Draft Legal Framework for Shared Water Resources in the Arab World: Is it Really Needed?

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Background

- Arab Ministerial Water Council (AMWC) Resolution in 2010.
- Draft Preparation.
- Postponing it
- Common Guiding Principles for Cooperation
Main Principles

- General obligation to cooperate;
- Regular exchange of data and information
- Planned measures
- Equitable and reasonable utilization
- Obligation not to cause significant harm
- Protection of the environment
- Settlement of disputes
- Water in occupied Arab territories
Arguments that support the establishment of such treaty

1) Adopting a unified front in the face of external water security threats

2) Providing one unified vision tailored to the region

3) Providing technical guidance and support through basin specific treaties or follow-up agreements and instruments

4) Enhancing conjunctive water management

5) AMWC may be efficient in solving disputes based on the Draft Arab Water convention.
Arguments that are not in favour of establishing such convention

1) 50% of shared freshwater resources originate from outside the Arab region

2) Arab Countries sharing same freshwaters have different interests

3) International conventions exist and Arab countries are parties to these treaties

4) The provisions of the Draft Arab Water Convention do not address the characteristics of shared aquifers

5) The AMWC may not be efficient in solving disputes
Recommendations Regarding the Draft Arab Water Convention

A. The instrument should only cover freshwater resources shared between Arab nations

B. Shared surface water resources should be included within the scope of the instrument

C. The instrument should be amended to address the characteristics of transboundary aquifers