

EcoPeace Budget Allocation Simulation¹

April 2020 // edited by Prof. Jeremy Pressman, University of Connecticut

Scenario: You are the Board of Directors of [EcoPeace Middle East](#), an Israeli-Jordanian-Palestinian environmental non-governmental organization (NGO). You have just received a grant of \$500,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation. The Foundation has stipulated that you may not spread the money too thin across your programming areas. You may allocate it to no more than **three** of your six existing objectives. Note that Objective #6 requires at least \$250,000 to get off the ground. You must write the Rockefeller Foundation one short memo of approximately 300-500 words explaining how the Board will allocate the money and why you have made that decision, justifying what you did and did not choose to support.

As you make this decision, think about what steps will do the most to

- a) Lead to cleaner water, a cleaner environment, and sustainable practices
- b) Educate the Israeli, Jordanian, and Palestinian people about these issues
- c) Help EcoPeace raise more funds so it can expand its activities

This is the list of the six possible allocation areas, followed by a more detailed explanation below:

Objective #1: Reach a new Israeli-Palestinian agreement on water allocation and management issues that fairly and sustainably advances water security for both peoples.

Objective #2: Seek the implementation in part or in full of the Jordan Valley NGO Master Plan and seek to change practices of the mineral extraction industry on the shores of the Dead Sea.

Objective #3: Create local constituencies that empower youth, adult residents, mayors and other municipal officials to call for and lead necessary cross-border solutions to regional water issues.

Objective #4: Create local and international faith-based constituencies that empower clergy and members to call for and lead Jordan River rehabilitation efforts.

Objective #5: Support the communities where the EcoCenters are located and their engagement in sustainable development practices.

Objective #6: Create the Center for Water Security in Washington, DC in order to share with other water basins the expertise garnered by EcoPeace and to further the organization's capacities through joint learning.

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Objective #1: Reach a new Israeli-Palestinian agreement on water allocation and management issues that fairly and sustainably advances water security for both peoples.

The water crises that Gaza faces, water scarcity in the West Bank, and unprecedented levels of pollution highlight to both the Palestinian and the Israeli public that water allocation and management issues can no longer be held hostage to other final status Israeli Palestinian peace

¹ This text is an edited version of the EcoPeace document, "EcoPeace Middle East: Strategic Five Year Plan, 2017-2021." Many sections are direct quotations from that plan in order to give as accurate an explanation as possible of EcoPeace's goals and programs.

process issues. Of all final status issues water is the most solvable. Much due to Israeli technological leadership in wastewater reuse and desalination, Israel today can produce more water for domestic use than it has the need for.

This means that the reallocation of natural water can today be negotiated at low political cost to Israel, and at high political gain to both sides. Moving first on water, however, requires a break from the all-or-nothing approach to final status negotiations that has been implemented to date by both the Israeli and Palestinian governments, as well as by the international community. In addition to concrete improvement of water security and livelihood for both Israelis and Palestinians, a new agreement on water would help rebuild the public's trust and belief in the future success of the peace process.

Targets:

- Show national level decision makers how it is in their best self-interest to move forward on a new Israeli Palestinian water agreement.
- Illustrate to the international community the possibilities for mutual gain in moving forward on a new Israeli Palestinian water agreement.
- Within the 5-year period reach a new Israeli Palestinian agreement on the fair allocation of natural water resources and their sustainable management.
- Seek to double again the amount of water Israel sells to Gaza and to help secure sufficient electric power supply for WWTP² and to meet midterm water supply needs in Gaza through desalination.
- Seek implementation of the Israeli MoU³ commitment to increase water supply to the West Bank by 30 mcm.
- Advocate for improvement of Palestinian water management including pricing, efficiency and governance.
- Seek Israeli Palestinian agreement on cross border wastewater reuse charge

Objective #2: Seek the implementation in part or in full of the Jordan Valley NGO Master Plan and seek to change practices of the mineral extraction industry on the shores of the Dead Sea.

Much due to conflict in the Middle East, the Jordan River has seen some 95% of its fresh water diverted, much of its flow polluted, and biodiversity lost. The demise of the Jordan River, together with the actions of the mineral extraction companies in Israel and Jordan, have led to the dramatic destruction of the Dead Sea, into which the Jordan River flows. Continued misuse of natural resources and lack of regional cooperation in the basin not only threaten the environment, but national and regional security issues as well as they perpetuate underdevelopment and poverty. Advancing the investment strategy detailed in the Master Plan and a healthy Jordan River can serve as the engine for development, increasing the GDP of the basin from \$4 million to \$73 million annually. The rehabilitation of the Jordan River, combined with changing mineral industry extraction practices, will stabilize the Dead Sea.

Targets:

² Wastewater Treatment Plant (I think).

³ Memorandum of Understanding.

- Continue to demonstrate to Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian national level decision makers the national security risks associated with current levels of poverty in the basin, and the opportunities presented to create wealth in the Valley thanks to the River's rejuvenation.
- Create a donor-lead trust fund for the implementation of a limited number of Jordan Valley projects following the signing of a trilateral Palestinian, Jordanian and Israeli Jordan Valley Trust Fund MoU.
- Support adoption of new governance structures needed to bring prosperity to the basin.
- Promote the creation of a public private finance mechanism that will attract large scales private sector investment in the valley through innovative financing.
- Research the viability of introducing desalinated water to the Sea of Galilee in order to advance Jordan River rehabilitation efforts and water security for Jordan and Northern Israel (See Water Energy Nexus program described below).
- Promote policies / legislation in Israel and Jordan that would require mineral extraction companies to pay for the Dead Sea water that they extract, creating an economic incentive for investment in new sustainable management technologies for the Dead Sea.
- Continue to lead major public events in partnership with local communities that bring media attention to the unsustainability of the current situation in the Jordan Valley.
- Further research possibilities of expanding the regional integration models developed in the Jordan Valley / Dead Sea to help stabilize the region.

Objective #3: Create local constituencies that empower youth, adult residents, mayors and other municipal officials to call for and lead necessary cross-border solutions to regional water issues.

Initiated in 2001, the Good Water Neighbors (GWN) program remains EcoPeace's flagship program for environmental peacebuilding. Mayors and municipal officials are often pawns in the lose-lose reality of poor water and environmental policies. Yet it is their mandate, as well as their commitment towards their constituents, to advance the clear self-interests of their communities when cross-border environmental solutions are proposed despite the prevailing conflict.

Target:

- Advocate the advancement of priority projects that have been identified in the 2016 GWN publication that increase water supply or prevent cross border pollution.
- Advance the watershed-based approach to have greater impact on governance and cross border policy-making.
- Expand the watershed branding initiative to include a pilot branding campaign that will promote an interconnected identity among residents of the pilot watershed and their water resources.
- Review and further develop youth education, including alumni programs for youth trustee graduates, which maximize the impact of the program within each watershed.
- Empower women and girls in each watershed and launch a scholarship program for women's leadership on water issues.
- Invest in the establishment of new eco-facilities, particularly in schools, in order to model best environmental practices hands-on.

- Revise the Water Resource Guide and develop new education materials, and advance their adoption and implementation by the respective Ministries of Education

Objective #4: Create local and international faith-based constituencies that empower clergy and members to call for and lead Jordan River rehabilitation efforts.

The Jordan River’s symbolic significance in many religions provides a direct opportunity for faith-based engagement in rehabilitation efforts both within local communities across the region and internationally. Because of the religious importance of the River to the three Abrahamic faiths, faith-based communities have a clear self-interest to be outspoken on cross-border environmental solutions that affect the River.

Target:

EcoPeace has developed educational materials for Christian, Muslim and Jewish communities and has issued the ‘Jordan River Covenant’ that many religious leaders have signed, pledging to advocate for a healthy river. Building on relationships established in the previous five-year strategic planning period, EcoPeace will:

- Continue to bring both local and international faith-based leadership to visit the Jordan River and engage their own communities in the rehabilitation of the River.
- Seek ways to empower religious communities to convert their concern into political will that will in turn impact decision-makers both internationally and locally.
- Aim to gain the support of the Pope through public statements that call for the rehabilitation of the River and hold together with the Pope a public event on the River’s rehabilitation.

Objective #5: Support the communities where the EcoCenters are located and their engagement in sustainable development practices.

Our EcoCenters are places where local, regional and international youth and tourists can come together to learn about and experience the shared environment. Demonstrate the environmental, educational and economic opportunities of sustainable development.

Target:

- Create a cohesive, unified image and supportive marketing plan for the three EcoCenters.
- Create a cohesive plan that integrates the EcoCenters with the activities of our Center for Water Security, enabling visitors to best experience EcoPeace’s unique methodology hands-on during site visits to the region.
- Further upgrade accommodation facilities at SHE⁴ and Auja so that they can attract larger groups while still modeling best sustainable practices.
- Expand partnerships with other local community organizations in order to integrate the EcoCenters into the communities in which they operate.
- Increase outreach undertakings in order to attract students worldwide.

⁴ Stands for...?

- Expand economic partnerships with the tourism, environmental education and adventure markets.

Objective #6: Create the Center for Water Security in order to share with other water basins the expertise garnered by EcoPeace and to further the organization's capacities through joint learning.

The Center will offer its services to facilitate effective program development in organizations located in shared water basins and will disseminate best practices developed in the Middle East by advising on how to best adopt 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' programming and strategies to the specific circumstances in a given location. Programing will include site visits by members of the target organizations to the Middle East in order to gain on-the-ground familiarity with EcoPeace's work and the travel of EcoPeace staff to the target regions. Climate-induced water stress, resulting in increased scarcity due to drought and pollution, is the biggest threat facing the planet over the next decade.

Target:

- Create the EcoPeace Center for Water Security in Washington DC.
- Raise funds for the first five years of basic programing to support the long-term sustainability of the Center.
- Develop strategic relationships with development agencies, think tanks and academia that could partner with the Center.