

# The **Protocol** on Water and Health

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where health,  
environment and  
development policies  
meet



UNECE



EUROPE

# Why a treaty to manage water resources and prevent water-related diseases ?

- In the European Region, poor-quality drinking-water causes over 13 000 deaths from diarrhoea among children aged 0–14 years (5.3% of all deaths in this age group) each year
- 140 million (16%) do not have a household connection to a drinking-water supply
- In central and eastern Europe water is safe only in 30—40% of households.
- 85 million (10%) do not have improved sanitation
- Emerging threats: protozoan infestations of drinking-water supply systems, proliferation of *Legionella*, and potential health problems related to the increasingly complex chemical environment.

# The Protocol on water and health:

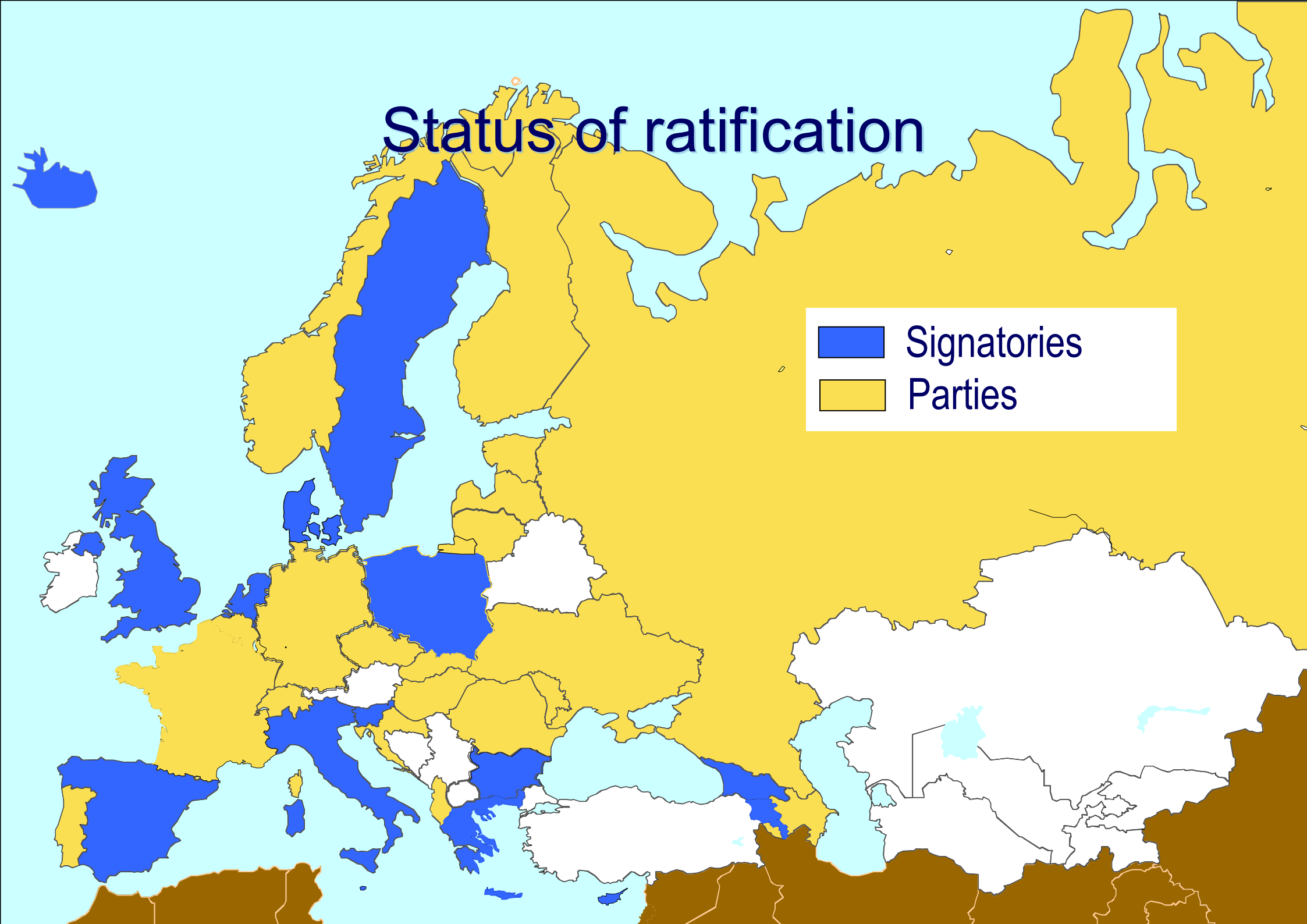


It is the world's first legal treaty designed to reduce water-related deaths and diseases through improved water management.

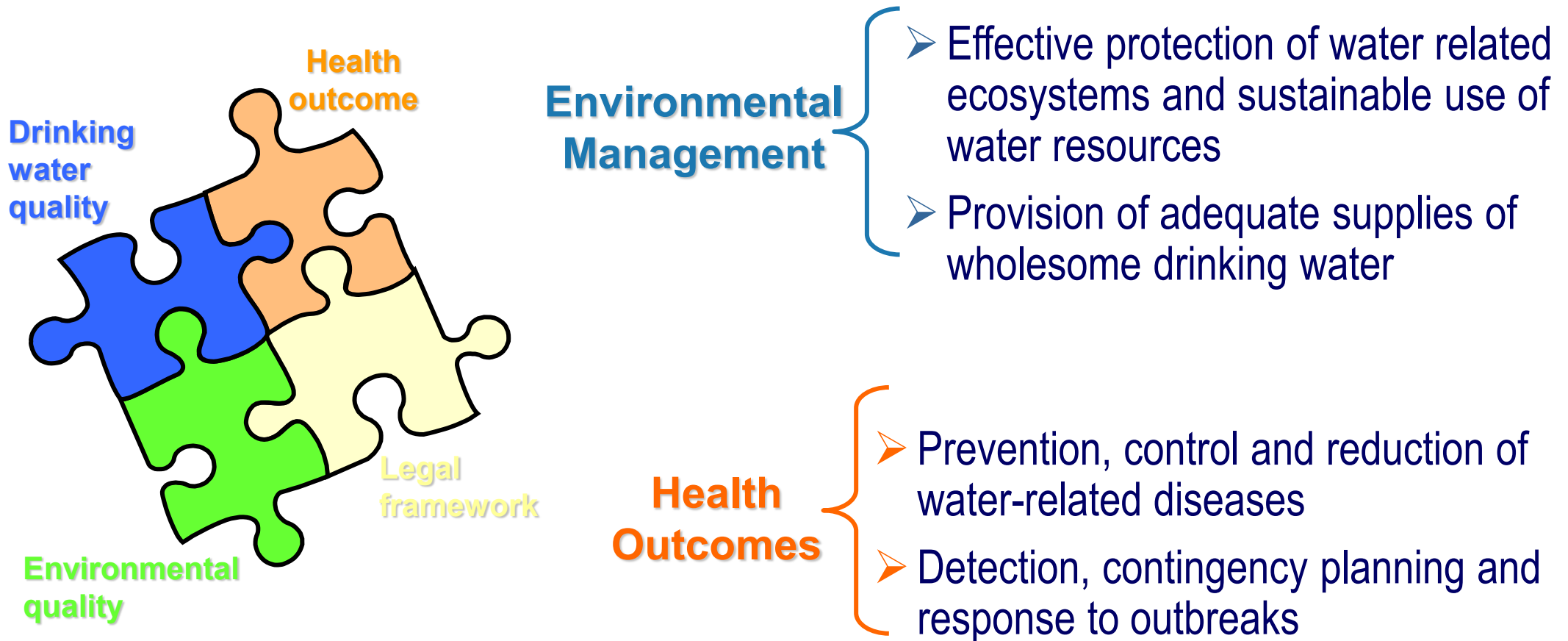
It is up to the countries to translate its code into the reality of greater access to safe water and improved sanitation.

# Status of ratification

-  Signatories
-  Parties



# Goal: Protect human health and well being by better management of water resources



# Goal: Protect human health and well being by providing institutional framework for:

- Sustainable development and MDGs
- Poverty reduction
- Policies integration
- Cooperation between sectors and countries



# Scope

**Costal and  
estuarine  
waters**



**Water  
during  
abstraction,  
transport,  
treatment  
and supply**



@ WHO central photo library



**Surface  
waters**

@ UNEP photo collection



**Wastewater  
collection,  
transport,  
treatment,  
discharge,  
reuse**

# Parties shall:

## ESTABLISH TARGETS

- Water supply and sanitation
- Water management
- Health protection

## SET DATES

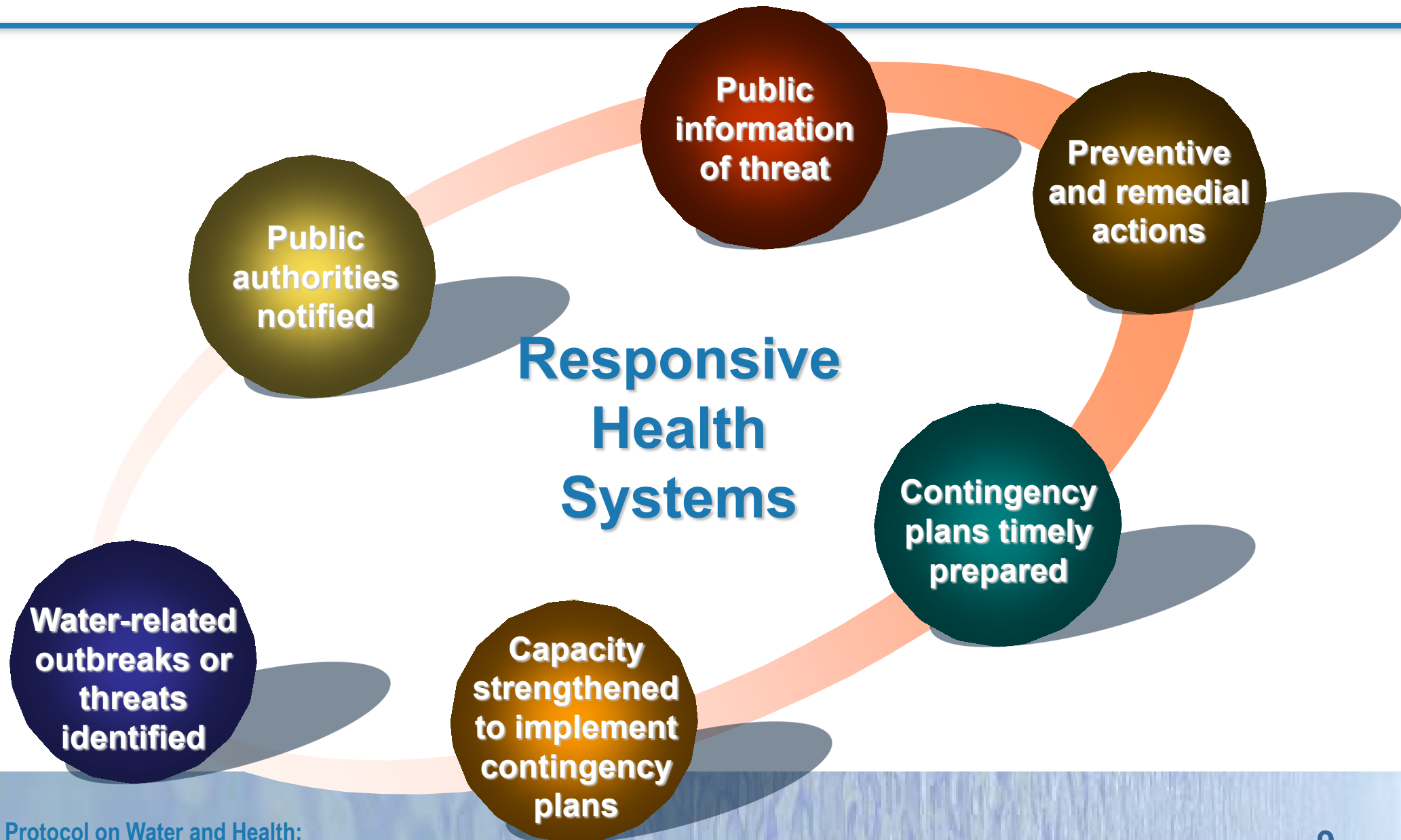
Within 2 years of becoming a Party, each country sets and publishes targets, and dates for achieving them

## REVIEW PROGRESS

- collect and evaluate data
- publish results
- review progress
- provide summary reports

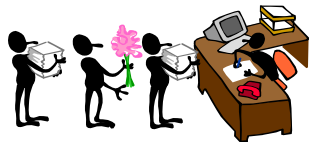


# Within 3 years each country shall establish systems for surveillance and control of water-related diseases



# How does the Protocol function?

## Meeting of the Parties (MOP)



Compliance Committee



Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism



Bureau



- Task Force Surveillance
- Task Force on Indicators and Reporting
- Task Force on Extreme Weather Events

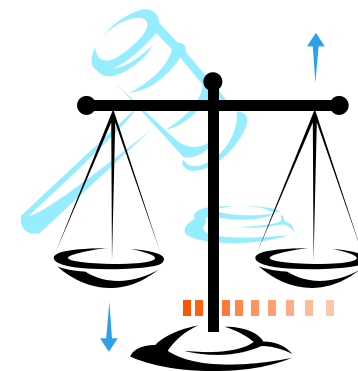
Working Group on Water and Health



Joint Secretariat WHO – UNECE

# Legal implications of the Protocol are beneficial

- ✓ Legally binding => ensures long-term commitment and forms a basis for improved regulatory environment
- ✓ Although legally binding, the Protocol is non confrontational and non judicial
- ✓ Does not conflict with other obligations (e.g. EU Directives) but make up for gaps not covered by fragmentary regulation
- ✓ Facilitates access to other international Conventions, and to Community Acquis



# The Protocol offers:

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- ✓ International assistance coordinated and strengthened through Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism
- ✓ Basis for cooperation on water and health between the countries of the European Union and other countries of the UNECE and WHO Europe
- ✓ Identifies and promotes more flexible and cost-effective development alternatives according to regional, national and local priorities
- ✓ Includes novel approaches such as contingency planning and water safety plan approaches

# Further advantages:

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- ✓ Designed to support continuous progress with pace and objectives tailored to countries' priorities and capacities
- ✓ Programme of work supports implementation and harmonization in the region as well as a framework for dealing with emerging issues
- ✓ Catalyses coordinated national actions by different stakeholders and promotes inter-sectoral cooperation and holistic approach
- ✓ Facilitates public participation.

*Adoption of the Protocol is a demonstration of coordinated governments' commitment to protection of human health through improved management of water and water related ecosystems.*

## **The Protocol on Water and Health**

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*www.euro.who.int/watsan*

*www.unece.org/env/water*

**Thank you for your  
attention**

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