



10th session

Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention

23-25 OCTOBER 2024 | LJUBLJANA | SLOVENIA



Information for non-Party States participating in the tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP 10) to the Water Convention

23–25 October 2024 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

This document aims to assist representatives of non-Parties to the Water Convention to prepare for the Tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties and promote an active participation in the discussion at the session. It provides a background on the organization of work at the Meeting of the Parties and highlights agenda items which could be of particular interest for non-Parties.

The Water Convention

The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was adopted in Helsinki in 1992 and entered into force in 1996. To date, the Convention counts 55 Parties, almost all countries sharing waters in the pan-European region, joined by 14 States outside the pan-European region¹. Indeed, an amendment to the Convention that entered into force on 6 February 2013, turned the Water Convention, initially a regional convention, into a universal convention on transboundary water cooperation. As of 1 March 2016, all United Nations Member States can accede to the Convention. The Convention actively engages globally with both Parties and Non-Parties in the advancement of transboundary water cooperation through projects on the ground, publications, events and its regular meetings. More than 140 countries worldwide have already taken part in its activities.

The Convention strengthens transboundary water cooperation and measures for the sustainable management of both transboundary surface waters and groundwaters. It requires Parties to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impacts, to use transboundary waters in a reasonable and equitable way and ensure their sustainable management. Parties bordering the same transboundary waters have to cooperate by entering into specific agreements and establishing joint bodies. As a framework agreement, the Convention does not replace bilateral and multilateral agreements for specific basins or aquifers; instead, it fosters their adoption and implementation, as well as further development. The Convention's implementation supports the reaching of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular target 6.5.

More information is also available from:

Introduction: About the Water Convention (<https://www.unece.org/env/water/text/text.html>)

Frequently Asked Questions on the 1992 Water Convention (<https://unece.org/environment-policy/publications/frequently-asked-questions-1992-water-convention>)

¹ Chad, Senegal (2018), Ghana (2020), Guinea Bissau, Togo (2021), Cameroon (2022), Nigeria, Iraq, Namibia, Panama, The Gambia (2023), Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, Zambia (2024).



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I. MEETING OF THE PARTIES: ITS VALUE TO NON-PARTIES & THEIR ROLE

The Meeting of the Parties is the Convention's highest decision-making body. It meets every three years to review progress in implementation of the Convention. It takes decisions on the development of the Convention such as the adoption of proposals for amendments to the Convention, soft law recommendations, other policy tools to promote transboundary cooperation and any additional action that may be required for the achievement of the purposes of the Convention. It sets strategic direction for future work under the Convention and agrees on the programme of work for the next three years. The Meeting of the Parties is therefore a **unique intergovernmental platform for discussing progress and challenges in transboundary water cooperation and for sharing good practices, lessons, experiences, ideas and future plans.**

Formally, representatives of **non-Party States participate as observers** in the meeting². However, given the distinctive spirit of cooperation of the Convention, the established practice in the Meetings of the Parties and in other Convention's meetings is that very little distinction is made between Parties and non-Parties, so that all participants have equal opportunities to express their views and opinions. However, **only Parties to the Convention are eligible to vote on formal decisions, for elections to the member of the Bureau and the Implementation Committee and to adopt documents, which is one of the benefits of acceding to the Convention.**

Non-Parties are **encouraged to intervene in the various agenda items**, including the discussion on the future programme of work. Expressions of interest are particularly important here; otherwise the secretariat would not be able to provide support in the coming three years. Your interventions will demonstrate your commitment and interest, enable you to express your priorities for strategic directions of future work under the Convention, as well as your contribution to the implementation of the programme and to exchange your experience. **Agenda items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, are particularly relevant for non-Parties. Item 6(a) of the agenda is dedicated entirely to the Convention's opening.** Your declarations of interest in accession to the Convention are especially significant here.

II. HOW NON-PARTIES MAY INTERVENE OR EXPRESS INTERESTS AT THE MOP

There are several ways in which non-Parties can have a role in the MOP. The primary means are:

- a) **Make a High-Level Statement during the High-Level Segment** based on the questions being discussed.
- b) **Make an Expression of Interest to become Parties** to the Convention and request to receive support in the accession process.

² Non-Parties cannot propose candidates for the Implementation Committee and the Bureau and cannot participate in the decision-making, i.e. they cannot vote in the unlikely case of a vote. The rules of procedure governing the discussions and decision-making at MOP 10 are available from the meeting page: https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/ECE_MP.WAT_54_Add.2_ENG.pdf



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- c) **Make an Expression of Interest to be involved in thematic activities** of the Programme of Work and/or Interest in the Convention's tools, events, projects etc.
- d) **Make a General Statement to share lessons learned, experiences, ideas or plans** in support of practical transboundary cooperation and collaboration moving forward.

A "High-Level Statement" is a brief intervention by a High-Level Representative on the specific topic of the High-Level Segment. An "Expression of Interest" is a brief intervention in the time allocated for discussion under the relevant agenda item(s) demonstrating your interest in a particular aspect of the Convention. A "General Statement" is a brief intervention to share lessons learned, experiences, ideas or plans in support of practical transboundary cooperation and collaboration moving forward. The context and requirements for interventions is explained in '*How non-Parties may contribute here*' under each of the main Agenda sessions listed below.

All speakers are expected to be as brief as possible (max. 2 minutes per intervention) to allow interventions by all interested representatives. The chair will cut speakers going beyond 2 minutes due to limited time at the meeting.

1. [High-level segment](#)

The High-level segment will occur on Wednesday, 23 October 2024 and feature a [special session on "Our waters, our future: Transboundary water cooperation to power climate resilience"](#). The session offers a high-level platform to advance the emerging discussions on the role of transboundary cooperation for climate change mitigation, which requires, among other things, a transformation of the energy and agriculture sectors – both highly dependent on the availability of freshwater. Panelists will discuss how transboundary cooperation can contribute to climate resilience, how the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus approach helps to promote intersectoral coherence and how transboundary water allocation as a method supports coping with extremes, such as floods, low flows and droughts. Contribution to this segment is open to Parties, non-Parties and partners from all regions.

How non-parties may contribute here

Non-Parties may contribute to this session in the following ways –

- a) **Agenda Item 3: Request the floor to make a High-Level Statement**, noting that:
 - Only high-level speakers can make statements;
 - Any intervention should answer one or more of the questions detailed in the High-Level Segment concept note in [English](#), [French](#), [Russian](#), [Spanish](#), and in Arabic.³

³ Further information will become available soon on the [MOP10 Webpage](#) (tab HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT, under Item 3 – Special session – "Our waters, our future: Transboundary water cooperation to power climate resilience").



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To facilitate the conduct of the debate, **delegations intending to make an intervention should inform the Secretariat (water.convention@un.org) by 10 October 2024.**

2. [General debate](#)

Non-Parties can benefit from the discussion under the general debate session by: learning about new developments in transboundary water cooperation and tools to support cooperation developed under the Convention and by its partners; and, sharing views, comments, priorities and interest to contribute to the work of the Convention as well as benefit from its activities.

How non-Parties may contribute here

Non-Parties may contribute to this session in the following ways –

- a) **Agenda Item 6 (a): Request the floor to make an Expression of Interest to become Parties** to the Convention and request to receive support in the accession process.
- b) **Agenda Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14,15: Request the floor to make an Expression of Interest to be involved in thematic activities** of the Programme of Work and/or Interest to apply some of the Convention's tools in events, projects etc.
- c) **Agenda Items 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15: Request the floor to make a General Statement to share lessons learned, experiences or ideas** in support of practical cooperation and collaboration moving forward.

To facilitate the conduct of the debate, **delegations intending to make an intervention should inform the Secretariat (water.convention@un.org) by 10 October 2024.**

III. [DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN BY THE MOP 10](#)

The tenth MOP is expected to adopt decisions, some of which are also relevant for non-Party States.

1. [Draft Programme of Work for 2025-2027](#)

The programme of work for 2025-2027 aims to assist countries, both Parties and non-Parties, in implementing the Convention and improving their transboundary water cooperation. It will include the continuation of current activities as well as new sub-programme areas, such as Source-to-sea. The draft programme of work for 2025-2027 is available from: [hyperlink](#). You are invited to **comment on and express interest in the different areas of the programme of work, by indicating how you could contribute to the implementation of the programme**, in the areas listed below:



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- Programme area 1: Increasing awareness of and accession to the Convention and its implementation drawing on the benefits of cooperation
- Programme area 2: Supporting monitoring, assessment and information-sharing in transboundary basins to address pressures on water resources
- Programme area 3: Promoting an integrated and intersectoral approach to water resources management at all levels
- Programme area 4: Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins
- Programme area 5: Facilitating funding and financing of transboundary water cooperation and basin development
- Programme area 6: Reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2 and under the Convention
- Programme area 7: Partnerships, communication and input to global processes

2. [Draft decision on cooperation with international financial Institutions \(Item 16 of the provisional agenda\) \(available from hyperlink\)](#)

International financial institutions are recognized as important enablers of transboundary water cooperation and basin development, providing essential financial and technical support. The Meeting will be presented with a draft decision on cooperation with international financial Institutions for the global implementation of the Convention for consideration. It will highlight existing areas of collaboration with partners and areas identified where additional efforts and a more systematic approach are needed to further strengthen this partnership.

3. [Draft decision on cooperation with regional organizations for the implementation of the Water Convention \(Item 16 of the provisional agenda\) \(available from hyperlink\)](#)

Regional partners play a key role in the global implementation of the Water Convention. The Meeting will be presented with a draft decision on cooperation with regional organizations for the implementation of the Water Convention for consideration. It will highlight existing areas of collaboration with partners and areas identified in need of increased collaboration and partnerships for strengthened implementation moving forward.

IV. [PUBLICATIONS TO BE LAUNCHED DURING THE MOP 10](#)

Three publications will be launched at the tenth Meeting of the Parties, all of which are relevant and important for non-Party States as they are interesting and practical tools that can support transboundary water cooperation in your regions, basins and countries.



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1. [Third report on progress on transboundary water cooperation under the Water Convention \(Provisional Agenda Item 5\)](#)

In 2023–2024, as part of the third reporting exercise on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2 and under the Water Convention, all Parties to the Convention have submitted their national reports. This publication, prepared by the secretariat, provides an analysis of the national reports submitted by Parties. Although it is first and foremost addressed to Parties, it is an important tool for countries that are considering accession to the Convention because it provides a useful insight into the application of the provisions of the Convention by its Parties.

2. [Progress on Transboundary Water Cooperation: Mid-term status of SDG Indicator 6.5.2, with a special focus on Climate Change \(Provisional Agenda Item 5\)](#)

SDG Indicator 6.5.2 measures the 'proportion of transboundary basin area within a country covered by an operational arrangement for water cooperation', including the area of both river and lake basins and aquifers. In the framework of the UN Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6, UNECE and UNESCO, as co-custodian agencies for SDG indicator 6.5.2, invited all countries sharing transboundary waters to review their progress on transboundary cooperation and to report on their national value for SDG indicator 6.5.2. as part of the 3rd reporting exercise conducted in 2023/2024. This third report on SDG Indicator 6.5.2 is part of a series that tracks progress towards the various targets set out in SDG 6 using the SDG global indicators.

3. [Good Practices and Lessons Learned in Data-sharing in Transboundary Basins \(Provisional Agenda Item 15\)](#)

The publication presents a global collection of case studies related to different aspects of data and information sharing, building on real-life experiences across all levels. It provides a wide array of examples showing how monitoring and data-sharing programmes can be implemented and thus complements previously developed guidance materials on monitoring and assessment. The publication is intended for all actors working on monitoring programmes and data and information-sharing in transboundary basins at both national and transboundary levels. They include: joint bodies such as basin commissions and other institutions for transboundary cooperation and their national representatives; developers of monitoring strategies, especially in transboundary basins; decision makers; specialists working on monitoring and assessment in ministries; and other authorities, scientists and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

V. SIDE EVENTS

A number of side events are scheduled to take place during the Meeting of the Parties (23-25 October 2024) in order to discuss in more detail certain challenges or tools for transboundary water cooperation. They aim to be participative and inclusive for the exchange of experiences and more informal dialogues between countries, partner on topics of relevance to the Convention and transboundary water cooperation



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generally. Participation in the side events is open to all. Three side events will specifically discuss topics related to the Convention's global opening, namely:

- **Learn more about the Implementation Committee** (Wednesday, 23 October 2024)
- **Accession to the Water Convention: addressing FAQs and sharing experiences between countries** (Thursday, 24 October 2024)
- **Implementing the Water Convention and promoting IWRM through national and regional action** (Friday, 25 October 2024)

The list of side events is available on the meeting website: https://unece.org/MOP10_Water_Convention

VI. FURTHER INFORMATION AND PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The provisional agenda for the session and additional practical information are available on the meeting website: [hyperlink](#)

For any questions, please address: water.convention@un.org.

For more information on registration, virtual and in-person participation to the meeting, accessibility to the venue, please refer to the practical guide in [English](#), [French](#), [Russian](#) and [Spanish](#).



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