

How the UNECE Water Convention promotes transboundary water cooperation on the ground

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Implementing the UNECE Water Convention in various contexts

Significant diversity within UNECE region:


- Water challenges
 - ✓ Growing problem of water scarcity
 - ✓ Extreme events
- Political landscape
- Economic and social conditions



Contribution to water cooperation

20 years of experience supporting transboundary water cooperation

Intergovernmental platform facilitating :

- Exchange of experience and assistance to implementation
 - Building trust and establishing cooperation in difficult cases
 - Continuity of efforts to ensure sustained progress and long-term results
 - Addressing emerging issues
 - Strong drive and ownership by Parties and close involvement of non-Parties
- 



In practice...

The Convention played a crucial role in the region in **supporting cooperation:**

- Most of the existing agreements in Europe are modelled on the Convention (Danube, Sava, Bug, Kazakh-Russian, Lake Peipsi, WFD)
- Influenced the work of river commissions
- Promoted the IWRM approach

How?

- Soft-law tools (Guidelines)
- Projects on the ground (NPDs, capacity building...)
- Advisory services (New agreements, establishing joint bodies)

Responding to challenges

- Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change
- Recommendations on Payments for Ecosystem Services
- Model provisions on transboundary groundwaters



Practical support to establish cooperation: Tajik-Afghan example



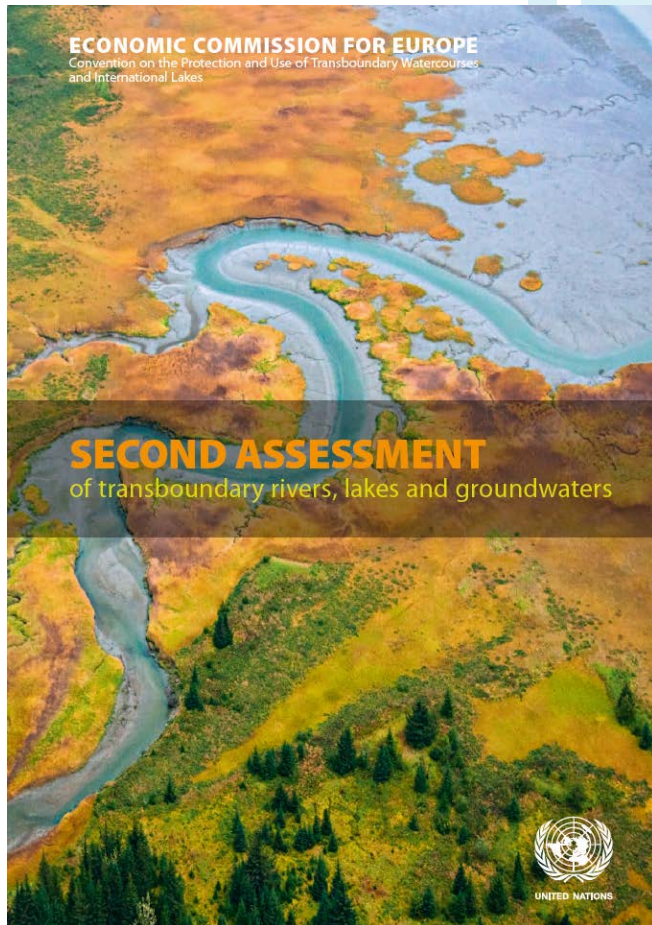
Establishing cooperation on hydrology and environment in upper Amudarya:

- bilateral working group
- exchange of hydrological data
- visits to hydrological monitoring stations
- cooperation with border guards
- first steps: cooperation in flood management and emergency situations

Intergovernmental bilateral Dniester Basin Treaty of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine (Rome, 29 November 2012)



Assessing results



The Second Assessment

- Covers more than 140 rivers, 25 lakes, about 200 groundwaters and 25 Ramsar Sites and other wetlands of transboundary importance
- Involved more than 250 experts from 50 countries
- Illustrates pressure factors, quantity and quality status, transboundary impacts, responses and future trends



UNECE Water Convention

Work programme 2013-2015

Area 1: Support to **implementation**

Area 2: EU Water Initiative **National** Policy Dialogues

Area 3: Assessing the **benefits** of transboundary cooperation

Area 4: Adapting to **climate change** in transboundary basins

Area 5: Water- food-energy-ecosystems **nexus**

Area 6: **Opening** of the Convention

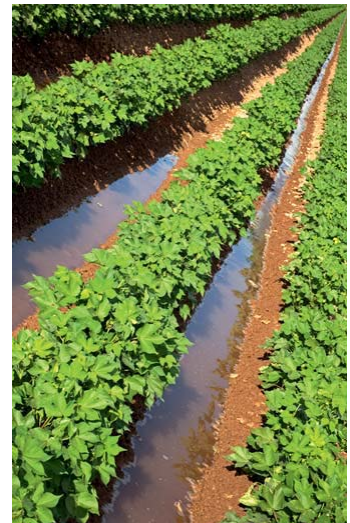
Area 7: **Promotion** of the Convention and establishment of strategic partnerships

Assessing the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

To support Governments to estimate the broad range of potential benefits of TWC to encourage the broadening of cooperation

	On economic activities	Beyond economic activities
From improved water management	Economic benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Level of activity and productivity in economic sectors• Economic impacts of water-related hazards	Social and environmental <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health• Employment and poverty• Access to services• Cultural value, recreation• Biodiversity
From enhanced trust	Regional integration <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goods, services, labour• Cross-border investments• Infrastructure networks	Geopolitical benefits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Peace and security• Avoided cost of military conflict, military spending

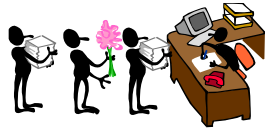
Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus



- Assessment to identify existing trade-offs, mapping of stakeholders
- Identification of synergies and opportunities for benefits from co-management, inter-sectoral coordination & transboundary cooperation through a participatory inter-sectoral process and supporting analysis
- The methodology piloted on the Alazani/Ganyh (GE, AZ); basin assessments Jan 2014-April 2015; report 2015
- To be applied to NWSAS

Institutional framework

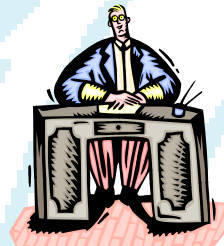
Meeting of the Parties



Implementation
Committee



*Working Group on
Monitoring and
Assessment*
Legal Board



Bureau



Task Force on Water and
Climate

Task Force on Water-
Food-Ecosystems-Energy
Nexus

Working Group on Integrated
Water Resources Management



Secretariat

A permanent institutional platform
ensures sustained progress and long-term results

Opening the Water Convention to all UN member states

- Aims:
 - Apply principles and provisions worldwide
 - Share experiences of Water Convention community of Parties
 - Learn from other regions of the world
- Amendments entered into force 6 February 2013
- More than 50 non-UNECE countries already participated in Convention's activities
- Many countries expressed interest in acceding to the Convention: Jordan, Iraq & Tunisia





Thank you!

More information

<http://unece.org/env/water>

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