

Water Conflict Chronology 2025 Update

November 2025

By Morgan Shimabuku, Peter Gleick, Jessica Dery, and Lena Wilson

The [Water Conflict Chronology](#) is the world's most comprehensive open-source database on water-related violence, comprising over 2,750 events spanning more than 4,500 years. Created by the [Pacific Institute](#) in the 1980s, it includes instances where water and water systems have been a **trigger**, or **casualty**, or **weapon** of violence. Each entry in the Chronology is identified with the date, location, category, a short description, and a verifying citation or source.

The latest update, released November 11, 2025, brings the database current through the end of 2024, with some additional events occurring in the first few months of 2025. In this update, the Pacific Institute added 844 new instances of violent conflicts associated with water resources and water systems. The update demonstrates a disturbing trend, with violence over water continuing to rise rapidly in 2024. 420 events were reported in 2024, an increase of nearly 20% over the number reported in 2023.

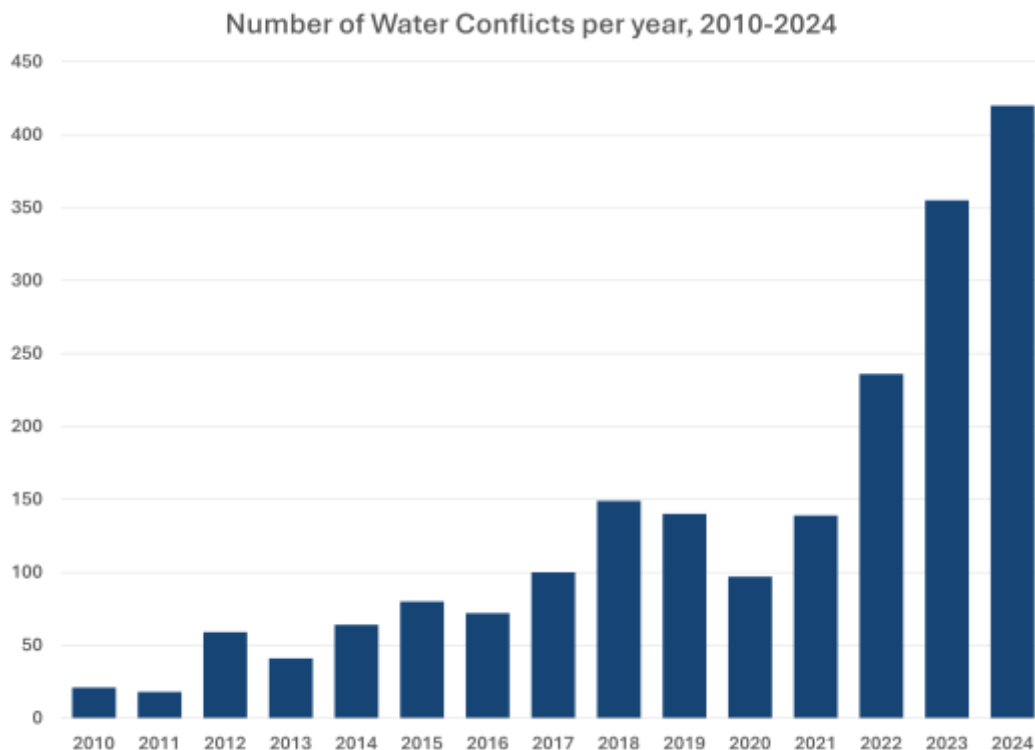


Figure 1. The number of water conflict events per year from 2010 to 2024. 420 events were reported in 2024, an increase of nearly 20% over the number reported in 2023. ([Download Image](#))

ANALYSIS OF EVENTS FROM 2010 TO 2024

The total number of recorded water-related conflict events has risen sharply over the past fifteen years. In 2010, only 21 events were documented. From 2011 through 2018, annual totals climbed steadily, surpassing 150 events by 2018. A brief decline occurred in 2019 and 2020, when events dropped to 137 and 95, respectively—likely reflecting a temporary easing of violence in parts of the Middle East and the global slowdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The trend reversed in 2021 with 139 recorded events, followed by dramatic surges of 70% and 50% in 2022 and 2023. Growth continued in 2024, with an additional 18% increase over the previous year. These recent spikes correspond with the intensification of conflicts in Israel-Palestine and Russia-Ukraine, as well as escalating disputes over inadequate water access in Africa, Latin America, and South Asia, and mounting tensions over drought-driven scarcity in India, Iran, and other regions.

All three categories (trigger, casualty, weapon) show increases over recent years compared to the early 21st century, especially cases where water systems have been targeted with violence in Ukraine and Palestine (Figure 2). In 2024, there was a very slight decrease in the number of events where water was used as a weapon compared to 2023.

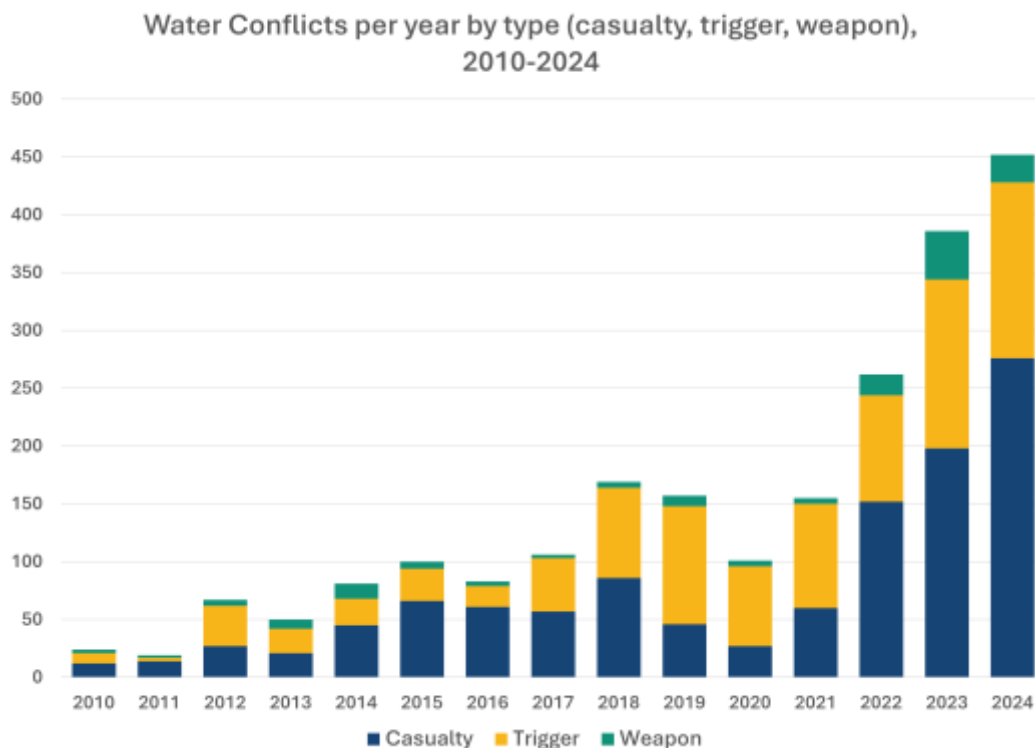


Figure 2. The number of water conflict events from 2010 to 2024 by conflict type. When an event is categorized as more than one type, it is counted in each group. ([Download image](#))

Interstate (Subnational) versus Intrastate (Transnational) Trends

In 2024, intrastate conflicts, such as those during civil wars, or between farmers and pastoralists in Africa, urban and rural water users, religious groups, and family clans (63% of the events) continue to far outnumber interstate events involving two or more nations (37% of the events).

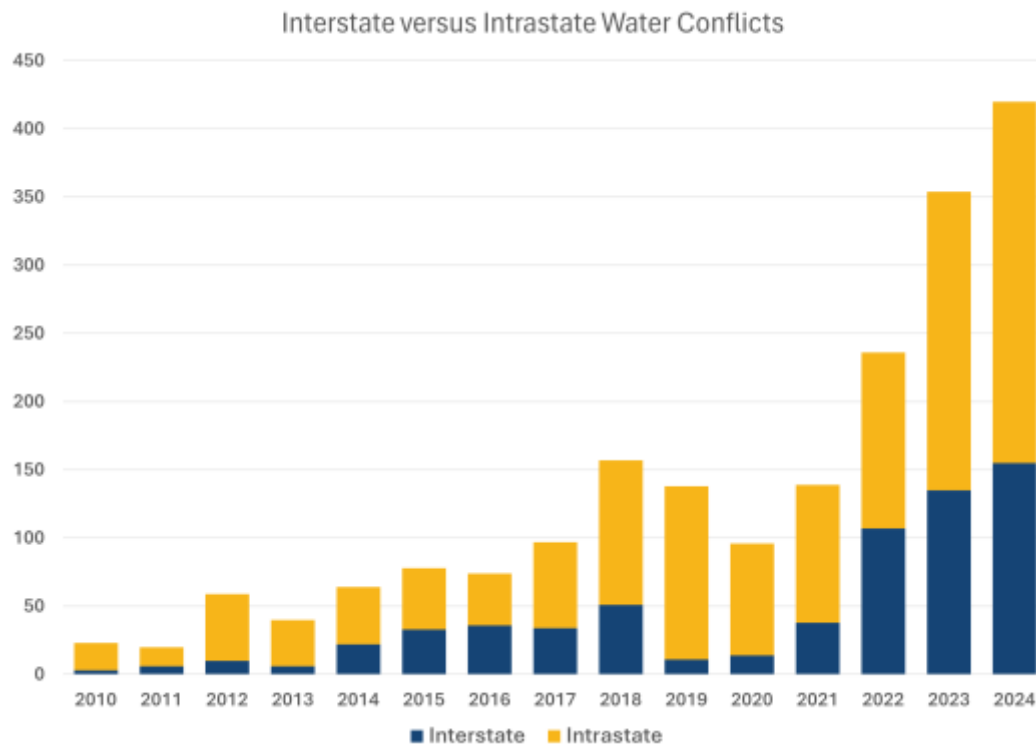


Figure 3. The number of interstate versus intrastate water conflicts from 2010 to 2024, showing a jump in both categories in recent years. ([Download image](#))

WATER AND CONFLICT IN 2024: 420 EVENTS

In 2024, the number of events where water was a trigger, casualty, or weapon of violence increased by 18%, with 420 conflicts recorded compared to 355 in 2023.

Number of Water Conflict Events in 2024 by Type

- Trigger: 152
- Casualty: 276
- Weapon: 24

Regional Breakdown (2024 compared to 2023)

- Western Asia (138 versus 134)
- Sub-Saharan Africa (76 versus 56)
- Southern Asia (74 versus 49)
- Eastern Europe (51 versus 32)
- Latin America and the Caribbean (40 versus 50)
- North America (6 versus 3)

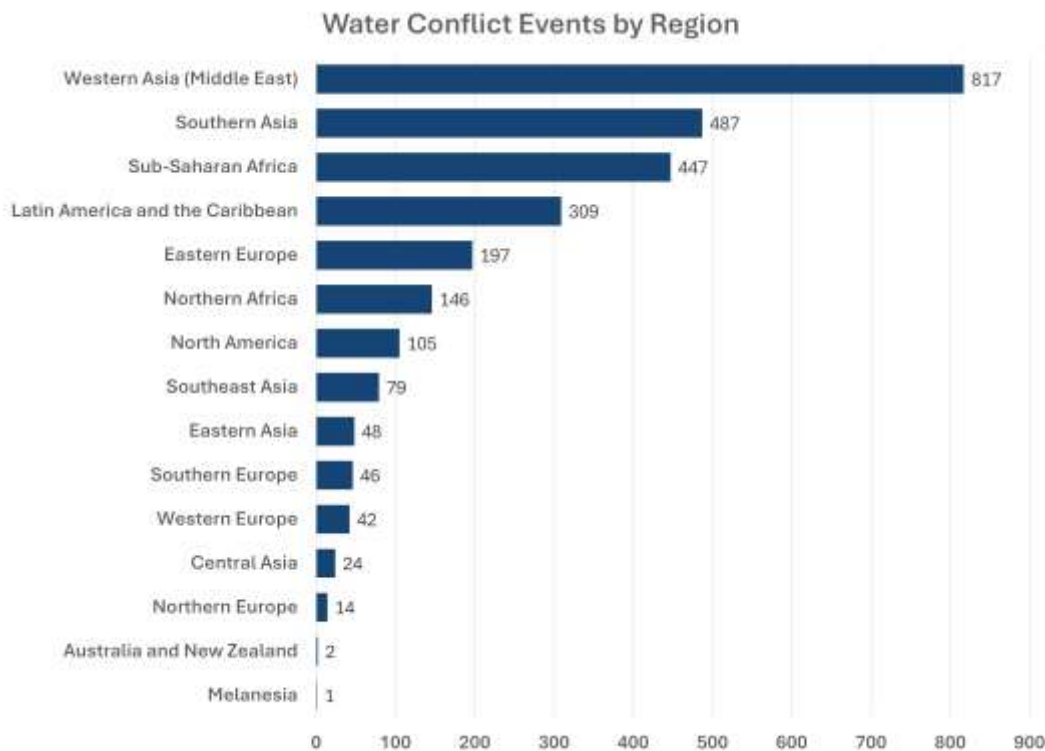


Figure 4. The number of water conflicts by region for the full Water Conflict Chronology database. Violence over water has been most prevalent in Western Asia (the Middle East), Southern Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, but events have been reported widely in other regions as well. ([Download image](#))



Figure 5. The distribution of water conflicts reported in 2024. Events cluster in the Middle East, Ukraine, south Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America. ([Download image](#))

Highlights of special concern in 2024 include:

- There was a continued expansion of attacks on water systems in Gaza, the West Bank, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen.
- Southern Asian countries, including India and Pakistan, saw major increases with sub-national violence targeting water systems, localized protests over scarcity and drought, and fights over water access.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, refugee camps were a locus for poor water access, and uprisings in these camps turned violent on multiple occasions.
- In South Africa, unrest related to water insecurity, water pricing, and institutional corruption contributed to protests and violence.
- Attacks on civilian water systems accelerated in 2024 and into 2025 in the Ukraine-Russia war and the expansion of civil war in Sudan.
- Tensions related to water for farmers and local communities led to violence in Mexico and Peru in 2024.

KEY CHRONOLOGY ENTRIES FROM 2024 AND 2025

A few examples from the new data are provided below, but all the new entries and full details on the examples below can be found at <https://www.worldwater.org/water-conflict/>.

Ukraine and Russia

- Dozens of attacks on Ukrainian cities interrupted civilian water supply and sanitation throughout the year. For example, power and water supplies were disrupted in parts of Kyiv, Ukraine, after a massive Russian air attack in August 2024.
- More than 3,000 tons of oil spilled into the Nemyshlia River in the Kharkiv Region after a Russian attack on Ukrainian energy systems.
- In 2024, Ukraine's largest dam, the Dnipro Dam, was attacked by Russia, causing massive damage and leading to extensive blackouts in Ukraine. This attack occurred on World Water Day.
- Ukrainian forces fired missiles into Belgorod, Russia. Three civilians were injured. Homes, cars, as well as electricity, gas, and water infrastructure were also damaged.

Southern Asia

- Members of the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) and United People's Bangladesh (UP) were attacked by armed locals who claimed they were obstructing an irrigation project in the Pich Kamtal area of Bandar Upazila, Bangladesh. Two BNP members were thrown into a reservoir and later rescued by the police. In total, seven people were injured in the attack.
- A demonstration against the Kikar-Navgaon drinking water scheme and concern that it would deprive other areas of drinking water in Himachal Pradesh, India resulted in seven policemen and one home guard being injured.
- Three men assaulted a man and his son with rods in Shivpuri, India, during a dispute over water collection. Both victims sustained head injuries and were hospitalized.
- A police officer was injured during a protest in Jalandhar, India over the failure to provide clean drinking water or resolve ongoing problems with sewerage and drainage systems.
- In May 2025, after a terror attack killed 26 Hindu tourists in Indian-administered Jammu and Kashmir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India reportedly restricted flows

to Pakistan through two dams on the Chenab River causing unprecedented drops in water levels. Pakistan responded by threatening international legal action and stated that "Any attempt to stop or divert the flow of water belonging to Pakistan...will be considered as an act of war."

- Armed Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF) militants attacked checkpoints in Kech, Pakistan, targeting the military's water supply.

Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa

- In May 2024, the paramilitary group Rapid Support Forces (RSF) attacked and briefly occupied the Golo water reservoir in El Fasher, North Darfur, a critical resource for an estimated 270,000 people.
- In 2025, water stations were targeted by Rapid Support Forces (RSF) drone strikes in Shuwak, Sudan, injuring civil defense personnel.
- JNIM (Salafi-jihadist group) militants detonated explosives at a water well in Kantchari, Burkina Faso. The well was destroyed.
- Following 10 days of protests against a mining company and demands for water and other basic services, security forces in Lero, Guinea killed two residents, injured 12, and destroyed homes.
- Refugees from South Sudan clashed with refugees from Africa's Great Lakes region, mainly Congolese, Burundians, and Rwandans at the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya, over drinking water resources. The clash resulted in the death of three South Sudanese refugees.
- Women and children fetching water from the Suguta River, Turkana, Kenya, were ambushed by armed assailants. One woman was shot dead, while another woman and a boy sustained injuries.
- In 2024, students protested outside their university campus in Vontovorona, Madagascar to demand the university improve drinking water supply, electricity, and internet connection. They barricaded the campus entrance with burning tires and tables and threw stones at gendarmes who responded with tear gas. Several students were injured.

Middle East/Western Asia

- Extensive Israeli attacks that damaged water infrastructure in Gaza and the West Bank were reported throughout the year, leading to deteriorating health conditions. For example, between July 18 and 27, Israeli forces destroyed more than 30 water wells in the southern Gaza towns of Rafah and Khan Younis.
- Detainees of Jaw Prison, Bahrain protested to demand improved living conditions. Prison officials cut off drinking water to the protesters.
- Around 1,500 residents rallied on the Baghdad–Basrah highway in Babil, Iraq, to protest the cutting off of irrigation water to farmland, power outages, and the drying up of rivers. Security forces arrested about 20 people and injured 15 while dispersing the demonstration.
- Israeli forces carried out airstrikes on multiple localities across Lebanon's Tyr District. The strikes damaged water networks and other infrastructure, as well as property and crops. In Jouaiya, one person was killed and five others were injured.
- On December 1, 2024, forces opposed to the Syrian government of Assad seized the main water pumping station for the city of Aleppo, cutting off water to the city.
- Two brothers were killed when a suspected Houthi landmine exploded while they were deepening a water well in Wadi Al Nile, Yemen.

North America and Northern Europe

- On 18 January 2024, a pro-Russia hactivist group accessed control systems at two Texas water facilities and tampered with water pumps and alarms, causing water to run past designated shutoff levels and overflow storage tanks.
- Over three-fifths of 350 US and British water and electricity firms surveyed reported being targeted by cyberattacks in 2024 with a majority suffering serious disruption or permanent corruption or destruction of data or systems.

Latin America and the Caribbean

- In Haiti, gangs, including the "G9" gang, struggled for power and attacked water and food deliveries causing severe shortages among Haiti's poorest.
- Residents of colonia Benito Juarez in Salina Cruz, Oaxaca, Mexico, staged a protest to demand reconnection to a municipal drinking water pipeline. Military and municipal police intervened, beating demonstrators.
- Over 500 farmers and residents from several localities in Paita, Peru, gathered at a water company site and broke a dike supplying water to the La Huaca district, redirecting it to irrigate their crops and nearby areas. The action was part of a protest against regional water shortages, with demonstrators calling on the government and the Ministry of Agriculture for assistance.