criteria of ownership and the relative

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power of the parties involved. Water has been a tool and a target in past wars and conflicts (Dinar 36). This, however, does not automatically predict the future. Countries do understand that the need of cooperation is far more important than being without any fresh water. Any good news for the future? Besides the growing concern about water in the world, we are developing a need for new and alternative water sources and better water management (Soffer 261). One of the water-wars, in Bolivia in 2000, resulted in new laws and bylaws, concerning water, water supplies and indigenous rights to water resources (Van Koppen 107). Other solutions mentioned (Miller 324) could entail the waste of water, subsidization, the limitations to water wells or the growing of water-intensive crops. The encouragement of organic farming, forest preservation, recycling and night-irrigation are some of the solutions that might help the waste of water (Miller 335). The threat of water shortage is present and will be more and more a global concern. Luckily, this threat has been known for decades, and scientists have already been thinking about solutions. Water-wars have been fought, and water will become an big issue. Due to the fact that we all know the importance of solutions, water-wars might not become a very large global problem, so we can focus on the real problem, instead of fighting over a lost cause. Works Cited Dinar, A., S. Dinar, S. McCaffrey, and D. McKinney. *Bridges over Water: Understanding Transboundary Water Conflict, Negotiation and Cooperation*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co. Pte. Ltd., 2007. Print. ICRC. *Water and War: ICRC Response*. ICRC, 2009. Print. Miller, G. T., and S. Spoolman. *Living the Environment: Principles, Connections, and Solutions*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning, 2009. Print. Soffer, A. *Rivers of Fire: the conflict over water in the Middle East*. London: Rowman & Littlefield

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