



OUR SHARED FUTURE:
ENVIRONMENTAL
PATHWAYS TO PEACE

Revitalizing Community Within and Across Boundaries

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Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

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Introduction

How does globalization affect natural resource issues such as water on local, national, and international levels? Can our common dependence on these stressed resources be a force for bringing people together rather than dividing us? What lessons can we learn from sharing insights from communities at these very different levels of organization?

In January 2010, the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Fetzer Institute invited 22 scholars and practitioners to a two-day seminar to discuss these questions and the deep connection between caring for the environment and caring for community. *Pathways to Peace: Defining Community in the Age of Globalization* was the second seminar in a three-year initiative to combine scholarship, public policy, and local practice to articulate and support global conflict transformation and reconciliation in communities throughout the world. Examining the effect of environmental peacebuilding on communities, the discussion explored how governments, NGOs, the private sector, and other interested parties can generate positive outcomes while minimizing negative ones.

Participants from Canada, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Israel, Kenya, Nepal, Switzerland, the Philippines, and the United States brought to the table a wide range of experience and expertise from diverse fields, including peacebuilding, community building, health care, economic development, conflict resolution, and foundation management. By convening leaders in environmental peacebuilding and community building, the Wilson Center and the Fetzer Institute drew on a wide range of experience and perspectives related to environment, conflict, and peacebuild-

ing practice and research. The group used water access and peacebuilding case studies as a means to enter into dialogue about the challenges of global community engagement.

In preparation for the seminar, geographer and renowned water expert Aaron Wolf of Oregon State University contributed a paper, “The Enlightenment Rift and Peacebuilding: Rationality, Spirituality, and Shared Waters,” in which he laid out the complicated, sometimes conflictual, and often surprisingly collaborative aspects of negotiations over water resources. For Wolf, given water’s life-sustaining quality but limited quantity, it seems intuitive that “water should be the most conflictive of resources.” However, he maintains that “While press reports of international waters often focus on conflict, what has been more encouraging is that, throughout the world, water also induces cooperation, even in particularly hostile basins, and even as disputes rage over other issues...there is a long, and in many ways deeper, history of water-related cooperation.”

On this foundation, Wolf illustrates four stages of water conflict: from adversarial, to reflective, to integrative, to action. Lessons from the “spiritual understanding of water conflict transformation” he says, “offer not only new understanding of current disputes, but also models, tools, and strategies for more effective water conflict management and transformation.”

Seminar participants used Wolf’s paper as a starting point from which to write short papers based on their own expertise and experience. From Kenya to Nepal to Harlem, participants shared their perspectives on the challenges and promises of environmental issues, community building and organizing, and peacebuilding.

This report draws from the rich dialogue of the seminar and seminar papers to share the broad range of experience and the insight of the participants. To learn more about these remarkable programs and the people working on natural resources, peacebuilding, and community development, see the complete list of papers on page 120, which can be downloaded from the Woodrow Wilson Center website.



SHEWAYE DERIBE

In Ethiopia, people who share
one river basin consider each other as brothers.
We say that we drink one water, we have one blood.
- Shewaye Deribe



Those Who Would Carry the Water:

Welcoming Reflections

by Mark Nepo

It is fitting to say “welcome” since this timeless greeting originally meant “come to the well.” Let me try to describe the well we are coming to. We are at once trying to gather the best experience and thinking of current environmental practice, to help advance the issue of water as a resource, and to use environmental work around water as a case study for the lessons and challenges of global community engagement. In convening leading practitioners and thinkers in the field of environmental peacebuilding and focusing on the ever-present issue of water, we hope to surface the strengths of human resources and how they affect the emerging global community.

In truth, the issues that bring us here have been present in the human condition forever. They are spoken to in every tradition. A few stories will help create a context for our time together.

If we turn to the Hindu tradition, we learn that Saraswati is the goddess of knowledge, music, and the arts. Her name means “the one who flows” and legend has it that she was born of the Saraswati River, which is an invisible river that carries the waters that sustain all life. From the earliest times, in many traditions, the waters that sustain all life refer to both natural resources *and* human and spiritual resources; actual water *and* the water we have come to know since the beginning of time as wisdom and love.

In Hindu lore, Saraswati’s ageless counterpart on earth is the serpent demon, Vritrassura, who is driven to hoard all the Earth’s water. And so the endless struggle begins; at least this is one tradition’s beginning. Thankfully, in the *Rig-Veda*, the sacred collection of Sanskrit, we are given hope as Saraswati—with help from her brother Ganesh, the provider and remover of obstacles, and Indra, the god who connects all things—kills the demon who would hoard the Earth’s water.



MARK NEPO

But clearly, throughout the ages, those who would carry the water and those who would hoard the water have appeared again and again and again. This is why we are here. Unspoken or not, unaware or not, we are by care and kinship of the lineage that would carry the water.

If we turn to the Haitian tradition, we find a very telling teaching story called “The Chief of the Well.” This story speaks of a time of drought when the streams are dry and the wells are parched. There is no place to get water. The animals meet to discuss the situation and decide to ask God for help. God creates a well that will have endless water as long as one of the animals serves as caretaker and welcomes all who would come in need. The lizard Mabouya volunteers. But intoxicated with his newfound power, Mabouya becomes a gatekeeper, not a caretaker, and sends everyone in need away. Eventually, God replaces the lizard with the frog who croaks to all, “Come! This is God’s well! The hole in the ground is yours, but the water belongs to God.” And we are left, in each generation, to discover what is ours and what is God’s and to understand what turns the caretaker in us to the gatekeeper.

If we can accept our role as caretakers of resources that outlive us, then the history of the *acequia* might be relevant. An *acequia* (a-sā’kē-e) is a community-operated waterway used for irrigation. It is the name for a sluiceway or gravity chute that flows down a mountainside, providing water for a village. The Spanish word “*acequia*,” which means “ditch or canal,” comes from the Arabic *al saqiya* which means “water conduit.” The Islamic occupation of Spain, beginning late in the eighth century, brought this technique of irrigation to Spain.

Acequias were then brought to the Americas by Spain only to find their indigenous counterparts already in use. Particularly in the Andes,

We could say that knowledge flows

like water between countries and communities.

If this is so, then each of you is such water.

– Mark Nepo

northern Mexico, and the modern-day American Southwest, *acequias* exist as the outgrowth of ancient systems created to carry snow runoff or river water to villages and distant fields. Many South American villages have settled around the mouth of an *acequia* that begins high and out of sight in the crags of a mountain. There, the source water collects all winter near the top and, in spring, with the thaw, it streams into the village.

In many of these South American villages, as in Peru for example, there is an annual ritual in which an entire village climbs the *acequia* in early spring to clear the rocks and tree limbs and snake nests that during the winter have blocked the path of water that the village depends on. This ancient, pragmatic ritual of clearing the *acequia* provides a powerful model for how community can care for its natural resources together.

In fact, keeping the *acequia* clear and flowing is a useful metaphor for interdependence and cooperation. The life of the *acequia*, and our responsibility to keep its path of flow clear, represents a cycle of natural and human erosion and cleansing that is intrinsic to life on earth. Therefore, keeping the *acequia* clear—both the actual *acequia* and the *acequia* of humanity—bears learning how to do well.

With all this in mind, I am drawn to lift up one more story. It comes from Éliane Ubalijoro, a professor at McGill University in Montreal, who as a Rwandan is working with the generation there orphaned by the genocide. After the mass killings, those surviving were confined to refugee camps. In this particular settlement, women had to cross a dark field outside of the camp and risk being raped to get water for their children. This difficult situation points to the complex levels of the issues before us, all of which demand our attention.

First, we might consider access to the water itself. With regard to the conservation and preservation of natural resources, we are asked to problem solve the perennial question: How to bring the water to those who need it? At this level, a direct solution might be to move the water supply *inside* the refugee camp.

Under this, however, we might consider access to the human resources. What is blocking the human *acequia*? With regard to conflict transformation and peacebuilding, we are compelled to ask: What are the values implicit in this situation by which the refugee camp guards *put* the water outside of the camp in the first place in order to create the opportunity to rape the women?

This leads to the work of education, the work of clearing the human *acequia*. So with regard to the development of social equity, we are now compelled to ask: What are the assumptions and traditions in this community that enable them to believe that exploiting women is not only permissible but entitled? How do we clear the human *acequia* so that wisdom and compassion can flow?

Finally, we might consider the conservation and preservation of human resources. For at the heart of this insidious atrocity is the resilience and courage and love of these women who went into the dark to get water for their children knowing the violation that awaited them. What kind of deep water is this and how can we insure access to this resource?

This story from Rwanda is one more example that shows how natural resources and human resources are inextricably linked. The questions before us are: How do we tend all levels at once? How do we develop multiple strategies? How do we convene and surface the wisdom of all frames?

Part of our inquiry here is to take our turn in trying to understand how natural resources and human resources are so linked. What blocks their access? What lets them flow together and sustain life? How do we understand the water of humanity and the water of the earth and how both kinds of water are shared or not in the world today?

We could say that knowledge flows like water between countries and communities. If this is so, then each of you is such water. We are here to drink from you and people like you, and to understand the currents that run between us and beneath us; to insure the clear flow of natural and human resources into the world; and to keep the global *acequia* clear; to embody and to further the art and science of carrying the water in all its forms to those who need it.



KENT BUTTS AND JOAN CASTRO

Once participants have moved, in the first two stages, from mostly speaking to mostly listening, and from thinking about rights to needs, the problem-solving capabilities that are inherent to most groups can begin to foster creative, cooperative solutions.

– Aaron Wolf



Opening Remarks

by Geoffrey D. Dabelko

On behalf of the Wilson Center, it was my distinct pleasure to undertake the next chapter in the Center's ongoing collaboration with the Fetzer Institute to delve into the multiple dimensions of community resilience. What a unique and invigorating experience to be approached by a foundation that seeks partnership to engage in mutual learning in unfamiliar arenas. From the beginning, it has been explicitly about learning through dialogue. Understanding that many different perspectives must be explored to gain nuanced insights, the Fetzer Institute actively seeks out a diversity of perspective and experience. For us at the Wilson Center, this collaboration has very much been a two-way learning street—something that was translated into the mindset we adopted when assembling the topic of this seminar and, most importantly, who we wanted in the room.

Last year, the Wilson Center and the Fetzer Institute gathered insights from their initial dialogues in the volume *Community Resilience: A Cross-Cultural Study*. In continuing these discussions of resilience and revitalizing community within and across boundaries, we decided to focus this seminar on natural resources, conflict, and peace, with an emphasis on water. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the policy and scholarly worlds grew more interested in the connection between natural resources and conflict. The new space for discussion afforded by the end of the Cold War opened up space for broader dialogues on peace and security. The environmental security topic experienced a big uptick in attention. In the specific area of links between natural resources and high levels of violence, there was a lot of smoke, certainly some fire, and a lot of contentious back and forth in policy and academic circles.

By the end of the 1990s, many of us involved in the debates described it as a period of treading water. The questions remained narrowly constructed with limited application to the world's wide-ranging challenges.

Is community building

the same as peacebuilding?

—Robert Adams

In response, the Wilson Center's Environmental Change and Security Program (ECSP) embarked on a modest effort to widen the lens of inquiry. With Ken Conca from American University, and in collaboration with a number of the other participants of this seminar, ECSP decided to turn the environment and conflict link on its head and pose a different question. Based on environmental interdependencies that we experience at different levels—individual, household, community, state, regional, and international—we set out to learn if there are opportunities for cooperation over natural resources to proactively build trust, build peace, and build confidence among parties at very different levels and within very different contexts.

In a 2002 edited volume entitled *Environmental Peacemaking*, Ken Conca and I worked with multiple regional experts to ask questions about how natural resource interdependency could be a force for cooperation and trust building rather than simply conflict. We looked at different levels, actors, players, and what we initially thought were different resource type issues. However, as the effort evolved, we unintentionally gravitated to water, often at regional and international levels. Realizing this, we started asking questions. Was there something special about water that led us to it repeatedly? Gidon Bromberg, Israeli Director for Friends of the Earth, Middle East, has extensive experience working with colleagues in Palestine, Jordan, and Israel to successfully advance environmental and community cooperation in a region otherwise steeped in conflict. He articulated in this seminar that the unique, life-sustaining quality of water facilitates cooperation and peacebuilding.

Water is not just another commodity. Together with the sun and the air it is the very basis for life. Water flows from one community



KEN CONCA

to the other. We need it for all our essential needs, and to sustain the ecosystems around us. Hence, because water is well understood to touch the very essence of life, in the midst of conflict, it is a safe issue from which to promote dialogue, common understanding, and joint projects around. People usually understand without the need for explanation that yes, water cannot wait and must be dealt with now even if that requires working with the other side. Hence, working together on water makes it easier to defend the need for cooperation in the midst of conflict.

While water projects offer opportunities for environmental peace-building, we also want to widen the conversation to recognize the opportunities for cooperation over other natural resources. How can an integrated approach to community building and development work have wide-reaching and long-lasting impacts? Hanmin Liu, president and co-founder of the Wildflowers Institute, whose mission is to understand how communities work and to help them be self-sustaining, wrote in his reflection paper:

The most important lesson that I have garnered from my experiences to date is that development work starts not from a program perspective such as health, education, or water management, but from seeing rural villages and vulnerable communities as a living ecosystem. This living ecosystem has a self-organized infrastructure, or basic organizing unit, that functions in and adapts to the economy of the times. The strategy for development should strengthen this infrastructure.

I have had the great fortune to meet with people who, through their work, highlight the need for integrated responses to development chal-

lenges. We included many people from these dynamic communities in this seminar because, while they are largely under-appreciated and under-funded, they continue to tirelessly tackle the multiple needs of their communities, from a practical standpoint of both the communities' wants and needs. But they also work from a larger analytical framework that recognizes the interconnectedness of these issues. This seminar was an opportunity to bring this community together

The participants quoted in the following pages have very rich experiences in understanding the level of the individual, the community, the state, and the international. They are trying to meet their integrated needs such as health and livelihoods, population and conservation, and anti-poverty programs. These challenges are present in many different contexts—a marine environment, a highlands environment, and an arid environment. This gathering was intentionally very rich and diverse in terms of disciplinary and topical backgrounds, in terms of practitioners and scholars. Through this mixed group we were able to gain new insights into environmental peacebuilding and community action. What follows is a compilation of these insights.



DAVID JENSEN

One way to fight the cynicism

is to engage with others who re-inspire you, who share their experiences and stories.

-David Jensen



AARON WOLF

The Enlightenment Rift and Peacebuilding: Rationality, Spirituality, and Shared Waters

by Aaron T. Wolf^{1,2}

BACKGROUND

Water management is, by definition, conflict management: water, unlike other scarce, consumable resources, is used to fuel *all* facets of society, from biologies to economies to aesthetics and spiritual practice. Moreover, it fluctuates wildly in space and time; its management is usually fragmented; and it is often subject to vague, arcane, and / or contradictory legal principles. As such, there is no such thing as managing water for a single purpose—*all* water management is multi-objective and based on navigating competing interests. Within a nation, these interests include domestic users, agriculturalists (including those in fishing), hydropower generators, recreators, and environmentalists—any two of which are regularly at odds, and the complexity of finding mutually acceptable solutions increases exponentially as more stakeholders are involved. Add international boundaries and the difficulty grows substantially yet again.

While press reports of international waters often focus on conflict, what has been more encouraging is that, throughout the world, water also induces cooperation, even in particularly hostile basins, and even as disputes rage over other issues. This has been true from the Jordan (Arabs and Israelis) to the Indus (Indians and Pakistanis) to the Kura-Araks (Georgians, Armenians, and Azeris). Despite research that finds repeatedly and empirically that water-related cooperation overwhelms conflict over the last 50 years (see, most recently, Wolf et al. 2003), prevailing theories fail to explain this phenomenon.

Here is a resource on which we all depend, which fluctuates wildly in space and time, and for which there is little guidance in international law. By any quantitative measure, water should be the most *conflictive* of resources, not an elixir that drives enemies to craft functioning and resilient institutional arrangements. (See Conca & Dabelko 2002; Carius

et al. 2004; and Wolf et al. 2005 for complete discussions of the relationship between water and security.) Certainly, there is a long history of conflicts over, or related to, shared freshwater resources. But there is also a long, and in many ways deeper, history of water-related cooperation. *Why* do countries that share a basin cooperate on water, even when they will not cooperate over other issues?

Studies offer economic (e.g. Fisher et al. 2002), environmental (Ollila, et al. 2000), or strategic (Finger and Tamiotti 2001) rationale to explain this “hydro-cooperation,” but none seems completely adequate. Prevailing wisdom in both the science and policy of water resources does not seem to provide the foundation to be able to answer this clearly ethical question. Perhaps some part of the answer lies not in the world of rationality, but rather in the spiritual, ethical, and moral dimensions of water conflict resolution. Incorporating these components may offer not only new understanding of current disputes, but also models, tools, and strategies for more effective water conflict management and transformation in the future.

This paper seeks to investigate the potential of integrating a spiritual understanding of water conflict transformation with currently prevailing economic, environmental, and strategic constructs. We begin by setting the context of current understanding of water conflict and cooperation, then by documenting the geography of what I call the Enlightenment Rift—the process by which the global North/West³ separated out the worlds of rationality from spirituality and the impact of this rift on ideas related to natural resources management. We continue with a discussion of the current clash of worldviews, as the North/West entwines its rational construct with the flow of international development capital and management philosophies, and the inevitable disconnect as these approaches collide with the more integrated views of the global South and East. We conclude with a section describing how the two worldviews might gently be interwoven, for example within a fairly universal construct of Four Worlds of perception, and how this construct might be employed within the framework of more effective water conflict management and transformation.

RECONNECTING PROCESS WITH SPIRIT

So how can the process from conflict to cooperation be enhanced? To begin our understanding, we might drop our scale of analysis from the macro to the micro. Along with describing global and regional trends

from an abstract geopolitical perspective, there is also the process that occurs “in the room.” At the end of the day, negotiations are about people and relationships, not solely about geopolitics and economic interests, which begs the question: Are negotiations rational or is something more going on in the room, something connected more to energy and transformation?

To gain insight into these questions, it is worth looking at the values and philosophies inherent within the negotiating context, as we do in the next sections.

The Enlightenment Rift: When North/West Meets South/East

The Enlightenment of the eighteenth century left a profound rift between the worlds of spirit and of reason, one with intense implications for today’s clash of ideas. In temporal terms, it suggested that day-to-day considerations should be gauged in rational, “objective” concepts, while the world’s spiritual dimension should be considered separately, in the evening at home or within one’s Friday, Saturday, or Sunday community (Martin 2007). Over time, “rationality” dictated the structure of subsequent paradigms, from economics to science to modernity, to where today we in the North/West are consistently satisfied to ask the “what” without the “why,” at least in public discourse. We talk comfortably of economic growth rates, for example, without the accompanying discussion of what simply creating and owning more stuff does to our soul. We are able to put the emphasis in debates over crime disproportionately on the value of punishment and retribution, and less regularly on the potential for the individual and his or her community for rehabilitation (see, for example, O’Connor, et al. 2006). We regularly turn to benefit–cost analyses as a decision making tool, where all factors must be reduced to economic value, explicitly excluding often profound, but intangible, considerations.

The idea of separating out rationality from spirituality is a fundamentally North/West construct: As Smith (1992) eloquently puts it, “The modern West is the first society to view the physical world as a closed system” (p. 96), whereas much of the thinking in the Global South and East often retains its integration of rationality and spirituality. As models, consider Figure 1.a, for example, that shows frameworks from two different spiritual traditions that illustrate the idealized relationship between self and community, between justice and mercy, and between boundaries and expanse. Figure 1a models three of the ten Kabbalistic

The Kabbalah of Conflict

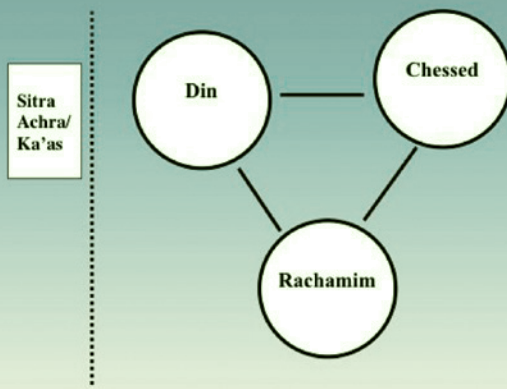


FIGURE 1.a

sefirot, or spheres of divine attributes (see Scholem 1965, Matt 1997, and Green 2004 for accessible introductions to Kabbalah). These three show a balance between *din*—the attribute of justice,⁴ boundaries, self—with the sefirah of *chessed*—the attribute of lovingkindness, concern for the other, mercy. Within this tradition, these two attributes remain in balance—one cannot exist without the other—but not quite. In this balance of divine attributes, the sefirah of *chessed*, lovingkindness, is always modeled just a touch higher, connoting that that attribute takes precedence in any conflict between the two. (Any parent understands this construct intuitively. Raise a child with justice alone, and the result will be an unfeeling bully. Raise him or her with only lovingkindness, and the child will become unbearably spoiled and self-centered. And, truth be told, when we’re ever conflicted between which of the two approaches to take with our loved ones, we generally can’t help but show some favor to mercy.)

As the map of the sefirot shows (figure 1.a), the balance of *din* (justice), with *chessed* (mercy), is manifested in the sefirah of *rahamim* (compassion). The attribute of *rahamim* is very explicit in what is meant by “compassion,” suggesting a precise integration of consideration for *both* justice and mercy, for self and community, for boundaries and expanse. The root of “*rahamim*” is the same as for *rehem*, womb, giving us a very clear allusion to what is meant: a mother is able to give not only nourishment, but her very life force to her unborn child (ultimate lovingkindness), but is able to do so *only* if she takes care of her own health and needs.

The message of the construct has relevance for many of the grand issues of the day. Do we pursue justice or mercy in our lives and politics? Shall we be concerned with individual rights or responsibility to one’s community? Modernity or post-modernity? Free market or safety nets?

Ying Yang



FIGURE 1.b

Right or left? Red or blue? The answer given by this understanding to all these choices is, “Yes, in exquisite balance.” The dichotomies are false, as is the apparent division between rationality and spirituality.

This balanced construct exists fairly universally and can influence quite a lot in respect to approaches to resource allocation, negotiations, and understanding of relationships. The unity of a balance of self and other, light and dark, can be seen in the *Taijitu*, the traditional Taoist symbol for *Yin* and *Yang* (figure 1.b). In a Christian construct, the triad of justice, lovingkindness, and compassion has been described through the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and some Christian Kabbalists make these comparisons explicit. In Islam, *Al-Hakam*, the Judge, *Ar-Rahman*, the Merciful, and *Ar-Rahim*, the Compassionate, are the three common names of the 99 names of Allah, and Abou El Fadl (2004) describes Islamic processes for “institutionalizing mercy and compassion in social interaction.”

So, to generalize, the heavy (over-) emphasis on rationality and the rights of the individual—as opposed to inclusion of spirit and the needs of the community—is disproportionately a North/West phenomenon, associated primarily with the non-Asian developed world. The Global South and East often retain a more integrated view of issues of the individual with the community or one’s spirituality with one’s rationality. These two profoundly contradictory worldviews—the North’s/West’s dichotomous views of rationality and spirituality, justice and mercy, in stark contrast to the South’s/East’s holistic, integrated balance—clash regularly and intensely across the world stage, from foreign policies to expectations of immigrant communities to dynamics in the United Nations. In other fora, one might note the implication this geography

has on the current “clash of civilizations,” but one can use water as a microcosm of these larger issues.

PARTING THE WATERS: THE ENLIGHTENMENT RIFT AND WATER ETHICS

Water and the Economics of Cooperation

The geography of this post-enlightenment rift is, well, enlightening.

Figure 2 shows the flow of water-related foreign assistance, primarily from the developed to the developing worlds. What this figure illustrates is the extensive interface between very different value structures.

In recent decades, for example, the North/West has approached international water management from an increasingly economic framework, most notably through the 1992 Dublin Principles, that state “Water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognized as an economic good” (ICWE, 1992, Guiding Principle No. 4). This was the first explicit recognition of water as an economic good, and this principle is often found quoted in literature that has ensued since its establishment. Agenda 21, which emanated from the Rio Conference on Environment & Development in June of 1992 echoed this theme, and the World Bank and other development banks have increasingly been urging conflict resolution through moving from thinking of water as a zero-sum commodity to negotiating over the *benefits* of water, a positive-sum commodity that can be enhanced and quantified through economic principles (see Delli Priscoli & Wolf 2008 for a history).

Yet, these economic principles, so prevalent in the North/West and encouraged through the North/West-sponsored development agencies and banks, explicitly contradict local and indigenous practices throughout the developing world. For example, different Islamic legal tenets apply to different water sources, basically divided by whether the water is “provided by God” (i.e., a natural surface or groundwater source which is available year-round) or whether it is “provided by man” (i.e., human labor which creates a cistern or the attendant canal system). “God-given” waters may not be bought or sold, and their use is available to all equally.⁵ To many, the idea of buying and selling water is both repugnant (like “buying and selling one’s children,” one interviewee suggested to me, quoted in Wolf 2000), and contrary to the tenets of Islam (Faruqui et al. 2001).



LEGEND	REGIONS OF THE FUNDING SOURCES
<p>█ > 15 PROJECTS AND/OR FUNDINGS; EG. DANUBE</p>	INTERNATIONAL
<p>█ > 5 PROJECTS AND/OR FUNDINGS; EG. ARAL SEA, MEKONG, NILE</p>	ASIA
<p>█ > 1 PROJECT AND OR 1 FUNDING; EG. COLORADO, GANGES-BRAHMAPUTRA- MEGHNA</p>	EUROPE
	NORTH AMERICA

FIG. 2

Healing Waters: Water Rights and Water Honor

Another interface for these clashing concepts and principles is in the realm of conflict management and transformation.

As noted above, approaches to the balance between the individual and the community can be thought of very differently in the North West as compared to the South/East. These views play out in approaches to legal principles and conflict resolution as well. The Western legal

structure, for example, is very comfortable with the idea that one side in a dispute can be found entirely right and gain everything in a dispute, while another side is found entirely wrong and loses everything (O'Connor et al. 2006). In contrast, the balance of justice and mercy described above leads, in many communities of the South/East, to the importance of both retaining individual rights *and* honor on both sides of a dispute and to reconciliation of a wrong-doer within one's community. Consider the Arabic word *tarradhin*, for example, defined as, "resolution of a conflict that involves no humiliation," a profound concept with no Western equivalent.

This is not a theoretical concept, but put in practice throughout the Muslim world, once a wrong has been committed, through the ceremony of a *sulha*, a ritual ceremony of forgiveness. The term comes from *musalaha*, reconciliation, which implies that hostilities are ended, honor re-established, and peace restored in the community (Jabbour 1996). This custom, which consists of private, often mediated, negotiation of redress between the affected parties, is followed by a public declaration of forgiveness and, usually, a festive meal.⁶ Once the *sulha* is performed, the slate is wiped clean, as if the dispute never happened. The agreement is legally binding on both the individuals and on the community. Grudges are dissuaded, and reference to past disputes may not be made to gain position in a current conflict (see Smith 1989, Jabbour 1996, and Irani 1999 for more detail).

The balance of rights and honor, of justice and mercy, and its contrast to the Western construct of justice, is described by Jabbour (1996):

This is how [social] justice should be achieved. The courts condemn the guilty party in vain, because they never take care of the harm. Magistrates and police don't know what social justice is. Honor is an alien virtue. They believe in the virtue of punishment, but forgiveness is overshadowed and neglected because peacemaking is not on their minds (Jabbour 1996, p. 116).

The international community seems to be lacking in just such a ritual ceremony of forgiveness. The negotiating process of many trans-boundary agreements is secret—at best, a televised signing ceremony may take place—and accord over an issue such as water, generally considered unnewsworthy, may take place without any public notice at all. A public ceremony would allow the community affected by a dispute—the stakeholders on all sides—to celebrate its resolution and thereby take ownership of seeing to its implementation.⁷

To be fair, the field now known as Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) came about precisely because of the limitations, and cost, of the Western legal framework. But for the most part, even ADR, as exemplified by Fisher and Ury (1981) and its offshoots (the potential of ADR in the context of international water resources conflicts can be found in Vlachos 1994; Bingham et al., 1994; Wolf, 2002; Shamir, 2003; and Delli Priscoli & Wolf 2008), is more often than not rooted in both rationality and / or economic constructs of interests and benefits. A claim by practitioners is that ADR works because the mediator can help parties construct agreements that meet the needs of the parties: people agree when it is in their interest to agree. Well, how does one know it was in the parties' interests to agree? The only proof is tautological: they agreed.

Spiritual Transformation and Lessons for Water Negotiations, or, Conflict, Cooperation, and Kabbalah

But *are* negotiations rational? Do we agree only when it is in our interest to agree? Or is something more going on in the room, especially when there is even the modicum of real emotion present, something connected more to energy and transformation? Successful multi-party negotiations require profound transformations in the way participants conceptualize the issues at hand. Those involved can often point to the precise moment when thinking altered dramatically—the “aha!” moment—where emphasis shifted from individuals thinking only in terms of their own agenda to also understanding the needs of the other. As noted above, traditional conflict resolution models define these moments in rational terms—“people come to agreement when it is in their interest to agree.” Even overlooking the tautological nature of this argument, “rationality” simply often does not hold sway if the conflict involves even a modicum of real emotion.

To really understand the process of transformation, and the settings most conducive to inducing these shifts, then, one may do well to look outside of the field of conflict resolution as defined in modern, academic terms. When one thinks of the situations most analogous to settings conducive to transformative thinking, the world of spiritual transformation rises as potentially the most appropriate. Every spiritual tradition in the world, after all, is devoted to precisely this process of transformation: to aid individuals in moving from a focus on their own immediate wants and desires to addressing more their obligations to society, humanity, and to the Divine.

Throughout the rich history of water conflict management, inducements to diverse stakeholders have centered on three sets of interests: economic inducements, environmental protection, and strategic interests. Each has met success over the years, yet each has its limitations, especially in particularly tense settings. Researchers have occasionally sought to bolster these traditional approaches with the experiences of other, seemingly peripheral, issues. Chalecki et al. (2002), for example, report on a workshop which brought together participants involved in international water management and those in international arms control agreements. The report suggests that common issues were found, and approaches exchanged, regarding political suspicion, incomplete data, and monitoring and enforcement of agreements. Ostrom (1992) has done remarkable work in tying small-scale, local experiences in water management with larger lessons and scales, and Wolf (2000) investigates the allocation rules and conflict resolution mechanisms of Berbers and Bedouin, drawing implications from their experiences for international waters.

Most research (and practice) of drawing together the worlds of spirit and water has focused on how religions address the environment and its protection. Much of this thinking has been documented by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim of Bucknell University, who coordinated a ten-conference series on World Religions and Ecology at Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions, and who are editing the conference papers from the series, with separate volumes describing relationships between each religion and the environment (summarized in Tucker and Grim, eds. 1993). Similarly, Palmer and Finlay (2003) provide an overview of religious approaches to the environment specifically as related to international development, and include statements on the topic from leaders in 11 of the world's religions.

Little in this field has been applied specifically to shared waters and issues of environmental conflict management, although some work describes the Catholic Church's leadership in promoting a religious obligation to protect the Columbia River watershed as an international basin (Burton-Christie 2003), and the Orthodox Patriarch recently planned a boat trip down the Danube with international invitees to promote protection of that basin (although the trip was subsequently cancelled) (Lubchenco, pers. comm. 2004).⁸

Yet the focus here is subtly but importantly different from that described above, in that the key is what spiritual and ethical *processes* of transformation can offer environmental negotiations and conflict management, not the overall framework in which each religious tradition

approaches the environment as a whole. As such, the scope of each individual application is by necessity smaller—small groups of stakeholders at best—yet I would argue that the overall potential to effect change in thinking about the process of conflict management is vast.

Very little work has been done explicitly tying spiritual transformation to environmental negotiations and management, although what has been done suggests exciting potential. In February 2003, the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School launched The Harvard Negotiation Insight Initiative, specifically to offer mediators and stakeholders resources to “explore the interface of contemporary negotiation theory and practice with alternative frameworks including some drawn from perennial wisdom traditions” (Launching Document 2003). While the initial focus was in the realm of legal mediation within the U.S., the first workshop, held in June 2004, brought a variety of facilitators and mediators together for training, including a handful with environmental expertise (including the author of this paper). As the annual workshops have grown, the focus has broadened to all branches of mediation and negotiation.

Literature does exist suggesting the potential for applying the tools of spiritual / ethical process to conflict transformation, suggesting potential applications to environmental issues as well. Transformative Mediation, a relatively new branch of Alternative Dispute Resolution, offers an alternative to problem solving mediation (which can be highly directive and focused on short-term problem solving), based on “empowerment and mutual recognition of the parties involved,” as well as on their long-term interests (Burgess 1997). “Compassionate listening” is a faith-based technique of guided communication that has proved effective in extremely hostile settings, notably by Carol Hwoschinsky in guiding dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians who have been touched by violence (Hwoschinsky 2004). Rabbi Uzi Weingarten teaches similar techniques of “communicating with compassion,” which have been applied in a variety of hostile settings (Weingarten 2003). Abou El Fadl (2004) describes Islamic processes for “institutionalizing mercy and compassion in social interaction;” McConnell (1995) structures mediation in a Buddhist construct; and Barthel (2005) suggests lessons for process from a Baha’i perspective.

The Association for Conflict Resolution (ACR) now has a Spirituality Section, and the Fall 2005 issue of *AC Resolution*, ACR’s journal, focused on spirituality and the heart of conflict resolution. While most of that activity focuses on the mediator’s own spirituality (see Riskin



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2002; Bowling 2005),⁹ or on mediation as a spiritual practice (see Cloke 2005; and Umbreit 2005), some work does draw directly from the spiritual world to facilitate the process of conflict resolution (notably Riskin 2004; Fox and Gafni 2005; and Cloke 2006).

Marc Gopin, director of the Center for World Religions, Diplomacy and Conflict Resolution at George Mason University, suggests the potential for conflict resolution’s learning from spiritual transformation (Gopin 2000):

One example [of the possibilities of merging study of religion and conflict resolution] is the spiritual process of transformation of character through reflection and ethical improvement of one’s behavior. Several theories of conflict resolution suggest the importance of personal transformation for the resolution of deep conflicts. Spiritual programs of personal transformation might be combined with this kind of conflict resolution methodology in religious settings.... Could such phenomena be incorporated into conflict resolution strategies among religious peoples or even more generally?

PROCESS AND THE FOUR WORLDS

Thinking of negotiations less in terms of rational interests and more in terms of transforming energy allows us to center on the process of *transformation* in negotiations—the point at which parties move from thinking of themselves as representing countries or political bodies to perceiving more broadly the needs of all stakeholders within a basin. These are critical junctures in negotiations, where movement from “rights-based” to “needs-based” to “interest-based” to “equity-based” negotiations



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suddenly becomes possible. In international basins, as noted above, this transformation may normally take years or even decades, during which time political tensions are exacerbated, ecosystems go unprotected, and water is generally managed, at best, inefficiently. This negotiation transformation may, however, have a corollary in spiritual transformation. Every spiritual tradition in the world is devoted to a very similar process, that is to guide individuals from thinking about their needs as individuals—their immediate wants and desires—to addressing more of their obligations to society, humanity, and other issues larger than themselves. In this setting, conflict can be seen less as a displacement between rational sets of interests and more as a rift in the fabric of community with the attendant obligation for healing.

The Universality of the Four Worlds

One construct that can help inform negotiation processes is the idea of the Four Worlds and the use of transformative processes to move through them. In many faith traditions, our relationship to the world around us can be experienced through four types of perception: physical, emotional, knowing, and spiritual. One intuitive example might be seen through a glass of water, which exists most recognizably on a physical plane or, if one is thirsty or the water is particularly good, one perceives the water emotionally. One can also intellectualize the water and consider its components and interaction with our body to provide sustenance. Finally, one might say a blessing over the water, lifting its “profane” covering, and it now becomes a source of spiritual nourishment. While these four levels of perception can be thought of separately, and can often be achieved best in sequence, they should not be consid-

ered as distinct or linear. The water, for example, exists simultaneously in all four states—it is up to us to determine through which lens it will be perceived. Nonetheless, understanding the Four Worlds in sequence is often useful, if not critical. Someone desperately thirsty, for example, may find it difficult to take the time and effort to intellectualize anything when offered a cool glass of water.

This construct seems particularly useful for our purposes, where negotiations regularly cross cultural as well as political boundaries. One notes the near-universality of the construct of the Four Worlds, what Smith (1976), in summarizing religions' common vision, calls the “levels of reality”. Psychologists will recognize Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs in the Four Worlds, but those familiar with the mystical traditions of the globe will find much more ancient roots. In Judaism they are seen in Kabbalah, and applied through the structure of the daily prayer service—a guided meditation based, in turn, on the construct of the Temple in Jerusalem, which itself was built to emulate Moses' experience of the levels of holiness during his ascent of Mount Sinai.¹⁰ They are described in the Four *Jhannas*—levels achieved in Buddhist meditation that correspond to “the four great levels of the heavenly realm,” (Mills 1999, p. 103); in Sufi mystical experience (al Jerrahi 1999); in the Shaman Four Levels of Perception (Villoldo 2006); in the Toltec Four Agreements (Ruiz 1997); and in the Native American Sacred Tree (Bopp et al. 1984). In fact, the construct is so widespread, that Shachter-Shlomi (2005) suggests that our biology is actually hard-wired to experience the world through these four lenses, through the reptilian, limbic, cortex, and unused portions of our brain respectively.

Understanding this construct and its universality leads to tremendous possibilities in the design and implementation of negotiation processes, training, and collaborative learning. It allows for a structure that moves through different lenses and perceptions, while tapping into what seems to be a fairly universal set of needs. Finally, it allows a focus on transformative processes in negotiations to bolster the only partially successful historical emphasis on quantifiable benefits.¹¹

Application: Stages of Water Conflict Transformation

How might the Four Worlds be harnessed for water negotiations? This section describes how each of the “worlds” can be seen in different stages of water conflict and conflict transformation.

FOUR STAGES OF WATER CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION			
NEGOTIATION STAGE ¹	COMMON WATER CLAIMS ²	COLLABORATIVE SKILLS ³	GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE
ADVERSARIAL	RIGHTS	TRUST-BUILDING	NATIONS
REFLEXIVE	NEEDS	SKILLS-BUILDING	WATERSHEDS
INTEGRATIVE	BENEFITS	CONSENSUS-BUILDING	“BENEFIT-SHEDS”
ACTION	EQUITY	CAPACITY-BUILDING	REGION

- 1 These stages build primarily on the work of Jay Rothman, who initially described his stages as ARI – Adversarial, Reflexive, and Integrative (Rothman 1989). When ARI became ARIA, adding Action, Rothman’s terminology (1997) also evolved to Antagonism, Resonance, Invention, and Action. We retain the former terms, feeling they are more descriptive for our purposes.
- 2 These claims stem from an assessment of 145 treaty deliberations described in Wolf (1999). Rothman (1995) too uses the terms rights, interests, and needs, in that order, arguing that “needs” are motivation for “interests,” rather than the other way round as we use it here. For our purposes, our order feels more intuitive, especially for natural resources.
- 3 These sets of skills draw from Kaufman (2002), who ties each set of dynamics specifically to Rothman’s ARIA model in great detail, based on his extensive work conducting “Innovative Problem Solving Workshops” for “partners in conflict” around the world.

FIGURE 2: FOUR STAGES OF WATER CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

There are, of course, no “blueprints” for water conflict transformation—White (1969) reminded us long ago that, “every basin is unique.” There does seem to be, however, general patterns in approaches to water conflict that have emerged over time. “Classic” disputes between, for example, developers and environmentalists, rural and urban users, or upstream and downstream riparians, suggest zero-sum confrontations where one party’s loss is another’s gain, and where confrontation seems inevitable. Yet such “intractable” conflicts are regularly and commonly resolved as creative thinking and human ingenuity allow solutions which

draw on a more intricate understanding of both water and conflict to come to the fore.

Over time, this process has been formalized a bit and defined as one path to the transformation of water disputes from zero-sum intractable disputes to positive-sum creative solutions, centering on a migration of thought generally through four stages (described in Delli Priscoli and Wolf 2008; and Wolf et al. forthcoming). Note that all stages exist simultaneously, and stages need not be approached in sequence nor each achieved necessarily for “success.” In today’s world, though many disputes fail to move beyond the first or second stage, they are tremendously resilient, while a few have achieved the fourth stage and are fraught with tension. Nevertheless, like any skill, it is useful to understand the structure of an “ideal” path in order to perfect the tools required for any individual situation.

The generalized path described here (the structure for a skills-building workbook in Wolf 2008), is structured on an understanding of each of the four stages through any of four perspectives, as described in Figure 3.

Stage I. Assessing the Current Setting: Basins with Boundaries

In Stage 1, in its initial, *adversarial*, setting, regional geopolitics often overwhelm the capacity for efficient water resources management. Metaphorically, the political boundaries on a map at this stage are more prevalent than any other boundaries, either of interest, sector, or hydrology. Dialogue is often focused on the past, based on the *rights* to which a country or state or province feels it is entitled, and a period of expressing pent-up grievances can be necessary. As a consequence of these initial tensions, the collaborative learning emphasis is on *trust building*, notably on active and transformative listening, and on the process of conflict transformation. By focusing primarily on the rights and interests of countries, states, and/or provinces, inefficiencies and inequities are inevitable.

Once stakeholders are brought to the table, this stage generally involves classic hydrological assessments of the current setting within a basin, including biophysical, socioeconomic, and geopolitical parameters. The processes for assessing many of these aspects are well-defined (e.g., hydrologic studies, or benefit–cost analyses of development alternatives), while many are less quantitative, but no less critical (e.g., social impact statements or assessments of indigenous traditions of management).

At this stage, stakeholders often think *nationally*, or as a state or province or other political constituency, and are focused on their *rights*, and

may be looking disproportionately backward, if only to be able to vent and perhaps address perceived grievances. Although understanding the baseline of any basin may take decades, if it is possible at all, it is not necessary to agree to all data before greater cooperation takes place—these assessments or training workshops can be used in and of themselves as confidence-building measures to move to the next stage, even as greater mutual understanding of the basin is being created.

Stage II. Changing Perceptions: Basins Without boundaries

As the adversarial stage plays out, occasionally some cracks can be seen in the strict, rights-based, country (province/state)-based positions of each side (although in actual water negotiations, this process can last decades). Eventually, and sometimes painfully, a shift can start to take place where the parties begin to listen a bit more and where the interests underlying the positions start to become a bit apparent. In this Stage 2, a *reflexive stage*, negotiations can shift from *rights* (what a country state/province feels it deserves), to *needs* (what is actually required to fulfill its goals). Conceptually, it is as if we have taken the national, provincial/state boundaries off the map and can, as if for the first time, start to assess the needs of the watershed as a whole. This shift, from speaking to listening, from rights to needs, and from a basin with boundaries to one without, is a huge and crucial conceptual shift on the part of the participants that can be both profoundly difficult to accomplish and absolutely vital to achieve for any movement at all toward sustainable basin management. To help accomplish this shift, the collaborative learning emphasis is on *skills building*, and we might approach the (boundary-less) basin by sector rather than by nation.

At this stage, the attention shifts from past to future as stakeholders examine each others' interests beyond positions. A process of social learning sets in. Parties can begin to ask, "What could be?" rather than "What was?" or "What is?" The metaphor for this stage is a basin without borders, where rather than *rights*, there are *needs*; and rather than thinking of national issues, we might look instead to how different sectors might be developed basin-wide.

This shift is transformative—the point at which parties move from thinking of themselves as representing countries or states/provinces to perceiving more broadly the needs of all stakeholders within a basin (whether or not they like these needs). Parties begin to understand the

The history of water conflicts

and cooperation suggests that people do come together, even across vociferous divides.

– Aaron Wolf

needs of the other and thus the requirements that must be met if agreements are to be reached.

Stage III. Enhancing Relations and Benefits: Beyond the River

Once participants have moved, in the first two stages, from mostly speaking to mostly listening, and from thinking about rights to needs, the problem-solving capabilities that are inherent to most groups can begin to foster creative, cooperative solutions. In Stage III, an *integrative stage*, the needs expressed earlier begin to coalesce to form group interests—the “why” underlying the desire for the resource. Conceptually, we start to add *benefits* to the still-boundary-less map, and to think about how to enhance benefits throughout the region, often by adding resources other than water and geographic units other than the basin. In fact, rather than allocating water, we can think about allocating benefits. The collaborative learning emphasis is now on the *relationship-building* of the group, and we begin to move in “benefit-shed” rather than being restricted by the basin boundaries.

Once the shift has been made in thinking about allocating water to allocating benefits, it is a natural progression to think together about how to enhance the benefits within and beyond the basin. This may be done within the realm of water resources alone—a well-designed dam upstream might, for example, both enhance agricultural production downstream and help protect riparian habitat. But it is often helpful to think at this stage about “baskets of benefits” that may go well beyond water or well beyond the basin in question (Sadoff & Grey 2002). Indeed, the most successful cases of building regional approaches to water have gone beyond seeing water as the end to seeing it as a mean to achieve



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other goals, such as socioeconomic development and reduction of fears of floods and drought. Energy production and water development are often linked, for example, as are afforestation programs, transportation networks, and environmental protection. Naturally the transaction costs of including more sectors than water go up exponentially, but so do the potential benefits. This means considering bringing in actors beyond the water sector and expanding the basket.

Stage IV. Putting It All together: Institutional and Organizational Capacity and Sharing Benefits

Finally, although tremendous progress has been made over the first three stages, both in terms of group dynamics and in developing cooperative benefits, Stage IV (the last, *action*, stage) helps with tools to guide the sustainable implementation of the plans and to make sure that the benefits are distributed *equitably* among the parties. The scale at this stage is now *regional* where, conceptually, we need to put the political boundaries back on the map, reintroducing the political interest in seeing that the “baskets” that have been developed are to the benefit of all. The collaborative learning emphasis is on *capacity building*, primarily of institutions.

As much as water resources professionals like to think in terms of basins or watersheds alone, eventually the borders have to come back on the map. Political entities are primarily responsible for their own benefits and sovereignty, after all, and it is often hard to sell their own constituents on an integrated basin alone. The most critical questions to address at this stage are, “How can the benefits be distributed equitably or perceived as fair?” and “How can sustainable and resilient institutions be crafted?” “How are the existing institutions and organizations to be

taken care of or compensated for any change?” The first question may require trade or side payments, while the second and third questions must evoke the best in institutional design. It is important to remember that conflict potential can actually increase during periods or situations of increased benefits. The increase of benefits alone will not assure the mitigation of conflict. This is because parties may realize benefits they never had, but they may perceive that the other is getting relatively more benefits than they are getting. Thus the perceptions of fairness and equity, not just the tangible delivery of benefits, are critical.

It is critical not to think of these “stages” as a linear process, where the further along the process goes, the better it is. Most basins ebb and flow back and forth over time, finding the level that meets a particular set of hydro-political needs for a given place and time: there is no “right” set of answers. One might think of these all existing in parallel “universes” simultaneously, each with its own set of approaches or tools, any of which may be useful at any given time, or conceptually as a helix or set of spheres rather than strictly linear. They are broken apart here only for the purposes of explanation.

Four Worlds of “Water”

Understanding this construct may help structure more effective future negotiation processes, as well as skills-building and collaborative learning exercises. Even the word “water” can be understood differently depending on the lens through which one is viewing it, and the mediator/facilitator can harness the construct and sequence of the Four Worlds to facilitate new understanding. In contrast, we ignore the Four Worlds at our peril.

As peace negotiations between Israelis and Arabs commenced in the early 1990s, for example, each side approached the issue of water very differently. From the Palestinian and Jordanian side, the concept of “water” was understood in both a very physical sense—people literally did not have enough clean water in some cases for sustenance—and in an emotional sense—control over water represented larger issues of sovereignty and occupation. From the Israeli side, “water” was constructed intellectually—survival had long been assured so the challenge was to move, price, treat, and store water in the most efficient manner.

These conflicting conceptualizations led to both difficult impasses—water was the last issue concluded in the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace—but also to especially creative solutions. In what will no doubt become

a classic modification of the tenets of international law, Israelis and Jordanians invented legal terminology to suit particularly local requirements in their 1994 peace treaty. In negotiations leading up to the treaty, Israelis, making the intellectual argument that the entire region was running out of water, insisted on discussing only water “allocations,” that is, the future needs of each riparian. Jordanians, in contrast, refused to discuss the future until past grievances had been addressed—they would not negotiate “allocations” until the historic physical and emotional question of water “rights” had been resolved.

There is little room to bargain between the past and the future, between “rights” and “allocations.” Negotiations reached an impasse until one of the mediators suggested the term “rightful allocations” to describe simultaneously historic claims and future goals for cooperative projects—this new term is now immortalized in the water-related clauses of the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace.

As for the Fourth World, we can see that, throughout the world, native and indigenous peoples see “water” as a holistic, spiritual resource. With the construct of the Four Worlds, we can conceptualize how jarring, to the point of sacrilegious, it can be to approach problem-solving in “rational,” economic, concepts.

CONCLUSIONS

Shared water resources provide a useful lens through which to describe both the hazards of ignoring the relationship between rationality and spirituality, but also demonstrate the potential an integrated approach may offer for effective negotiations and conflict transformation.

As the historically contrasting worldviews of the Global North/West and South/East increasingly interact, both within and without the worlds of shared waters, we have the opportunity to heal historic divisions. The history of water conflicts and cooperation suggests that people do come together, even across vociferous divides. And yet the dangers of scarcity-driven suffering and conflict will only increase with population growth, poverty, and global change. Yet as grow the dangers, so too grow the opportunities for dialogue and healing.

In 1996, the Episcopal Diocese in Massachusetts shifted its diocese boundaries from political divisions to watershed boundaries. The rationale was instructive: “Simply demonstrating that we are all connected by water: rich and poor, urban and rural, upstream and downstream, is

a fine place to start. I think the Holy Spirit will take care of the rest” (MacAusland 1996).

Water ignores all separations and boundaries save for those of the watershed itself. As such, it offers a vehicle for bringing those who share it together and, since it touches all we do and experience, suggests a language by which we may discuss our common future.

NOTES

1 Address for correspondence: Department of Geosciences; 104 Wilkinson Hall; Oregon State University; Corvallis, OR 97331-5506, USA; Tel: +1-541-737-2722; Fax: +1-541-737-1200; email: wolfa@geo.oregonstate.edu

2 Adapted from, Wolf, A. “Healing the Enlightenment Rift: Rationality, Spirituality and Shared Waters.” *Journal of International Affairs*. Vol. 61 #2, Spring/Summer 2008. pp. 51-73.

3 I acknowledge the wild over-generalization involved in dividing up the world between the global North/West and the South/East. This construct should be understood as infinitely more porous and ephemeral than dichotomous, but roughly follows the geography of Hall’s (1977) “high context” and “low context” cultures (critiqued though the model has been). In very general terms, the former includes Europe and much of the non-indigenous Americas, while the latter includes most of Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

4 “Justice” is meant here in the strict, bounded sense, and is not meant in the same vein as one might refer to a more holistic “restorative justice.”

5 The famous first scene in *Lawrence of Arabia*, which seems to have shaded the perceptions of many vis a vis Middle East water tensions, in which a hapless traveler is shot for drinking from another’s well simply would not have happened. The well and its water would have been accessible to anyone.

6 “The eating of a meal together, from ancient times, carries the strength of covenant and is a sign of reconciliation and the removing of barriers from between the participants” (Jabbour 1996, p. 56).

7 To some degree, this concept is being introduced to the international community. Irani (1999) describes a *sulha* which was carried out between the Christian and Muslim communities in Beirut. The interviewees in Smith (1989) argue that, while the problems between Israelis and Palestinians are too great to be dealt with in a simple ceremony, the principles of *sulha*, balancing rights with honor, might be applied.

8 Bartholomew I has been dubbed the “Green Patriarch” for his attention to environmental issues. See Chryssavgis, ed. (2003).

9 As Eileen Barker, Chair of the ACR Spirituality Section asks in her introductory article, “How can we ‘be the peace’ we wish to create for others?” (Barker 2005).

10 Described by R. Bachya Ben Asher, Spanish commentator (1263-1340), who first applied the Four Worlds into a Torah commentary based on four simultaneous yet sequential levels of meaning of text: plain, *midrashic* (*aggadic* or homiletic), philosophical, and kabbalistic exegesis (Ben Asher 1998).

11 Manfred Halpern (1924-2001) developed his theory of transformation as the root of both personal and political change, based largely on Sufi understandings, as applied to international relations. He left an unfinished manuscript on the topic as his Princeton class notes for Politics 325.

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Water ignores all separations

and boundaries save for those of the watershed itself.

As such, it offers a vehicle for bringing those who share it together

and, since it touches all we do and experience,

suggests a language by which we may discuss our common future.

– Aaron Wolf

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JUAN DUMAS



SANDRA RUCKSTUHL

Part I: A Conversation on Environmental Peacebuilding

THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF WATER

There are few resources that get us at the four levels of our being: the physical, the emotional, the intellectual, and the spiritual. So when we sit to talk about water, we're not only bringing all of our existence into the room, we're bringing in the breadth of stakeholders, from power people to developers to environmentalists to spiritual leaders and so on. And when we have a conversation about our shared water resources, it ends up being a conversation about our shared vision of the future.

—Aaron Wolf

How is it that water—and other aspects of the environment—can create pathways for building peace? Though environmental issues are often seen as points of contention, in some instances they can bring conflicting parties together. Issues of territory, rights, governance, and politics are oftentimes so steeped in human emotion and history that they can be too overwhelming or even dangerous to address, while the environment, though often ignored, must be sustained at least minimally for survival. As Geoff Dabelko of the Woodrow Wilson Center has pointed out, environmental issues can, at least initially, be addressed at the local and technical level, and thus create opportunities for conversation, for working together and for peacebuilding separate from the other conflicts and tensions that may plague the area.

While all environmental issues have the potential for creating these openings, seminar participants noted that water is a unique resource, and as such has a special potential for peacebuilding. Of all natural resources and environmental issues, water is universal in its reach and impact. Water, unconstrained by political borders and necessary for life, is



GIDON BROMBERG

particularly suited for bringing people to the table. As Gidon Bromberg of Friends of the Earth, Middle East knows all too well, there are few such elements in the Middle East. In such a troubled land, peace may be beyond the reach of many people, but water can offer pathways to peace. The stories beginning on page 51 illustrate how water can open transformational moments.

Paul Born of the Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement was particularly moved by the notion that water could create safe avenues for people to communicate and work together.

I have a sense that there is something beyond the physical in water. For me, this discussion is very profound. As someone who comes at this thinking through a community development lens, it is interesting to think of water as a safe issue. It is very important for me that we agree that there are things we can collaborate around that are safer than others. I would consider that it's the "emotional experience" that

We work with schools and bring together

young people to learn how to build rainwater harvesting facilities. Then they build such systems in their own schools. Not only does it empower the youth, it helps create peacemakers out of the teachers and school principals. In one case, a principal had to defend himself because one of the parents accused [the school] of being a collaborator because they allowed a cross-border project to “invade their school.” The principal stood up and said, “I’m a collaborator? I’m enabling your kids to come to school without having to bring a bottle of water.” (Water scarcity is so severe that they cannot guarantee the flow of water) “I’m the collaborator? I’m improving the educational ability of your kids. I’m facilitating girls to come to school.” (When there’s no water in the school, the bathrooms are closed and girls are not sent to school.) The principal was able to convince the rest of the parents that he was doing the right thing. It was safe to defend his actions in terms of water. The principal became a leader for standing up for what he thought was right.

Some four years ago a wall, a separation barrier, was going to be built between the two [neighboring Palestinian and Israeli] communities. We focused on water as the connecting issue that could help bring the two communities to cooperate, including trying to stop the wall from being built on environmental as well as social and human rights grounds. After more than four years of the two communities working together, ten Palestinian and ten Israeli residents were in the mayor’s office of the Palestinian community and one of the Palestinians said, “Whether this wall is built or not, you’re still going to be my neighbors. I don’t want to see the stone throwing against the building of the wall that exists in other communities.” And that’s a real transformation that is beyond the [usual] which would say, “We’ve been working together for many years, now I’m calling you to count. I want all you Israelis on the other side there to stand in front of the bulldozers.” That’s what you would expect. But there’s been a transformation that’s taken place between these communities because of trust building that’s

taken place over shared water. You can call it spiritual, I would call it trust building. It was a personal relationship that has moved the people beyond that. Irrespective of whether that wall is built or not, the response was we stay as neighbors and nothing will destroy what has been built at the community level.

At a national level, I think of a meeting with the Jordanian minister of water before launching a project for the rehabilitation of the River Jordan. His initial response was, “What are you talking about? Why have you come to me? Jordan is not going to give any water back to the river. We don’t have any water for drinking purposes in our capital here in Amman so what’s the point? There’s nothing to talk about.” But we continued talking and an hour later he tells the story out of nowhere of him fishing in the river with his father as a child and how wonderful it would be if he could fish in that river again. Trust was built in just an additional hour. And because of that trust, he was able to speak his own personal story. Then he said, “I wonder whether we could find a way. Not that I’m going to give you any of my water but maybe we could find a way to bring some water back to the River Jordan.”

—GIDON BROMBERG, ECOPEACE / FRIENDS OF THE EARTH, MIDDLE EAST



KEVIN SCRIBNER

is safe, in that it is easier for us to talk together about that which we have in common and avoid topics that are not necessarily safe. But it's so interesting that water is a safe issue to defend...that political leaders can defend collaboration around water even when they are in conflict with the very same collaborators on other issues, such as land claims or human rights abuses. I would suggest that seldom can we enter into these spaces of conflict and be safe. I was profoundly struck by Aaron Wolf's graph that showed that around two-thirds of the time people who have dealt with water conflicts have done so cooperatively. I think that somehow defines something that is far greater than intellect. I was thinking last night whether there was any other issue that two-thirds of the time we work cooperatively around. I couldn't come up with one.

Reflecting on her experience with a research project and model of integrated water resource management in Brazil, Margaret Keck of The Johns Hopkins University noted that "Water has proven to be an astonishingly rich window into the interactions among political institutions at all levels, among different kinds of social organizations, and among different kinds of capacities and resources. It is something that connects people."

In his research on local governance and poor communities in African cities, Richard Stren of the University of Toronto has also seen how water can bring people together.

One of the things I learned is that water is a very central theme in bringing people together even under the worst conditions. In conditions of extreme poverty, or in conditions of extreme stress, people have to collaborate to get water... I've heard many stories

in different African cities of the way people have come together in order to produce some solution to the problem of community water resources. This is not easy because the state or the local governments have very little money to spend and so people have to do almost everything themselves.... It's inspiring and very innovative from place to place. But it's also very fragmented. People often don't know what others are doing. This is a very interesting window into the way poor communities are functioning. They're much more hopeful and positive than one would normally think by just reading newspapers or the more apocalyptic overview statements about what's going on in developing countries. I think water is a kind of window of possibilities.

Journalist Cleo Paskal of Chatman House stressed the importance of creating and sharing best practices.

There are problems with water systems all over the world...but people don't hear about them outside of their local communities. So [it would be good to have] a physical demonstration site for a lot of simple good techniques for protecting your water systems, which would then also include techniques for peacebuilding...so people don't have to keep reinventing the wheel...

Though much of the conversation focused on water, participants recognized that other environmental issues could also set the stage for peacebuilding. As Kenyan Kuntai Karmushu of the Laikipia Wildlife Forum said, it is a matter of identifying the issue that is most relevant to the particular community.

I think when we look at the issue, especially on the environmental peace conflicts, we look where we are in the specific community and think which element of the environment will take you to peacebuilding and a fresher kind of utilization of resources in that community.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PEACE?

It's quite clear. People in Kabul are planting trees.

—David Jensen

As they discussed environmental peacebuilding, participants shared images of peace that they had encountered throughout the world. These images were often place-specific and not necessarily discernable

Since 1999, the United Nations Environmental

Programme's Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch (PCDMB) has worked to assess the environmental impacts of conflicts and disasters and address the subsequent risks to human health, livelihoods and security. UNEP piloted the concept of using natural resources and environmental issues as a platform for cooperation, dialogue, and confidence building. This work, branded "Environmental Diplomacy," aims to transform conflict over resources into a basis for lasting cooperation, based on the premise that sustainable management can form a foundation for long-term stability and peace.

What makes assessing these cases and drawing overarching conclusions difficult are their vast differences from one another. Nevertheless, the following top ten lessons can be drawn from this work:

1. Environmental diplomacy (or environmental peacemaking) interventions should first consider building on what's there already. All cultures, societies, or nations have mechanisms for enabling dialogue between groups and for mediating disputes.
2. National ownership of and buy-in to the process is vital. The level of political commitment among the parties involved to implement agreed-upon measures and transform them into concrete outputs is an important determinant of success.
3. Capacity building to participate in environmental diplomacy interventions is often needed.
4. A neutral third party—whether a local stakeholder, an NGO, business interest, international organization, or national government—can offer "carrots and sticks" to pressure or encourage conflicting parties toward peacebuilding and is often necessary in pushing the agenda forward.
5. Long-term commitment, engagement, and financing are vital. There are few "quick wins" in environmental diplomacy and peacebuilding. Staying engaged over time is a significant challenge. The long-term na-

ture of building trust and cooperation around natural resource management, addressing pollution hotspots, or collaborating on natural disaster response suggests that typical one- and two-year project timeframes are unrealistic. For environmental diplomacy to be effective over the long term, resources must also be allocated to support the implementation of projects. Lack of financing can otherwise be a limiting factor.

6. When engaging in ongoing dialogues, aim for at least one to two meetings a year to sustain a minimum of continuity, particularly at a time when there is bound to be governmental changes.
7. It is important to strike the right balance between technical and political cooperation. If the issues at hand are too narrow and too technical, they may have little impact on wider peacebuilding efforts. If, however, environmental diplomacy becomes too politicized too quickly, the process risks becoming stalled because of the political differences among the parties involved.
8. It is important to set realistic goals. Joint programmes that raise expectations but turn out to be unrealistic can be counterproductive.
9. One should not underestimate the necessity for true diplomacy.
10. Common environmental threats may offer entry points for intervention. The rationale for environmental cooperation and peacebuilding becomes particularly clear if there is a shared threat requiring cooperation among the parties involved.

—DAVID JENSEN AND DENNIS HAMRO-DROTZ
UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME
*Excerpt from Jensen and Hamro-Drotz' seminar paper:
LESSONS LEARNED ON ENVIRONMENTAL DIPLOMACY*

to an outsider's eye. David Jensen of the United Nations Environment Programme described how a village in Afghanistan identified signs of peace.

When we were in Afghanistan in about 2004, we were talking to a lot of people who were really enthusiastic about the peace process. They said: "There are signs all over that peace is holding and peace is going to be here." We asked, "What are the signs? Tell us what makes you think that." They responded, "It's quite clear. People in Kabul are planting trees." For them, it was the biggest indicator that the people thought that they were here to stay.

Sandra Ruckstuhl of George Mason University shared a similar story from the siege of Sarajevo.

The city was under siege, and people were burning everything in their homes, including their books, to stay warm and to eat and so forth. But there was an informal agreement in parts of the city not to chop down the trees in the parks. They were pruned a lot but they weren't chopped to the trunk. There was a vision that this, the longest siege in modern history, would end and so they needed to preserve their resources.

These poignant and subtle signs of peace capture the imagination and illustrate the power of such stories to connect and communicate. As Sally Hare of Coastal Carolina University noted:

We come into life as human beings hard wired to connect with each other. I saw that when I worked with young children, and I've continued to see that. I also know that learning is social; it happens in community. My work right now is in research and evaluation. I now understand it's all about story catching.

Others spoke of how stories can carry the wisdom of the past and help people envision a richer future. Kevin Scribner of the Walla Walla Watershed Alliance shared his experience working with someone who understood the power of stories.

In the middle 1980s I started becoming, for lack of a better word, an environmental activist or political activist with an environmental bent. I began to work out of my home river basin in Walla Walla, in the Pacific Northwest of the United States. In that georegion there is the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, and I

began to work very closely with them. With one of the young elders, Katherine (Kat) Brigham, we started dreaming about bringing the big chinook salmon back to the Walla Walla River, for the run had been extirpated in the 1920s. Kat said, “Collect the stories because the stories will bring the fish back.” Since then, I have tried to collect the stories, including the science stories and we have brought the salmon back, 800 last summer.

Stories can also inspire hope and the ability to persevere, both qualities greatly needed by those in the environmental peacebuilding field.

One of the things that’s quite soul-destroying is that you have to be perpetually optimistic about what you’re doing even in dire situations. You have to always present an optimistic, positive outlook even when you know that there’s barely a chance of good. One way to fight the cynicism is to engage with others who re-inspire you, who share their experiences and stories. Connecting with other people who are experiencing the same things—you can’t quantify that. —David Jensen

The participants recognized the power of these images and stories, but they also knew that communities needed to provide measurable indicators of peace and success for funders and policy makers. As the participants explored the role of the environment in peacebuilding, underlying questions surfaced: What are the indicators of peace? How can you measure peace?

Gidon Bromberg described how hard it is to answer these questions other than through personal stories, and even then it is difficult to know or measure the impact of an experience.

Hence, because water is well understood

to touch the very essence of life, in the midst of conflict,
it is a safe issue from which to promote dialogue, common
understanding, and joint projects.

—Gidon Bromberg

How do we try and evaluate contributions to peace? It's relatively easy to know how many people participated, the types of people that participated, and how often they participated. The more difficult issue is measuring how meaningful that participation is.... People don't really understand the change that's taken place until there's been a moment of tension where they, because of their experience, will now react in a different way. And who knows when that moment of tension will happen? It might be at the next checkpoint that they have to go through in a month's time. Or it might be in a response to a media article that they would have immediately agreed with but now say, "Maybe this is not the whole picture." Capturing these stories is the way to see [the impact]. It is more and more accepted as a way to evaluate a program.

Kent Butts of the US Army War College said one sign of success is if people adopt the process that you've shared. But it is often difficult to point to hard evidence of this, and most often it comes through informal feedback.

That's how we measure success. Did we get it down to the action level and has the process been adopted by our target audience and applied? And within that set of the countries that participated, how many activities did they pursue after they had trained their own people? ... If you get down to where you have an organization that is capable of applying what you've shared, then you can measure it. But unfortunately, just the way our structure is set up here in the United States, it's difficult to do that.... So it's so hard to follow on and measure that. And yet I've had people come back to me to say, "That was

The International Peace Park Expeditions

use the expedition framework, which is a journey with a purpose, to reach out to folks in international peace parks on three different levels. The first level is working with youth from the peace park region to do experiential peacebuilding programs and participate in leadership trainings, practical skill trainings, peacebuilding, and conflict resolution. The second is an academic component that works with students studying environmental, peace, and international relations issues and brings all those together around international peace parks as a cross-disciplinary learning tool. And at the third level are professional field training programs that consider the cross-disciplinary nature of international peace parks and seek to create knowledge-sharing opportunities that contribute to a holistic picture of the context within which all the professionals who work in peace parks operate.

How do we capture the transformation process that occurs in the course of these expeditions? How do we recognize the value of the trainings and the skills that are imparted through the course of these expeditions? How do we measure the bonds that are built throughout the course of that process?

This was something that we struggled with very seriously when we were developing our experiential peacebuilding expeditions and bringing together youth from each of the different countries involved in the peace park.

To get at some of these key questions, we came up with the idea of using mini-HD video recorders. We had the participants use these to conduct a series of interviews to:

- capture the baseline of the participants at the beginning of the experience;
- find out, part way through the program, what things had been impacting them and the powerful moments that they had experienced;
- learn what happened and what their overall thoughts were at the conclusion of the program;

- establish how they were able to work through the challenges and maintain the bonds through that reentry process after they returned to their community and implemented their jointly developed community service project; and,
- learn the impacts at the six-month stage, as we were preparing for those participants to help recruit and mentor the next group of participants through the process.

I think creating the series of live interviews gives a real dynamic flavor to the transformation process. It's a way that you can capture something that's as amorphous as a transformation process.

—TODD WALTERS, INTERNATIONAL PEACE PARK EXPEDITIONS

a watershed [experience] for me. I had my unit do the following and they've gone on to achieve things." How do you keep track of that?

Kirk Emerson of the University of Arizona affirmed how difficult this can be and added that to accurately measure success, you must specify the change you are seeking and understand that the movement toward peace may appear in subtle ways.

Are you looking at change among individuals and the people involved in the process, the public at large, or the institutions that come together? That makes a difference.... I do think there's something to institutional adaptation itself being a form of peace. If indeed the intervention or the program has led to changes in the way people do business, [the way they assess their] priorities and strat-

egies...and ultimately if subsequent adaptations occur when faced with a future conflict.

Juan Dumas of Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano said that the environmental field needs to do a better job of creating credible definitions of peace and identifying the relevant theories of change to guide and measure the work.

I believe we need to acknowledge as a field that we've been very poor in developing indicators that are needed to do good evaluations of our work. I believe two things are very important when addressing this. One is the issue of defining what we mean by peace. It may be obvious, but I think it's important whether you're talking about absence of direct violence or absence of structural violence. And the other thing I think is very important is the theory of change behind what you are doing. I think there are different indicators that respond to different theories of change.

Others agreed that communities and organizers, not just the funders and policymakers, needed to take an active role in defining what is meant by peace and what would be the indicators of success. Ken Conca offered the following as the definition of peace he uses in his work.

The definition of peace I usually use is something along the lines of a spectrum that runs from some weak condition as the absence of violence and a stronger condition of inconceivability of violence. It isn't inconceivability in the sense that I'm so oppressed and demobilized that I can't even mount a collective action to throw off my oppressors. It's in the sense that I can't imagine wanting to resolve my disputes with violence as opposed to other means.

We're much better at measuring the absence of violence than the inconceivability of it. The observation about the absence of violence is an external measure. Moving up that spectrum, it's not simply noting externally that there is no violence, but understanding people's understandings and their sense of community. Those are internal measures.

There is also the low-grade violence that we don't recognize. There's an enormous amount of low-grade violence around water, as in strikes, protests about privatization, protests at dam sites, etc.

Juan Dumas added that the stability and fairness of the legal and governance systems is also crucial to a peace one can trust. Margaret Keck

Much of the current popular literature

on water and environmental conflict emphasizes the potential for international “resource wars” and increased civil unrest in an increasingly industrialized, urbanized, and globalized world. This dynamic, however, is only one element of a much larger story that requires an integrated understanding of both *cooperation* and *conflict* as a consequence of concurrent social and environmental conditions. While competition associated with achieving and maintaining environmental security can serve as a dividing and polarizing force in societies, the basic human need for access to natural resources, such as water, can also contribute to cooperation and peacebuilding.

Experience demonstrates the potential for positive social outcomes through “environmental peacebuilding” as seen in the Nile Basin Initiative, the forests of Southeast Asia, and the drinking wells of India. By observing human experience we can develop a holistic understanding of resource conflict and cooperation, and this knowledge, in turn, can contribute to the development of sustainable and peaceful communities through environmental peacebuilding practice. A full understanding of these relationships requires a more contextualized and integrated analysis of environmental conditions, social conflict, and peacebuilding practice than has previously been offered. An important unit of analysis and a critical point of departure in this study is the terminology we use and the effect that terminology has on our practical interventions in the field.

A local program officer from the Sarajevo office of CARE International once told me while discussing the successes and failures of peacebuilding programs in post-war Bosnia, “Reconciliation often happens best when we do not call it that.” The correlation is that we narrow the scope of impact when we put the words “peace,” “peacemaking,” or “peacebuilding” on the work we do. The concept of peace is tied up in politics; it leads to self-censorship and self-selection in programs that have the “peace” label, and it treads on touchy ground for organizations that either have a contrasting political position toward “peace” or

that are explicitly apolitical. Yes, there are benefits to “calling a spade a spade,” but there are also strategic benefits to being more discreet.

This assertion from an experienced NGO staffer in the field further reinforces that projects, whether explicit or not explicit about their peacebuilding objectives, can generate peace dividends and positive social impact that fall under the rubric of “peacebuilding.” If “peace happens” even when we do not try to make it happen, but we are not quantifying those outcomes, then we, as conflict resolution experts, are still missing half of the story with regard to our knowledge of peacebuilding. My research on conflict-sensitive approaches to development considers this question of “explicitness” and the effect that explicit peacebuilding objectives can have on project outcomes. Of foremost importance in this exploration is the assumption that although non-explicit environmental management projects do not proclaim to “do peacebuilding,” they can, and they often do... Thus to make real progress with regard to *peacebuilding*, we need to do more than include it explicitly in our list of organizational priorities, funding mechanisms, and project literature. As practitioners in the fields of *conflict resolution* and *development*, we need to think more collaboratively about linkages between our fields and within the problem space at the first party / conflict and third party / organizational levels. We will then be better equipped to facilitate the positive social change that we envision.

—SANDRA RUCKSTUHL, GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY

Excerpt from Sandra Ruckstuhl's seminar paper: ON PEACEBUILDING PRACTICE: MEANING, EXPLICITNESS, IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

stated that conditions of peace enable people to have a more expansive view of space, time, and possibilities.

How can you tell whether there's been success in building peace and the environment? It seems to me to have something to do with the expansion of people's time horizons and their scale horizons. Only in a situation of peace can people talk with confidence about something that's going to happen way down the line.

In these definitions and conceptualizations of peace, there is a depth that again belies narrow wording and easy measurement. Participants spoke of the challenge of finding words that encompass the concepts and

You might want to let the parties

figure out their definition of peace—to help them articulate how they would define it, know it if they saw it, and how they might get there. And then hold them accountable to their own definition of what would be a peaceful outcome for them.

—Kirk Emerson

yet find wide acceptance. Sandra Ruckstuhl noted the importance of selecting the appropriate language and terminology for particular situations and environments.

When I use the terminology “environmental peacebuilding” in the halls of the World Bank, people kind of tilt their heads and wonder exactly what that means operationally in implementing projects. As we look at definitional issues, it’s important to explain what that means in terms of field work and how to come up with definitions that translate into the nomenclature of different organizations.

Kent Butts spoke for many at the seminar when he wondered how one could use a spiritual approach or even the word “spirituality” (as Aaron Wolf did in his paper and presentation) in this work.

How do you create the conditions where a spiritual approach to water negotiation will find purchase? ... Have you attempted that and if so where have you found success? What are the barriers? How do you overcome this?

Aaron Wolf responded by explaining how he had become more comfortable with drawing on spiritual practices and speaking of spirituality.

As Kent mentioned, the word “spiritual” puts people on edge. I think one of the things that I’m more and more comfortable doing is talking about spirituality regularly so that it becomes less of an edge. I’m a scientist. I go where inquiry leads me, and if inquiry leads me into the world of the spirit, that’s where I have to go. As a scientist it would be disingenuous of me not to go there if that’s where the inquiry is. So [it helps] to be able to talk about it more, but also to recognize that the word itself can be

Had the villagers of Ibieca been conscious of the women's role in weaving the social fabric of their community, they might have continued the circles of engagement and collective action while also adopting the washing machine. Instead, the culture that weaved the fabric of this community was greatly diminished.

The most significant challenge in environmental peacemaking is having a comprehensive framework of social change that mirrors different social realities and the culture of communities. The work of environmental peacemakers is right at the nexus of change where these terms are being defined. What capabilities peacemakers bring to their work, whom do they deal with, and on whose terms are some of the main factors influencing their effectiveness in peacemaking and development.

—HANMIN LIU, WILDFLOWERS INSTITUTE

*Excerpt from Hanmin Liu's seminar paper: PATHWAYS TO PEACE:
DEFINING COMMUNITY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION*

loaded and to use a lot of these tools. For instance, you don't have to use the word "spiritual." It can be deep listening, transformative listening.

Ken Conca spoke of the power of language and the importance of not censoring the words we chose to use.

I think extraordinarily powerful concepts bring people together at a community level. I think the point about water [being safe to defend]...is very much correct even though I understand exactly why for some it raises a red flag. But if we're all worried about how this will play in certain corridors of power because it's the [people in

power's] ability to structure the language and the techniques...that imbalances the playing field in the first place.

There's a spectrum of responsibilities that we have. Some of us operate in those corridors; some of us need to strive to be sort of outside insiders or inside outsiders; and some of us need to stay out here and reclaim the language. Words are the only thing that we have. There are also a lot of people in this room who can stretch the language and tell us what it means and reclaim what it used to mean and no longer does mean....

OBSTACLES TO PEACE AND PEACEBUILDING

I find myself thinking frequently about the spoilers, the people who benefit from conflict, the people who are quite hostile to some of the transformative approaches.... What is their role in this and what are the forms of engagement that are required to address that aspect as well?

—Ken Conca

For many of the participants dealing with the “spoilers” and those who benefit from conflict is the most difficult part of their work. Gidon Bromberg spoke about this and the benefits of being with others involved in peacebuilding.

We face the spoilers every single day and that's really tough, that's really lonely. So being in a room with people that have to face those challenges every day in the field as well is a great opportunity to learn, to share experiences, and to gain some strength again because those batteries need to be recharged. We have so much to share from our learning to improve policy making. As an advocate I think that

Once participants have moved, in the first two stages, from mostly speaking to mostly listening, and from thinking about rights to needs, the problem-solving capabilities that are inherent to most groups can begin to foster creative, cooperative solutions.

– Aaron Wolf

there are so many mistakes being made at the policy level that it's our duty to try and influence them and correct them.

Others picked up on Bromberg's point that it was important to address bad policies. They saw how such conflict could be an important catalyst for action. Juan Dumas said, "I believe that a dispute can provide a sort of a pathway into public policy change. That's why disputes at the local level are really important. When we talk about conflict prevention, we are not talking about not having conflict. I think we're talking about preventing violence."

Sometimes conflict can be the galvanizing force that enables a community to assert its rights and fight against injustice. Ken Conca noted that "rights-based discourse," while at times mired in conflict, can be the vehicle that gives the community some power and standing in negotiations.

Clearly we don't want the conflicts to lead to violence.... The problem is finding a sort of balance, to recognize that conflict can be generative if people who are involved can be or are convinced that it's worth trying to build something out of this rather than use it to destroy. Conflicts produce energy. If they escalate too far then of course they blow up and destroy things. —Margaret Keck



BISHNU UPRETI

Part II: Working in Communities

UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURE OF A COMMUNITY

I recognize that communities often face conflict from “outside” when larger political and environmental conditions affect them adversely. In this way many issues of conflict faced by communities are beyond their control. My experience, though, shows me that communities are most often the hope for “fixing,” repairing and/or mitigating the damage of conflict. In place, people are able to bind together through trust and mutual know-how. They can stand together and navigate through the storm, collectively healing both spirit and place. They are a micro system that, depending on their strength and ability, can be prepared to respond in times of uncertainty. For me it is in place, in community, that the true hope for a peaceful and just world reside.

—Paul Born

It is critical to work with, and involve as directly as possible, the people most affected by the situation. Working with and empowering local leaders and community members, is not only the most ethical way of working, it is also the most effective. While all agreed that it is critical to engage the community, they acknowledged that this creates many challenges.

The participants discussed the incentives and disincentives for getting involved in peacebuilding. Typically funding and attention is directed to those areas, organizations, and individuals that are involved in more conflicted areas. Consequently, those who are successfully, peacefully working things out often get less funding.

It turns out that regions that report major conflict, their budgets are significantly higher. And people who have been involved in major conflicts [have careers that] rise significantly faster... And those where

In our efforts to reflect on the relationship

between rationality and spirituality in helping to promote peace and use environmental issues to prevent or overcome conflict, we have gained certain insights as to when this relationship is beneficial and when it is not. First, it is important to understand that *spirituality reflects the social and cultural values of the community* in which the problem is being addressed. Quite often these values differ between countries, between regions, and between villages. Success in applying elements of spirituality should begin by mapping the limits of those related cultural values. We have found that the US Peace Corps, religious organizations, and other NGOs provide an invaluable source of understanding of the shared cultural norms within a country, region, or village and determining where the application of a particular cultural norm is apropos.

Second, at a strategic level one quite often finds a problem of *ethnocentricity* and the projection of the cultural values of the strategic or security planners in one country on the countries or regions in which their plans are to be undertaken. A close analogy for this problem may be found in the development community, where many failed or marginally successful developmental projects have focused almost exclusively on the economic dimensions and the amount of money to be contributed by donors to the relative exclusion of regional, social (cultural), and environmental veracities that are essential if one is to achieve sustainable development...

Third, we have a problem of *uncommon terminology* that renders many terms abstract for the uninformed reader which undermines efforts to sell the importance of the concept... Peace terminology is particularly convoluted and over defined...such as environmental peacemaking, peacebuilding, peace operations, peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and peace engineering (Conka 2002, Vesilind 2005). This plethora of similar terminology is itself a barrier to gaining widespread institutional support for a concept and the necessary resources to ensure its successful application...

Recognize the vulnerability of normative concepts. We have found there is a natural resistance on the part of organizations and people involved in hard security activities to embracing a “soft” security role

or mission.... We have found it useful to identify key stakeholders and power sources, those organizations or people whose support is absolutely essential to successfully inculcating a new concept.

Policy makers are vulnerable to reductionist thinking (e.g., “If water does not lead to interstate conflict, then it can be dismissed as a security issue”). Even though the chief benefit of water resources in regional stability may be confidence building and peacemaking, the United Nations, USAID, and the Department of State frequently draw attention to resource-related issues by emphasizing their role in violent conflict (Melnik 2007, Harnish 2009). This is true because officials have proved more likely to take action to stop violent conflict than to undertake peacemaking.

—KENT BUTTS, US ARMY WAR COLLEGE

Excerpt from Kent Butts’ seminar paper:

GLOBAL CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

they’re actually maintaining dialogue and peace and prevention, the opposite is true—smaller budgets and a slower career track. —Aaron Wolf

To craft authentic partnerships and successful interactions, policy makers and those on the ground need to be educated and sensitized to the needs and ways of those with whom they are working. In the paper excerpt found in the box above, Kent Butts wrote of the importance of understanding the values and beliefs of the culture.

Communities are not monolithic entities; there are often many layers, groups, and interests within a community. It is important not to assume that different groups are homogenous or that all NGOs are the same or that they necessarily represent all the public interests. Peggy Shepard of WE ACT for Environmental Justice highlighted some of the challenges in identifying the stakeholders and leaders in a community:

Part of the process is determining who the stakeholders are, looking for a robust representation and looking for the voices of the affected

I am with the Tamarack Institute for Community

Engagement. Our job is to bring together large-scale citywide collaborations to address complex social issues such as poverty. We now have 12 citywide collaborations in Canada working to reduce poverty. In the last five years our work has reduced poverty for more than 171,000 families.

When we started as an institute, we were given the mandate to come up with a technology around community transformation. Our donors, who had studied our outcomes, were interested in whether we could create a system that could be replicated—a way of working that if you just followed this methodology over and over again you could get a similar result. I was naïve when I said yes to these donors, believing that systematizing a spiritual transformation or an awakening that causes them to act, is possible.

My belief was that we have a better chance of such transformations if we can create the conditions that increase the probability of a transformation. We began to look for these conditions. When I think about the conditions for spiritual transformation, I think about going into a mosque or a church. I think of the effort someone made to create the physical environment by which someone can have a spiritual moment. It's more than faith. There is a set of conditions that at times does something to a soul. The space and the experience of worship evokes something. Simple and sometimes profound transformations can occur as a result. In similar ways, involving people in community change work can be transformative if we can provide those conditions that evoke our desired response.

Over the last seven years we have helped communities to form large-scale collaborations to address poverty in their communities. On the surface this is a large-scale poverty reduction program. Our larger intention is to build the skills in communities for working together so that regardless of the need, there are deep connections and bonds of trust across sectors, religion, race, age, and gender and in doing so prepare communities for more difficult times ahead. Communities engage in five “learning themes” together:

- . to learn to identify the real issue and to come to a common understanding of this issue;
- . to learn to work comprehensively with the issue;
- . to learn to identify the assets a community has and then bring the representatives of those assets into the conversation;
- . to learn to work across sectors and to work as a truly multi-sector collaboration; and,
- . to learn that true change is not through one idea or leader but rather through a cycle of learning and change.

—PAUL BORN, TAMARACK INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
*Excerpt from Paul Born's seminar paper: DEFINING COMMUNITY
 IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION*

people. Cultural norms may also vary widely within a small area. How do you ensure all the voices are included in negotiations?

Cultures and communities assign different meanings and values to a particular resource. Those from the Western world tend to allocate economic value to natural resources, but this may not be in keeping with the views of the local community. Aaron Wolf's following story illustrates a consequence of organizers exporting values and methods that do not reflect the community's beliefs:

At one point in a bank meeting, a woman from Uganda raised her hand and said, "Just so I understand what you're saying—we didn't have international basins until you drew these lines and made it international. And now we have to have a dialogue along your lines,

and the benefits that you're talking about are only the things that we can measure. So we basically have to strip away all the things that we value in order to have this conversation?"

BUILDING A COMMUNITY'S CAPACITY FOR ACTION

Can we prepare our communities to be more collaborative and, in turn, more resilient for the environmental uncertainty that is coming? The optimist in me always wants to answer yes to this question, though most often it is the realist in me that answers. I say, "I know only one thing for certain, it depends." It depends on many factors and conditions that already exist in a community...a rich history of collaboration, a good reputation [of the leadership group and each of its members] and the appropriate political and social climate are critical when considering any collaborative effort.

—Paul Born

One of the most effective ways to learn about a community is to seek out a partnership with someone in the community. The participants shared how they go about making these connections. Hanmin Liu of the Wildflowers Institute offered the following questions as a key place to start to learn about the community. "The first thing you do coming from outside is ask, What's there? Where is the distribution? Where is the power structure? Where are the politics? How does communication of information happen?" Joan Castro of the PATH Foundation Philippines Inc. added, "It really boils down to who should do it? Is it the people on the ground? What is our role? What kind of empowerment? What kind of human capital initiatives should we input? How does scaling up sustain these efforts?"

Kevin Scribner described how his community understood that they needed to have a greater role in the governance of the water system in their area. After years of work, the state government granted them this authority setting up an unusual experiment in direct democracy.

With water management in my home Walla Walla River Basin, we have been conducting our own experiment of democracy, in a direct, participatory manner. We have been granted legislative authority to manage our water in partnership with the State of Washington's regulatory agency, the Department of Ecology. This is a ten-year experiment to see if substantial devolution of governance to a local level can manage water more effectively through community-based plan-

ning than a state agency whose only tool is individual water rights regulation could.

Cleo Paskal spoke of the need to have such innovative solutions and programs at the local level shared more broadly.

A lot of the assessment that's done at the top level has become very disconnected from what's actually happening at the community level where the impacts are being felt very quickly, the changes are happening very quickly. There are actually very good solutions happening at community levels that aren't filtering up through the system which could create better global resilience and ideally deviate from some of the conflict pathways that are currently developing.

In her work, Joan Castro has learned the importance of creating a shared vision with the communities she serves:

What I've learned from the communities is that when you start working with them, they cooperate or partner with you because you have a shared vision. They share the vision that they want a better future. They want to have the same fish that they have today in the future for their children. It's striking to have a simple analogy—to be able to say that you want your children and my children and our grandchildren to eat the big shrimps that we have today, and so we need to do something now.

Richard Stren pointed out the need to share what is going on the local level, even if it might be case specific.

We need large-scale projects but we also need to nourish and support community development in all its contextual specificity.... People deal with water or other resources in very specific ways that probably nobody will understand unless they live there for a while. One needs to understand what's going on locally.... There needs to be a buy-in from the local community or else it will be inefficient and insensitive to what the people's needs are.... How do agencies respond to this specificity? They don't usually do it very well because they're large and bureaucratic and have to decide on a large number of cases in a simplified fashion. So they say, "Let's find out what works and let's scale up." And that usually doesn't work because you can't scale something up (or reproduce it in the same fashion in many other places) when it works differently in each place.... Still, I feel that it's important for us to know about what's happening in other places. We

Eight Characteristics of “The Walla Walla Way”

The Walla Walla Basin Restoration Partnership has developed procedures for meetings, problem-solving, and decision-making for which it has gained a regional and national reputation. These have been entitled “The Walla Walla Way.” The following are its characteristics:

- . **CITIZEN-LED.** The Walla Walla Basin Restoration Plans have been developed by an open, inclusive, and transparent process with citizens providing the leadership and technical experts and governmental agency staff playing advisory roles. Meetings consist of conversations with authentic dialogue, with participants insuring that everyone has the chance to be heard. This is striking in its difference from the “public hearing” format, where citizen input is relegated to time-limited statements which rarely precipitate—or are allowed to spark—dialogue with officials or the format of the technical expert plan development process where citizens are invited to comment on a completed draft plan.
- . **VISION-DRIVEN.** Plan development begins with establishing a vision that encompasses and expresses the shared values of the community.
- . **CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING.** Citizen-led plan development requires consensus approval by the community group tasked with generating them.
- . **TRIBAL PARTICIPATION.** Think and act culturally. The entire Walla Walla Basin lies within the 6.3 million acres of land ceded to the US Government by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) in the Treaty of 1855. According to the treaty, the ceded territory is to be held in trust by the US Government, which is to maintain the natural resources that will sustain the culture of the CTUIR.... CTUIR engagement has been extremely beneficial because the tribes have brought their cultural relationship with natural resources to the conversation and in doing so, have encouraged other stakeholders to reflect on and express their own cultural connections to the land and water, i.e. agri-culture. As well, tribal culture brings a deep sense of time,

history, and legacy to the conversations, as they have lived in the area for millennia and look seven generations into the future when developing plans in the present.

SPIRIT OF GENEROSITY. In 2000, the three major irrigation districts in the basin became the focus of the federal government's actions to recover the two fish species that had been designated as "threatened" by the Endangered Species Act. Instead of fighting this, these districts decided to cooperate and contribute to recovery actions. This has led to current Walla Walla River water management where the districts seasonally forego up to 30% of their water withdrawal rights to provide flow for the fish. In other words, these irrigators have chosen to "gift" the fish with substantial amounts of river water that they are legally entitled to and have withdrawn for decades. This is truly an act of generosity

CREATIVITY. The Walla Walla Basin community believes in the power of innovation and very seldom—if at all—admits defeat to perceived insurmountable obstacles.

SHARED KNOWLEDGE. The basin restoration plans incorporate the best available science, call for continued monitoring and evolving plan adaptation, and strive to be accessible by the lay public.

ACT WHEN YOU CAN. The basin restoration plans have identified, prioritized, and implemented "early actions." These have proven effective, not only for restoration, but for sustaining the dedication of participants and demonstrating that the basin [restoration plan] "walks its talk."

—KEVIN SCRIBNER, WALLA WALLA WATERSHED ALLIANCE

need to have some way of networking and some way of getting these stories out.

Shewaye Deribe of the Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resources Association pointed out that some countries, like Ethiopia, have good natural resources but they do not necessarily have the capacity to access global environmental funding. For these countries, the key to revitalizing the environment is building that capacity.

Those who come with very good proposals win in most of the competitions for funds. Those who come with weak proposals, they do not get the funds. So we see an imbalance in the distribution of funds. So building this capacity, especially in poor countries, will help revitalize the ecosystems which are sources of water and livelihood in many poor countries.

Kuntai Karmushu also pointed out that sometimes the capacity and the will to act are generated when there is no longer any choice.

I usually see that experience is the best teacher. You tell people “don’t do x,y,z,” but people won’t listen. But when the resource is gone, that’s when they come together to actually learn to fix the problem.

WORKING FROM THE TOP DOWN / BOTTOM UP

We have a traditional rice cake in the Philippines that you cook up and you cook down. That’s the process and the approach that we’ve taken to be able to make some strides and be able to make a difference for the life of the people in the communities where we work. In the end I think that’s the objective of all community initiatives.

—Joan Castro

The image of working simultaneously from the top down and bottom up captured the imagination of the participants. They embraced the idea of working with the community at multiple levels, thereby strengthening both the program and the members of the community as they become more active. Richard Stren noted that the environmental field tends to be very participatory and wondered if there was something unique about the way people get involved in environmental initiatives. “Unless people participate, it doesn’t work. Why is that? Why are they so engaged? Why are they so committed?” Gidon Bromberg responded

peacekeeping; they are facilitators and catalysts to successful community-based processes.

5. Marginalized communities are often the victims of food insecurity and poverty. The linkages of these factors with politics and business interests require political will, social and corporate responsibility, and civil society groups working together for change.

The goal to transform the populace from being vulnerable to situations such as food insecurity toward well being and self sufficiency will require breaking the traditional stovepipe responses to complex issues through dialogues for partnership between communities and across sectors, consistent and synergistic actions and efforts, monetary support, and leadership. These balancing acts lead to progress toward peace in communities... More communities that are healthier, wealthier, better informed and capacitated to cope and adapt to changes will create a bigger impact and sustainable gains.... Initiatives that look at short-term results will have short-term peacebuilding outcomes. The formula for peace needs to be consistent, encompassing, linked, trusting, and dynamic to changes and time.

—JOAN CASTRO, PATH FOUNDATION PHILIPPINES INC.
*Excerpt from Joan Castro's seminar paper: RESILIENCE AND
HOW TO BUILD A HEALTHY COMMUNITY*

that the participatory approach is not unique to the environmental field, but that it is deeply embedded within it.

Kevin Scribner suggested that the wide base of participation and leadership of these efforts strengthens the community and enables it to sustain itself through the years and the many changes that take place in organizations and communities.

I was struck by our conversation about the importance of continuity and persistence over time, but also about the reality of life changes. Life changes happen all the time. People pass. Staff members get

transferred from governmental agencies. So continuity is something I always try to keep in mind. My mind then goes to the sense of leadership that we tend to focus on—charismatic leaders—because they’re the ones who are most prominent and we have a tendency to rely on them. But one of the things that I work on in my community is to borrow a bit of language from the Zen Buddhists and promote the “art of leadership and no leadership.” The effort is to try to have leadership in everybody so you don’t rely on charismatic leaders because there’s always a shadow behind those charismatic leaders. You need to have more leaders come up. I believe a lot in the leadership in each and every one of us.

But at the same time that there is continuity, there’s got to be some new patterns that emerge. In Walla Walla, we realized that we weren’t just needing a tool to do water management, we actually needed governance of water. We went to the legislature to get the authority to create a form of governance where we could use a suite of tools. When you do that, you’ve got a pattern that will persist past the people who were serving at that time. I think that’s a really important process to make part of our cultural patterns.

Part of building community capacity means making sure that no one is left out of the process. Hanmin Liu spoke passionately about this challenge.

I woke up this morning thinking about the invisible people that we all in some way care deeply about but who are not able to be here at this table. I’m struck by the challenges that we have trying to articulate not only their needs but their aspirations, which I would say is probably more important than their needs. For me the challenge is: How do we, at this time in our engagement globally, bring those voices in? How do we create a space for them to bring their own voices in such a way that we’re the learners rather than the conveners?

That’s a very different kind of paradigm from what I’m used to in building an interface between different groups and perhaps different nations. I think that recognizing that there is a capacity—and building this capacity, being clear about where we can play a role, where we can enhance the voices of those who are invisible—would go a long way to making the kinds of policy changes so that those voices are really at the table.

For me, it’s about the definition of success. I want to root myself, at least as much as I can, not just in seeing an agreement, but in seeing that there are actually substantive benefits to people who have other

powers but don't have the kinds of powers that engage bureaucracies and institutions.

In a break-out session, one group talked about how self-victimization can be paralyzing and that people need to understand what power they have. They have the power to protest, to organize effectively, and to harness their own creativity and energy. In this way, they have the power to be part of the solution.

One of the powerful “bottom-up” voices is the unexpected voice. Sometimes the unexpected voice will be listened to while the expected or usual voice may be ignored. At an environmental rally, the environmentalist may be dismissed as just “another one of them.” But a fisherman speaking for the environment can be an unexpected voice that may prompt more active listening on the part of those the community is trying to influence.

When a rubber tappers leader went to talk with the World Bank, this was an unexpected voice. There's no question that this can be powerful. The general wisdom was that poor people, despite themselves, had no choice but to wreck forests. It made a big difference to hear from these rubber tappers because they weren't the usual ones who spoke.

With water, the technocrats—engineers and economists—have many times been critical of the negotiations. The NGOs, business community, and finally spiritual leaders have been joining as well. It happens when someone looks up and says, “We've got to do this.” It can help in terms of credibility (religious leadership), money (private capital), etc. —Aaron Wolf

CREATING THE SETTINGS AND CONDITIONS FOR TRUST AND TRANSFORMATION

Aaron Wolf has become increasingly interested in the experience of transformation that occurs in conflict resolution. He has discovered spiritual traditions have much to offer for the process of negotiation, transformation, and peacebuilding.

I, like a lot of us, got my training in conflict resolution based on the rational interest-based model, which holds that people come to agreement when it's in their interest to agree. But those of us who have been in these situations, we know it's not a rational process. We've been there. It's palpable. There's an energy shift in the room. So what I started to get interested in, besides quantifying the rational, is:

When do we experience transformation?

What is that process of transformation?

What are the settings that are conducive to transformation?

How do we focus and think about that particular moment when suddenly somebody sees, everybody sees, things in a very different way?

Can we learn constructs and tools that would be useful for our processes of conflict resolution?

We can learn from our spiritual traditions the very profound transformative listening skills that allow anger to dissipate, to get to the vulnerability where we can have a much deeper conversation. I've been learning a whole host of skills and settings that are useful in conflict resolution that are not part of any of our rational models, far

Environmental justice is a national and global

movement that challenges the disproportionate burden of pollution and environmental degradation borne by communities of color and low income. It is this disparate distribution of burdens, benefits, investment, and access to decision making that characterizes environmental racism. It is the intentional targeting of communities of color and low income for pollution—because they are less informed, less powerful and influential—that has led to excess exposure to environmental hazards, a major contributor to egregious disparities in health by race / ethnicity and social class.

Though I was not aware of the term “peacebuilding,” my organization, WE ACT for Environmental Justice, has been fully committed to and involved in the achievement of its aims to provide new data and options, build community-based resources to achieve solutions, build new

relationships across divisions and across community, and to build community resilience to influence the course of social and economic change.

As one of the few advocacy organizations based in Northern Manhattan, and the only environmental advocacy group, we have worked for the past 21 years to achieve environmental peacebuilding and transformation in our underserved community, which is now undergoing reinvestment by the private sector and government and gentrification by more affluent white residents with a resulting displacement of lower-income residents of color.

In the Adversarial Stage, the government participated in accountability sessions organized by the community, but government never developed a process of community engagement that built trust. Perhaps, as a result, trust building between community stakeholders occurred more naturally than it might have, had there been more government cooperation.... Through skills building and a ten-year community-academic partnership that provided exposure data, we have achieved new policies and legislation, the residents have learned from the data about developing community resilience, and they are applying it to a range of community issues that are transforming their relation to government authority and improving their living conditions.

The challenge is not only building trust between the adversary and the stakeholders, but building trust between the stakeholders. That is proving to be the strongest liability for peacebuilding. How do we build trust among neighbors? In order to build community resilience, we need to have high levels of collaboration with other community-based organizations. In oppressed communities, any group with resources is often seen as suspect. The addition of racial and ethnic differences to a weak civil society weakens community ability to influence the course of social and economic change.

—PEGGY SHEPARD, WE ACT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE
*Excerpt from Peggy Shepard's seminar paper: ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEMAKING,
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES, EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP AND INSTITUTIONS:
REFLECTIONS FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY: HARLEM*

from it. They are immensely useful to how we sit, how we listen, how we tell and honor stories.

Kirk Emerson also saw how the “ways of being” in the spiritual traditions were similar to those needed for conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Reflective practice, in many ways, is a kind of mindfulness training and undergirds most spiritual traditions. One has to practice some kind of mindfulness or centering to be able to be in the middle of conflict as a stakeholder or as a third-party mediator or conciliator. I am very interested in how one builds on the capacity [for resolving disputes]. How can you transform the capacity, the social capital built through that experience, into support structures that can be more abiding over time?

It is also important to create the optimal conditions and settings for transformative conversations. Todd Walters spoke to the challenges of a typical decision-making process that inadvertently disconnect people from the environment in question.

The process of going inside of a building and being disconnected from the natural setting is something that takes away from the spiritual as well as the emotional aspect of that discussion. Therefore a lot of the discussion is focused purely on the intellectual level. I think we need to create a model that brings the discussion out into the natural environment. To have the setting be the location that’s being talked about. This setting would provide you with the opportunity to capture those spiritual and emotional connections that people have to that area. This would allow for a much more comprehensive, transformative potential within the negotiation process.

As Peggy Shepard noted, it can be difficult to build trust with or within communities.

How do you build trust that leads you to the transformation of thinking about needs instead of simply what you want? I’ve been involved in situations where you could not build trust among the community that’s negotiating with an outside force. As a result there was no transformation, and the outcome was not as positive as it could have been.

Yet building trust is key to all peacebuilding efforts. But it takes a significant amount of time and commitment.

You can't fast-track trust building.

—Kirk Emerson

It's a long process. It's not like they will trust you right away. So, it's very important to start working with local leaders, the indigenous leaders.... Sometimes they don't trust you because they don't know what the program is all about or they don't know what the issue is all about. So you need to work up and you need to work down. You work with the community, but at the same time, you have to create the collaboration and networking at the top with the local chief executives or with the leaders so that all of you will have a shared vision. It's not easy, but it will happen. Trust building is very important. It's actually a key to success to whatever you have to do.... Trust building starts with the community seeing that the work we do is valuable to them. —Joan Castro

Conditions for building trust are contingent, in part, on the integrity of the facilitator or organizer. While the prevailing view is that facilitators must maintain their neutrality, this can sometimes limit the potential for relationships and cost the process and the facilitators a successful outcome. Juan Dumas challenged the emphasis on neutrality.

It also has to do with we who are interveners, practitioners, who show up there in the name of neutrality or impartiality. We don't share all those physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual parts of ourselves. We do bring those to the table, but we say we don't. I believe that people would really trust us when we start doing this very explicitly. We're too obsessed with neutrality and impartiality...

This opened a conversation about the personal costs for the facilitators in keeping a neutral stance. Being neutral keeps them once removed from the work and the people. Participants discussed how to balance this pressure to be objective and distant with their personal need to be fully present and authentic to their work and the people.

Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resources

Association is a nongovernmental nonprofit organization working in Ethiopia. The organization has two project sites...promoting a community-based integrated wetland-watershed management approach in order to reduce vulnerability of poor communities to socioeconomic and climatic shocks, both within the project sites and in the downstream, through revitalizing water supplying ecosystems. A positive endeavor of the communities in these watersheds is contributing to their own wellbeing and for their neighbors downstream. This small effort can be an example of a positive contribution one community makes to another for mutual benefit. The altruism it creates seals holes for conflict. Communities and citizens of the globalizing world should behave in this manner in order to block opportunities for conflicts and create healthy communities and a healthy environment.

The organization is tackling factors that contribute to natural resource degradation and shortage of resources such as water and food through integrated watershed management (people and watershed-centered approaches) and cultivating shared responsibility among the stakeholders (community members, community leaders, development practitioners, and decision makers) through continuous sensitization... The goal of this approach is to calm interwoven problems at household and community levels by realizing the fact that households and communities are the bases for all other problems that gradually increase in scale and spatial coverage...

It is time to cooperate and share responsibilities to save the sources of water and other resources; it needs “source-to-mouth” integrated efforts within river basins. Thinking about conflicts is a futile exercise and wastes time, energy, and resources. The situation needs a paradigm shift, and it is wise to redirect all the investment (time, energy and resources), allocated for conflict management or facilitation, toward resource development. The combined effect of the growing demand for natural resources (water) and degradation of the sources of water will end in water stress and accelerate water-related conflicts, which are fruitless for all the beneficiaries and will further complicate the problem. Conflicts

aggravate resource degradation, migration, and unrest that may affect the peace and security of people, including those in areas far from the conflict. In addition, degradation of the environment will add fuel on the warming climate that affects the whole world. Therefore, global cooperation is critical to halt environmental degradation, improve resource bases, and calm conflicts; this seems the right direction toward attaining the Millennium Development Goals and realizing sustainable development, and to make the planet a hospitable place for humankind.

SHEWAYE DERIBE, ETHIO WETLANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Excerpt from Shewaye Deribe's seminar paper:

INTERWOVEN PROBLEMS NEED INTEGRATED SOLUTIONS

This conversation led Mark Nepo of the Fetzer Institute to ask the participants to talk about the top human resources or qualities necessary for peacebuilding. Gidon Bromberg spoke of integrity, humility, and being holistic as the qualities essential to trust building and environmental peacebuilding:

INTEGRITY is integral in trust building. If you can't show the depth of your integrity, then you don't have financial resources to offer to strike a deal. You need to be able to show that what you're doing is for altruistic purposes and not for anything that is associated with self-gain.

HUMILITY is incredibly significant: coming in as "I know little." Before opening your mouth, listen, because you cannot assume. There are things that repeat themselves but the circumstances are so important that if you're not listening to the specifics, then you're going to miss the point and won't be able to help. Maintaining a strong sense of humility in the work that you do is essential for the listening process.

HOLISTIC is the other unique feature of environmentalism as a whole and environmental peacebuilding in particular; it needs to be holistic. The comment earlier was that water encompasses everything. To really deal with water issues, you have to deal with land, nature,

communities. To be effective in environmental peacemaking, you truly have to be holistic.

Richard Stren added to Bromberg's notion of the importance of listening:

In addition to being humble, you also have to realize that people have a lot to say. You have to be interested in what they're saying. It's more than listening, it's being fascinated in the stories and thinking of ways to collectively make sense of it.

Others added the following characteristics: flexibility and creativity; mental agility (as in the ability to hold two views in your mind); being an effective player at different levels of power (able to work vertically and horizontally); being rooted in the community values; being self-reflective and having respect of self and others.

Conflict management / resolution / transformation

is hard to do. It takes a lot of work, special conditions and resources. When it does work, it is dazzling. When it doesn't work, it can be quite detrimental. There are so many ways in which these processes can go awry that it really is a miracle when it does all come together. It is even harder to sustain new-found collaborative engagement over time among diverse participants, unless the intensity or imminence of the shared resource loss or threat remains salient.... Consultation and assessment (those very first steps in how people are convened and what and how questions are being asked) are a critical part of the collaborative process, starting well before everyone gets to the table.... Conflict resolution happens in—and must connect with—the diverse cultural and institutional contexts. Aaron Wolf writes about the spiritual and cross-cultural imperatives, but political and legal authorities, critical for traction toward long-term sustainable solutions, need to be understood and fully engaged....

To be most effective, environmental conflict resolution should be better integrated with existing social / ecological / political / legal contexts. It stands as one among several avenues to pursue for best resolving a given dispute or working collaboratively toward a shared solution.... Taking this a bit further, might we serve this agenda for transforming conflict by stepping back and exploring the larger governance system, of which dispute resolution is one part? Can we have effective conflict resolution if the governance system is seriously impaired or failing? I think we need to integrate our practice and research on conflict resolution back into “governance” and broaden our perspective on governance as cross-sector, cross-scale systems. The challenge then is how to build those collaborative governance systems to assure peaceful, sustainable community engagement.

Barriers to environmental peacemaking include 1) the limited capacity of public and private stakeholders to engage together in collaborative negotiation and 2) the lack of trusted institutions to convene conflict resolution processes. Regarding capacity, I think we need to do better than we have, such as when we presume that “training” is the answer to this barrier. Creating opportunities for mutual learning, for example, might be a start. Many of us have been so fixated on “the mediator” as part of the conflict resolution equation in this field that we are only now starting to consider the social learning that Aaron mentions and how to enable that across cultures. We have been so party-centric that we have forgotten the importance of leadership, not just in the convening role, but as a quality we want to develop in every person in the process. Building the capacity not only to negotiate, but to repair or initiate relationships, integrate new information, and change our frames for understanding problems and possible solution sets are just a few of the competencies to foster, not to mention the moral imperatives to cultivate spiritual and cultural understandings and tolerance.

— KIRK EMERSON, UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Excerpt from Kirk Emerson’s seminar paper:

*PATHWAYS TO PEACE: DEFINING COMMUNITY IN THE AGE
OF GLOBALIZATION*



SHEWAYE DERIBE AND PAUL BORN

For me it is in place,
in community, that the true hope for a peaceful
and just world resides.

—Paul Born



Part III: Community in Times of Globalization

OUR GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

As a logical extension of the conversation on environmental peacebuilding and community transformation, the seminar facilitators asked participants to reflect on the question “What does it mean to be a citizen of the earth?” Margaret Keck saw it as an important expansion of our way of thinking, to think with patience about the future and work toward it. “So being a citizen of earth, it seems to me, means learning how to think longer and broader.”

Todd Walters commented on how the speed of our technology and our ability to communicate almost instantaneously was changing what it meant to be a citizen of the earth:

What strikes me about being a citizen of earth is the growing sense of interconnectedness of everything and the shifting paradigms of how the ordinary person can have a global impact with the rising use of technology, particularly social networking media. We’re seeing examples of this in Iran with the protest being all over Twitter and getting out the photographs and the stories from the people on the ground participating. We saw it in Kenya during the post-election violence with people tracking on their cell phones where the violence was occurring in real time. As this continues to grow and brings the world closer together, I think that the ability of the ordinary person to have a global impact is going to become an increasing thing on the global stage.

In his seminar paper, Kuntai Karmushu raised insightful questions about the assumptions underlying many conversations about global citizenship.

What does it mean to be a citizen of the world?

It takes me to a position that I try to put myself in, to be attached to or taking care of what is next to me, whether that be a tree, a person, or anything that is around to you—be attached to it.

—Kuntai Karmushu

There are some fundamental questions that need to be raised here to help us understand our role as citizens of the Earth:

- Is the “global citizenship” crusade a reality or yet another development fad to camouflage the negative effects of globalization witnessed so far?
- Could “global citizenship” be nothing more than rhetoric to sustain our business as global activists?
- Who sets the rules of the game in “global citizenship” and globalization?
- Activism for what, on whose agenda, at whose interest?
- What structures are in place to facilitate peaceful equitable “global village” and / or how do we bridge the big gap between the mighty rich and voiceless poor citizens of the world to protect the vulnerable groups against negative effects of globalization?
- Is globalization another new form of neo-colonialism? Demystifying sovereignty?

Mark Nepo then asked, “Given your particular experience in environmental issues, what do you want to add to how we should educate people about what it means to be a citizen of the earth?”

Several participants reflected on the fact that cultural traditions often contain wisdom about the local environment. And thus it is important that the next generations are well educated in their cultural traditions and values. Shewaye Deribe described how this was the case in Ethiopia.

In different parts of Ethiopia the big trees were venerated especially in the early days.... These trees were used as a shared place for elders



KUNTAI KARMUSHU

to discuss and settle the local problems and also used by travelers to locate or distinguish a village from a distance. But nowadays the trees are cut down, either for timber making or generating income for some immediate needs such as food, clothing, construction, etc.

Cleo Paskel reflected on how children in the Western world have become disconnected from the origin of their food and how this affects their relationship to the environment.

We have become incredibly disconnected from where our food comes from, which is an integral part of the natural system. So an initial way of connecting to the natural system might be a way of helping children understand. If you start bringing them to farms, they can get a better sense of their connection to nature.

Joan Castro talked about the role of passion in her work, asserting that the challenge is to infect the next generation of leaders with that passion.

One of the things that comes to my mind is the passion that we take to our work. Sometimes we hope that we all share the same passion. We ask, How do we translate these passions to the next generation of leaders? To be able to continue to lead the work that we do now, to be able to adapt to the shrinking resources? That's the challenge for me as I think of my role as a citizen of the world—to start putting me as a citizen within my community.

Peggy Shepard observed how her organization trained young leaders who then took their learning and passion to the next organization.

Most of my staff is under thirty. They're environmental attorneys and public health professionals and environmental natural resource folks

and we're training them. They're all leaders of color and they're going on to other environmental organizations. We're also working to build infrastructure in communities of color. I think that's my contribution toward future generations and making sure that there is that passion for what we've got to do to preserve the earth and our resources.

David Jensen also spoke of the importance of mentoring young leaders. He told of mentors who were instrumental in his life and encouraged others to extend this help to the young people in their organizations.

I think within our individual professions we have to identify the up-and-coming leaders and try to empower them to the extent that we can. Let them make mistakes, but put them forward and try to make sure that they're on the path toward leadership. Never forget how important it is to spend time with them and to tell them that they are future leaders.

CITIZENS OF THE EARTH, CITIZENS OF THE COMMUNITY

That's the challenge for me as I think of my role as a citizen of the world—to start putting me as a citizen within my community.

—Joan Castro

As we are pushed and pulled by globalization and technology, our focus is often on what it means to be part of this new and larger, ever-changing world. And yet, sometimes the focus on the larger world seems to come at a cost to the world closer to home. Sometimes we seem more present to the larger world than to our own community.

We've all heard the term “nature deficit disorder,” and many of us have spoken about the need to get grounded back in community. It may not be a problem being a citizen of the world. It may be more of a problem how to be a citizen of a community. We may well be facing a *community deficit disorder* where communities don't know that it's against their tradition not to cut the trees or have forgotten where their water or food comes from. There really does need to be some thought given to this in what will be an increasingly virtual world.

—Kirk Emerson

The participants discussed how being a global citizens was more and more the focus of our lives and our technology. In fact, sometimes it's actually easier to communicate with someone across the planet than with

your neighbor next door. They then began to acknowledge that being a citizen in your community was as important as being a global citizen.

This is a very interesting topic to me, especially coming from a very different culture. The Massai culture believes all natural resources come from God. They don't really think of planting trees or all that. These have been very big questions since I started to ask What does it mean to be a citizen of the world? I have been even asking friends.... What is the connection between the national resources, the culture, the spiritual, etc...to the natural resources we have?

When we think of this generation now, where are we heading? Are we heading where the Western countries now are? And are the Western countries going back and starting to develop the old processes? Or are we going to shortcut and learn from them and take another way?

Is it possible to start initiating talks, especially to discuss what we have and ask people 20, 30 years ago, what was there? In our culture it is very hard to think what will be up in 50 years to come. Is it possible to discuss such a thing? I struggle as I try to define, what it means to be a citizen of the world.

It takes me to a position that I try to put myself in, to be attached to or taking care of what is *next* to me, whether that be a tree, a person or anything that is around to you—be attached to it. Because when you consider taking care of it and then anything else around you, you take care of the other one. I think that will give you a connection to grow together and be connected. If I'm connected to this room, then I'm connected to my community. And if all of us can know what is going on at the same time, I believe we can make something better. —Kuntai Karmushu

David Jensen brought the topic back to home and provided a glimpse of hope and promise.

With the environmental world, we often get a little bit overwhelmed by the magnitude and challenge ahead. It causes us to get lost. But if we can focus on what specifically each one of us can actually influence in our daily lives in terms of our network, in terms of our associations, I think that can help us move forward.

Best Practices for Conflict Transformation: Lessons from the Dialogue

1. It is important to use both top-down and bottom-up approaches. No one group or organization can do both. An environmentalist calling for change is the expected, so find advocates who are not environmentalists. Strategically select the people you are going to target for support and who you will work with.
2. It is necessary to start collecting top-down, bottom-up knowledge more systemically and disseminating it to communities of practice.
3. You can tell your funders that you'll give them A, but then also give them B and C to stimulate their interest in funding B and C the next time around.
4. The central importance of reflection and accountability.
5. A multi-scale approach is key to success.
6. The process of engagement of people is critical.
7. The importance of personality.
8. Crisis and conflict bring more attention than peacebuilding.
9. The factor of time in building trust and relationships.
10. Once you've used water as your initial building block, find ways to expand that out to other resources (i.e. economic development).
11. Spoilers – be aware of them and find ways to engage them specifically. Bring them in, don't let them just snipe from the outside.
12. People are inspired by brave people going against the trend.
13. You can't fast-track trust building.

–David Jensen



JOAN CASTRO

A project can be sustained

and can be owned by the local governments and local communities if they are provided the capacity to implement their programs and they see the value of the programs that they do.

—Joan Castro



KEVIN SCRIBNER, KENT BUTTS, AND DENNIS HAMRO-DROTZ

Part IV. Program Hurdles: Lessons from Environmental Peacebuilding

In all the work we do, there's always a tension that we're trying to navigate. There is tension between efficiency, delivering your project on time, national ownership, and level of participation, between quality and efficiency, between finance and quality.

—David Jensen

Throughout the seminar, there was a great deal of discussion about the relationship between organizations, communities, funders, and policymakers. There was frustration with the gap between the funders' perspectives and needs and those of the communities they supported. Those representing communities and organizations acknowledged that they need financial support and because of this, they must work with policymakers, but they also want a certain amount of autonomy to envision and carry out the work. Funders, who are trying to support and foster good work and programs, expressed their frustration with the process and the constraints they felt.

While this topic was not necessarily the intended focus of the seminar, these complicated and imperfect relationships were a significant part of the discussion. The participants spoke openly about the issues involved and generated ideas for how to create a more productive relationship and effective process for both funders and grantees. The following reflects some of the ideas and insights that emerged from this discussion.

WHO DECIDES? THE CHALLENGES IN DEFINING THE DIRECTION AND SCALE OF PROJECTS

Everybody is very clear that local governance is key, that all of the intangible processes of building consensus and community is so

It's not good enough to just do no harm.

Those scarce resources must be invested

in a manner that corrects

and heals and tries to resolve.

—Gidon Bromberg

important to sustainability. But nobody funds that. It's grown in the past five years or so. Ten years ago this was impossible.

—Juan Dumas

An important factor in building a community's capacity and success is ensuring that the community has a say in defining their goals, priorities, and future. Yet as Hanmin Liu stated, "Most of the time it is the funders who decide how things are done and supported. Funders carry the power... Funders carry a specific idea of how things should be carried out, but that may not always work. How they do it, what timeline, etc, needs to come out of the will of the community."

Kuntai Karmushu spoke from his experience that sometimes the community is the last to know.

At what level does the community come in either in making the decisions or choosing which direction to go? I see the community comes in almost at the last part when the decision was already made and when the funds are there. The donor, or what we call the development partner, will decide whether the project worked or didn't work. They tell us, "This is what you do." They already have fund structures that say these are three-year funds. The donor withdraws from the project, when it's just been started. So it's not about helping, it's more about exploiting.... We must ask ourselves if we are allowing the community to do what will be beneficial to the community or what we think as a developing partner will be best.

Shewaye Deribe underscored the importance of funders being transparent about how much money they will be investing in the project.



KIRK EMERSON

An important issue is transparency that empowers the community. How many funders tell the community how much they can invest? How many local leaders know the amount of money that will go to the community? ...If we want to bring better livelihood and ensure peace, we have to touch the problem, the real problems of that part of the community, we have to consult and encourage actual participation.

Funders tend to have a particular area or issue they are interested in funding, but they do not always see the many facets of an issue and how it affects other issues in the community. This lack of integration is a major challenge to communities. Bishnu Upreti of the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research in Nepal described how funding can have the unintended consequence of disempowering the community. He urged a rethinking of the funding morality.

In Nepal, we are in the position of developing new projects, and the money waiting there through the nongovernmental sector is 15 billion rupees, almost 15% of the total national budget. Instead of helping, it is creating confusion. Helping communities is the responsibility of the state. But if donor or international communities just go through the route of the nongovernmental sector, they consequently weaken the post-conflict transitional period. On the experience of Nepal, there is real need of rethinking the funding morality.

Shewaye Deribe advocated a more holistic approach to funding family planning initiatives.

Most donors do not follow an integrated approach. If you take the family planning issue, if you distribute the pill, the condoms for the

communities, that's good. But if we empower the women, the school children, it will help them to learn. If they get education, if they get livelihood opportunities, then they will decide for themselves. But if we are simply distributing the pills without addressing other interlinked issues at the household or community level (livelihood, empowerment, knowledge, etc), the intervention will not stand by itself and will not be sustainable.

But as Joan Castro pointed out, it can be particularly challenging to get funding for an integrated program that involves more than one issue and different levels of the community.

You have to take some risks to implement a program that is not within the funding descriptions. You have to look for an entry point. You have to look at the frameworks in government to be able to put in programs that would bring together different sectors to start talking together, using an overarching theme of an issue such as security, livelihood or poverty elevation. The beauty of working with local governments is that you're able to work in small places (vs. national). And if you have the right factors, the right parameters, you are able to work with the community, with local chief executives, with indigenous leaders. You're able to build leaders so that they can tell their story and not have it be you telling their story.

Hanmin Liu described the tendency of funders to look at large-scale efforts. While there is logic to this—larger efforts are potentially more effective with a more significant impact—it leads to a diminishment of the power and input of the communities.

Funders want to forge private, large-scale efforts, but this will probably end up brushing over the real power in the communities, their issues, their challenges, and their aspirations.... Then what happens to the community? Every time that happens they lose a little more of themselves, so pretty soon they become invisible.

Blair Ruble of the Woodrow Wilson Center, drawing on his studies of urban areas, saw the problem as a failure to “create a broader environment in which successful projects can emerge on their own.”

It's a really difficult task. But if the focus doesn't begin to broaden out, you get one-off examples of reasonable success that helped people but had no capacity to sustain that success over time. Rather than talking about taking a good project and scaling up, the ques-

of the Constituent Assembly; and the Peoples Parliament for Natural Resources are effective to building national consensus, promoting shared vision and paving the path for concerted action on dealing with environment and natural resources.

Experiences of Nepal show that environmental peacebuilding is a social learning process which is possible through trust and relation building, shared goals, a strengthened network, and concerted action.

Environmental peacebuilding is not a linear process to be settled only by the state. Instead, it is a continuous process and requires constant and concerted efforts of all stakeholders (politicians, policy makers, civil society, researchers, users federations) and resources (knowledge and evidences, time and finance). Nepal's relative success confirms that such multi-stakeholder initiatives for environmental peacebuilding are possible but need key initiators (committed facilitators of the process) to make multi-stakeholder, multi-stage negotiation successful.

Research / evidence-based information is crucially important to change the status quo and explore alternatives and options in the process of complex negotiation.

State- or NGO-initiated community mediation initiatives are successful if they are connected with existing community structures (e.g., users' committees, mothers' clubs, religious committees), and if they use locally available knowledge and resources.

In Nepal, some components of the "four stages of water conflict transformation" model of Professor Wolf are in practice. Based on the Nepalese experiences, this model could greatly contribute to developing holistic understanding and practical implementation of conflict transformation strategy in natural / environmental resources.

—BISHNU RAJ UPRETI /SWISS NATIONAL CENTRE OF
COMPETENCE IN RESEARCH, NEPAL

*Excerpt from Bishnu Raj Upreti's seminar paper: MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY OF
WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL PEACEBUILDING: REFLECTIONS FROM NEPAL.*

tion should be “How do you create a broader environment in which other projects—like the successful project—can emerge on their own?”

Hanmin Liu described how the Kellogg Foundation has tried to address this situation by having the matrices of success defined by the community.

The board will spend three weeks somewhere, and we’ll get down to the community level and try to learn from it. You’re always an outsider, there’s no doubt, there’s a little bit of a voyeur thing. But it gets the board to begin to understand the sensibility of the community, the voices of the community. Now how far we can go with this I don’t know. I can’t say that that’s the right approach for a large bureaucracy like the State Department. But I know that for smaller foundations, it’s something that we take really seriously.

Another challenge is the fact that funders tend to support short-term, specific projects but not the administrative aspect of the programs. Organizations find it difficult to allocate funds for staffing or administrative work even though these are often critical to the success of the project.

In addition, the need for support can lead organizations to search for work that can be funded as opposed to the work that needs to be done. Margaret Keck notes, “the project driven mentality has led to the de-skilling of political activism in a great many societies.... It’s a kind of a ‘projectism’ that takes over that says that it’s more valuable to find the funding than organizing for political change or looking for allies that are going to make that possible.”

TIMING IS EVERYTHING

Fifteen years isn’t really a long time. In grant time it is, but in reality it is not. Expectations in the funding community are very different than letting things evolve.

—Kirk Emerson

Dennis Hamro-Drotz of the United National Environmental Programme asked, “When we talk about interventions for environmental and natural resource management, what is the right time and what are indicators of impact and success?”

Many spoke of the different perceptions of the timeframe for projects as one of the major stumbling blocks to effective funding for projects.



TODD WALTERS

Often a project's impact is not fully evident during the time period covered by the grant or the reporting period. Joan Castro spoke about how projects evolve over time and how short timeframes limit the learning for both the funder and the program.

Funding is good because it institutes different components as promised, but after projects officially “end” they take on their own life and can bring progress or development in other areas that funders aren't made aware of. Sometimes returning this information about what works to funders gets lost in the process.

Margaret Keck suggested that since “funders have a tendency to go back to the same regions over and over again, it could be good to encourage them to do follow up studies. They may find that programs they thought weren't successful actually are.”

Juan Dumas shared his idea of an Early Response Fund that he felt would address many of the issues inherent in traditional funding structures.

Funding has been great; it has been useful and we're very grateful for it. But I believe that the way funding agencies think is not suitable for this kind of work. There is a need for timely interventions, for an early action fund. There are a lot of early warnings but very little early action. When funders come to us and we say: “We need your help.” They say, “Let's do a dialogue process here. You write a proposal. We'll be back in six months and will let you know if you get the money or not.”

I wonder what we can all do together about this. We need to change the way in which funders think about this. As grateful as I am for their support, I think they should reflect a little bit more about the

way in which they're doing their work. I would encourage more flexible engagements, longer term engagements, and certainly indicators of success.

The Early Response Fund was created with a hypothesis that we do not necessarily want to prevent disputes: what we want to prevent is violence. We feel that disputes are upsurges of people wanting to say something or make themselves visible. What we want to prevent is an escalation into violence and crisis. So at any point in that escalation, an intervention that would prevent violence from happening is worthwhile. With a very small amount of money, \$5,000–\$10,000, at a good time with the right capacities, you can get people to the table, prevent violence, and leverage some of the funding.

DEFINING SUCCESS AND CLARIFYING EXPECTATIONS

*The first thing to do is to turn to the community
or the agency that you're funding and ask,
"What would you consider success?" And recognize
that a lot of those indicators for success
are not going to be quantifiable.*

—Aaron Wolf

Many participants spoke to the need for transparency and honest conversations about expectations and outcomes for funding programs and projects. Robert Adams of the Fetzer Institute affirmed the need to be clear about expectations and needs, "It is important to have joint accountability. Both sides must clarify expectations, so the donor is clear about what

the community wants, and the community understands what the donor wants out of the partnership.”

Kirk Emerson affirmed the importance of clarifying expectations:

There needs to be joint accountability. We need to clarify expectations and make sure everyone is clear about what the community and the donor wants out of the partnership. The first step has to be community governance.

Another key is coming up with measurements that fit the realities of what is happening on the ground. Often there are more factors at work than are taken into account. Cleo Paskal pointed out that it is also important to build in flexibility to match changing circumstances:

If you're dealing with a watershed, the assumption often seems to be that the amount of water in the watershed is a constant but, especially with climate change and with degradation, that's not the case. So how are these variables over time built into the negotiations so that the treaties don't become a source of conflict as the resources change?

Aaron Wolf agreed with Cleo Paskal and shared a method he uses to take into account the impact of exogenous events on the level of conflict or cooperation in a situation.

This is something we struggle with a lot. What we end up doing, for a number of reasons, is coding interactions on a spectrum of how conflictive or cooperative they are. You can actually track and develop timelines for relationships by how cooperative or how conflicted they get. Then you can plug in different exogenous events like droughts or elections or treaties. The Bureau of Reclamation is trying to be more proactive about identifying points. There are almost tipping points where a trend is conflictive and then something happens and the trend moves up or vice-versa. So you can hone in on that one moment and see who made a decision, where, how, why in order to shift the trend. If somebody signs a treaty, relations should either stay the same or get better. If they get worse, the question is why? The Israel-Jordan treaty is a good case where relations immediately got worse because there was the worst drought on record and there was no good drought provision within the treaty.

Good governance is central to environmental

peacemaking. It requires plenty of patience, professional capacity, and financial resources. I am particularly interested in finding ways to improve philanthropic and development cooperation efforts to support good governance.

It is encouraging to see a growing interest from philanthropists in the need to address conflict and its horrendous consequences for the most vulnerable. I am personally grateful for it. Yet, addressing conflict effectively is not always an easy fit with common grant-making practices. Philanthropists and all types of donors could make even better contributions if they would consider making the following changes in their common practices.

TRUST THE POWER OF WELL-DRIVEN PROCESSES. We repeatedly hear that conflict prevention and peacebuilding are about building trust, social capital and accountability, putting together an institutional infrastructure, strengthening governance and the rule of law, sustaining dialogue, and implementing inclusive public policies. These intangible components are critical to the success and long-term sustainability of the more physical and humanitarian investments in conflict settings.

COMMIT TO LONGER-TERM INITIATIVES. It is very difficult to sustain these processes and make any significant progress in this field if grantees are to frame their activities into one- to two-year projects, with directly measurable outcomes in that time period. It can typically take months to research specific conditions, conduct consultations, plan for implementation, and build a team to set up an effective dialogue or project process for conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Second-phase fundraising often must begin before first-phase implementation is well underway, making demonstration of impact all the more difficult. And stakeholders in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts often say it is better not to start a process that cannot be continued for a longer time than to raise and then fail to meet

expectations by prematurely ending efforts before results can realistically be expected to materialize and be sustained. There is good evidence from existing efforts that processes need to be sustained for a minimum of five years.

FLEXIBILITY OVER RESULTS IS A MUST. Peacebuilding processes are usually more about being there than about producing specific outputs. Crises do not wait for money, and when they happen we need to be there on time. There are plenty of early warning systems but very few early action or rapid response mechanisms. This is not say, however, that concrete outcomes should not be pursued and monitored. On the contrary, if realistic timeframes and appropriate funding are provided, grantors and grantees should engage in a learning process by monitoring progress from a good baseline through specific indicators. Also, more ample timeframes allow for unexpected impacts, a very common positive externality of grant-making, to be seen.

AVOID YIELDING TO THE TEMPTATION OF A SINGLE-SECTOR APPROACH. Addressing conflict is all about complexity... Policy analysts, human rights workers, dialogue promoters, and many other practitioners from a myriad of fields of expertise need to come together and work collaboratively if a difference is to be made in a certain conflict.

Unless this is rethought, grant makers will continue to receive a good amount of unrealistic project proposals. We should look forward to more dialogue opportunities between grantees and grant making organizations where these and other conditions for success can be thoughtfully addressed.

—JUAN DUMAS, FUNDACIÓN FUTURO LATINAMERICANO

Excerpt from Juan Dumas' seminar paper: PATHWAYS TO PEACE: DEFINING COMMUNITY IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION.

INFLUENCING THE FUNDING PROCESS

While funders have more control and power in the process, several participants pointed out that it was possible to influence the funding process.

In a lot of cases, the people who are getting the funding have a lot more power than they actually realize in the context of how they can

It was said that conflict

helps attract resources, but it can also frighten.

Most private foundations don't want
to touch the Middle East.

—Gidon Bromberg

dictate terms. For decades, Tonga had a patchwork of development programs that, at times, worked at cross purposes, destabilizing local populations. The government said, “Look, we have a problem. We have water, but we have a problem with our energy system. We want 50% renewable energy by 2012, and any development money that comes in has to be geared toward giving us 50% renewable energy by 2012. We don't want to deal with 20 funders, we want to deal with one funder and everyone will go through that one funder and we'll negotiate with them.” They took complete control of the development funding process. —Cleo Paskal

Gidon Bromberg shared a success story along this line:

We don't have to just accept the funding scenario as it is. By organizing, we can have a tremendous influence on the thinking of funding organizations. In the Middle East, the European Commission is granting five million euros every year for people-to-people activities, one of the three criteria is environmental peacemaking. They don't call it that, but you have to show how you're involving environmental water issues. That's a direct result of the influence that we've had. It has opened the door for so many other organizations.

Several people suggested that one improvement would be to have funders support projects and programs based on track records instead of project proposals.

I think the easiest thing to do is set aside some of the funding for a program. Like the MacArthur Genius Awards. Look around and find

Once the shift has been made

in thinking about allocating water to
allocating benefits, it is a natural progression
to think together about how to enhance the benefits
within and beyond the basin.

– Aaron Wolf

people who are doing good stuff, who have figured out their objectives, their strategic plan, and say, “Here’s a million bucks, just keep doing it.” That would be the easiest way to think about funding programs. —Aaron Wolf

They suggested that funders could also play an expanded role in sharing and distributing information. As it stands, the work and funding is largely decentralized and there is little collective learning and advancement going on. Participants urged those in funding to look at how to share information about programs. Todd Walters shared an idea from a conversation with a fellow participant on how to build a coalition of funders to better support the work and the learning.

One of the ideas was to create a coalition of funders that could be brought together. Since environmental peacemaking is inherently a cross-discipline concept, if we can bring together funders from the environmental field, the peacebuilding field, the conflict prevention field and the smaller, more nuanced areas within each of those larger disciplines, there may be an opportunity to revolutionize the way that funding happens in this particular sector. I think that would be something worth exploring.

Aaron Wolf described another system that had the flexibility to respond to the program’s needs as it developed over time.

We’ve started to use a term called “managing by intention.” We need a system that funds where you want to go, so that you work in the right direction, rather than just funding projects that have concrete results. Funding programs and letting them develop their projects and measurements of success can help us to move beyond this problem.

We worked on a project with Carnegie that worked in this fashion—we had three years of funding and had to come up with a conference, but that was it. There isn't enough of that kind of thinking in the funding community. If we collectively document that funders need to be more open, recognize intangibles...that could help bring about a change.

Participants pointed out that communities and organizations often need to make changes to adapt to evolving needs and shifting situations. Yet, their reports to the funders must depict a project that has produced the goals and objectives that were originally agreed upon. This balancing act can sometime curtail the honesty of the reporting process and detract from opportunities to recognize successes and failures in the project that could offer valuable lessons to both the funder and the community. Robert Adams spoke of how the hopes and dreams of funders, while well intentioned, can blind them to the reality on the ground.

The problem is making everything into a metric and plan. Everything gets wrapped up in ideals and what they imagine the reality to be and not reality itself. They lose track trying to realize the myth. That's the problem with timelines, because when you don't see the results when you expect them, you move onto the next novelty. Then the process repeats where innovation becomes a false hope.

The participants called for more opportunities for open conversations between funders and recipients and among funders themselves. They felt this would be a valuable way to share the lessons learned from the work and to find better ways to work together. All agreed that it is important to have open and honest feedback between funders and orga-

nizations. They need to share both what is working and what is not—including the relationship between the funder and recipient. One suggestion was to craft anonymous evaluations for the donors and grantees to use in reflecting on the successes and failures of a particular project and its funding.

I think a lesson here is that a community's relationship with partners and donors evolves over time. As you develop the structure and institutional structures get established, the roles and priorities shift. There are different roles, therefore, for the interveners over time. Developing partners might do well to look at the long term and to develop trust between partners. —Kirk Emerson

Appreciation

This seminar was marked by a rich sharing of information, experience, and insight. We would like to thank the participants who brought such a thoughtful, open presence to the seminar. Special thanks to the Woodrow Wilson Center and its staff, particularly to Geoff Dabelko, Gib Clarke, and Lauren Herzer whose vision and experience in environmental peacebuilding was so essential to the formation of the seminar and the gathering of such an amazing group of participants. Our thanks also to Michael Van Dusen and Lee Hamilton for seeing the possibilities and making this partnership and seminar series possible. And thanks to the staff at the Fetzer Institute who helped make it all happen, including Deborah Higgins, Peggy Quinn, and Robert Adams. Thanks to Megan Scribner, Lauren Herzer and Diana Micheli for their parts in creating this book and the web components. And our special thanks to Mark Nepo whose openness and wisdom helped to shape these seminars and whose poetry and friendship gave them light and laughter.

Participants and Seminar Papers

The seminar papers were written in response to Aaron Wolf's *The Enlightenment Rift and Peacebuilding: Rationality, Spirituality, and Shared Waters*. All of these papers can be found in full on the Woodrow Wilson Center website.

ROBERT ADAMS, JR., Program Officer, Fetzer Institute, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

PAUL BORN, Director, Tamarack—An Institute for Community Engagement, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. Seminar paper: “Defining Community in the Age of Globalization.”

GIDON BROMBERG, Co-Director, EcoPeace/Friends of the Earth, Middle East, Tel Aviv, Israel. Seminar paper: “Reflection Paper—Pathways to Peace: Defining Community in the Age of Globalization.”

KENT H. BUTTS, Director, National Security Issues Branch, Center for Strategic Leadership, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Seminar paper: “Global Conflict Transformation: Lessons from the Field.”

JOAN CASTRO, Executive Vice President, PATH Foundation, Philippines Inc., Manila, Philippines. Seminar paper: “Resilience and How to Build a Healthy Community.”

GIB CLARKE, Director, Development and Planning, Interfaith Community Health Center, Bellingham, Washington and former Senior Program Associate, Environmental Change and Security Program, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.

KEN CONCA, Professor of International Relations, American University, Washington, D.C.

GEOFFREY D. DABELKO, Director, Environmental Change and Security Program, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.

SHEWAYE DERIBE, Project Coordinator, Ethio Wetlands and Natural Resources Association, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Seminar paper: “Interwoven Problems Need Integrated Solutions.”

JUAN DUMAS, Special Adviser, Fundación Futuro Latinoamericana, Quito, Ecuador. Seminar paper: “Pathways to Peace: Defining Community in the Age of Globalization.”

KIRK EMERSON, Policy Research Associate, School of Government and Public Policy and the Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona. Seminar paper: “Pathways to Peace: Defining Community in the Age of Globalization.”

DENNIS HAMRO-DROTZ, Associate Programme Officer, Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Geneva, Switzerland. Seminar paper: “Lessons Learned on Environmental Diplomacy.”

SALLY Z. HARE, Distinguished Professor Emerita, Coastal Carolina University and President, still learning, inc., Surfside Beach, South Carolina.

DAVID JENSEN, Policy and Planning Coordinator, Post-Conflict and Disaster Management Branch, United Nations Environment Programme

(UNEP), Geneva, Switzerland. Seminar paper: “Lessons Learned on Environmental Diplomacy.”

MARGARET KECK, Professor of Political Science, Johns Hopkins University, Washington, D.C.

KUNTAI KARMUSHU, Senior Extension Officer, Bio-Enterprise Project, Mukogodo in Laikipia North District, Il Ngwesi community located in the Laikipia District of the Rift Valley, Kenya. Seminar paper: “A Paper on Global Conflict Transformation and the Emerging Community: The Case of Il-Laikipiak Maasai Pastoralists of Kenya.”

HANMIN LIU, President and CEO, Wildflowers Institute, San Francisco, California. Seminar paper: “Pathways to Peace: Defining Community in the Age of Globalization.”

MARK NEPO, Author of *The Book of Awakening* and many other books, a teacher and former Program Officer at the Fetzer Institute, Kalamazoo, Michigan.

CLEO PASKAL, Fellow, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, Montreal, Canada.

BLAIR A. RUBLE, Director, Comparative Urban Studies Program, Woodrow Wilson Center, Washington, D.C.

SANDRA RUCKSTUHL, Adjunct Professor, Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University, Arlington, Virginia. Seminar paper: “On Peacebuilding Practice: Meaning, Explicitness, Impacts and Opportunities.”

KEVIN SCRIBNER, Owner/Operator of Kooskooskie Fish Consulting & Marketing; Walla Walla Watershed Alliance; Salmon-Safe Certification, Portland, Oregon. Seminar paper: “The Wide Open Spaces of Water, Poets, and Politics.”

MEGAN SCRIBNER, Editor, Evaluator, Advisor, Fetzer Institute, Takoma Park, Maryland.

PEGGY M. SHEPARD, Executive Director & Co-Founder, West Harlem Environmental Action, Inc., in New York, New York. Seminar paper: “Environmental Peacemaking, Healthy Communities, Effective Leadership and Institutions: Reflections from an Environmental Justice Community: Harlem.”

RICHARD STREN, Emeritus Professor, Department of Political Science and former Director, Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, Canada

BISHNU UPRETI, South Asia Regional Coordinator of the Swiss National Centre of Competence in Research, Katmandu, Nepal. Seminar paper: “Multi-Functionality of Water and Environmental Peacebuilding: Reflections from Nepal.”

TODD WALTERS, Executive Director, International Peace Park Expeditions, Boston, Massachusetts.

AARON WOLF, Professor, Department of Geosciences, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. Seminar Paper: “The Enlightenment Rift and Peacebuilding: Rationality, Spirituality, and Shared Waters.”

