

## Chapter 12 Highlights

1. Water can be a trigger, casualty, or weapon of conflict.
2. Where river basins cross international boundaries, they pose a challenge to national sovereignty and an opportunity for cooperative management.
3. There are no clear allocation criteria for international basins, but the *UN Watercourses Convention* includes the principle of *limited territorial sovereignty*, reflecting the tension between the right to utilize and the duty not to cause harm.
4. Countries have both positive and negative interactions over shared waters, but cooperation is generally more common than conflict.
5. Factors thought to increase the likelihood of international conflict over water include: rapid changes (e.g., dam construction, climate change), water scarcity, groundwater depletion, upstream/downstream arrangements, and other factors.
6. Factors thought to calm conflict include joint institutions (river-basin organizations) and treaties with clear but flexible allocations and dispute resolution mechanisms. Not all water treaties and joint institutions are effective or fair.
7. Strategies to move towards resilient cooperation include side payments, issue linkage, benefit sharing, technical cooperation, and a focus on needs.
8. Non-state actors—from terrorist groups to international NGOs to multinational corporations to “water protectors”—are often engaged in water-related conflict. Sometimes conflict is necessary to achieve just outcomes.