

Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign



www.savethetigris.org

TERMS OF REFERENCE

An international effort to save and protect the heritage and water resources of Mesopotamia from the impact of megaprojects and to promote sustainable management of the Tigris River and its tributaries.

Revision 3, May 2017

I. Definition

Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes is a civil society advocacy campaign that was started in March 2012 by a coalition of Iraqi and international non-governmental organisations to save the World Heritage on the Tigris River from the impacts of dams and other destructive megaprojects. The campaign name in English is **Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign (STC)**. The name in Arabic is: حملة انقاذ نهر دجلة و الاهوار العراقية

The Turkish government is constructing number of large dams on the Tigris River without any consultation with the Iraqi government and local communities and without any study on the impact of such projects. The Iranian government is building a number of dams on rivers that are tributaries of the Tigris River and is transferring water through inter-basin schemes such as Kouhrang 3, Golab and Behesht Abad. All these projects are not respecting the well-established international norms on uses of international watercourses, specifically the principles of equitable and reasonable utilization; participation; and the obligation not to cause significant harm to those who depends upon the water.

Megaprojects continue to receive strong support among governments and local authorities in the region. The Kurdistan Regional Government in Iraq continues to build dams with no effective study on their impacts downstream and on sustainable peace in Iraq and the region. In recent times, water resources in the region have been weaponised and the rivers of Mesopotamia have become strategic assets over which states and other actors wage conflict. Water infrastructure has been used for political and military purpose in conflicts. The conflict over Mosul Dam in Iraq has demonstrated the instability and unsustainability of large dams. It is time to think of new paradigm for water management.

Our campaign believes a paradigm shift is necessary: instead of being a source of rivalry, water should be force for peace and cooperation between all the countries and peoples of the Tigris-Euphrates basin. We advocate for safe access to water for all the people of Iraq, and policies that secure the sustainable and equitable use of water for all those who live in the Mesopotamian region and for the coming generations. Our advocacy and awareness activities involve all relevant actors: local communities, civil society organizations, media, authorities, academics, research centres and others.

II. Challenges and campaign position

1. Construction of large dams on the Tigris River and its tributaries

1.1 Our campaign advocates against Ilisu Dam, a large hydroelectric project currently under construction by the government of Turkey in southeast Turkey. Its construction is proceeding without a dialogue with the local communities along the Tigris River or with downstream states such as Iraq, and without taking in consideration the impact the dam will have on the rights of Iraqis to have access to water, or of environmental, cultural and economic consequences. The Ilisu Dam will be the biggest dam on the Tigris River and will significantly reduce the amount of water that Iraq receives. It will open the way for more dams such as Cizre and other similar dams.

1.2 In Iran, the Daryan Dam currently under construction would severely decrease the water flows of the Sirwan River and threaten the water resources of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The Iranian government is planning other dam - and water transfer projects that are diverting water from the western Iranian regions, with a destructive impact on the water flows to Iraqi Kurdistan and Iraq in general.

1.3 Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign opposes all megaprojects on the rivers of Mesopotamia and seeks to link all groups concerned with their adverse impacts. The campaign calls on the states of Turkey, Iran, Syria and Iraq to respect international law and the 1997 international convention on the law of the non- navigational uses of international watercourses, specifically the principals of equitable and reasonable utilization, participation and the obligation not to cause significant harm to those who depend on the water, as explained in the articles, 5, 6 and 7 of the convention.

2. The use of watercourses and water-related infrastructure as weapon and a tool for political hegemony

2.1 Mega projects are a threat as rivers are being increasingly weaponised. Meanwhile, the political and security crisis in Syria and Iraq has caused issues related to access to water, pollution and water quality to be pushed to the margins of political discourse, without any clear water policies. Syrian and Iraqi water infrastructure is exposed to armed threats and water is deliberately used by military forces as a tool for control. Water security is increasingly a problem for the communities living along the rivers; internal and regional conflicts related to water are becoming a reality. The right of free access to water is under threat.

2.2 The Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign is committed to obtaining the commitment of all, governments and non-state actors, *not* to use water infrastructure for

political or military purpose in any conflict; and instead to adopt the principle of “water as a tool for building sustainable peace in the region”.

3. Threats to cultural heritage along Tigris River

3.1 Mega projects endanger the cultural heritage of the Tigris River basin. In particular Ilisu will entirely destroy the ancient city town of Hasankeyf in Turkey, and threaten the Iraqi Marshes. The latter was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2016 but urgently requires further sustainability measures in the face of water scarcity.

3.2 In order to remain sustainable, the Marshlands of Iraq will need a guaranteed continuous water flow from upstream. Its inscription in the UNESCO World Heritage List is a step towards sustainable preservation of the Marshes, but in the coming years UNESCO recommendations will first have to be implemented.

3.3 Among its priorities, Save the Tigris Campaign monitors the preservation of cultural heritage. In this framework, STC monitors the implementation of UNESCO recommendations for the marshes and continues to spread information about the marshes' value in Iraqi society and worldwide.

4. Water pollution and unsustainable management of water resources

4.1 Water pollution from the industrial, agricultural and housing sectors is a great threat to clean water resources. Iraq faces further increased strains on its water resources due to climate change, droughts, pollution and overconsumption of water.

4.2 Save the Tigris Campaign calls on regional governments to invest in new sustainable methods for water management; and to promote and implement new methods for treating industrial, agricultural and housing waste. We need a new approach that prioritises biodiversity and keeps rivers fishable, swimmable and their water drinkable.

5. Privatisation of water and access to water

5.1 The privatisation of water resources is being promoted all over the world by governments and policy makers, with the private sector becoming responsible for managing water resources, water provision, and water infrastructure. As a result of privatisation, the cost of water is increasing and the quality of water is declining. Water must be accessible and affordable for all human and other living species.

5.2 Save the Tigris Campaign believes that rivers and watercourses are a shared resource and both government and citizens need to respect access to affordable drinking water for all.

II. Campaign goals

To provide a network where civil society organizations from Iraq, Turkey, Iran and Syria and international civil society organizations can mobilize together, express their solidarity and exchange knowledge and experiences to work on the following general objectives:

6. To promote alternatives to megaprojects on the Tigris River and its tributaries

6.1 To advocate at the national and international level to halt the construction of Ilisu, Daryan and other large dams.

6.2 To continue dialogue with the Iraqi government about the destructive socioeconomic, cultural and environmental impact of mega projects. We advocate that the Iraqi government develops policies that address transboundary water issues - specifically Ilisu Dam, Daryan Dam and other large dams - and negotiates with riparian states in accordance with international law and to apply the articles 5, 6 and 7 of the 1997 International Convention to the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

6.3 To raise awareness among Iraqi citizens and the international community about the socioeconomic, environmental and cultural impacts of large megaprojects and the need to protect the rivers of Iraq and Mesopotamia.

6.4 To raise Iraqi citizens' and the international community's awareness of the need to protect Iraq's water resources, and the threats posed by large dams such as Ilisu in Turkey, Daryan dam and water transfer schemes in Iran, as well as dams within Iraq.

6.5 To encourage Iraq, Turkey, Syria and Iran to sign agreements that establish a fair share of water between riparian states, and emphasize the integrity of the river ecosystem.

7. To promote water courses as a tool for sustainable peace between different communities

7.1 To advocate on national and international level for the protection of water infrastructure in times of conflict and for sustainable policies that protect the rivers of Mesopotamia, taking into account water scarcity and guaranteeing safe access to water for all Iraqis.

7.2 To promote cooperation between people in the Mesopotamian region over the shared water resources in order to create a lasting peace through dialogue and activities that involve environmental activists, civil society and communities across the region.

7.3 To promote transboundary water cooperation and management including rivers, wetlands, lakes.

8. To preserve the cultural heritage along the Tigris River

8.1 To demand that the Iraqi government, UNESCO and its supporting organizations work actively, transparently and in a timely manner to protect cultural heritage sites in Iraq, especially the Iraqi Marshlands.

8.2 To spread awareness internationally on the cultural and environmental heritage of the Iraqi Marshlands, the town of Hasankeyf in Turkey, the spring of Kani Bil and the marshes of Hoor al Azim in Iran.

9. To raise awareness of pollution in order to improve water quality of rivers

8.3 To demand that the Iraqi government adheres to UN development goals, especially concerning those on water, in order to sustainably manage watercourses.

8.4 To draw attention to the pollution of the Tigris River and its tributaries and to promote sustainable use of the river.

III. Campaign Members

This campaign is open to new members that agree on the objectives of the campaign and the principles set out in this TOR. New members may include NGOs, networks, social movements and individuals.

1. Campaign Partners:

1. Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative	ICSSI		Iraq- International	http://www.iraqicivilsociety.org/
2. Humat Dijla (Tigris Keepers)		Baghdad	Iraq	https://www.facebook.com/humat.dijlah
3. Iraqi Social Forum	ISF	Baghdad	Iraq	http://www.iraqsf.org
4. People of Iraq Campaign To Save the Tigris	IPCST	Baghdad	Iraq	http://www.facebook.com/groups/Tigrisxilleso/
5. Initiative to Keep Hasankeyf Alive		Batman	Turkey	http://www.hasankeyfgirisimi.com/en/index.htm
6. Un Ponte Per	UPP	Rome	Italy	http://www.unponteper.it/

7. Corner House		Newton	UK	http://www.thecornerhouse.org.uk/
8. Gegenstroemung (Counter Current)			Germany	http://www.gegenstroemung.org
9. Environmental Defenders Law Center			USA	http://www.edlc.org
10. Waterkeepers Iraq		Sulaymaniyah	Iraq-KRI	http://www.waterkeepersiraq.org
11. Tammuz Organization for Social Development		Baghdad	Iraq	http://www.tammuz.net
12. Ma'aluma Information Center		Baghdad	Iraq	http://infocenteriq.com
13. Al Mesalla		Erbil	Iraq	http://www.almesalla.org
14. Association for Water and Forest Studies	FIVAS	Oslo	Norway	http://www.fivas.org
15. Mountainwatch		Tehran	Iran	http://mountainwatch.persianblog.ir
16. Center for Sustainable Development	CENESTA	Tehran	Iran	http://www.cenesta.org/
17. Civil Development Organization	CDO	Sulaymaniyah	Iraq-KRI	http://www.cdo-iraq.org/English.aspx

2. Rights and responsibilities of the members

2.1 To participate in the general assembly and to propose ideas or activities

2.2 To participate in discussions about strategy

2.3 To be informed about the decisions of the steering committee regarding the direction of the campaign

2.4 To be committed to the goals and objectives of the campaign

2.5 To implement the campaign strategy

2.6 To comply with the strategy of the campaign

2.7 To participate in the campaign activities

2.8 Members may represent the campaign in meetings with officials, during public events or with media and other stakeholders only if they coordinate in advance with the steering committee and the chair and adhere to the objectives of the campaign and the principles of this TOR.

IV. Ethics and Principles

1. Members of the campaign are committed to the 1997 international convention on the law of the non- navigational uses of international watercourses and its general principles.
2. Members of the campaign oppose large dams and other megaprojects that have a negative impact on the environment and on local communities
3. Members of the campaign oppose construction of all megaprojects that are not implemented based upon participatory decision-making that involves local communities and are built without a comprehensive evaluation of the impacts to the environment.
4. Members of the campaign oppose using water, and water-related infrastructure, as a weapon of war in times of conflict. Instead, they commit to the use of water as a tool for peacebuilding.
5. Members of the campaign must be committed to responsible use of water, supporting water as a shared, public resource, and therefore opposing privatization of water.
6. Members of the campaign oppose pollution of rivers in Iraq. They have to be committed to the principles of respect of nature, water resources, and a healthy environment for all.
7. Members of the campaign support the restoration and preservation of the Marshes, respect for its indigenous peoples, maintenance of its natural ecosystem and cultural integrity.
8. Members reject Malthusian views that simplistically blame water scarcity on overpopulation and are committed to exposing and campaigning against the remorseless generation of water scarcity through patterns of production and consumption that put profit before people and that benefit the few not the many.

V. Information management and official documents of the Save the Tigris and Iraqi Marshes Campaign

1. The main information platform of the campaign is the independent website (savethetigris.org) and the campaign page on the website of the Iraqi Civil Society Solidarity Initiative (iraqicivilsociety.org)
2. Created documents that represent the opinion of the campaign are to be found on the 'Resources and Documents' page of the Campaign website. These include:
 - 2.1 General campaign documents
 - 2.3 Reports and papers of the campaign
 - 2.4 Press releases of the campaign
3. New documents should be agreed according to this TOR.
4. The campaign is featured on social media:
 - 4.1 The facebook page of the Save the Tigris Campaign:
<https://www.facebook.com/save.tigris.and.iraqi.marshes>
 - 4.2 The twitter hashtag is #Save_Tigris
5. The management of information with media and officials and others should be as per III (2.8)
6. The official email addresses of the campaign are: coordinator.en@savethetigris.org (for the international coordinator) and campaigner.ar@savethetigris.org (for the Iraqi campaigner)

VI. Steering Committee

The steering committee is the decision making body of the campaign.

1. Roles and Responsibilities:

- 1.1 To develop and update the strategy of the campaign
- 1.2 To determine and create an organizational structure that will sustain the campaign and review the goals and objectives, work program, activity schedule, etc.

1.3 To identify, recruit, screen, and select qualified individuals and encourage involvement of new members in the campaign.

1.4 To accept or reject new members (based on background, previous experience of members, and commitment to work on the campaign)

1.5 To determine the self-assessment process that the committee will utilize to develop the action plans.

1.6 To appoint campaign representatives to attend formal meetings

1.7 To establish a regular meeting schedule and extend invitations to appropriate meeting participants

1.8 To organize general assembly meetings of members of the campaign

1.9 To follow up on actions, meetings and any other development related to the campaign

1.10 To approve campaign documents

2. Structure of the steering committee (SC)

2.1 Meetings of the steering committee are conducted via Internet and can be open to other campaign members if needed

2.2 The steering committee is formed from the members of the campaign and other active members co-opted by the SC of the campaign.

2.3 SC members should attend all its meetings unless in special cases a member may not attend by informing the others before the meeting.

3. Decision making process in the steering committee:

3.1 Voting mechanism- every member of the SC has one vote including the chair.

3.2 Decisions are taken by SC in consensus to all members. If a consensus is not reached after two meetings, the SC members have to vote and the majority is 50%+1

4. The chair of the SC

4.1 The chair is the international coordinator of the campaign

4.2 The chair has the following responsibilities:

(1) Facilitate communications between other members of the steering committee

- (2) Lead meetings to discuss strategy and propose changes
- (3) Ensure the steering committee implements the campaign strategy
- (4) Ensure that decisions are communicated to the assembly

5. Warnings and other forms of regulations

5.1 Members of the campaign are working on a voluntary basis because of their interest and commitment to the campaign. Every time there is an activity, members of the campaign discuss resources and how to share costs of activities. The campaign is a combined effort of all members and volunteers.

5.2 Steering committee members cannot be paid to be part of the steering committee; their work is voluntary.

VII. Assembly of the campaign

1. The assembly is a forum that includes all members: NGOs, civil society organisations, social movements and other forms of associations. In addition to individuals such as activists, professionals and academics, that are committed to achieve the campaign goals.
2. The assembly of the campaign will be informed of events, and will be updated about campaign achievements and progress by email. A mailing list will be used for this purpose.
3. The assembly of the campaign will meet whenever it is possible.
4. Roles and responsibilities of the assembly are driven form Rights and responsibilities of members (III)

VIII. Modification of this ToR

It is possible to modify this TOR, Any modification should be agreed to in the steering committee and should clearly contribute to objectives and principles set in this TOR

Adopted and approved in December 2012

Revision 1.0 October 2013 - To delete members of the campaign and add new members.
Minor typo error corrections.

Revision 2.0 February 2015 – To edit the Campaign definition, campaign goals, general objectives and specific objectives. To edit the information management of the campaign. To delete and add members of the campaign.

Revision 3.0 April 2017 – To renew the campaign definition, goals, objectives, add new members and information management. Approved in Sulaymaniyah, KRI.