



WORLD WATER WEEK

in Stockholm,
August 16-22, 2009

Seminar

The UNECE Water Convention: how a legal framework is making a difference on the ground

19 August - 9:00-12:30

Stockholm International Fairs
Room K11



Since 1992, the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) has provided a unique legal framework and practical support for transboundary water cooperation in the pan-European region, contributing to improving the management of shared waters. The seminar will illustrate the practical usefulness of the Convention as a platform promoting action at different levels: from the development of strategic approaches for the whole UNECE region, for example on climate change adaptation in the transboundary context, to concrete projects furthering cooperation in specific basins. The second part of the Seminar will focus on challenges and possible solutions for transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia and the activities of the Water Convention in this sub-region, such as the recently started programme linked to the Berlin Water Process.

By presenting a broad range of experiences and lessons learnt under the Convention, the Seminar will demonstrate how a legal framework and its implementation have made a real difference, and can therefore also be of interest beyond the UNECE region.

Programme

- Chair:** **Ms. Heide Jekel,**
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention
- 09:00** Welcome and Introduction. Ms. Heide Jekel, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
- 09:05** Transboundary water cooperation as a basis for security. Mr. Ján Kubiš, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- 09:20** The importance of transboundary water management and the role of the international community. Ms. Uschi Eid, Vice-Chair of UNSGAB, Member of the German Parliament
- 09:35** How the Water Convention supports cooperation on the ground. Ms. Francesca Bernardini, Secretary to the Water Convention, UNECE
- 09:50** Information as a basis for cooperation: the Assessments of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE Region. Ms. Lea Kauppi, Director General, Finnish Environment Institute
- 10:05** Beyond water: ecosystem protection and economic tools. Ms. Sibylle Vermont, Senior Scientific Officer, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention
- 10:20** Discussion
- 10:30** Coffee break
- 11:00** Too much or too little water – Guiding climate change adaptation in transboundary basins. Ms. Renske Peters, Director for Water Affairs, Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, the Netherlands

Focus on Central Asia

- 11:15** Windows of opportunities - Steps to resolve the water crisis in Central Asia. Mr. Bo Libert, Regional Advisor, UNECE
- 11:25** Rebuilding regional water cooperation. Mr. Saghit Ibatullin, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea
- 11:40** The Berlin Water Process to support water management in Central Asia. Mr. Martin Jungius, Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Desk Officer, and Mr. Volker Frobarth, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Programme Manager
- 11:55** Will the environment become an important element in water cooperation in Central Asia? Mr. Bulat Yessekin, Consultant, Kazakhstan
- 12:10** Discussion and summary
- 12:30** Close

For more information:

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

This event is brought to you by: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Bureau of the UNECE Water Convention represented by the Governments of Germany, Finland and Switzerland, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

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