

Water Deal to Help Georgian, Ossetian Farmers

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Officials agree to clear waterways and give communities on both sides the water they need for their crops.

Georgia and South Ossetia are at loggerheads on most issues, but they have nevertheless started cooperating on a practical and vital issue – access to water.

The Zonkari reservoir lies in territory held by South Ossetia, whose claim to independence is contested by Georgia and indeed the rest of the international community, barring Russia and a handful of others. This water resource feeds the Tirifoni canal, in Georgian-held territory.

The reservoir has suffered periodic stoppages, sometimes accidental and sometimes intentional, while the canal has silted up and become clogged. Both Georgian and South Ossetian farming communities have watched their crops shrivel up as irrigation water stopped flowing

Now they can look forward to receiving water again, thanks to an agreement reached in late July at a meeting of the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism, facilitated by the OSCE and the European Union Monitoring Mission in Georgia.

Georgian and South Ossetian officials have committed to clearing the waterways and communicating via a special hotline to discuss regulating the flow from the reservoir so that everyone benefits.

For more on the story, see **[Georgia and South Ossetia in Rare Accord](#)**.

Goga Aptsiauri works for RFE/RL and is the winner of the European Union's 2014 Peace Journalism prize.

Location: [Georgia](#)
[South Ossetia](#)

Topic: [Conflict resolution](#)

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