



Conflict Factsheet

Water Resources Distribution - Ica River Basin in Peru

Type of conflict Main	Intensity 1
Conflict Locality South America	Time 2006 –ongoing
Countries Peru	Resources Agricultural / Pastoral Land, Water



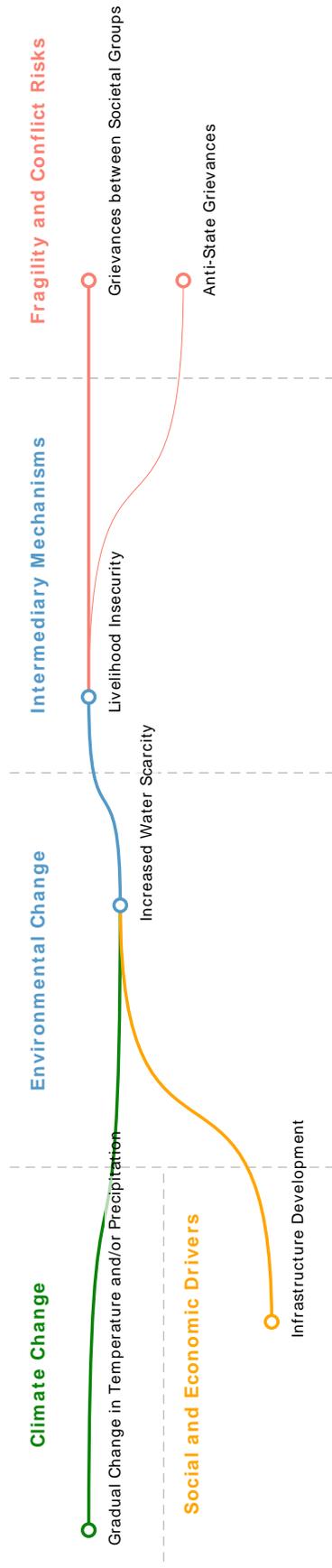
Transboundary
water
management

Conflict Summary

The situation of increasing water scarcity, exacerbated by climate change and different water uses, has led to conflicts over water management in the Ica River Basin, Departments of Huancavelica and Ica, Peru. In this particular conflict, the needs of an agro-export model have clashed with the local self-supply-oriented economy. Currently, the conflict is in a latent stage, but new water infrastructure projects proposed by the national government may escalate the situation.



Conceptual Model



Context Factors



Agricultural / Pastoral Land, Water



Conflict History

The Ica River's headwaters are located in the high-altitude plateau (altiplano). The natural discharge and the volume of the Ica River depend on the limited rainfall during rainy-season months (from December to March); the river is dry by April. Agriculture in the Department of Ica depends partly on water resources from the Ica River. The Department of Ica is on the central southern coast of Peru's coast, with a desert ecosystem and soil suitable for agriculture. According to preliminary figures from the Fourth National Agricultural Census of 2012, the agricultural sector grew 10.5% from 2011 to 2012, due to growth in the agricultural (7.6%) and livestock (15.6%) sub-sectors.

Major economic discrepancies between the Ica Valley and Huancavelica

The Ica Valley has become one of the country's main agro-export zones; it has created employment and contributed greatly to the country's gross domestic product. Meanwhile, Huancavelica has some of Peru's highest levels of poverty and extreme poverty. In terms of regional and social inequality, the Ica River valley demonstrates the juxtaposition of both prosperity and privation.

Huancavelica's situation

The Department of Huancavelica is an altiplano region located 2,200 to 4,500 meters above sea level. It is mostly a rural department, with low population density and ongoing outward migration due to the lack of options to escape extreme poverty within the region. Another problem the region faces is the scarcity of available water, which limits agricultural activity. Lack of sufficient water resources means that there are fewer agricultural areas under irrigation; therefore, the Huancavelica department depends fundamentally on dryland agriculture, limiting this activity to subsistence farming. To compound the problem, much of the potential productive soil in the mid-basin is located on terraces, which have been largely abandoned due to the lack of technologies needed to increase the productivity of these areas.

Change in weather patterns

In the last few years, there has been a change in the distribution of rainfall patterns in the altiplano. The actual rainfall amount, however, has not decreased. The effects of these changes in the rainy months are felt in the agricultural sector. Moreover, stakeholders are concerned about increasing cold in the high-altitude Andean areas that can affect the raising of camellids (llamas and alpacas) and require additional infrastructure to care for these animals, among other things (Herz, 2014).

Diverging interests

The conflict involves the agro-export sectors in the Department of Ica that demand more water for their economic activities, and the rural sectors and political authorities in the mid- and upper basin that call for a fairer distribution of water in order to deal with shortages of productive land (Herz, 2014). On the coast, high water demand for the farming sector, since the early 1900s, has led to the construction of water catchment infrastructure in order to transfer water from the altiplano. This major increase in water enabled a boom in irrigated crops in the Ica Valley, mainly for export. The 2007 asparagus boom propelled the vegetable to the top in terms of water usage. Asparagus now uses 35% of the total water in the valley, relegating cotton to second place at 22%. The rural economy, mid-sized farmers, agro-export companies (with the boom for new crops) and Ica's population growth, are in macro terms the main drivers of demand



for water resources in the Ica River watershed. At this time, agriculture_ accounts for 90% of total water usage. Water for human consumption is only 10% of the total (ATA Sweco, 2000, in Herz, 2014).

National Government's projects

Because of the increased demand for water by the agro-export sector, the National Government has proposed new water infrastructure projects. According to public commitments by the National Government, several of these projects are considered top priority and of national interest, with budget allocations totalling some 230 million dollars.; however, these economic measures have never been discussed with the stakeholders in the upper watershed (Herz, 2014). In view of these new projects, the population in the altiplano fears further reduction of available water and an increase in negative effects on their ecosystems. Five decades ago, residents experienced changes in high-altitude ecosystems after the implementation of a water transfer project. This project also had considerable social and economic impacts, especially concerning water usage in the rural communities of the districts of Pilpichaca and Santa Ana (Herz, 2014).

Resolution Efforts

There have been different periods of latency and recent reappearance of conflict. In 2006, the Regional Government of Huancavelica asked the Regional Government of Ica to suspend field work for the Choclococha Developed – Regrowth of the Choclococha Dam and Ingahuasi Collection Canal project, and also requested information about the work being done. The Huancavelica government sent letters to the Council of Ministers and to the Presidency of the Republic, asking them to suspend work on the Ingahuasi Collection Canal; however, none of these requests were accepted.

Master Plan for integrated management of the Ica River basin

Another important endeavour was the Ministry Resolution N° 396-2006-PCM, which set up a commission to formulate and propose a Master Plan for integrated management of the Ica River basin. The commission was comprised of a representative of the National Water Resource Intendency, a representative of the Ica ATDR, two representatives per Regional Government, a representative of PETACC, a representative of the Rural Communities of Huancavelica, and a representative of the Huancavelica Water Management Group. They met four times in 2006 until the initiative was discontinued.

Complaint by the Rural Community of Carhuancho

A significant development in the conflict was the complaint by the Rural Community of Carhuancho in Huancavelica against the Peruvian Government, the Regional Government of Ica and PETACC. The complaint was formally entitled "Violation of the human right to water of the Indigenous Community of Carhuancho by construction of the Ingahuasi Collection Canal in the Choclococha Project, Huancavelica, Peru" and was brought on 8 October 2007. The Latin American Water Tribunal ruled in favour of the Rural Community of Carhuancho, stating that the rights of the community had been violated by the project to construct the Ingahuasi collection canal.

Adaptation to Climate Change project in Ica and Huancavelica

Since 2013, an initiative by the Adaption to Climate Change project in Ica and Huancavelica (ACCIH) by the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) has worked to generate dialogue among

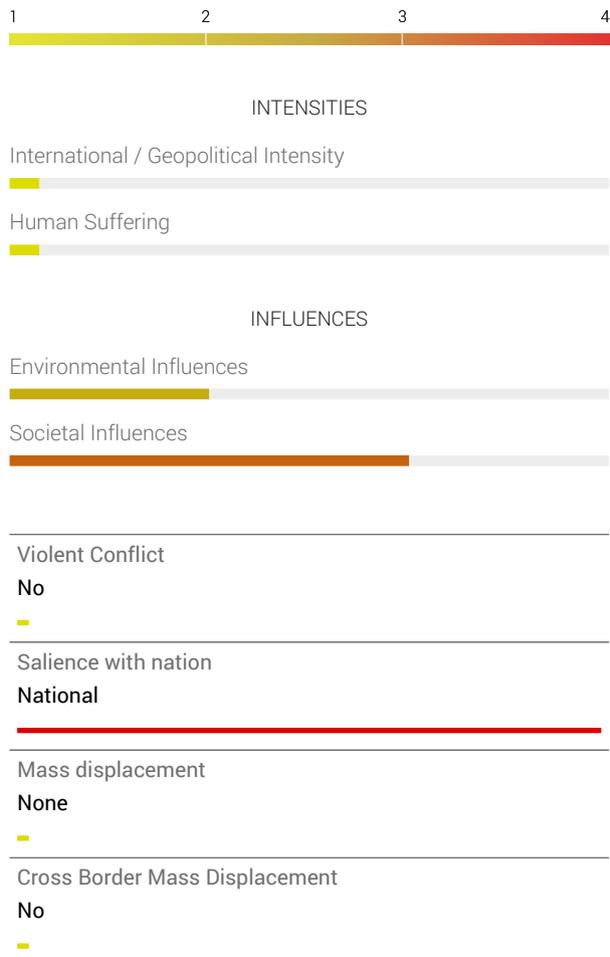


authorities and leaders of the two Departments (Ica and Huancavelica) while also forming the Basin’s Water Resources Council, an inter-institutional management entity established by the new Water Resources Law. This approach was also supported by the project for Regional Dialogue on Environmental and Natural Resource Management in the Andean Countries (DIRMAPA) by GIZ. Later in 2014, progress was made in motivating key watershed stakeholders to establish new rules for integrated water resource management; however, the lack of political will among national authorities, who are more inclined to favour agrarian export policies, has made it difficult to reach stable agreements.

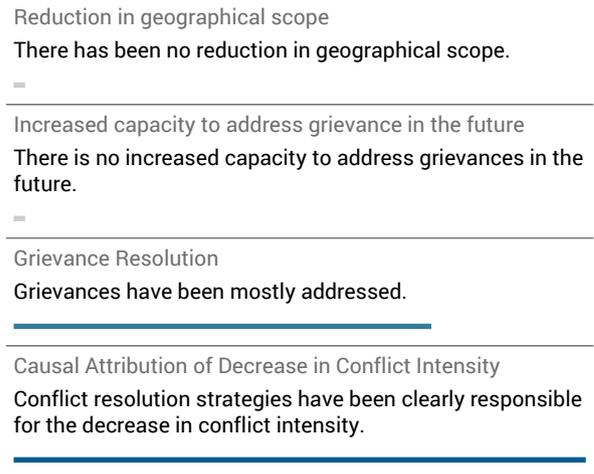
Outlook

There has been progress in studies on the potential of the mid- and upper basin. These studies provide sounder technical arguments for negotiation and dialogue, focused on a territorial development approach (Herz, 2014). The high number of actors with different interests, the mistrust between those actors and the fragility of local state institutions makes dialogue difficult; therefore, there is a need for a gradual, long-term process that includes a participative zoning process and sustainable water policies.

Intensities & Influences



Resolution Success





Entry Points for Resilience and Peace Building

Dialogue

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The German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ) created the Adaption to Climate Change project in Ica and Huancavelica (ACCIH) with the aim of generating dialogue between the leaders of the Ica and Huancavelica departments. While moderate progress was achieved, there are still no stable agreements made between watershed stakeholders.

Cooperation

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Studies conducted about the mid- and upper basin have provided technical arguments for a territorial development approach. However, mistrust and diverging interests among stakeholders have made cooperation difficult.

Mediation & arbitration

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The Rural Community of Carhuancho in Huancavelica filed a complaint against the Peruvian Government, the Regional Government of Ica and PETACC to the Latin American Water Tribunal. The tribunal ruled in favor of the community stating that that the rights of the community had been violated by the project to construct the Ingahuasi collection canal.

Resources and Materials

References without URL

Herz, C. (2014). Case study on socio-environmental conflict in priority watersheds of Ica and Huancavelica, GIZ ACCIH- DIRMAPA, October 2014.

Further information

<https://factbook.ecc-platform.org/conflicts/distribution-water-resources-ica-river-basin-peru>