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Current Legal Frameworks and Future Prospects of Data and Information Exchange in Afghanistan Transboundary River Basins

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Afghanistan has five major river basin with 34 sub river basins. Four of them are transboundary.

- Amo River Basins (TB)
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- Harirud Murghab River Basin (TB)
Amo River Basin

- **Length:** 2540 Km (1500 Km Shared border with Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan)

- **Total Flow:** 67 BMC

- **Afg’s Contribution:** Around 30% (22bmc)

- **Represents:** 30% of Afghanistan’s available Water

- **Land Cover** 38.59% of Afghanistan Land

- **Population:** 8.7 million Afghans, or 25%
Current Legal Frameworks in Amo River Basin

- 1946 border agreement (Defined the middle of the river as the border line)
- 1958 border regime treaty
- Data Exchange MoUs with Tajikistan (2010-2020)
- Data exchange MoU with Turkmenistan on Amo and Morghab (under progress)
**Helmand River Basin**

- **Length**: 1150 KM, Crosses the Border with Iran and makes 55 KM of the shared border
- **Out Flow**: 8.4 BCM
- **Represents**: 17% of Afghanistan available water
- **Land Cover**: 40% of Afghanistan’s land
- **Population**: 6 million in Afghanistan
Historical background (Arbitration by Gold Smith(1872) and Makmahun (1905))

Helmand Delta Commission – 1950

Helmand River Treaty between Afghanistan and Iran- 1973 and two additional protocols.

The treaty has a data exchange clause referring that the water flow should be gauged in Dehrawud Station

Helmand River Commission- 21 commissioners joint meetings so far

Dispute Resolution mechanism: (Diplomatic Negotiation, Due diligence and mediation)
Kabul River Basin

- **Length:** 700 Km (crosses the border with Pakistan)
- **Out Flow:** 21.5 BCM (608 m³/sec)
- **In Flow:** 10 BCM
- **Represents:** 26% of Afghanistan’s available Water
- **Land Cover:** 12% of Afghanistan Land
- **Population:** 11.6 million Afghans, or 37%
Harirud:
- Crosses the border with Iran and exhausts in Turkmenistan
- Out Flow: 2.53 BCM
- Represents: 5.14% of available water
- Land Cover: 11.8% of Afghanistan’s land
Murghab River:

- Murghab river flows from Afghanistan, directly empties into qaraquram desert of Turkmenistan.
- Afghanistan can only used a limited amount of water in Murghab river.
- Total annually runoff : 1.48 bcm
- Length of the river : 443 Km
- No legal framework in place
Challenges

- Lack of legal frameworks in three river basins
- Climate change and water scarcity
- Mistrust with neighboring countries
- Different level of Development (Afghanistan the least developed)
- Insufficient number of hydrological and meteorological stations
- Knowledge gap between riparians
Opportunities

- Presence of political will
- Water as an element of regional cooperation and integration
- Ongoing negotiations with downstream riparians
- Transboundary Waters Policy, Drafted
- Data and Information Policy Exchange Policy (Drafted)
Thank You!