

A vertical stream of water falls from the top center, creating a large splash with many small droplets. Below the splash, concentric ripples spread out across the surface of the water. The background is a gradient of blue, from a lighter cyan at the top to a darker blue at the bottom.

**NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE: GHANA – CONTEXT OF
ACCESSION TO UN GLOBAL WATER CONVENTIONS, THE
VALUE ADD, AND DEVELOPING A ROAD MAP TO ACCEDE
TO THE WATER CONVENTION**

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**ZAMBIA SUB-NATIONAL STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP IN THE CONGO BASIN:
ACCESSION TO THE WATER CONVENTION AND RELATED TRANSBOUNDARY WATER GOVERNANCE PROCESSES**

**13-14 SEPTEMBER 2022
MANSA, LUAPULA PROVINCE, ZAMBIA**



National Context of Accession to UN Global Water Conventions (1)

Ghana's Transboundary Water Resources Concerns:

- About 30% of the freshwater flows from outside of Ghana's international borders.
- Provide substantial water supply, hydropower, irrigation, and industrial needs.
- Links the populations living in the shared basins : socio-economic interdependencies among the riparian countries.
- Recent extreme events (floods) and pollution occurrences in the transboundary basins (Volta, Tano, and Bia) have been of grave concern.



National Context of Accession to UN Global Water Conventions (2)

Ghana's Position:

- Ensure pragmatic solutions anchored on negotiations & dialogue
- Cooperate fully with her riparian neighbours and other global watercourse countries.

The Needs:

- Need for international legal agreements to serve as vital tools:
 - To guide, foster, and secure the required transboundary water cooperation.
- Ghana sees the 1992 Water Convention and 1997 Watercourses Convention as vital tools to promote her position on transboundary cooperation.



National Context of Accession to UN Global Water Conventions (3)

- Both Conventions cover international watercourses - surface & underground freshwater and serve as mechanisms to strengthen international cooperation.
- The Conventions embody a number of principles:
 - *equitable and reasonable utilization;*
 - *obligation not to cause significant harm;*
 - *general obligation to cooperate; etc.*
- They are compatible, not contradictory, and in many ways complementary:
 - 1997 Watercourses Convention complements the 1992 Water Convention by detailing the factors relevant to equitable and reasonable utilization (article 6).



National Context of Accession to UN Global Water Conventions (4)

- Differences between the two conventions on the same subject matter are of greater or lesser stringency or detail rather than a matter of conflicting prescriptions.
 - 1997 Watercourses Convention leaves confined groundwater outside its scope, 1992 Water Convention covers all transboundary groundwater, including confined aquifers.
- The differences are rather a strength since the more detailed provisions in one instrument can inform the implementation of the other.
- It is good to sign up for both hence, Ghana's accession to both Conventions.

The Value Add: The Benefits (1)

- The Conventions have proven their effectiveness as an international legal regime.
- Water Convention provides Ghana with:
 1. A platform for enhancing international cooperation for shared rivers and aquifers.
 - Framework and support in establishing agreements and bodies for specific basins - the ongoing case of the Comoe, Bia, and Tano basins.



2. Specific timeframes, standards, and procedures for Ghana in developing single and joint trans-border water infrastructure.
 - Developing single and joint trans-border water infrastructure such as the Sogakope-Lome water supply, and the Pwalugu Multipurpose Dam projects.
3. Applicable provisions to promote data exchange and information sharing as well as joint training programmes and relevant seminars and meetings on data exchange.

The Value Add: The Benefits (2)



- Developing agreement on an obligatory minimum amount of water that should flow into Ghana from Burkina Faso for use, especially in the dry season.
- 4. Step-by-step mechanisms to pursue conflict prevention and resolution.
 - Creates room for Ghana to engage its neighbours on activities inimical to us as the downstream country.

- 5. Provisions for implementing obligations, especially the obligation aimed at prevention, control, and reduction of significant transboundary impacts.
 - Addressing impacts of the perennial spillage from Bagre Dam in Burkina Faso into Ghana and pollution of Bia River in Cote d'Ivoire from mining activities in Ghana.

The Value Add: The Benefits (3)

6. Enhancing Good Governance and Investment:

- Accession has signaled to other countries, international organizations, financial institutions, and other actors the willingness to cooperate on the basis of transboundary norms and standards.
- Enhancing the trust of international investors in terms of good governance (clear processes, rules, standards, and norms).



- Provides the necessary framework – international principles, standards, and practices to enhance management of international watercourses and contribute to the implementation of SDG target 6.5.
- ### 7. At the regional level - has been given key importance:
- ECOWAS Water Resources Management Centre is engaging countries to enter into or improve transboundary arrangements.
 - Volta Basin Authority developing a Water Charter that embodies the principles of the global water conventions.

The Value Add: The Benefits (4)

8. Technical Assistance and Support:

- Ghana could benefit from the use of the Water Convention's trust fund – for studies and pilot projects; and support for capacity building (priority is given to parties).
- Benefits from existing experiences, such as guidance documents, activities, and projects on the ground.



- e.g. the Water Convention's activities on adaptation to climate change and on transboundary flood management.
- Support from the Community of Parties:
 - The water convention is a collective forum. Ghana as a party may bring its needs and expectations to the attention of all other parties - a party is not left alone in its dealings.
 - Assisting in spreading the accession message and sharing experiences.

The Value Add: The Benefits (5)

9. Contribution to International Peace and Security.
 - Participation in and cooperation through the Water Convention intergovernmental platform –
 - reduces uncertainty;
 - builds relationships –
- contributing to international peace and security.





Developing a Road Map to Accede to the Water Convention

- The key to the Accession is a clear Roadmap to be followed through.
- Developing the Roadmap involved the following:
 - Lead institution to lead the process
 - Development of a Ratification Toolkit
 - Identification of Key Stakeholders
 - Engagement/Consultation of the Stakeholders (including CSO & Media)
 - Materials and platforms for communication and advocacy
 - Timelines for the accession
 - Resources and Support Required (Internal and External).



THANK YOU