

Water and Development in Iraq

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Central Marshes



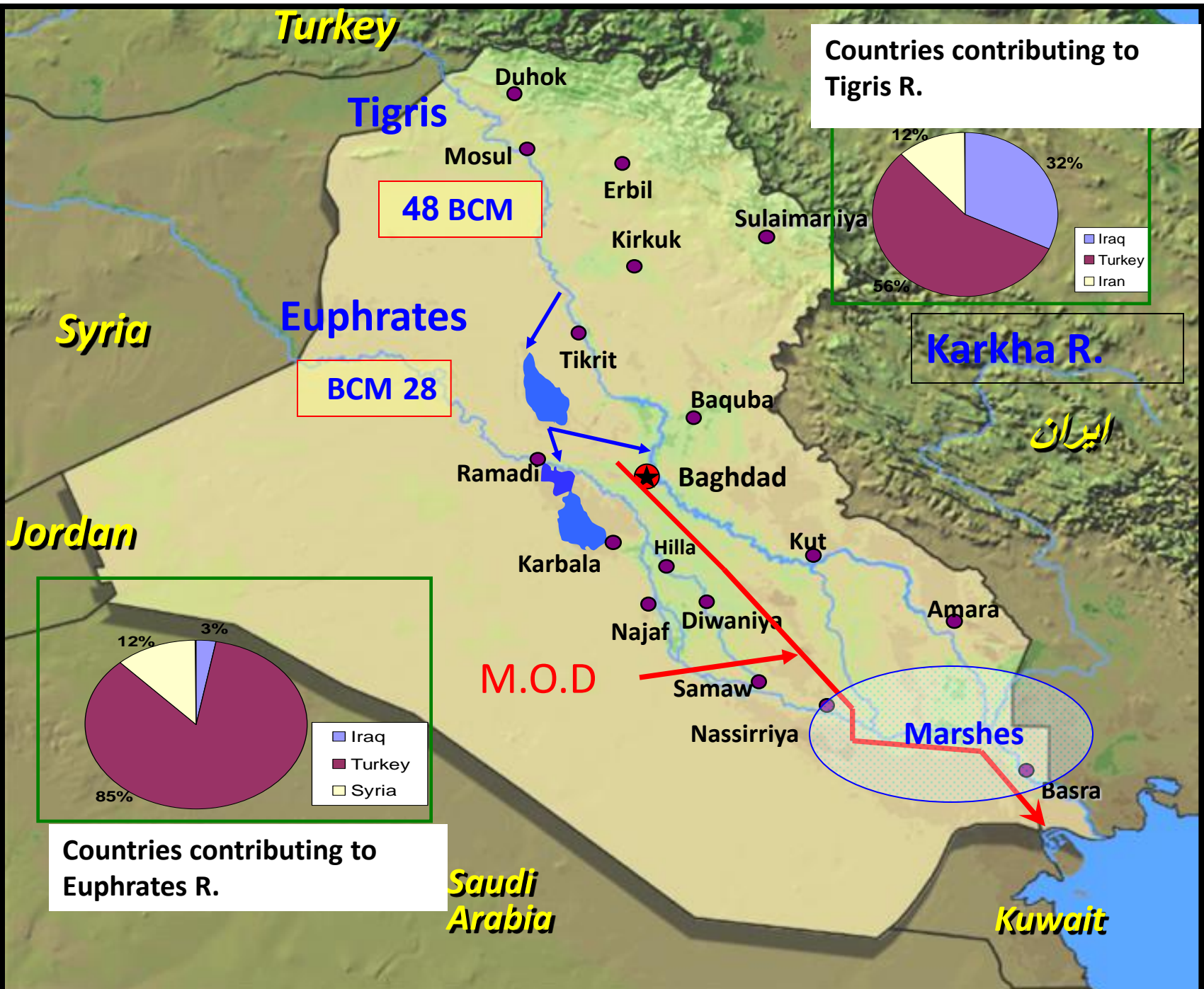
Irrigated Agriculture

Development Phases in modern Iraq

1. Evolution as a modern state **1920s – 1970s**.
2. Mismanagement , bad policies and war destruction **1980s – 2003**.
3. Recovery, transition and new governance arrangements **2003- Present** (*still uncertain*)

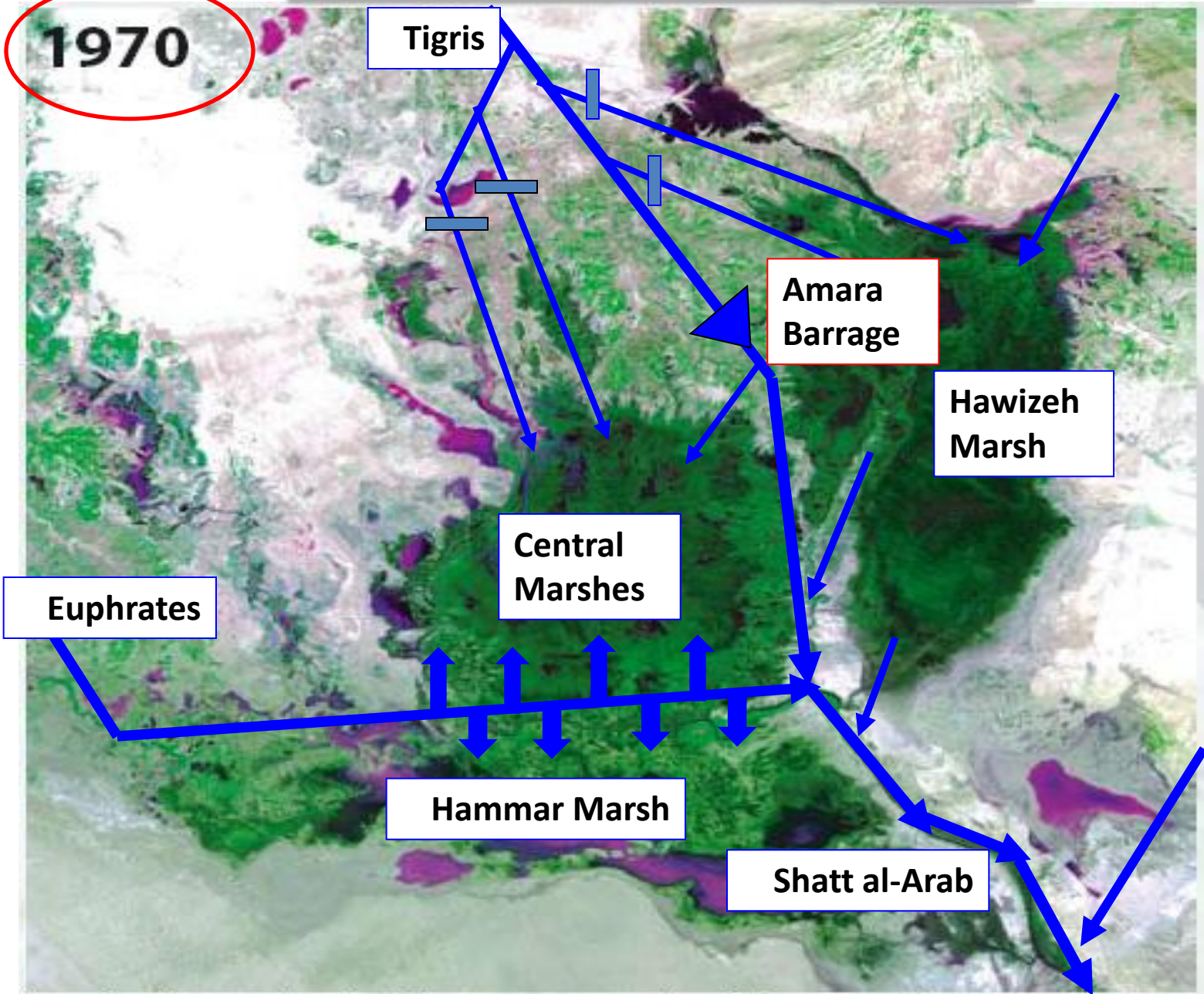
Phase 1. Evolution as a modern state 1920s – 1970s

- **Natural** river system with abundant water and fertile land.
- Science - based **planning** & implementation of water resources development projects.
- Construction of critical **water control** infrastructures across the country.
- **Agrarian Reform** (*not particularly successful*)
- Massive **land reclamation** projects .



The Marshlands in Southern Iraq

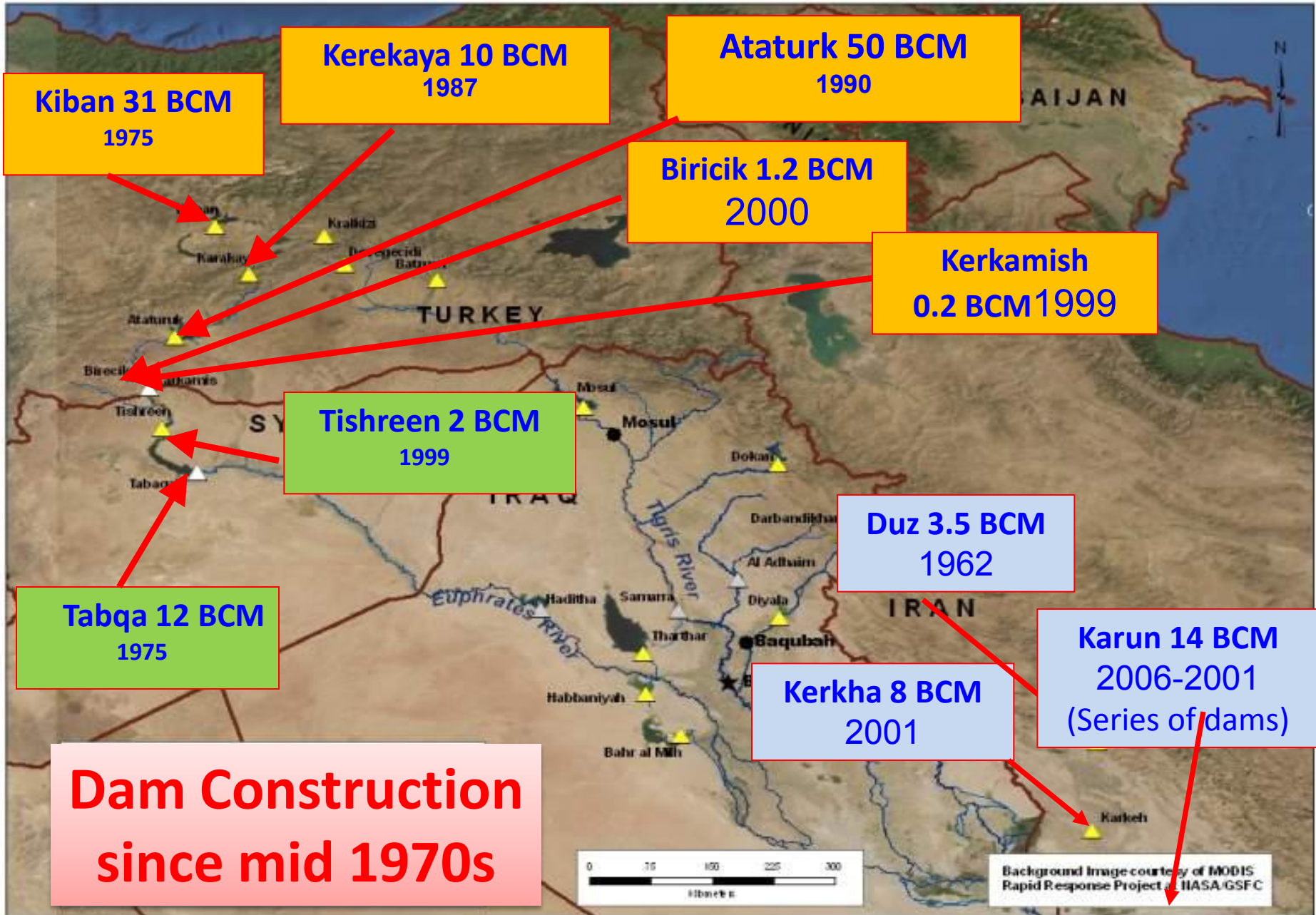
1970



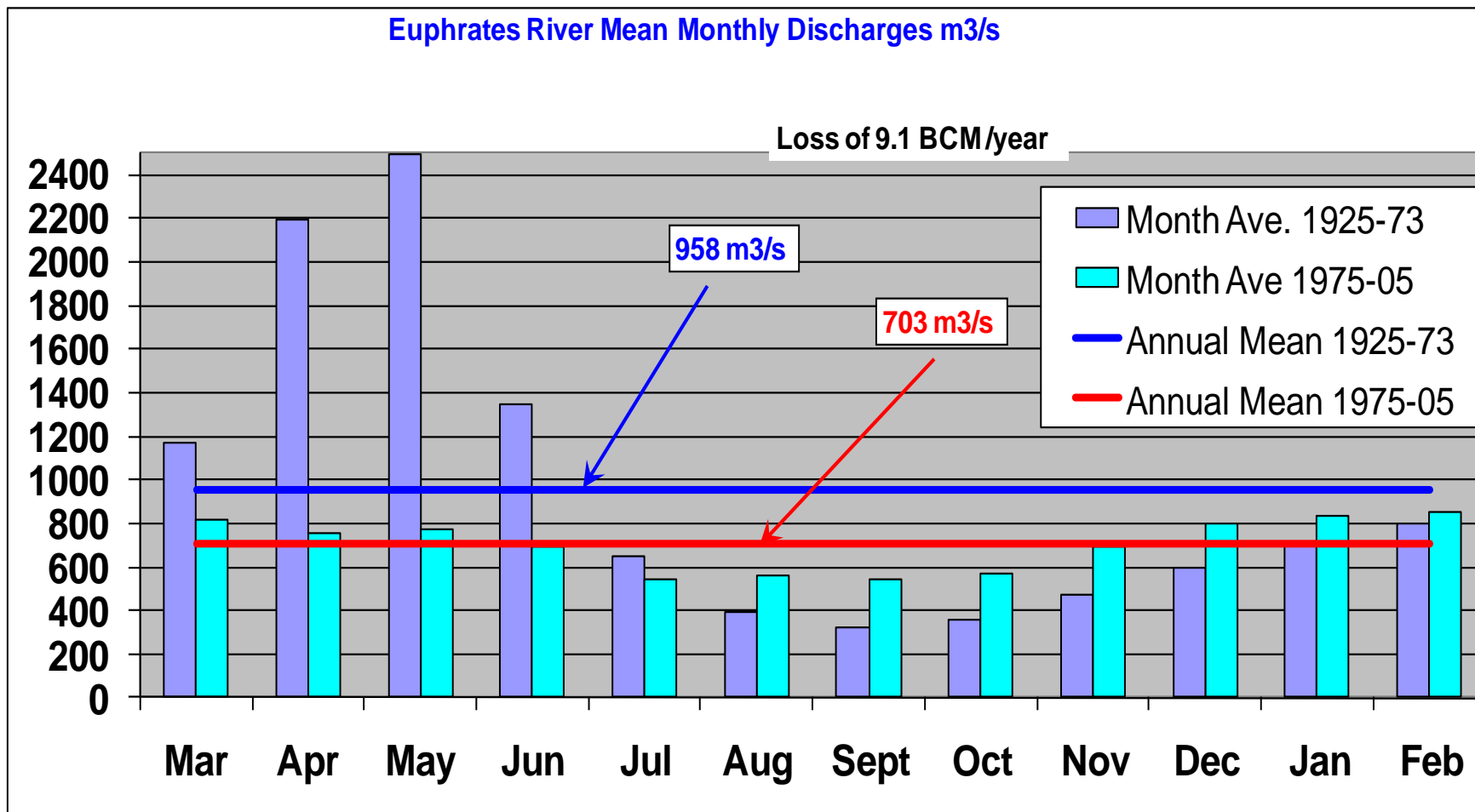
Landsat image (spring) (green: vegetation, blue: water)

Phase 2. Mismanagement , bad policies and war destruction 1980s - 2003

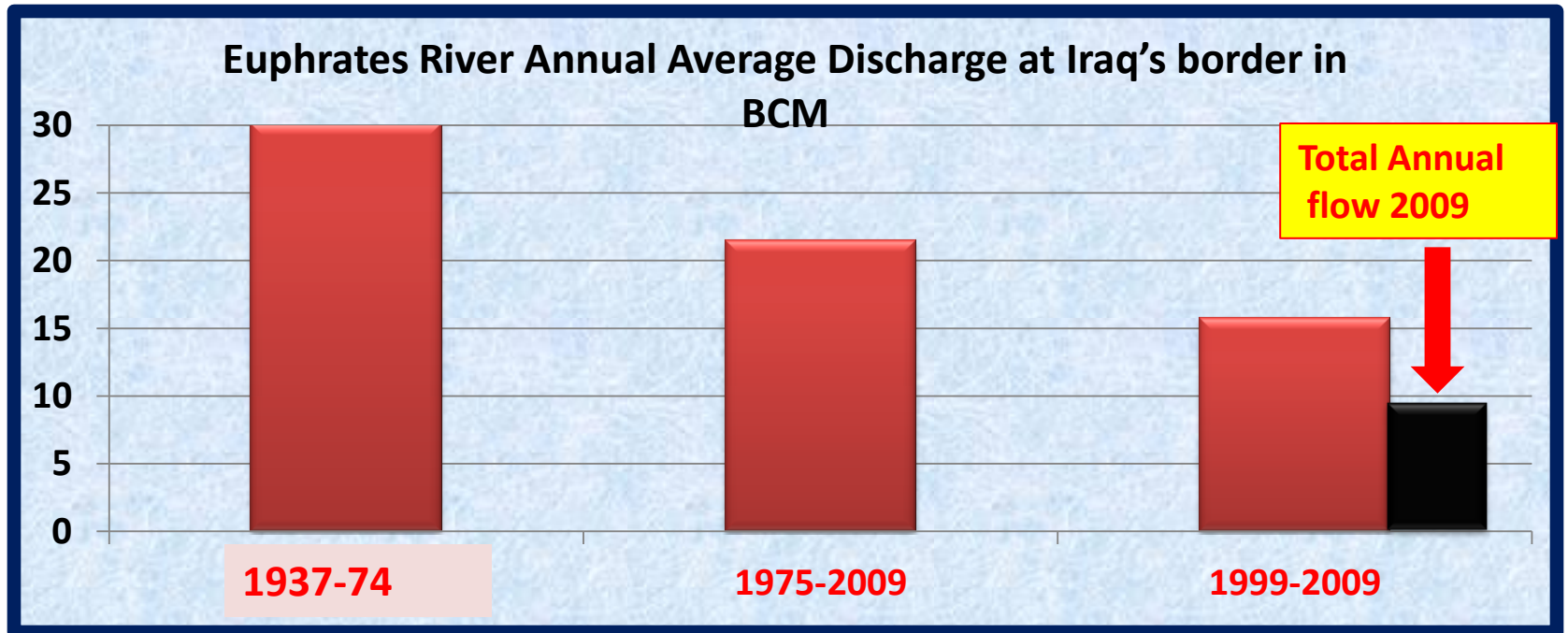
- Extremely **centralized** authoritarian approach and poorly (or badly) focused programs.
- Diversion of resources towards **military needs**.
- **Draining** of the vast Mesopotamian wetlands.
- War destruction & adaptation of fertile and water rich lands to serve military operations rather than crop production.
- **Declining** in water resources availability due to **dam constructions** in neighboring countries..



Euphrates 1925 – 2005



Water Resources changes



3. Recovery, transition and new governance arrangements 2003- present

- Rehabilitation, recovery and **emergency intervention** (*lawlessness*).
- New **Constitution** (2005) with two main Articles related to water resources management, namely articles **110.8** and **114.7** (*first attempt to divide power/authority*).
- Enormous **investment** opportunities (*Investment Law No.13 in 2006*).
- **Empowered Civil Society.**

The Major Challenges

1. **Centralization VS Decentralization/Federalism.**
2. **Authority & responsibility.** Who is responsible for what (MWR, MMPW, Baghdad Mayoralty, KR Gov. and Governorate Councils).
3. **No water-sharing** agreement with riparian countries.
4. **Climate change impact** (*prolonged drought*)

The Major Challenges... Continued

- 1. Transformation of agriculture** (*i.e changing role of MoAg, water saving technologies...etc*).
- 2. Lack of effective **framework** for coordination between the three levels of government as well as horizontally** (*MWR, MoAg, Baghdad Mayoralty, Min of Environment*).
- 3. Ambiguous constitutional articles** (*likely to change*) .

New measures

- Reuse of drainage water for wetlands restoration purposes
 - *Fresh water ecology*
Vs Salt water ecology



Dalmaj Lake



Ibn Najim Marsh

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Thank you