

Global Diplomacy Lab

## Water Diplomacy 4.0<sup>1</sup>: Process Matters – Impact Lab

Hosted by GDL Member [Kathryn Bryk Friedman](#) with the support of [Elsa D'Silva](#)

Location and date: Ljubljana, Slovenia, 24 to 27 August 2022

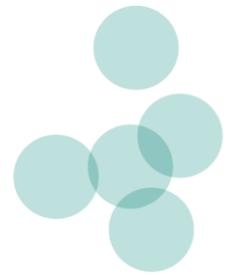
Water insecurity is one of a handful of global grand challenges facing society in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Whether looking at transboundary aquifers (e.g., the Mountain and Coastal Aquifer Basins between Israel and the Palestinian Territories), transboundary freshwater lake and river basins (e.g., the Persian Gulf, Indus River, Jordan River, Laurentian Great Lakes, Red River Basin) or changing patterns of transboundary atmospheric water vapour generated by forests (e.g., Congo and Amazon Basins), it is clear that water systems across the globe are under severe stress, threatening the lives and livelihoods of billions of people.

GDL members and partners consisting of government and private sector representatives, as well as academic and non-profit leaders, met during the Incubator Lab in Berlin from 14-16 June 2022 to engage and exchange on the challenges of global transboundary water systems. Amongst them, five participants took on the role of Case Clinic leads associated with the water systems mentioned above to provide a “deeper dive” into their respective cases. Fellow participants in turn contributed their perspectives and engaged in multiple skills-building exercises, including strategically identifying myriad stakeholders and rights-holders engaged in these transboundary water systems and in building trust. All concluded that a “business as usual” approach to water is not working. It is imperative that stakeholders and rights-holders across sectors and scales reimagine a new vision (where are we going?) and co-create new ways to get there.

As a follow-up, the GDL will host an Impact Lab from 24-27 August 2022 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. The Lab will focus on 1) envisioning that new future through a structured, scenario-analysis-based approach; and 2) by developing a Water Diplomacy 4.0 Toolkit to get there. Remaining steadfast in their desire to be relevant, practical and useful, GDL members will present this Toolkit to a roundtable of experts comprising diplomats, scientists, activists and NGO leaders, among others, to obtain feedback and insight. Furthermore, they will conduct an exchange with emerging leaders at the [Young Bled Strategic Forum](#) to integrate new perspectives from upcoming generations. Armed with these insights and revisions, GDL Members will distribute the Toolkit to their networks and elsewhere, with the aim of moving the needle on water insecurity

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<sup>1</sup> *Diplomacy 4.0* stands for a new approach to diplomacy at the GDL. It draws on innovative methodologies to reconcile the interests of multiple stakeholders and build trust. Diplomacy 4.0 allows governments to operate as sovereign actors while leveraging the influence and potential of other actors via a new diplomacy track. Read more here: [https://global-diplomacy-lab.org/files/gdl\\_strategy\\_2025\\_diplomacy\\_4.0.pdf](https://global-diplomacy-lab.org/files/gdl_strategy_2025_diplomacy_4.0.pdf)



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challenges worldwide. In this context, selected participants will present the Water Diplomacy 4.0 Toolkit during the “*Water-proofing our peace actions and conflict-proofing our water actions*” session on Water Security at the [17<sup>th</sup> Bled Strategic Forum](#), where a diverse range of global leaders gather to discuss key challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the future of multilateralism in the view of current and emerging crises.