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Fundamental Problems² of Water Resources Management in the Helmand River Basin, Afghanistan

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Abstract

The closed hydrology and the geopolitical nature of the Helmand River basin in terms of leadership, management, and use of water resources have created serious threats to its integrity, environmental health, and human security in this river basin. The Helmand River basin, where about 8 million people live, includes about 49 percent of the soil and 11 percent of the water flow of this country. Agricultural sectors and related industries are the main drivers of the economy in this basin and due to the increasing need for food in the country and the region, the population shift towards cities, industrialization, and most importantly climate change and water shortage, competition between major water consumers in this basin is increasing. Despite the increasing number of studies on the water management of the Helmand River basin, no practical research carried out to strengthen and summarize⁸ the common conclusions and findings related to the fundamental problems facing the water resources management of this river basin. Therefore, in this article, to fill the aforementioned gap, all related documents, studies, and topics have been comprehensively reviewed and analyzed³. To achieve this goal, the qualitative-analytical research method was used to analyze and find the key issues raised, and as a result, the basic problems facing the water resources management of this basin were investigated as much as possible. In the following, the necessary suggestions are also presented so that by implementing it, this country would be able to solve the existing problems by using its hydro political capacities and opportunities and it would also be placed at the center of the water interactions in the river basin, to provide a sustainable and all-round development of the country.

Keywords: Afghanistan, climate change, geopolitics, hydrology, water management problems of the Helmand river basin, hydroponics

Introduction:

The Helmand River basin is the biggest water basin in Afghanistan, which, with its vast and fertile plains, can accommodate and support a large part of the country's people. Unfortunately, the residents of this river basin are struggling with many problems due to various factors, including successive droughts and the lack of proper management of water resources. These problems, with seasonal rains and devastating floods, cause severe loss of life and financial losses to the people.

In expansion, the final few decades' wars and political insecurities have devastated Afghanistan's water foundations, such as dams, water supplies, water system and water supply systems, water estimation and metrology stations, sewage and sanitation frameworks, and water data collection and examination frameworks, additionally caused a decrease in capacity, need of administration and solid advancement of water assets and has escalates the migration emergency within the nation (Fahim, 2015; 2018, Gleick & Iceland; 2014, GAO; 2015, Yildiz; 2010, Ruler & Sturtewagen). On the other hand, water conveyance in Afghanistan is unequal in different ways. For illustration, the normal precipitation in Afghanistan is between 250 and 310 mm, which is about one-third of the normal precipitation within the world (Fahim, 2015). In expansion, the country's water assets moreover have a unbalanced conveyance; The Amu Waterway bowl, counting the Harirud and Marghab bowls and other related regions, covers almost 37% of Afghanistan's arrive but contains around 60% of the water stream. The Eastern Kabul Stream bowl covers around 12% of the region of this nation. It contains approximately 26% of the water stream, but the Helmand bowl covers approximately 49% of the arrive of this nation and as it were 11% of the water stream. 2010, Lord & Sturtewagen). Too, Afghanistan's water assets is exceedingly subordinate on regular and unsteady rain and snowfall. Ice sheet withdraw and early snowmelt have solid impacts on waterway water accessibility. In addition, Afghanistan right now has the least water capacity capacity per capita within the locale (Lord & Sturtewagen, 2010). For case, when the nation experienced a dry season from 1999 to 2005, the lion's share of inhabitants in towns with restricted water assets were constrained to forsake their arrive and move to bigger cities (Yildiz, 2015). Thomas and colleagues (2016) state that 90% of Afghanistan's waters are shared with downstream neighboring countries, which increasingly requires cooperation to ensure sustainable development in Afghanistan and neighboring countries and maintain regional stability and security. It needs a region. Despite this need, there is no formal dialogue process or bilateral

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