

# Introduction to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes – Water Convention

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Secretary of the Water Convention



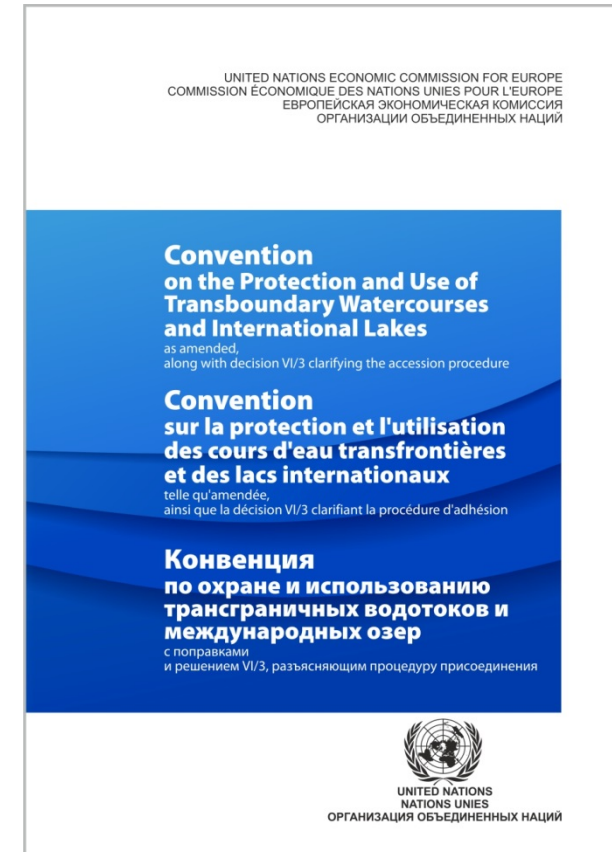
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# History of the Water Convention

- 1992: Adoption of the Water Convention
- 1996: Entry into force of the Convention
- 2003: Adoption of the amendment allowing all UN Member States to accede to the Convention
- 2012: Blanket approval by the Meeting of the Parties for all future requests for accession
- 2013: Entry into force of the amendment
- **1<sup>st</sup> March 2016: Operationalization of the Amendment: all UN Member States can accede to the Convention**

***Several countries have started national accession processes***

- Originally negotiated as a regional agreement for the pan-European region but what is «Europe»?
  - Not only the European Union, but including all countries from the Ex-Soviet Union
  - Not a peaceful continent
  - Not a homogeneous continent from the development point of view
  - Not a continent exempt from water problems



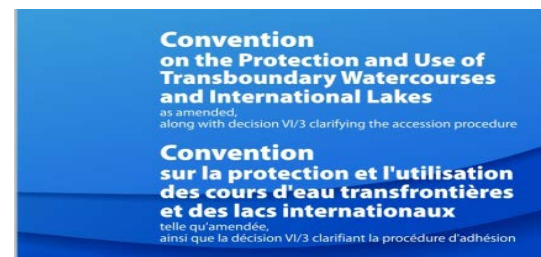
# A living instrument

Objective: to protect and ensure the quantity, quality and sustainable use of transboundary water resources by facilitating cooperation

## The Convention is based on three main pillars:

- Principle of prevention
- Principle of reasonable and equitable utilization
- Principle of cooperation
  
- Sustainability of resources is the overarching objective

Support to transboundary water cooperation thanks to:



A sound legal framework

An active institutional framework

Activities and projects on the ground







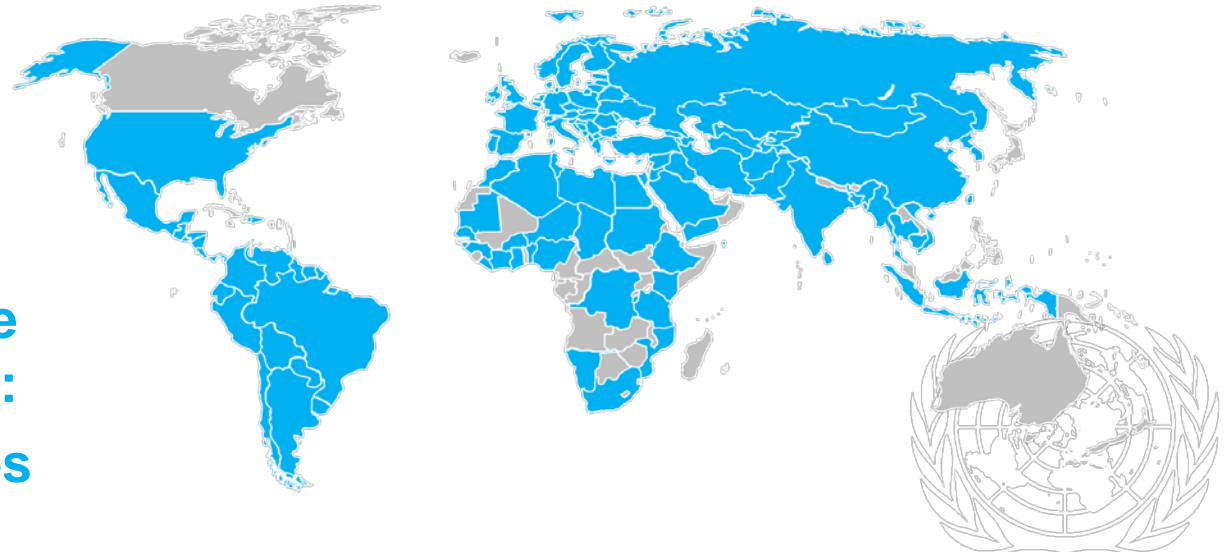




# Why was the Convention opened for global membership?

- ✓ Build on the success achieved => practice had demonstrated usefulness
- ✓ Apply the principles and provisions worldwide
- ✓ Share the experiences of the Convention
- ✓ Learn from other regions of the world
- ✓ Broaden political support for transboundary cooperation
- ✓ Jointly develop solutions to common challenges

**In practice, participation in the Convention's activities is already global: more than 110 countries participate in its activities**



Participation in events under the Water Convention

# Obligations under the Convention – General (Part 1)

- Obligation of preventing, controlling and reducing transboundary impacts (due diligence obligation)
- Obligation to ensure that transboundary waters are used in a reasonable and equitable way
- Obligation for riparian to cooperate through the establishment of agreements and joint bodies  
“All appropriate measures”

## Other provisions:

- Art. 4. **Monitoring**

programmes for monitoring the conditions of transboundary waters

- Art. 5. **Research and development**

on effective techniques for prevention, control and reduction of impact

- Art. 6. **Exchange of information**

the widest exchange of information, as early as possible

- Legal, administrative, economic, financial and technical measures
- Prior licensing of waste-water discharges by the competent authorities, and monitoring of the authorized discharges based on BAT
- Application of biological treatment or equivalent processes to municipal waste water
- Measures to reduce nutrient inputs from industrial and municipal sources
- Measures and best environmental practices for the reduction of pollution from diffuse sources
- Application of EIA and other means of assessment
- Risk of accidental pollution is minimized

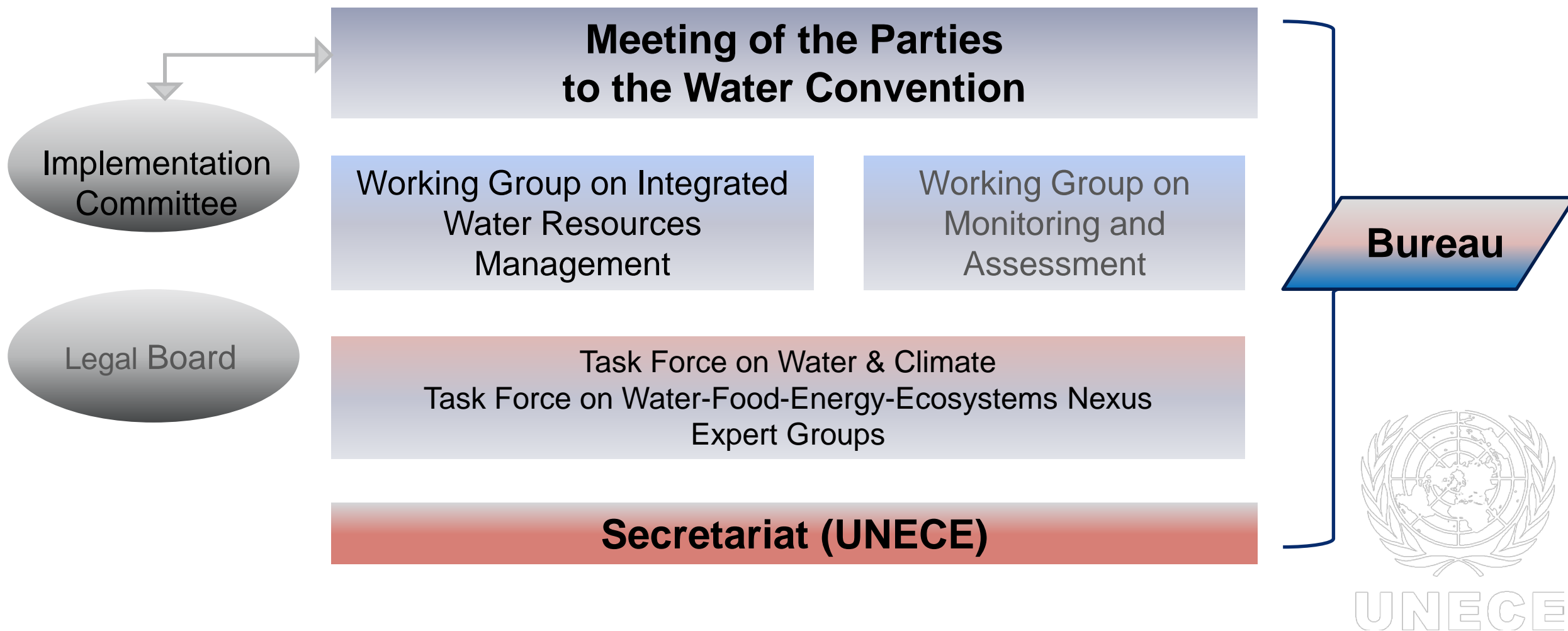


# Obligations under the Convention – Riparian Parties (Part 2)

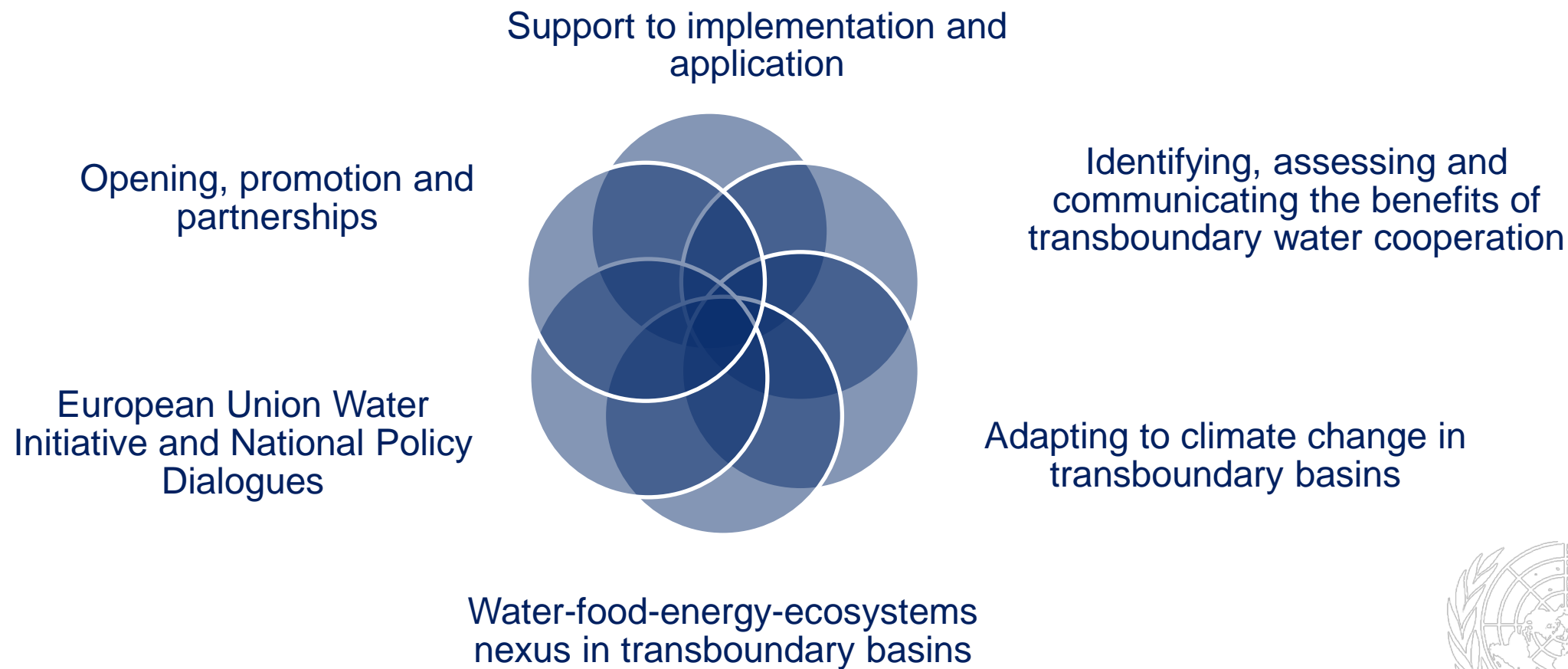
- Specific obligations for transboundary cooperation
- Applicable between Riparian Parties
  
- Obligation to conclude specific agreements and establish joint bodies
- Consultation
- Joint monitoring and assessment
- Exchange of information
- Warning and alarm systems
- Mutual assistance



# Institutional framework



# Programme of work for 2016-2018



# The Water Convention embeds a nexus approach and supports the SDGs implementation

Parties are required to look into impacts on:

- human health and safety,
- flora, fauna, soil, air, water,
- climate,
- landscape
- historical monuments or other physical structures
- the interaction among the above factors
- cultural heritage
- socio-economic conditions





# Thank you for your attention!

## More information

including guidelines, publications and information on activities under the Convention can be found at:

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

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