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Capacity Building, HydroCONCERT-Euphrates : a role-play for scientists and non-scientists

D. Fougeirol, E.M. Lyons.
BURGEAP.

The Euphrates river is a classical case in trans-national basin conflicts studies. The HydroCONCERT'-Euphrates role-play has been built by two water experts also dedicated to conflict resolution and active teaching methods. It is based on the real situation, taking into account the hydrological characteristics of the river, as well as the history of bilateral and multilateral relations. Rounds of tri-lateral negotiations take place between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq, under the guidance of the UN, acting mediator (this particular feature is not (not yet ?) part of reality). As the play proceeds, States discuss the ressource allocations that condition their water-dependent policies. In their teams, players have an ocasion to go through the whole conflict resolution process : from stakes appraisal and position building, to final treaty or resolution writing. A debriefing session is an occasion to discuss their interpretation and bring forth essential messages.

Since 2002, the role-play has been given in academic settings including high-level Engineering schools and masters, as well as Diplomacy and International Relations studies. The pedagogical value of this role-play to both Engineering and International Relations students will be examined. Regarding the importance of scientific and technical appraisal, the following questions will be addressed :

- How true, and precise, should data be ?
- How will the hypothesis taken for scenario modelling influence the common representation of the problem and its solution ?
- How can technical progress "enlarge the cake"

- The difficulty of value assessments.

Beyond science, peace-building also involves specific methods and tools the PCCP program has made many water specialists familiar with. An important question in the context of multiple profile curricula involving non-scientist actors seems to be : How much do non-scientist actors need to understand about hydrology in order to live up to a responsible role in international water conflicts resolution ?