

Finland has had an essential role in development of international water law since the 1950's. This explains also the fact that Finland negotiated and signed bilateral transboundary water agreements with all its neighbors (Russia, Sweden, Norway) already before the International Conventions were signed. These agreements are, however, fully compliant with the Conventions. The cooperation has been operationalized through permanent institutions. Transboundary water cooperation has brought concrete mutual benefits for Finland as well as her neighbors. Based on this experience, Finland gives a high value for the Water Convention and has been one of the major donors for the Water Convention Secretariat through its history. Likewise, in recent years Finland launched a FinWaterWEI programme promoting sustainable water management in Central Asia where transboundary water issues are particularly important.

Through global opening of the UNECE Convention, and also having the UN Convention now in force, Finland expects transboundary water cooperation to be strengthened in many regions where disputes on equitable use of shared water resources prevent socio-economic development and utilization of ecosystem services. We also expect more cooperation between water using sectors and improvement of water governance. Finland would also like to see emphasis given to the involvement of upstream countries in water cooperation.

*Finnish-Russian transboundary water commission was founded in 1965. The working rules of the Commission were signed in 1966 by Eero Manner from Finland and by K.S. Kornev from Soviet Union.*

