

# Earth Week Webinar "Water: Source of Life and Development of the Earth"

April 19, 2023

This event was co-sponsored by Coalition For Peace Action (CFPA), the Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the United Nations Association - USA, Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, C-Change Conversations, Global Water Alliance, and Physicians for Social Responsibility.

Watch the video of the session here: <https://youtu.be/EnnlGDhs99Q>



**Ingrid Timboe**

**Okezue Bell**

**Molly Jones**

Our keynote speaker was **Ingrid Timboe**, Alliance for Global Water Adaptation

She built her talk around two “stories” of different regions affected by water issues due to climate change.

One was the Colorado River Basin, a major water source for a number of US states and Mexico.

The basin is experiencing a megadrought – estimated to be the worst in 1,200 years.

Making matters worse, the allocation treaty signed 100 years ago was based on the best flow estimates available. Unfortunately, the estimate was done in wet years, so it was already overestimating the amount of water available for use even before the current drought!

Ingrid stressed two aspects of the problem. First, although the Colorado River Basin is dealing with a historic drought (probably made worse by global warming), humans have exacerbated the problem by building in areas with less water than we thought we had.

Second, we can still take steps to mitigate aspects of the consequences. For example, Colorado River Delta restoration efforts are designed to “re-wet” parts of the Colorado River delta severely affected since little water reaches there. The plan creates special releases of water to rewet the delta. If this keeps happening, it can help restore the health of the delta.

The second place Ingrid discussed was the Lower Kafue River Basin, Zambia. This is a major river in the area, subject both to flooding and drought. Agriculture in this area is more dependent on rain, less irrigation, than in the US west.

They are working on local methods to help with the problem, such as check dams to slow down the water, recharge trenches, and native trees.

**Okezue Bell**, Youth Climate Ambassador, UNA-USA was another of our fine speakers. At 16 years old he has done research at Harvard and MIT!

He spoke about the possibility of cellular agriculture – developing foods like meats in a test tube. Since food production has a major impact on climate change, making it more efficient could have a potent impact.

The idea is to use stem cells to produce meat. You could genetically modify those meats or create meats without allergens. We can also create milk. Or seeds and berries.

He asked the question why he is important? His answer – we need youth involvement.

**Molly Jones**, C-Change Conversations (C for Climate) was our third speaker (who actually went first due to some technical glitches!)

Their organization focuses on bridging the communication gap re climate change.

She gave an example of the kind of simple educational presentation she might use. Show images of extreme heat and torrential rains. Note the 1/1,000-year events happening much too frequently. Discuss Greenhouse gases and effect.

Note that summers are getting hotter here. We don't necessarily get more rain, but more often in heavy falls, less useful.

What to do? Mostly advocate -- community, friends, leaders. Princeton developed a climate action plan: Mostly dealing with effects of climate change, like improving emergency management, storm drain systems, and so on.

One question that came up was whether anyone was trying to use flood waters to help with droughts! Several speakers responded.

Ingrid mentioned managed aquifer recharge. You pay farmers to take land out of agriculture and let it flood. The water will be reabsorbed into the aquifer.

Rain barrels and cisterns are becoming popular in the west, but this only results in a tiny amount of water. Plus, you need steps to mitigate mosquitoes. Some people also do stormwater gardens.

Molly mentioned green buffers on streets to absorb flood waters.

Everyone appreciated the speakers and found the discussion enlightening. Thanks to them and the sponsors!

If interested in CFPA's no wars no warming agenda, contact Ed Aguilar at [aguilarcfpal@gmail.com](mailto:aguilarcfpal@gmail.com)