



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

Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management

Third meeting
Rome, 22–24 October 2008
Item 13 of the provisional agenda

Informal paper 5

Proposed activities for the World Water Day 2009 on transboundary waters

Concept note prepared by the Secretariat

1. In 1992, the United Nations General Assembly designated 22 March of each year as the World Day for Water by adopting resolution A/RES/47/193. This world day for water was to be observed starting in 1993, in conformity with the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development contained in chapter 18 (Fresh Water Resources) of Agenda 21.
2. Each year, the World Water Day (WWD) has a different topic. The World Water Day 2009 will be devoted to transboundary water cooperation. The main objective is to raise awareness on the potential of transboundary waters, the potential to create conflicts but also and above all, to induce cooperation. Since numerous events will be organized at the global, regional, national and local level by many different actors and institutions, the Working Group is invited to discuss how activities at these different levels can support each other.
3. At the regional level, the World Water Day is an important opportunity to promote the Water Convention's work and therefore, a few products and material will be produced. As resources for the WWD are limited, activities should be designed so that any product developed at the Convention level is useful and widely distributed at national and local level. Vice-versa impacts of national and local activities could be multiplied through promotion at the regional level.
4. At the international level, UN-Water designates usually one or more UN agencies as lead coordinator for international activities. UNESCO is the coordinating institution for the World Water Day 2009, in cooperation with the UN-Water Task Force on Transboundary Waters, co-chaired by UNECE and UNESCO. The Task Force will mainly organize an international event at the World Water Forum in Istanbul as well as several other common products such as a slogan, message, brochure to be included on the website etc.: <http://www.unwater.org/worldwaterday.html> (to be confirmed)
These products should be used as much as possible also at the national and local level.
5. This document contains some suggestions for activities and material to be produced and asks several questions to stimulate discussion. It is based on discussions at the meeting of the Bureau (17-18 September 2008).

Involvement of focal points, river basin commissions, NGOs and other partners

6. Since the World Water Day aims to reach out to the general public, river basin organizations, governmental institutions and agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations, Academia etc. are all encouraged to organize events.

7. All the activities proposed to be developed under the Convention should serve the efforts by other actors at national and local level. It's therefore fundamental that products and activities are designed together with end users and that focal points, river basin commissions and other partners use them, translate them in their national languages and disseminate them as widely as possible.

8. In the UNECE region, the Water Convention could also play a useful role in promoting exchange of information on events and activities through its website. Use will be made of the Water Convention's network of focal points. Since the Water Convention and its work should be promoted and awareness increased it is important to provide promotion material. The website can provide an opportunity to report on events to take place and to provide such material.

Are there already plans for WWD2009 in your country/institution?

How could the Convention's best support efforts and national and local level?

How can the work of the Water Convention be publicised at these events?

Will it be useful for you to share information through the Water Convention's web site?

Promotion material for the Water Convention:

1. Updated brochure on the Water Convention

9. A new brochure will be developed, targeted at the general public. It will be shorter than the previous version (max 6-8 pages) and possibly be developed by a "communication" expert (e.g. a journalist). The bureau suggested producing the brochure in a way that one page which can be easily changed and updated and offered to circulate examples of such brochures used in their offices. The brochure will highlight as much as possible achievements and added value of the Convention and therefore be developed based on inputs from Parties. Translation of the brochure into national languages is strongly encouraged, but should be organized at the national level. The secretariat can only cover the translation into Russian.

What should be included in the brochure?

Will you translate the brochure into your national language?

How can an optimal distribution of the brochure be ensured?

2. Water Convention website

10. A special part of the Water Convention website will be devoted to serve as a forum for presenting and exchanging information on events organized by different partners, including

background information on the World Water Day, promotion material, etc. In addition, a calendar of events in the water sector will be included and updated on the Water Convention website, focusing especially on those events which the Convention and the Protocol are organizing or involved in.

11. Focal points and other partners will be responsible for informing the secretariat of their activities.

3. Fact sheets

12. At the UN-Water level it was decided to create fact sheets on successful cases of transboundary cooperation from all over the world. It is important that the UNECE region contributes a number of such fact sheets due to the long and successful history of transboundary cooperation in the region. These should at the same time show the achievements (and challenges) of implementation of the Convention. A common template for factsheets will be produced by FAO by end of November 2008.

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| Can you contribute any example from the region? |
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4. Promotion of the work and activities under the Convention

13. The work under the Water Convention is often not well known. WWD 2009 provides an opportunity to promote the Convention to a broader public. To this aim, specific products could be developed. Possibilities include:

- Production of a calendar with photos and activities on transboundary basins in the UNECE region (as done through the Danube Commission).
- Production of post cards with photos from transboundary river basins in the region
- Involve press/ media: press releases etc.
- Production of a video.

14. As the capacity is limited, efforts should focus on products which will have a broad distribution and that focal points will find useful to disseminate in their countries

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| What do you suggest should be developed as promotion material? |
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Any other suggestions and comments can be sent to: water.convention@unece.org