



Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management
Sixteenth meeting
Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment
Sixteenth meeting
Geneva, 26-28 April 2021

**UNEDITED LIST OF DECISIONS ADOPTED BY
THE WORKING GROUP ON INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND
WORKING GROUP ON MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT¹**

Items 1, 2 and 3: Opening of the session; Adoption of the agenda; Adoption of the report of the previous meetings

1. The working groups:

- (a) Adopted the agenda (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2021/1-ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2021/1);
- (b) Adopted the report of the 15th meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2020/2);
- (c) Adopted the report of the 15th meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2019/2).

Item 4: Recent developments related to transboundary water cooperation at the global level and under the Convention

2. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the organization of the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties on 29 September-1 October 2021 in a hybrid format in Geneva and entrusted the secretariat, in cooperation with the Bureau, to make all necessary arrangements;
- (b) Expressed deep gratitude to Estonia for all preparatory arrangements already made for hosting the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (c) Invited Estonia to host a major Convention event in 2022 in Tallinn, such as the celebration of the Convention's thirties anniversary, possibly back-to-back with the Convention's meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management;
- (d) Invited Estonia to continue playing the leading role in the preparations of the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties (hybrid, Geneva);
- (e) Welcomed the SDG 6 global acceleration framework and encouraged countries and organizations to contribute to its implementation;
- (f) Underlined the need to highlight the importance and benefits of transboundary water cooperation in the global water processes such as towards the 2023 United Nations water decade conference,

¹ All pre-session documents and presentations are available at: <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/water/events/3rd-Joint-meeting-WGIWRM-and-WGMA>

and requested the secretariat to contribute to these processes and to organize a preparatory regional/ thematic event.

Item 5: Status of ratification

3. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the significant progress in accession by Guinea Bissau, Iraq and Togo and encouraged the countries close to accession to finalize the process as soon as possible to participate to the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties as Party, if possible;
- (b) Encouraged other countries to start or progress in their national processes of accession.

Item 6: Increasing awareness of and accession to the Convention and application of its principles drawing on the benefits of cooperation

6 a) Increasing capacity for implementation of the Convention and supporting national processes towards accession

4. The working groups:

- (a) Reaffirmed its commitment to support accession processes through the provision of technical and legal assistance, including by sharing Parties' expertise in implementation;
- (b) Expressed appreciation for the assistance provided by existing Parties to support accession;
- (c) Thanked donors, which provided resources to support activities promoting the Convention, and lead Parties and the Bureau for providing political leadership;
- (d) Expressed appreciation for the support by global and regional organizations and river basin organizations, including the United Nations system, contributing to awareness raising and increasing capacity for accession to and implementation of the Convention;
- (e) Invited countries and partners to use and promote the UN-Water policy brief on "the United Nations global water conventions: Fostering sustainable development and peace" to build a better understanding on the usefulness and complementarity of both conventions;
- (f) Decided to include "Increasing capacity for implementation of the Convention and supporting national processes towards accession" into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

6 b) Promoting and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation, and supporting the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies

5. The working groups:

- (a) Invited countries and organizations to provide written comments on the *draft checklist on the development of agreements or other arrangements for transboundary water cooperation (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2021/INF.3-ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2021/INF.3)* to the Water Convention secretariat no later than 15 May 2021;
- (b) Entrusted the secretariat, in cooperation with the lead Party and the Drafting Group, to finalize the checklist integrating the comments received for adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its 9th session, and to translate it and print it in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish;
- (c) Decided to include "Promoting and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation" and "Supporting the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies" into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

6 c) Implementation Committee

6. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the outcomes of the first advisory procedure carried out by the Implementation Committee and encouraged other Parties to make use of this useful mechanism;

- (b) Recalled decision VI/1 on support to implementation and compliance (ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.2) in particular the provisions related to the election of Committee members, and the deadline 7 July 2021 for the submission of candidates by Parties for the election at the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties.

6 d) Implementation of the Strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level

7. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the actions taken so far by the Bureau, Parties, partners and the secretariat to implement the Strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level;
- (b) Encouraged the Bureau, Parties, partners and the secretariat to accelerate efforts in the implementation of the Strategy for a better management of transboundary waters worldwide.

Item 7: Promoting an integrated and intersectoral approach to water management at all levels

7 a) Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins

8. The working groups:

- (a) Encouraged countries participating in nexus projects to make use of the nexus assessment results in developing policies and interventions and to explore operationalizing nexus and investments, and mobilizing resources for implementing them, in collaboration with other sectors;
- (b) Encourage partners to apply and further develop the questionnaire on nexus solutions and investments;
- (c) Invited countries and organizations to provide written comments on the draft publication *Solutions and investments in the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus: a synthesis of experiences in transboundary basins (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2021/INF.4-ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2021/INF.4)* to the Water Convention secretariat no later than 15 May 2021;
- (d) Entrusted the secretariat, in cooperation with the lead Party and partners, to finalize the Nexus solutions publication based on the comments received, and publish and print in English, French, Russian and Spanish, with the English version available by the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (e) Decided to include “Supporting intersectoral dialogues and assessments through the application of the water-food- energy-ecosystems nexus approach” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

7 b) Supporting equitable and sustainable water allocation in a transboundary context

9. The working groups:

- (a) Invited countries and organizations to provide written comments on the English version of the *draft handbook on water allocation in a transboundary context (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2021/INF.5-ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2021/INF.5)* to the Water Convention secretariat no later than 21 May 2021 while versions in French and Russian would be made available in June with a later deadline for comments;
- (b) Entrusted the secretariat, in cooperation with the lead Party and the Expert Group, to finalize the *Water allocation handbook* based on the comments received and submit it in English, French, Russian and Spanish to the Meeting of the Parties for adoption at its 9th session and subsequently to publish and print it in those languages;
- (c) Decided to include “Supporting equitable and sustainable water allocation in a transboundary context” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

7 c) Supporting National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management under the European Union Water Initiative

10. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the progress in the National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, expressed appreciation and gratitude for the support provided by the European Union and encouraged the European Union and other donors to continue supporting financially the work of the NPDs in these regions;
- (b) Decided to include “Supporting National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management under the European Union Water Initiative” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

Item 8: Monitoring, assessment and information-sharing in transboundary basins

11. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the outcomes of the expert meeting and decided to reflect the slight amendments decided by the group in the draft programme of work for 2022-2024;
- (b) Decided to include “Supporting monitoring, assessment and information sharing in transboundary basins” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

Item 9: Reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2 and under the Convention

12. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed that all Parties had submitted reports under the Water Convention in the second reporting cycle in 2020-2021;
- (b) Expressed appreciation and gratitude to the 129 countries out of 153 sharing transboundary waters, that had submitted reports to UNECE and UNESCO in the second monitoring of SDG indicator 6.5.2
- (c) Called on countries to make use of the reports in order to improve their transboundary cooperation, for example by setting national or basin-wide targets;
- (d) Invited partners, such as Regional Economic Commissions, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations or basin organisations, to capitalize on the reporting of SDG indicator 6.5.2 in order to continue building capacity on SDG indicator 6.5.2 and for possible joint analysis of the reports at regional level;
- (e) Requested the secretariat to finalize and publish, together with UNESCO and in the framework of UN-Water, the *Second report on SDG indicator 6.5.2 - Accelerating progress on transboundary water cooperation to achieve Target 6.5* in Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish;
- (f) Invited countries and organizations to provide, no later than 15 June 2021, written comments on the *Draft second report on progress on transboundary water cooperation under the Water Convention* to be circulated by the secretariat in May 2021;
- (g) Requested the secretariat to finalize the *second report on progress on transboundary water cooperation under the Water Convention* based on the comments to be received, and publish and print in English, French and Russian, with at least the English version to be available by the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (h) Entrusted the secretariat to further develop the proposal for an online reporting system for consideration and endorsement at the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (i) Decided to include “Reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2 and under the Convention” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

Item 10: Facilitating financing of transboundary water cooperation

13. The working groups:

- (a) Entrusted the secretariat, in cooperation with the co-lead Parties and partners, to finalize the publication on funding and financing of transboundary water cooperation and basin development,

and publish and print it in English, French, Russian and Spanish for the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties;

- (b) Decided to include “Facilitating funding and financing of transboundary water cooperation and basin development” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

Item 11: Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

14. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the conclusions of the global workshop on increasing resilience to climate change through improved water management at national and transboundary levels (Geneva and online, 29-31 March 2021) and requested the secretariat to transmit these conclusions to UNFCCC and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with a view to presenting them at COP26;
- (b) Appreciated the progress of the network of basins working on climate change adaptation and encouraged more transboundary basins to join the network;
- (c) Encouraged countries to mainstream water and transboundary cooperation into their national climate-related documents such as, for example, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and to liaise with colleagues responsible for climate change issues and disaster risk reduction;
- (d) Decided to include “Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

Item 12: Partnerships, communication and knowledge management

12 a) Cooperation with UN-Water, global and regional partners and other multilateral environmental agreements

15. The working groups:

- (a) Encouraged partners to further identify possible synergies and join efforts with the Water Convention to support a better understanding and implementation of the Convention and its activities worldwide, including under the future 2022-2024 programme of work of the Convention;
- (b) Entrusted the secretariat, in cooperation with the Bureau, to develop a draft decision on partnerships or more specific partnership decisions with particular organizations for adoption at the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties;
- (c) Decided to include “Cooperation with UN-Water, global and regional partners and other multilateral environmental agreements” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

12 b) Activities of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

16. The working groups:

- (a) Decided to include “Activities of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents” into the draft future programme of work for 2022-2024.

Item 13: International Water Assessment Centre

17. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the activities carried out by the International Water Assessment Centre in 2019-2021 and thanked Kazakhstan for the support provided to the centre;
- (b) Entrusted Kazakhstan, in consultation with the Bureau and the secretariat, to develop the draft work programme for IWAC for 2022-2024 and submit it to the Meeting of the Parties for adoption at its 9th session.

Item 14: Financing of the Water Convention

18. The working groups:

- (a) Expressed gratitude to all donors supporting the implementation of the Conventions programme of work;
- (b) Invited Parties, non-Parties and other donors to provide financial resources for the implementation of the programme of work, if possible unearmarked;
- (c) Endorsed the draft decision on targets for a more sustainable and predictable funding of the work under the Convention, and requested the secretariat to submit the draft decision to the Meeting of the Parties for adoption at its 9th session.

Item 15: Future programme of work for 2022–2024

19. The working groups:

- (a) Supported the mainstreaming of gender into the future programme of work for 2022-2024;
- (b) Encouraged Parties to propose gender balanced nominations of focal points, delegates to meetings and candidates for the Bureau and Implementation Committee;
- (c) Agreed on the future institutional structure under the Convention and the mandate of the different subsidiary bodies to guide the implementation of the programme of work for 2022–2024 of the Water Convention;
- (d) Invited countries and organizations to share any additional written comments on the draft programme of work of the Water Convention for 2022-2024 to the secretariat no later than 15 May 2021;
- (e) Endorsed the draft programme of work for 2022-2024, and entrusted the Bureau of the Convention, with the support of the secretariat, with the integration of comments received and finalization of the draft programme of work for 2022-2024 and submit it to the Meeting of the Parties for adoption at its 9th session;
- (f) Invited Parties, non-Parties and other donors to provide financial resources for the implementation of the draft programme of work, and to indicate such pledges at the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties.

Item 16: Preparation of the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties

20. The working groups:

- (a) Welcomed the preparations for the 9th session Meeting of the Parties by Estonia, the secretariat and the Bureau;
- (b) Encouraged Parties, non-Parties and organizations to participate in the meeting at high level and to mobilize their permanent missions in Geneva for participation, as appropriate;
- (c) Entrusted the Bureau, in cooperation with the secretariat, to develop rules for decision-making at the hybrid session.

Item 17: Possible hosting of the tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties

21. The working groups:

- (a) Decided to submit the draft decision on the procedure for proposing the hosting of sessions of the Meeting of the Parties as contained in document ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2020/4 to the Meeting of the Parties for adoption at its 9th session;
- (b) Requested the secretariat to submit, no later than 6 weeks before the 9th session of the Meeting of the Parties, an overview of the proposals received with regard to hosting the tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties, for consideration and decision by the Meeting of the Parties at its 9th session.