

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
- 1st 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

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE DMMISSION ÉCONOMIQUE DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'EUROPE BEPOПЕЙСКАЯ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕПИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

as amended, along with decision VI/3 clarifying the accession procedure

Convention sur la protection et l'utilisation des cours d'eau transfrontières et des lacs internationaux

telle qu'amendée, ainsi que la décision VI/3 clarifiant la procédure d'adhésion

Конвенция по охране и использованию трансграничных водотоков и

решением VI/3, разъясняющим процедуру присоединения







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



Acitivities and projects on the ground



Status of ratification of the UNECE Water Convention 40 countries and the European Union **Parties** Non Parties

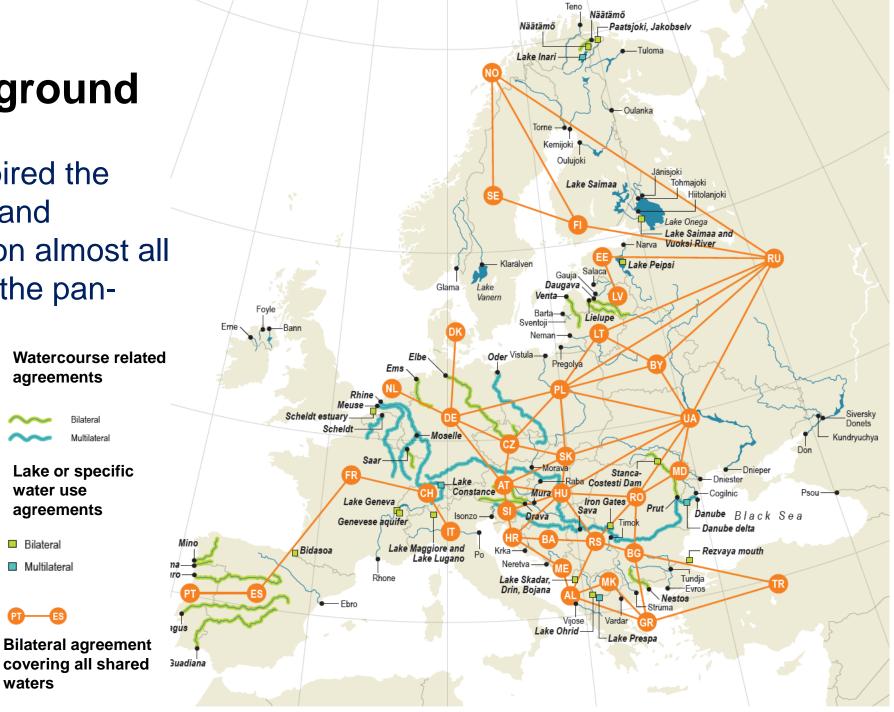
Impacts on the ground

The Convention has inspired the development of bilateral and multilateral agreements on almost all transboundary waters in the pan-European region

water use

Bilateral

waters



Impacts on the ground

The Convention has also driven continuous progress on transboundary cooperation:

- Promoted the expansion of the scope of cooperation
- Fostered the adoption of good practices
- Encouraged dealing with emerging issues
- Strenghtened national governance
- Supported progress at both the technical and political level

Watercourse related agreements



Multilatera

Lake or specific water use agreements



Multilateral





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





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 WUNECE (Part 2)

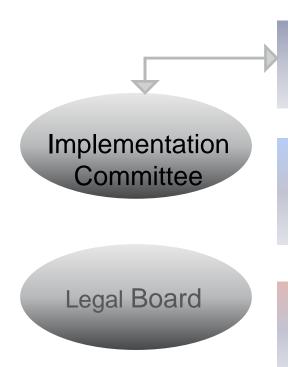


- Specific obligations for transboundary cooperation
- Applicable between Riparian Parties
- Obligation to conclude specific agreements and establish joint bodies
- Consultation
- Joint monitoring and assessment
- Exchange of information
- Warning and alarm systems
- Mutual assistance





Institutional framework



Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention

Working Group on Integrated
Water Resources
Management

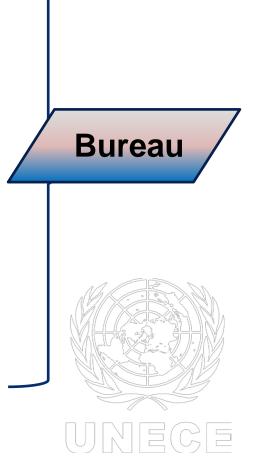
Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment

Task Force on Water & Climate

Task Force on Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus

Expert Groups

Secretariat (UNECE)





Programme of work for 2016-2018

Support to implementation and application

Opening, promotion and partnerships

Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues

Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins



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:

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