



# INTERPROVINCIAL CONFLICT ANALYSIS IN IRAQ

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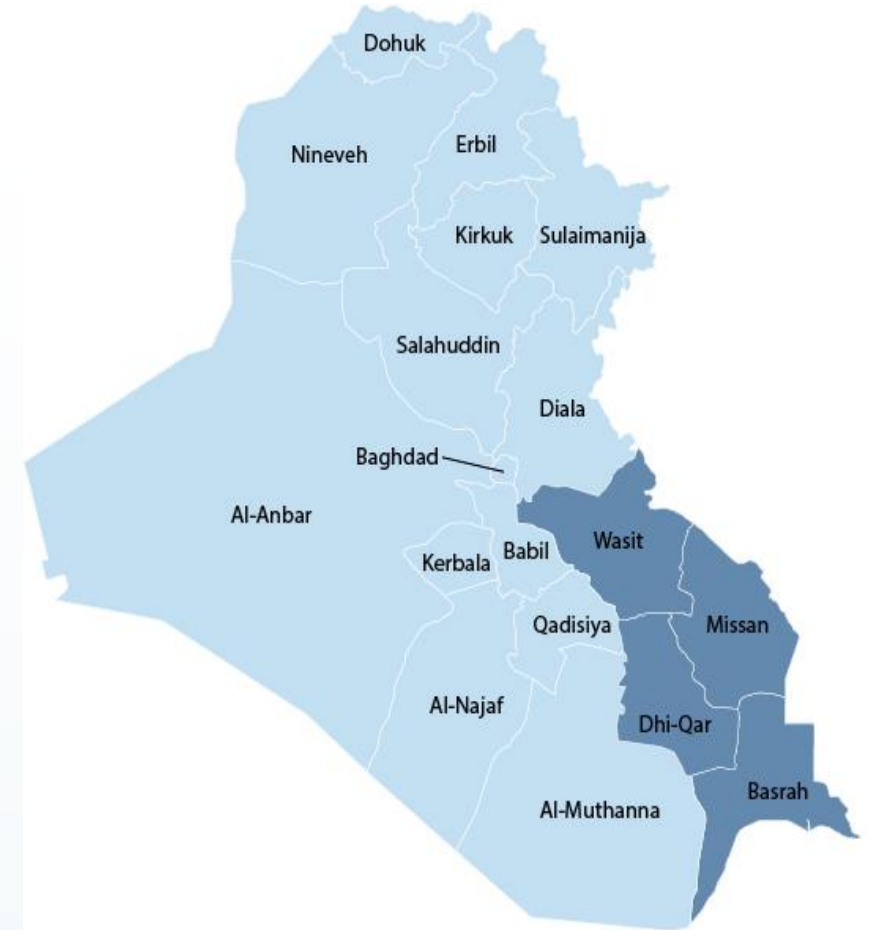
Excerpts from slides prepared for Water, Peace and Security tailor-made capacity development activities in Iraq. Please attribute authors when using materials.

# Interprovincial Analysis

- **Definition:** Water-related conflict in and between provinces in Iraq
- **Interprovincial conflict can manifest at multiple levels:**
  - Between the central government and provincial governorate authorities
  - Between provincial governorate authorities
  - Between citizens and provincial governorate authorities
  - Between citizens within a province
  - Between citizens of different provinces
- **Why is this approach important?**
  - Provincial-level conflict can undermine stability and add further stress to the water situation
  - Provincial-level conflict can have spill-over effects and implications for national & regional stability
  - Potential for future escalation
  - Key to strengthen national-level integrated water management
  - Under-researched topic

# WPS Approach: Interprovincial Analysis

- **Four provinces in the South:**
  - Wasit
  - Missan
  - Dhi-Qar
  - Basrah
- **Regional challenges:**
  - Geographically induced water challenges: Provinces at end of T&E + at mouth of Persian Gulf (Basra)
  - Low rainfall, climate change and river dependence create increasing water scarcity (e.g., Basra, Mesopotamian Marshes)
  - Oil & agriculture industries compete with domestic water needs
  - Industries contribute to water pollution
  - Water crisis driver of displacement in and from southern Iraq



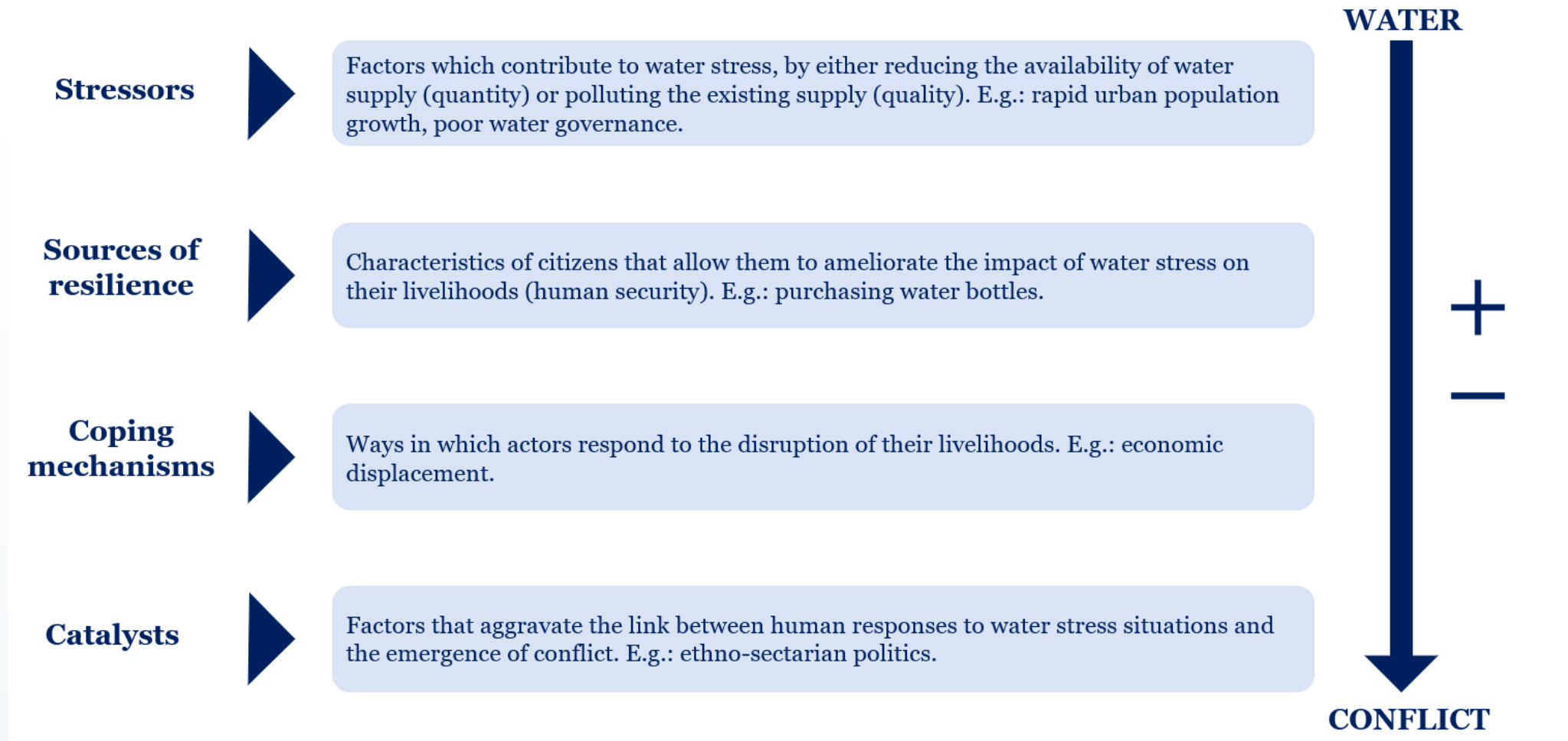
# Main Actors in Iraq's Water System

Group	Actor
Industry	Agriculture Industry
	Oil and Gas Industry
	Electricity producers (e.g., hydropower)
Socio-economic groups	Farmers
	Herders
	Fisherman
	Indigenous communities (ecotourism)

## Actor Identification

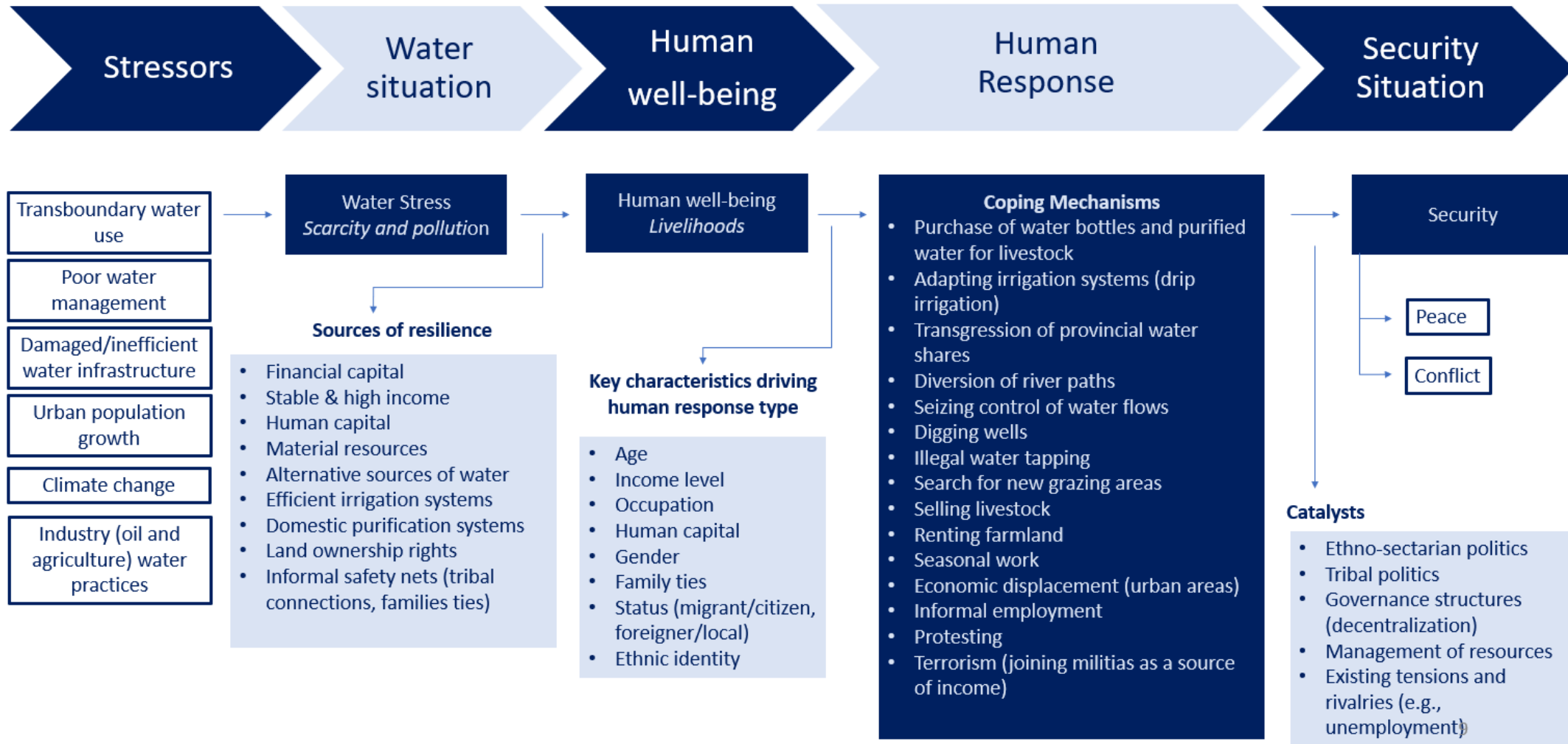
- Identify actors relevant to the water ecosystem
- Understand their relationship to water: water needs, water practices, water pollution

# Key Concepts to Understand Interprovincial Water-related Conflicts





# Key Dynamics to Understand Interprovincial Water-related Conflicts



# Types of Interprovincial Water-related Conflicts

Conflict Typology		
Type	Sub-type	Definition
<b>Geographic</b>		Tensions over water management and distribution based on the location of different provinces (nationally) and across borders along upstream-downstream lines
<b>Economic</b>		Tensions arising from competition over water as an essential resource for socio-economic activities
<b>Legal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructural</li> <li>• Allocative</li> <li>• Quality</li> </ul>	Legal tensions over breaches of centrally determined water quotas
<b>Socio-political</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kurdish-Arabs</li> <li>• Sunni Arabs (upstream) - Shia Arabs (downstream)</li> <li>• Government-citizens (protestors)</li> </ul>	Competition over scarce water resources incites or exacerbates existing social, ethno-religious and/or political tensions between and within Iraq's provinces

# Types of Water-related Conflicts: **Geographic, Economic**

## GEOGRAPHIC

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**Description** Tensions over water management and distribution based on the location of different provinces (nationally) and across borders, mainly along upstream-downstream lines

**Example** *Federal government-provincial governorate:* disagreements between the federal government and the province of Basra over the construction of a dam near Abu Flous Port that was extended for several years

## ECONOMIC

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**Description** Tensions arising between actors/groups from competition over water as an essential resource for socio-economic activities

**Example 1** *Farmer-Herder:* in the province of Basra, due to water scarcity, some livestock owners have moved in search of new grazing areas. Local arable farmers have complained that the livestock caused damage to their crops. The situation resulted in conflict between the two groups

**Example 2** *Oil industry-farmers:* Farmers from the Imara tribe have complained of the occupation by oil companies of their farmland. This situation has forced several farmers to quit their agricultural livelihoods and search for other sources of employment, exacerbating discontent and tensions against oil companies, and the government, that is blamed for its lack of protection to this socioeconomic group



# Types of Water-related Conflicts: Legal, Socio-Political

## LEGAL

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**Description** Legal tensions over breaches of centrally determined water quotas

- **Infrastructural:** building of water infrastructure, such as dams and canals that increase water supply for some provinces at the expense of others
- **Allocative:** unequal distribution of water resources both between provinces and between populations within provinces
- **Quality:** difference in the quality of water within and between provinces

**Example** *Province-Province (allocative):* Lawsuit filed by the Council of Missan against the provinces of Wasit and Dhi Qar for disregarding the former's allocated water share causing material damage and harming citizens

## SOCIO-POLITICAL

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**Description** Competition over scarce water resources that incites or exacerbates existing social, ethno-religious and/or political tensions between and within Iraq's provinces

- **Kurdish-Arabs**
- **Sunni Arabs (upstream) – Shia Arabs (downstream)**
- **Government-citizens (protestors)**

**Example** *Arab farmers-KRG :* Arab farmers living in the disputed territories have blamed the KRG for water deprivation in the area. If water scarcity intensified, it could lead to tensions between Arab farmers and their Kurdish neighbors

## Case Study: Provincial-level Conflict in Basra

- **Context:**

- Water quality and quantity under pressure in Basra
- End of the T&E at the mouth of Persian Gulf
- Large oil industry: water consumption & pollution
- Recent protests about water pollution

- **Analysis (Next Slides):**

- Introduction to the complex water system in Basra & potential for conflict
- Includes: main water stressors, actors, sources of resilience, response, types of conflict



**Stressors**



**Actors**



**Sources of Resilience**



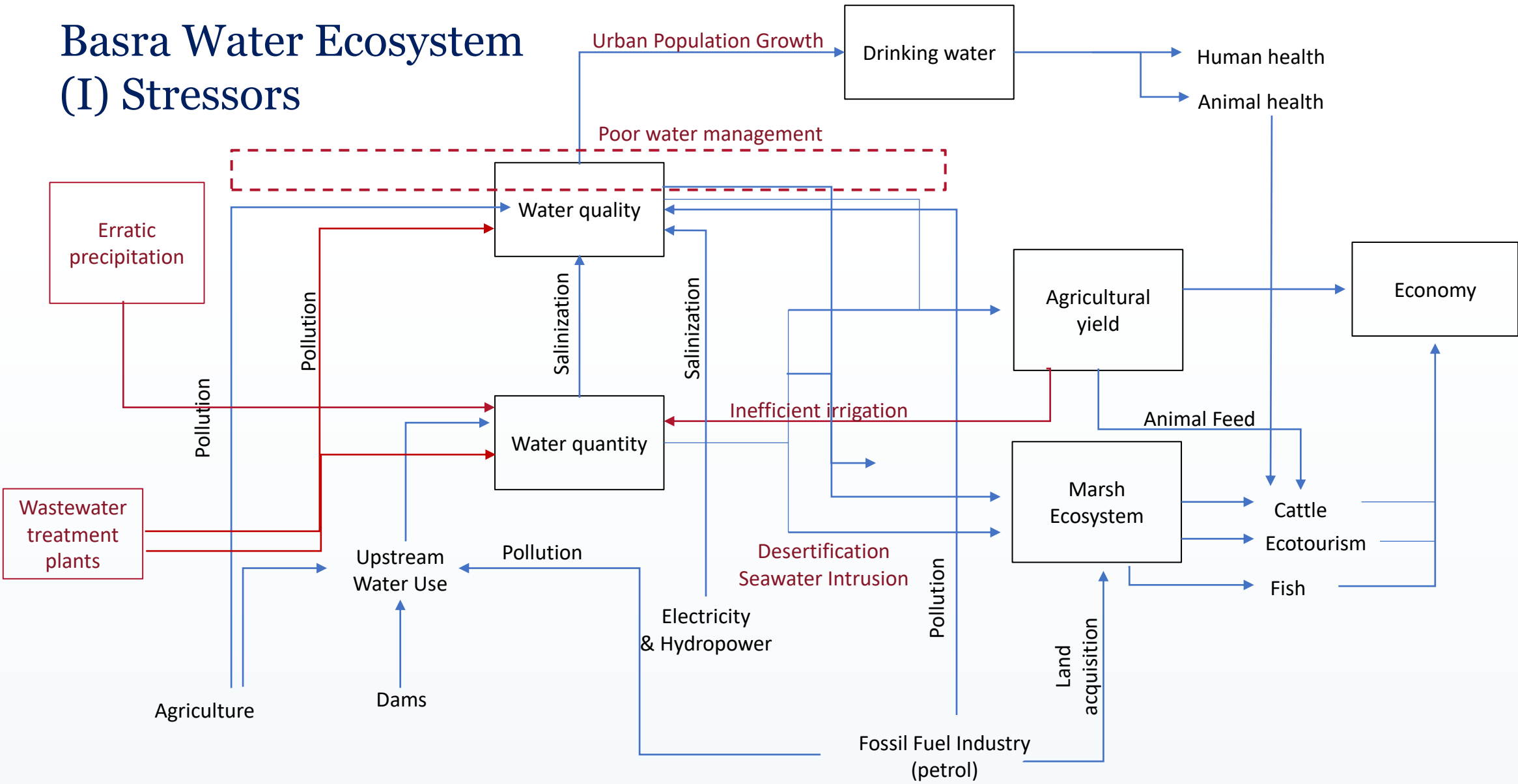
**Human Response**



**Types of Conflict**

# Basra Water Ecosystem

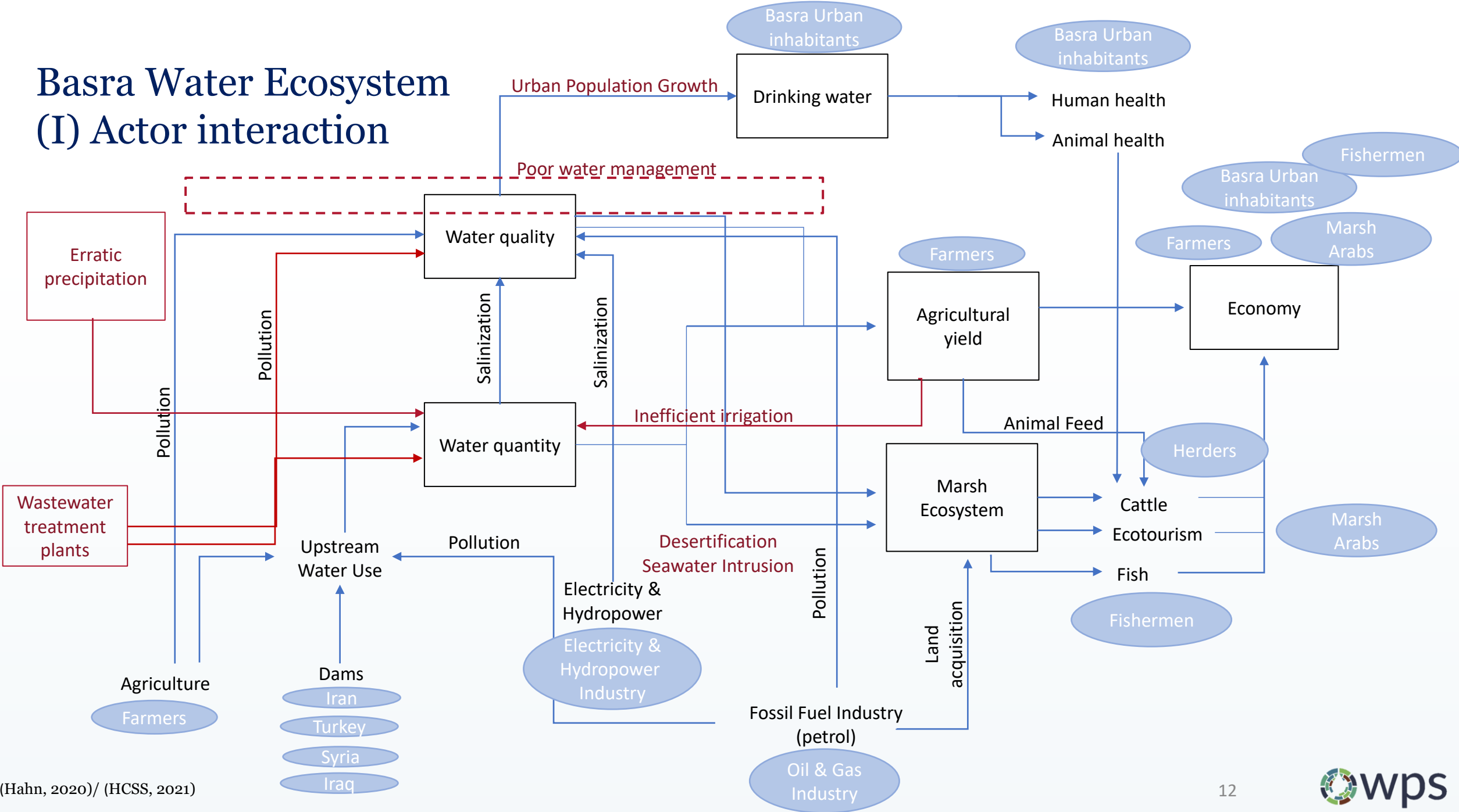
## (I) Stressors



(Hahn, 2020)/ (HCSS, 2021)

# Basra Water Ecosystem

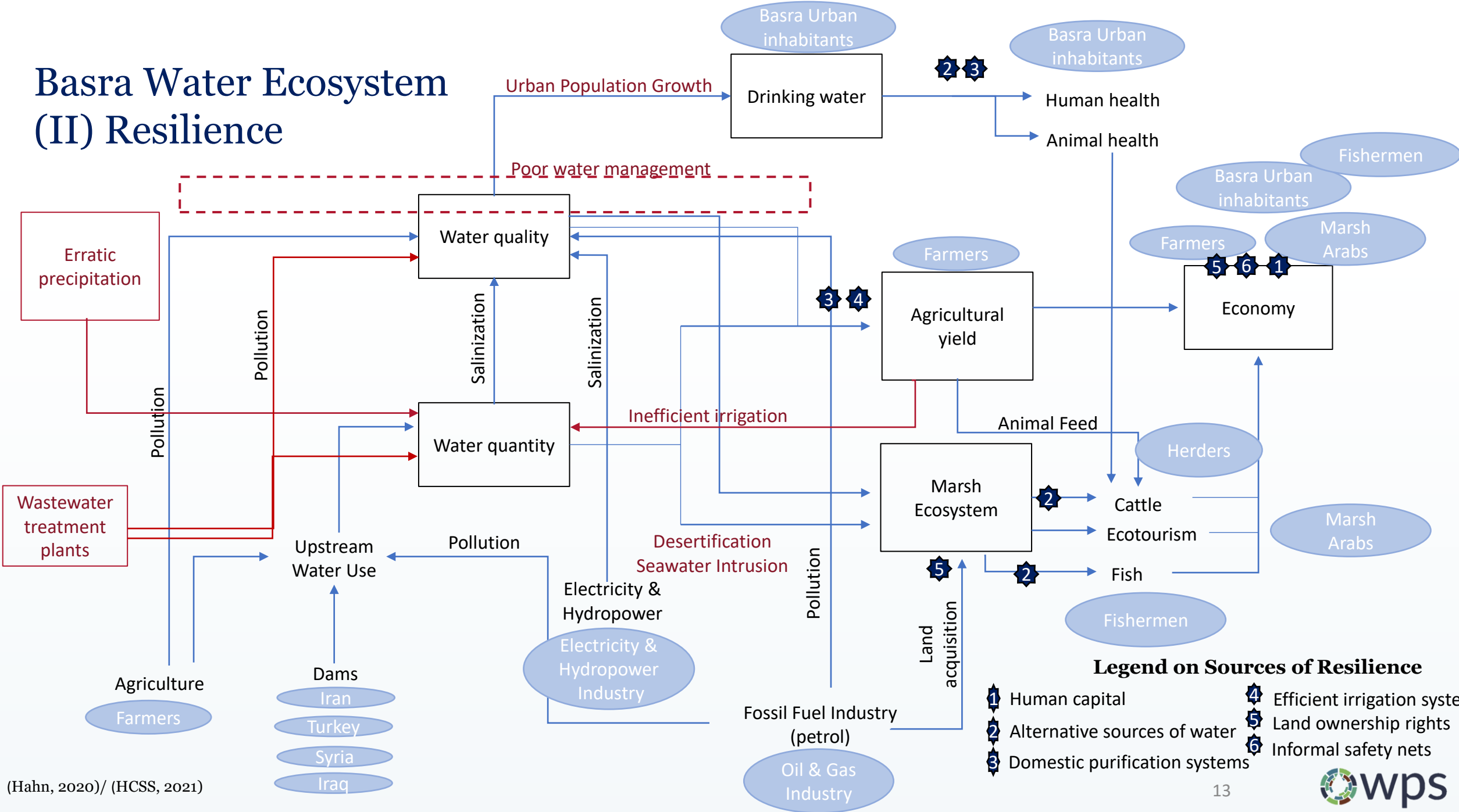
## (I) Actor interaction



(Hahn, 2020)/ (HCSS, 2021)

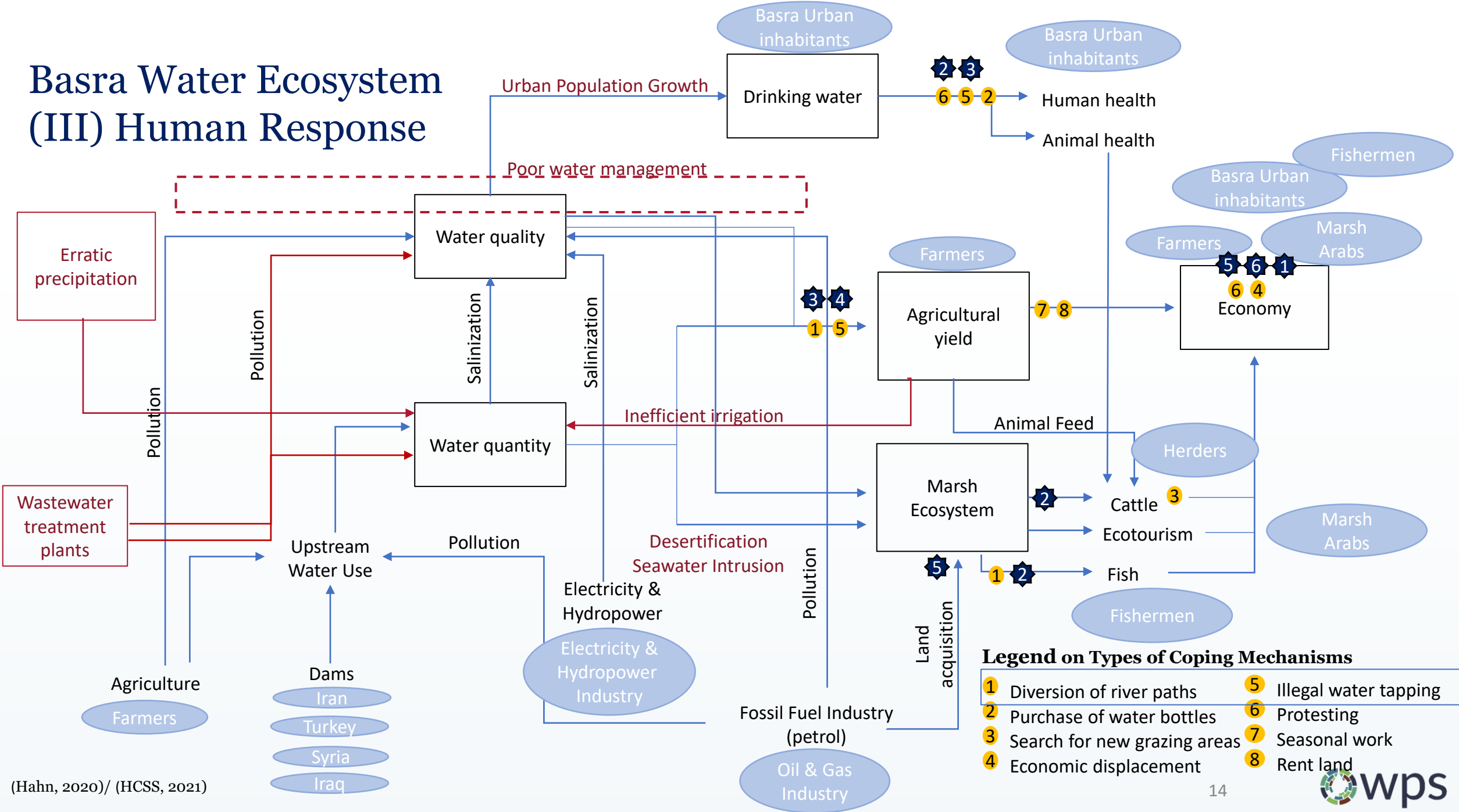
# Basra Water Ecosystem

## (II) Resilience



# Basra Water Ecosystem

## (III) Human Response



(Hahn, 2020)/ (HCSS, 2021)



## Basra Water Ecosystem (IV) Types of Conflict

