

Bilateral and Regional Cooperation Profile



This profile presents an overview of bilateral and multilateral cooperation developments among Blue Peace Middle East member countries throughout 2025. The summary reflects the significant progress achieved in strengthening transboundary water dialogue, institutional coordination, and technical cooperation across the region.

Iraq – Iran

2025 Developments

October 2024: Establishment of Permanent Joint Technical Committee

Iraq activated the Permanent Joint Technical Committee (PJTC) for shared waters through Ministerial Order No. 40493 dated 23 October 2024. The Committee's mandate encompasses improving bilateral cooperation, addressing urgent technical matters, facilitating data and information exchange for shared rivers, and discussing joint projects and trans-boundary environmental impacts. Iraq awaits the formation of a counterpart committee by the Iranian side.

June 2025: Formation of High-Level Committee for Hawizeh Marshes

A high-level committee was established under Diwani Order No. 3022/250883 dated 30 June 2025, chaired by the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for Bilateral Relations, with the Technical Deputy Minister Eng. Hussain Abdalamer Al Zubedi as member. The committee's mandate focuses on conducting discussions with Iran regarding the joint management of the Hawizeh/Al Atheem Marshes.

August 2025: PJTC First Meeting and Hawizeh Committee Launch

The PJTC held its first meeting on 4 August 2025, chaired by Eng. Hussain Abdalamer Al Zubedi, Technical Deputy Minister and Blue Peace Middle East Policy Advisory Committee member. The meeting reviewed provisions of the 1975 Algiers Agreement ahead of the series of meetings to be held by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with Iran, in line with National Security Council directives.

The high-level committee for Hawizeh Marshes held its first meeting on 7 August 2025. Iran expressed understanding of the importance of cooperation and is preparing project proposals for joint implementation. Committee recommendations include approaching Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye to support marsh revival efforts, and engaging international agencies to help finance joint projects.

A specialized committee was also formed to develop a draft MoU with Iran, including senior technical leadership such as Eng. Hussain Abdalamer Al Zubedi as an official member.

September 2025: Diplomatic Engagement in Tehran

On 28 September 2025, a meeting was held in Tehran at the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs between the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the Iraqi Embassy and the Director of the First Department for Gulf Affairs (Iraq Desk). Discussions addressed the activation of the 1975 Algiers Agreement in a manner safeguarding Iraq's interests and sovereign rights over the Shatt al-Arab, taking into account abnormal changes in the watercourse.

December 2025: Ministerial Meeting at RCUWM Governing Board

On 4 December 2025, on the margins of the 14th meeting of the Governing Board of the Regional Centre on Urban Water Management (RCUWM) in Tehran, the Iraqi Minister of Water Resources Eng. Aoun Diab Abdullah met with Iranian Minister of Energy Mr. Abbas Aliabadi. Discussions addressed water challenges, drought impacts, and shared water problems concerning the Shatt al-Arab, Kalal Badra, Zurbatiya, Sirwan, and Wadi al-Naft. Iran expressed readiness to cooperate through specialized companies to implement joint projects in seawater desalination, treated wastewater reuse, and irrigation projects.

Proposed New Framework Agreement

Iraq intends to sign a new framework agreement with Iran, similar to the framework agreement with Türkiye signed in April 2024 and separate from the Algiers Agreement. This draft framework would include provisions for: enhancing and developing shared water resources through integrated management; cooperation on water infrastructure and protection of the Shatt al-Arab environment; joint programmes for climate change adaptation and combating desertification; and conservation of shared marshes as a World Heritage asset, including their development and sustainable use in tourism and economic projects.

Proposed Joint Projects

The Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources has prepared a list of projects for potential implementation through a strategic agreement, including: Wadi al-Naft Project, Wadi Tarsakh Project, and the Central Tigris Reclamation Project.

Iraq – Syria

Ministerial Coordination

Ongoing regular meetings have been held at the ministerial level between the two countries, both in-person and virtually. Discussions focus on water situation challenges and avenues for enhanced cooperation.

August 2025: Ministerial Meeting in Baghdad

On 12 August 2025, a meeting was held in Baghdad between the Iraqi Minister of Water Resources Eng. Aoun Diab Abdullah and the Syrian Minister of Energy, during the latter's visit to Iraq. The Ministers agreed on the following:

- **Activation of Trilateral Dialogue:** Importance of holding regular meetings between Iraq, Syria, and Türkiye to discuss water-related issues, with the aim of establishing mutual agreements on water quotas for the Euphrates River and the possibility of concluding a formal trilateral agreement.
- **Designated Representative:** Syria designated Mr. Osama Abu Zaid, Deputy Minister of Energy for Water Resources Affairs and Blue Peace Middle East Policy Advisory Committee member, as the Syrian representative on water-related matters.
- **Joint Field Visit:** Agreement to conduct a joint field visit by hydro-monitoring teams to the Jarabulus station for joint gauging, calibration, and data verification.
- **Continued Data Exchange:** Continuation of cooperation in data and information exchange at the Syrian Jarabulus and Iraqi Husaybah stations through designated focal points and diplomatic channels.
- **Reciprocal Visits:** Commitment to continued collaboration through reciprocal visits and bilateral meetings at both technical and ministerial levels.

Data Exchange Mechanism

Ongoing cooperation continues on water data exchange between Iraq and Syria for daily water release data for the Euphrates River at key border monitoring stations: Jarabulus (Syrian-Turkish border) and Husaybah (Syrian-Iraqi border). Daily data exchange is conducted through designated focal points, while monthly average data is transmitted through official diplomatic channels.

Iraqi authorities track water inflows into Syrian territory at Jarabulus and compare them with inflows entering Iraq at Husaybah. Should any decline in water volumes be observed, diplomatic communication is initiated with both Syrian and Turkish sides to clarify causes and request necessary explanations.

Exchange of Expertise and Capacity Building

Iraq and Syria have maintained ongoing cooperation in the exchange of technical expertise. Iraq provided capacity-building support to Syrian staff through six specialized technical training courses aimed at strengthening capabilities of personnel from the Syrian Ministry of Water Resources.

Syria shared its experience and technical know-how with Iraqi counterparts in groundwater utilization, including related legislation and regulatory frameworks, as well as expertise in closed-pipe irrigation systems.

Technical Exchange Visits

Cooperation has continued through technical exchange visits. The Syrian hydro-monitoring team conducted a field visit to the Husaybah border station and Haditha Dam from 11-12 August 2024 for on-site monitoring activities as part of the data-exchange mechanism agreed upon during the fourth virtual bilateral meeting held on 22 July 2024. Both sides conducted joint measurements at the Husaybah border station, reviewed water storage levels of Haditha Dam, and inspected the dam's hydrological monitoring station. They reaffirmed commitment to continued technical cooperation including reciprocal water releases and the establishment of a joint gauging station to ensure daily, jointly verified documentation of hydrological data.

Iraq – Jordan

Joint Technical Steering Committee Progress

Continued meetings of the Joint Technical Steering Committee implementing the MoU between Iraq's Ministry of Water Resources and Jordan's Ministry of Water and Irrigation, originally signed on 9 February 2023 in Baghdad.

January 2025: Third Steering Committee Meeting in Amman

The third meeting was held on 27-29 January 2025 in Amman. Delegations agreed on:

- Conducting a comprehensive study on the characteristics of both groundwater and surface water within the Al-Hammad Joint Aquifer Basin, to be carried out by the partner countries.
- Preparing a technical study to be presented to donors with the aim of supporting development and sustainability efforts in the basin area.
- Establishing a joint team of geological specialists from both countries to undertake a detailed study of the shared basin.

April 2025: Technical Team First Meeting

A joint Iraqi-Jordanian technical team held its first meeting on 9 April 2025 to review existing data on the Al-Hammad Shared Groundwater Basin. Iraq presented a comprehensive geological overview covering the aquifer's regional extent across Iraq, Jordan, Syria, and Saudi Arabia; the stratigraphic sequence derived from historic Yugoslav well logs; and the characteristics and productivity of key water-bearing formations.

The team examined how these formations extend across the border and reviewed corresponding Jordanian stratigraphic equivalents. Jordan presented available data including well logs from the Ministry of Energy. Both sides agreed to reconvene, with Jordan preparing geological cross-sections similar to Iraq's presentation.

Jordan – Syria

High-Level Coordination Framework

May 2025: Establishment of High Coordination Council

On 18 May 2025, the Council of Ministers of Jordan approved the general framework for establishing a High Coordination Council between Jordan and the Syrian Arab Republic. On 20 May 2025, a high-level Jordanian delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Al-Safadi met with Syrian counterparts in Damascus. Both sides agreed to:

- **Activate the Joint Water Committee:** Jordan to designate members and respond to Syria's invitation for a technical meeting focused on the Yarmouk Basin.
- **Advance Yarmouk Basin Cooperation:** Begin implementing shared water management strategies and address unauthorized well drilling.
- **Launch the High Coordination Council:** First meeting to be held in Jordan, with regular biannual sessions across key sectors including water.
- **Initiate Technical Exchanges:** Explore joint expertise sharing on dam management, water-saving agriculture, and climate adaptation techniques.

July 2025: Joint Water Committee Meeting at Al Wehda Dam

The joint Jordanian Syrian technical water committee convened at the Al Wehda Dam, where both sides reaffirmed commitment to fair water distribution from the Yarmouk River Basin. Following technical-level discussions, a signed protocol was concluded.

The agreement aims to safeguard the rights of both countries and improve regional cooperation on water management. Syria expressed readiness to address illegally drilled wells over recent years, with a framework for resolving the matter expected to be finalized during a forthcoming meeting in Damascus scheduled for September.

The technical meetings were co-chaired by Hisham Hisa, Secretary-General of the Jordan Valley Authority and head of the Jordanian delegation, and Osama Abu Zaid, Deputy Syrian Minister of Energy for Water Resources Affairs. Mr. Abu Zaid confirmed Syria's readiness to revisit the 1987 bilateral water-sharing agreement, stressing the need for updated hydrological studies to determine equitable distribution ratios and ensure consistent inflow to the Wehda Dam.

September 2025: Launch of Joint Water Platform

On 25 September 2025, a Syrian delegation completed a visit to Jordan's Ministry of Water and Irrigation on the sidelines of a five-day joint technical workshop on integrated water resources management. During the visit, the delegation met with the Minister of Water and Irrigation and other senior officials. Discussions focused on shared water resources, climate adaptation, sustainability, and water conservation efforts.

On 28 September 2025, Jordan and Syria launched the Joint Water Platform following the completion of the five-day technical workshop in Amman with participation from the Syrian Ministry of Energy. The workshop focused on sustainable management of shared water resources.

Secretary-General of the Jordan Valley Authority Hisham Al Hisa highlighted the importance of advancing joint programmes addressing climate change adaptation, protecting water sources, and raising public awareness on water conservation. The Advisor to Syria's Deputy Minister of Energy for Water Resources Affairs and Blue Peace Middle East Managing Committee Member; Eng. Taher Al Amer commended Jordan's expertise in managing scarce water resources. Both sides emphasized the need to maintain coordination and activate the Joint Water Platform as a strategic mechanism for information exchange and strengthening collaborative efforts. A technical team of 6 members from both countries has been formed in October and met in the same month to work on the update of the Yarmouk Basin Study conducted by Blue Peace Middle East in 2019.

Planned Activities

Jordan plans to present a study on cloud seeding in the Yarmouk Basin, aimed at bolstering regional water resources.

The Government of Jordan officially approached the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) to support upgrading of the Yarmouk Basin Hydrological Study, developed under Blue Peace Middle East in previous phases. The study update will be implemented within the Blue Peace Middle East framework, led by the Water Diplomacy Center, aiming to enhance data-driven decision-making and transboundary water cooperation between Jordan and Syria. Also, Jordan and Syria will install smart Climate and Weather Stations on the Yarmouk River to allow real time online data sharing between the countries.

Jordan – Türkiye

Technical Cooperation on Underground Dams

Following the Blue Peace Middle East initiative field visit to the Izmir-Kiraz underground dam in 2024, an official request was launched from the Government of Jordan to establish technical cooperation in this area.

The cooperation focuses on knowledge transfer and technical expertise exchange between the Turkish Water Institute (SUEN) and relevant Jordanian institutions, particularly the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA). SUEN will provide technical assistance in site assessment, feasibility planning, and field implementation to ensure sustainable and scalable underground dam implementation in Jordan.

Jordan is exploring the construction of underground dams to benefit from Turkish experience in this field, aiming to reduce evaporation and lower costs as part of its search for solutions to the water crisis. These underground dams are considered an alternative to traditional surface dams, which suffer from low storage capacity and reduced storage levels due to siltation and high evaporation rates.

Current Status

The cooperation agreement is currently in the final stage of the signing process. The initiative is financially supported through the SDC-Jordan bilateral cooperation portfolio.

Türkiye – Iraq

Strategic Framework

Iraq and Türkiye continue official dialogue, diplomatic and technical engagement to pursue the development of a framework for long-term water cooperation.

The Strategic Framework Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Iraq and the Government of the Republic of Türkiye was signed in April 2024. This agreement includes 26 memoranda of understanding, among them the Framework Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Water between the two governments. The agreement establishes a comprehensive framework for cooperation on transboundary water and implementing strategic projects that improve water efficiency in Iraq, serving as the basis for a long-term partnership of 10 years covering development of sustainable water management, infrastructure development, and improving water-use efficiency.

Joint Permanent Water Committee

A Joint Permanent Water Committee on water issues was established between Iraq and Türkiye in 2023. Blue Peace Middle East Policy Advisory Committee and Managing Committee members from both countries serve as members of this committee.

Following the Third Meeting of the Joint Permanent Water Committee in late 2024, both sides initiated implementation of agreed cooperation areas with focus on irrigation system modernization, water infrastructure improvement, and joint projects to reduce evaporation in dams and reservoirs.

Subcommittees were formed to implement the decisions of the Permanent Joint Committee. These specialized sub-teams conduct both in-person and virtual meetings, covering: water harvesting dams and irrigation projects; and experience exchange for wastewater infrastructure, drinking water, sanitation, and irrigation improvements.

2025 Developments

February 2025: Fourth Joint Permanent Water Committee Meeting

The 4th Joint Permanent Water Committee convened in Baghdad in February 2025, to review developments and measures taken by both sides regarding cooperation areas and assess progress on previously agreed technical initiatives.

April 2025: Experience Sharing Programme

In April 2025, a sharing experience programme on "Floating Solar Panels on Dams to Reduce Evaporation" was held with the participation of Turkish and Iraqi experts at Keban Dam in Elazığ. An Iraqi delegation conducted a field visit to floating solar power stations in Türkiye, focusing on knowledge transfer on floating solar energy technology for reservoir evaporation reduction and exchange of expertise and information on floating solar power station technologies.

June 2025: Virtual Joint Technical Meeting

A virtual joint technical meeting was held on 24 June 2025, aimed at enhancing coordination frameworks between Iraqi and Turkish institutions with focus on improving planning and implementation of water and sanitation projects in Iraq. The meeting specifically targeted greater institutional alignment and sectoral cooperation in drinking water, wastewater treatment, and irrigation.

October 2025: Joint Field Visits and Monitoring

On 18 October 2025, Turkish representatives and experts participated in the first scientific conference held in Baghdad by the Al-Alamein Centre for Environment, Climate Change and Water Studies (ACECCWS).

A joint field visit was conducted from 20-24 October 2025 to the Amara Irrigation Project in Iraq to assess current conditions and gather technical information needed for design and implementation planning.

A joint monitoring and maintenance mission was carried out at the Khabour Joint Station on 23 October 2025, including joint gauging activities and routine servicing.

November 2025: Implementation Mechanism Signed

On 2 November 2025, Türkiye and Iraq signed the “Mechanism Document for the Financing of Projects Under the Framework Agreement on Water Cooperation Between the Government of the Republic of Türkiye and the Government of the Republic of Iraq” for the financing of cooperation projects. This mechanism advances joint work on irrigation projects and water-harvesting dams under the bilateral framework agreement on water cooperation.

The Implementation Mechanism aims to develop water infrastructure through the implementation of irrigation projects using modern irrigation techniques and the construction of dams.

Targeted projects under preparation include: five irrigation projects, three water-harvesting dams, and four storage dams with hydropower generation.

December 2025

The Second Meeting of the Türkiye-Iraq Joint Permanent Committee, Subcommittee on Wastewater, Drinking Water, Sanitation and Experience-Sharing Program was held on 15-18 December 2025.

A study visit for an Iraqi delegation from the Ministry of Construction, Housing, Municipalities and Public Works, and Baghdad Municipality is being prepared for mid-December in Türkiye, to learn from Turkish expertise in drinking water, wastewater, and irrigation systems and improve future cooperation mechanisms.

Key Cooperation Areas

Enhanced technical cooperation in 2025 between Iraq and Türkiye has encompassed: joint evaporation reduction projects in dams and reservoirs; infrastructure development through Turkish company partnerships; technical capacity building and knowledge transfer; renewable energy integration in water management systems; investment projects involving storage systems, improving water efficiency, modern irrigation techniques, and water supply system conversion from open to closed channel systems; field studies.

Türkiye – Syria

2025 Developments

August 2025: Agricultural Cooperation Meeting

On 12 August 2025, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Türkiye and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Agricultural Reform of the Syrian Arab Republic held a meeting in Kilis, Türkiye, to enhance bilateral cooperation in the field of agriculture.

Multilateral and Global Engagement

Jordan: Accession to the UN Water Convention

In October 2025, the Jordanian government approved Jordan's accession to the 1992 Helsinki Convention (Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes). This move aims to strengthen international cooperation on shared water resources and ensure sustainable and equitable management of transboundary water resources, particularly significant given Jordan's water scarcity and one of the lowest per capita water shares globally.

Blue Peace Middle East, through the Water Diplomacy Center, provided support to the Government of Jordan in exploring accession to the 1992 UN Water Convention by supporting a national technical consultation held on 1 September 2025 in Amman. The consultation included participation from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, UNECE Secretariat, and SDC to assess legal, institutional, and diplomatic considerations for Jordan's potential accession.

Jordan: Membership in International Bodies

Jordan officially joined the World Commission on Dams during its annual conference held in Chengdu, China in May 2025. This step represents a strategic move for Jordan, highlighting the effectiveness of its efforts in the field of dams and contributing to enhancing sustainable water security.

Jordan has received a formal invitation to join the World Water Organization, whose charter was recently signed in Riyadh. The Jordanian Minister of Water and Irrigation welcomed the invitation, considering it an important step towards strengthening international cooperation in addressing water challenges. The new organization aims to tackle global water issues by unifying efforts and coordinating action among nations.

Türkiye: Blue Peace Middle East Promotion and Regional Visibility

The Turkish delegation in Blue Peace Middle East promoted the initiative at the ministerial level in Türkiye, aiming to strengthen regional understanding and support for the initiative. Türkiye, through SUEN's cooperation with the EU, GLOWACON, and the World Water Council, has developed strong experience in wastewater surveillance, especially critical in emergency zones and large events such as the Hajj. Türkiye aims to develop joint projects with regional countries in this area.

Türkiye will organize the 5th Istanbul International Water Forum on May 5-6, 2026, host COP31 in Antalya in November 2026, and will host the 20th International Water Association World Water Congress on October 2027 in Istanbul.

— End of Report —


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Blue Peace Middle East Initiative

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