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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
the Protection and Use of Transboundary
Watercourses and International Lakes

Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management

Tenth meeting

Geneva, 24 and 25 June 2015

Item 14 of the provisional agenda

**Programme of work for 2016-2018 and preparations for
the seventh session of the Meeting of the Parties**

Draft programme of work for 2016–2018

Prepared by the Bureau

Summary

At its ninth meeting, the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes entrusted its co-Chairs, in cooperation with the Bureau, with preparing a proposal for the programme of work for the period 2016–2018 for the Convention. The proposal, as set out in the present document, identifies also the bodies to support the implementation of the programme of work and provides estimates of the necessary human and financial resources. Gaps — notably in terms of lead countries and sources of funds for activities — are indicated.

The Working Group is invited to discuss the structure, activities, resources, timeline and way forward for finalizing the programme of work for 2016–2018.



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I. Bodies to implement the programme of work for 2016–2018

A. Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties

1. In accordance with the rules of procedure for the meetings of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties is composed of not fewer than eight persons, including the Chair and the two Vice-Chairs of the Meeting of the Parties, the Chairs of the working groups and, if applicable, other officers elected by the Meeting of the Parties (see ECE/MP.WAT/19/Add.1).

2. The main responsibilities of the Bureau include: (a) making arrangements to further develop the programme of work, adapting it to changing circumstances and avoiding, to the extent possible, duplication of efforts with water-related activities of other United Nations bodies and other international organizations; (b) taking initiatives to strengthen implementation of the Convention; and (c) carrying out other tasks entrusted to it by the Meeting of the Parties.

B. Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment

3. The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment are the two main subsidiary bodies established by the Meeting of the Parties.

4. The two Working Groups are responsible for the implementation of the relevant activities under the various programme areas of the programme of work. They examine experience and draw up draft recommendations, codes of practice and other soft-law instruments. They also review policies, strategies and methodologies of relevance to the protection and use of waters and examine the implications of such policies, strategies and methodologies. The Working Groups also assist the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention and the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health, if applicable, in developing response measures and in promoting the harmonization of rules and regulations on specific areas.

5. In between sessions of the Meetings of the Parties, the two Working Groups provide guidance regarding the implementation of the programme of work. They may advise the Bureau to make arrangements to further develop the programme of work, to adapt it to changing circumstances and to avoid, to the extent possible, duplication of efforts with water-related activities of other United Nations bodies and other international organizations.

6. The Working Groups also take initiatives to strengthen the application of the Convention, including the preparation of draft decisions, proposals and recommendations, and a draft programme of work for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention. They also mobilize resources to support the implementation of the programme of work.

7. Each Working Group may formulate recommendations related to the work of the other Working Group.

8. The focus of the work of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management is on intersectoral activities to support the implementation of the Convention with regard to the integrated management of transboundary water resources (surface waters and groundwaters). Activities under this Working Group aim to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impacts, as defined in the Convention; to promote the ecosystem approach in

the framework of integrated water resources management; to promote equitable and reasonable utilization of transboundary waters; and to ensure conservation and, where necessary, restoration of water-related ecosystems. Further goals are to advance adaptation to climate change in the transboundary context — including flood and drought management; to promote understanding of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus and the reconciliation of multiple water uses in transboundary basins; to advance the understanding of the benefits of transboundary cooperation; to promote the concept of ecosystem services and payments for them; and to prevent accidental water pollution. The Working Group also seeks to build and strengthen the institutions responsible for the management of transboundary waters, to facilitate the work of joint bodies and to promote access to information and public participation in decision-making. In the 2016–2018 triennium, the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management will be led by [Finland and Germany].

9. The focus of the work of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment is to assist Parties bordering the same transboundary waters in establishing and implementing joint programmes for monitoring and assessing the pressures on and the conditions of those transboundary waters, including floods and ice drifts, as well as transboundary impacts. Furthermore, this Working Group has a leading role in the preparation of periodic assessments of transboundary rivers and international lakes, as well as groundwaters, which will allow for measuring progress in the implementation of the Water Convention. The Working Group also seeks to promote the exchange of data on transboundary waters, to encourage Parties to inform each other about any critical situation that may have a transboundary impact and to make available to the public information on transboundary waters.

10. In the 2016–2018 triennium, the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will meet at most once, back to back with the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, if a meeting is considered necessary for developing the concept of the next periodic assessment. The Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will be led by ...¹

11. *Resource requirements*² for meetings of the Bureau, the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment for the triennium 2016–2018 are US\$ 276,000.

C. Implementation Committee

12. In accordance with decision VI/1 of the Meeting of the Parties on support to implementation and compliance (see ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.2), the Implementation Committee facilitates, promotes and safeguards the implementation and application of and compliance with the Convention. It carries out the functions assigned to it in decision VI/1 or by the Meeting of the Parties at its subsequent sessions and reports to the Meeting of the Parties accordingly.

¹ Throughout this draft programme of work, lead countries and organizations have yet to be identified or confirmed. Additional lead countries/organizations may also come forward.

² The estimated costs shown here are limited to those intended to be covered by voluntary contributions, either through the Convention's trust fund or in kind. They do not include costs that are expected to be covered by the United Nations regular budget or other sources. The estimate is mostly based on the experience with previous programmes of work and may vary according to the further definition of the activities by the Meeting of the Parties, as well as according to United Nations administrative regulations. The estimated resources requirements do not include overhead costs.

13. Where the activities of the Committee with respect to particular issues overlap with the responsibilities of another body of the Convention, the Committee should consult with that body.

D. Legal Board

14. The Legal Board deals with legal questions related to the work under the Convention, upon the request of other Convention bodies. In the triennium 2016–2018, no activity is under the direct responsibility of the Legal Board; thus it will only meet during the period 2016–2018 if the need arises.

E. Task Force on Water and Climate and the core group of pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins

15. The Task Force on Water and Climate, with [the Netherlands and Switzerland] as the lead Parties, is responsible for activities related to adaptation to climate change, including flood and drought management.

16. The core group of pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins ensures exchange of experience, cross-fertilization and harmonization between the pilot projects in this area.

F. Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus

17. The Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus, with ... as the lead Party, is responsible for overseeing programme area 3 on the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus and the finalization of the thematic assessment on the nexus in transboundary basins. The Task Force will continue to meet in the period 2016–2018 as long as the nexus work continues.

G. International Water Assessment Centre

18. The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) is the Convention's collaborative centre on monitoring and assessment and integrated water resources management and a support tool for the implementation of the Convention and its protocols. IWAC will not perform any activity until a host country is found.

H. Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

19. The Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (Joint Expert Group) was established under the Water Convention and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) to support work in the area of accidental water pollution and to respond to the needs identified by Parties.

20. The work of the Joint Expert Group is regulated by its strategy adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session (see ECE/MP.WAT/29/Add.2). The Joint Expert Group is currently co-led by [Hungary and Germany].

II. Areas of work and activities

21. The activities to be carried out under the Convention in the period 2016–2018 are organized in programme areas (as set out below), but there are numerous cross-links between the various activities and areas.

A. Programme area 1: Support to implementation and application of the Convention

Responsible bodies: The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, the Implementation Committee (for activity 1.2) and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (for activity 1.4), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Regional Adviser on Environment and the secretariat.

Objectives: Assist Parties and non-Parties, at their request, in improving cooperation on their transboundary waters and implementing and applying the Convention. Assistance will include legal and technical assistance (e.g., to draw up, revise and/or adapt agreements on transboundary waters, including transboundary groundwaters, to strengthen national and transboundary water institutions and to strengthen the capacity of countries and joint bodies in integrated river basin management, including joint monitoring and assessment). Work will build on the Convention and the guidance documents developed under the Convention.

Assistance will also include providing support to Parties and non-Parties to prevent or manage existing or potential conflicts regarding transboundary waters and to implement and comply with the Convention, through the Implementation Committee.

Work to be undertaken

1.1 Assistance supporting implementation and application of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development

This work will include support for the development of transboundary water cooperation in the Chu and Talas, Dniester, Drin, Kura, Neman and Pyanj (upper Amu Darya) Basins, as well as possibly other river basins. It will further include work in support of regional organizations, dam safety and water quality in the Aral Sea Basin.

Work in this area will be closely coordinated with the National Policy Dialogues under the European Union (EU) Water Initiative (programme area 6), and will also benefit from and feed into activities in other programme areas, in particular programme areas 3 (water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins) and 4 (adapting to climate change in transboundary basins).

Work in this area will also support application and implementation of the guidelines developed under the Convention, such as the *Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters* (ECE/MP.WAT/40), for example [in the aquifers shared by Hungary, Romania and Serbia, led by Serbia and] in the Syr Darya aquifer in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other partners. Work in this area might also support application and implementation of the Convention's water quality-related guidelines.

Resource requirements: Project-driven activities depending on demands. While co-funding is provided by ECE, for example through the United Nations Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation, the main costs are covered by different project donors, including

Finland, Germany, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) ...³

Possible partners: GEF, the Global Water Partnership (GWP), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UNESCO (especially for groundwater activities), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Zoï Environment Network. Projects will also be developed in the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative.

1.2 Implementation and compliance

The work of the Implementation Committee will be ruled by decision VI/1 of the Meeting of the Parties on support to implementation and compliance (see ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.2).

Resource requirements: US\$ 221,000.

1.3 Reporting under the Convention⁴

Lead Parties/organizations: Bureau with the support of the secretariat.

A first [pilot] reporting exercise will be carried out, and the secretariat will prepare a synthesis report of the results. In the light of that experience, the reporting template may be reviewed and guidance on reporting developed, as necessary. Further to the outcome of the foregoing activities, a draft decision on reporting may be prepared for the consideration of the Meeting of the Parties at its next session.

Resource requirements: US\$ 148,000.

1.4 Development of a concept for a third comprehensive assessment

Lead Parties/organizations: [...].

A proposal for a third comprehensive assessment will be elaborated in 2016–2017, including the thematic and geographical scope, modalities and partners for implementation, financing options and links with other ongoing processes (for example, sustainable development goals, reporting under the Convention, other treaties, such as the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), and relevant EU directives). The proposal will be subsequently discussed by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment or the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, as appropriate, in 2017 or 2018.

Within the development process, links with the pan-European Shared Environmental Information System, the UNEP Global Environment Monitoring System, the GEF Transboundary Waters Assessment Programme and the UNESCO Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management initiative will also be discussed.

Resource requirements: US\$ 90,000.

Possible partners: European Environment Agency, GEF, International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre, Ramsar Convention, UNEP, UNESCO, ...⁵

³ The financing of the above projects is still under discussion with bilateral and multilateral donors. The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management will be updated on the funding situation.

⁴ The inclusion and wording of this activity are dependent on the decision taken by the Meeting of the Parties on the possible adoption of a reporting mechanism.

⁵ Throughout this draft programme of work, possible partners have been identified but may withdraw. Additional partners may also come forward.

1.5 Exchange of experience of joint bodies

Lead Parties/organizations:⁶

The establishment of joint bodies, such as river, lake and groundwater commissions, is a main obligation under the Convention and their role is key to implementing it and ensuring long-term transboundary water cooperation. The promotion of experience gathered under the different joint bodies is beneficial to their performance and effectiveness and useful both for other joint bodies and for countries (in particular countries that have not yet established joint bodies). Regular (biennial) workshops (two in the period 2016–2018) will be organized to promote the exchange of experience and good practices of joint bodies worldwide and to develop recommendations. The topics for exchange will include, among others, groundwaters, including conjunctive management of surface and groundwaters, and financing of joint bodies. Also as part of this activity the *Principles for Effective Joint Bodies* will be published as a brochure in the languages of the United Nations and promoted alongside other publications and guidance material under the Convention.

Resource requirements: US\$ 275,000.

Possible partners: Existing joint bodies, the African Network of Basin Organizations, GEF and its International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN) project, GWP, the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), IUCN, UNDP, UNEP and UNESCO.

B. Programme area 2: Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Lead Parties/organizations: [Estonia, Serbia, ...].

Responsible body: Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management.

Objectives: Support Parties and other States, at their request, in improving cooperation on their transboundary waters by:

- (a) Highlighting the potential to generate a broad range of significant benefits for cooperating countries;
- (b) Providing a forum to assess and communicate such benefits in order to support the strengthening of ongoing cooperation;
- (c) Contributing to a reflection on possible accession to the Water Convention.

Work to be undertaken

In this area, the *Policy Guidance Note on Identifying, Assessing and Communicating the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation* will be promoted in pilot basins and countries interested in applying it, in cooperation with partners and, where appropriate, led by those partners. Subsequently, experience between these pilot exercises and other similar activities worldwide will be shared during one workshop in 2017 or 2018.

Resource requirements for programme area 2: US\$ 690,500.

Possible partners: GEF IW:LEARN, GWP, OSCE, the Ramsar Convention, the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), UNDP Shared Waters Partnership (SWP) and others.

⁶ This activity will be retained only if a lead country is identified and confirms its readiness either to finance this activity or to identify the required funding. This activity could be included, in an abbreviated form, under another activity.

C. Programme area 3: Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins

Responsible bodies: The Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus and the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management.

Lead Parties/organizations: Finland [and ...].

Objectives: Support transboundary cooperation by:

- (a) Identifying intersectoral synergies that could be further explored and utilized in the different basins;
- (b) Determining policy measures and actions that could alleviate negative consequences of the nexus and help to optimize the use of available resources;
- (c) Helping to move towards increased efficiency in resource use, greater policy coherence and intersectoral co-management;
- (d) Developing capacity in addressing intersectoral impacts.

Work to be undertaken

Nexus assessments will be continued in transboundary basins where the process could not be finalized in the period 2013–2015, such as those for the Syr Darya and Isonzo/Soča Rivers. Assessments will be carried out in additional basins, in cooperation with partners, upon the expression of interest and depending on the availability of funding, for example, in the Niger River Basin and the North-Western Sahara Aquifer. The methodology developed in 2013–2015 will be promoted for application by partners in other basins worldwide, including by preparing a synthesis brochure. In addition, in 2016, a global stocktaking workshop on the nexus assessment and implementation of a nexus (intersectoral) approach in transboundary basins will be organized in cooperation with, for example, IUCN, GEF IW:LEARN, UNEP, the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and others.

Conclusions and recommendations from the basin assessments will be further disseminated in the form of a brochure and policy briefs and promoted at international events, forums and processes. Subject to resource availability and the interest of the riparian countries concerned and partners, the reports of individual basin assessments will be published and disseminated. Identification of and agreement on follow-up actions by the countries will be facilitated, as appropriate, including through other programme areas, notably the National Policy Dialogues under programme area 6.

In addition, good practice examples on water allocation from different transboundary surface water basins and groundwaters, including through the work of joint bodies and other forms of intersectoral governance, will be collected and, if appropriate, published. This will build on the methodology developed for the assessment of governance aspects in the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus, as well as the *Principles of Effective Joint Bodies* and other publications and guidance materials under the Convention. The scope involves also intersectoral and transboundary implications of water scarcity. The work will involve the organization of a global workshop in 2017 on water allocation in transboundary basins, in cooperation with partners such as OECD, UNESCO, GEF IW:LEARN and others.

Resource requirements for programme area 3: US\$ 936,100.

Possible partners: River basin commissions, national and international statistics agencies, relevant ministries (environment/water, energy and agriculture, but also finance and foreign affairs), the European Environment Agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), GIZ, GWP, the International Energy Agency, the International Food Policy Research Institute, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the

International Water Association, IUCN, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Ramsar Convention, [SIWI,] [SWP,] the World Bank and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

D. Programme area 4: Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

Responsible bodies: The Task Force on Water and Climate and the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management.

Lead Parties/organizations: [Switzerland, the Netherlands (to be confirmed)].

Objectives:

(a) Increased adaptive capacity and improved cooperation on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins worldwide;

(b) Increased awareness of the importance of cooperation in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction at the national level and in intergovernmental processes, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Work to be undertaken

4.1 Pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins: moving towards implementation, scaling up and mainstreaming

This activity will promote cooperation in the development of vulnerability assessments, adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies and their implementation in transboundary basins within projects implemented by the ECE Water Convention together with other partners. Some pilot projects (such as those for the Dniester, Chu Talas and Neman River Basins) will continue to implement their adaptation strategies or mainstream prioritized adaptation measures into other plans, strategies, policies, projects or programmes at the basin or national level. In addition, new pilot projects could be started, for example on the Alazani or Kura Rivers or on groundwater in Eastern Europe. Other partner organizations may implement pilot projects outside of the region, with limited involvement of ECE. As in the past, the information on the implementation of all the pilot projects (in the ECE region and beyond) will feed into the meetings of the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation (see 4.2 below).

4.2 Regular thematic global workshops and meetings of the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins

This activity aims at learning and exchanging experience, good practices and lessons learned through, among others, the existing global network of basins working on climate change adaptation coordinated by INBO and ECE, building on the 2015 publication on this topic. The organization of regular workshops will continue (with two workshops, possibly in mid-2016 and at the end of 2017 or early 2018). The workshops could be thematically focused (e.g., on water scarcity) and be organized in cooperation with existing and new partners. In addition, smaller meetings of the basins in the global network may be held to share experiences between river basin organizations.

Direct exchanges on topics relevant to some of the basins of the global network may be organized, e.g., through expert exchange, study visits or smaller thematic or regional events.

These activities will also contribute to global processes on water and climate, such as under UNFCCC, as described in activity 5.4.

Resource requirements for programme area 4: US\$ 986,000.

Possible partners: The Alliance for Global Water Adaptation, the Environment and Security Initiative and its members (in particular OSCE and UNDP), the European Commission, GEF, GIZ, GWP, INBO, IUCN, the Ramsar Convention, the Regional Environmental Centres in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, OECD, SIWI, the Stockholm Environment Institute, UNESCO, UNFCCC, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), other United Nations regional commissions, the World Bank, the World Meteorological Organization and the joint bodies involved in adaptation to climate change.

E. Programme area 5: Opening, promotion and partnerships

Responsible bodies: The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, national focal points, the Bureau and the secretariat.

Lead Parties/organizations: [Hungary (to be confirmed), Finland? France? ...].

Objectives: To promote the Convention, its products and achievements, and transboundary water cooperation in general, and to enhance the Convention's relevance, impact and efficiency through strategic partnerships and cooperation with other actors. In addition, to support the global opening of the Convention by:

- (a) Raising awareness and developing capacity on the Convention in non-parties, including by involving them in activities under the Convention;
- (b) Promoting exchange of experience with other regions of the world;
- (c) Ensuring synergies with other multilateral legal instruments on water, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (United Nations Watercourses Convention);
- (d) Supporting countries in their efforts to accede to the Convention.

Work to be undertaken

5.1 Promoting accession by raising awareness about the Convention and developing capacity to implement its provisions

A number of different national and regional events targeting countries or regions outside ECE at different levels (experts, decision makers) will be organized upon request to promote a greater understanding of the Convention's provisions and build capacity for their implementation while, at the same time, fostering the exchange of experience to be able to benefit from good practices worldwide. Such events will be organized in cooperation with international and national partners. In addition, legal advice on accession can be provided to countries that express their interest in accession.

Upon request, countries and basins from outside the ECE region seeking support for cooperation in specific basins can be assisted through the provision of guidance material produced under the Convention and expert advice, including participation by Bureau members and the secretariat in related events, subject to resource availability.

Where appropriate, the ECE Water Convention will be promoted alongside the United Nations Watercourses Convention.

Moreover, the Parties, the Bureau and the secretariat will contribute to relevant events and activities organized by other actors with a view to promoting the ECE Water Convention and United Nations Watercourses Convention worldwide and supporting countries outside

the ECE region interested in acceding to it, for example those organized by the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), the League of Arab States, river basin commissions and regional commissions.

Representatives from outside the ECE region will also be invited to different meetings under the ECE Water Convention. This may require funds for financial support for representatives unable to identify other means of covering their costs and in some cases assistance for translation and interpretation. Targeted fundraising efforts will be made to increase the means available for this purpose.

An opening workshop for non-ECE countries will be organized in Hungary in 2016 (to be confirmed).

5.2 Synergies with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses and other multilateral legal instruments on water

The Meeting of the Parties will promote synergies and coordination with the United Nations Watercourses Convention by sharing the experience collected under the ECE Water Convention to support the implementation of the United Nations Watercourses Convention, promoting exchanges and coordination between the Parties to the two Conventions and by offering an intergovernmental framework for discussion on and provision of information on the two Conventions.

Synergies will likewise be sought with other multilateral and regional agreements as well as with the draft articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers. If requested by the Parties to the United Nations Watercourses Convention, activities within the present programme of work may also serve as a platform.

5.3 Promotion of the Convention, its activities and guidelines

To increase the visibility and impact of the work under the Water Convention, efforts will be devoted to promoting the Convention, its activities and the guidelines developed under it on various occasions, including through relevant national- and basin-level meetings, as well as at international meetings of strategic importance, such as the World Water Forum and the World Water Week in Stockholm and, as appropriate, regional water forums.

Promotional activities include the production, publication and printing of information and communication materials (e.g., leaflets, brochures and booklets in all United Nations languages) on the Convention, as well as the production of media work, interviews and press releases and the regular revision and update of the Convention website.

It also includes activities carried out by focal points, who will regularly report on their promotion efforts.

Activities, events and products will be organized in 2016, the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention, in order to promote the Convention and synthesize the material available and the experience collected under it, including through a stocktaking publication to be published and printed in all United Nations languages.

5.4 Contribution to the post-2015 development agenda and other international processes

Through its intergovernmental framework, guidance documents and assessments, as well as potentially through its reporting activities, the Convention will provide a forum for contributing to the implementation, monitoring and review of the sustainable development goals and, in particular, the water goal. The secretariat and Convention bodies will provide input into these processes, as appropriate and if requested.

The secretariat, Bureau and Parties will contribute to global and regional processes and related events such as the Environment for Europe Ministerial Process, including with

respect to the Astana Water Action and reporting on its implementation. The contribution to these events will aim to promote the Water Convention, the Protocol on Water and Health and their respective activities.

This activity will also promote the importance of water and climate change adaptation efforts in global processes, such as under UNFCCC and UNISDR, including by organizing side events at major conferences together with partners (e.g., sessions of the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties), providing written and oral inputs and advice to other processes and publications, and sharing information and knowledge on adaptation in water management. Direct inputs into the work on water and adaptation under UNFCCC might be provided upon the request of the UNFCCC secretariat or other relevant bodies and mechanisms.⁷

5.5 Cooperation with other international multilateral environmental agreements

Continuous exchange of information will be ensured with relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), including other ECE MEAs and in particular the Protocol on Water and Health to the Water Convention. Other MEAs of relevance include the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on the Protection of the Alps, the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians and ...

Opportunities for enhanced cooperation and synergies will be explored at three levels, i.e., between the MEA secretariats, the MEA bureaux and governing bodies, and among focal points at the national level, in order to make the work of MEAs more robust and efficient and to strengthen their implementation. On the basis of common interests and shared demands and needs, joint activities will be carried out.

In particular, the joint implementation of the Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health and of their respective programmes of work will be promoted. Possible areas of close cooperation include monitoring and assessment, setting targets and reporting in accordance with the Protocol, climate change activities and activities on the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus.

In the period 2016–2018, the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents may promote the organization of transboundary response exercises. In addition, a checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters will be published.

5.6 Cooperation with the Global Environment Facility

Further to decision VI/4, a strategic long-term partnership is being developed with GEF, in accordance with GEF rules and procedures, with the objective to support implementation of the Convention and the improvement of transboundary water cooperation within and beyond the ECE region, especially in view of the opening of the Water Convention to all United Nations Member States. In particular, the Convention will continue to cooperate with and contribute to the GEF IW:LEARN project and implement GEF-funded projects on the Drin, Chu Talas, Syr Darya and Dniester, among others, together with other partners such as UNDP, GWP and OSCE.

5.7 Cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Further to decision VI/5, a strategic long-term partnership is being established with UNESCO with the objective to promote the protection and the reasonable, equitable and sustainable use of transboundary groundwaters, through the exchange of experience and the

⁷ The cooperation with UNFCCC could instead be reflected under programme area 4 on adapting to climate change in transboundary basins.

organization of joint activities. The secretariat will continue to work with UNESCO on the organization of joint events and by contributing to each other's work, on the basis of common interests and shared demands and needs.

5.8 Cooperation with UN-Water and other partners

The Convention will be promoted through coordination and seeking synergies with activities of other United Nations agencies and bodies, in particular UN-Water and its Thematic Priority Area on Transboundary Waters, coordinated by ECE and UNESCO.

The Meeting of the Parties and the secretariat will also ensure coordination and join forces with ongoing projects implemented by other organizations, as relevant and feasible.

For example, also in the wider context of programme area 5, the Meeting of the Parties will strive to take advantage of existing EU instruments, such as the European Neighbourhood Policy Instrument (ENPI) and the EU Strategy for Central Asia, with the aim of maximizing synergies and mutual benefits.

In the light of cooperation with FAO on the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus, further opportunities for cooperation with FAO will be sought. Similarly, opportunities to strengthen cooperation with UNEP in relevant programme areas and activities will be sought in order to benefit from UNEP areas of expertise, notably with respect to ecosystems and related capacity-development projects.

Strengthened cooperation with the other United Nations regional commissions will also be sought to support the promotion and eventual implementation of the Convention outside the ECE region.

Resource requirements for programme area 5: US\$ 1,162,800.

Possible partners: AMCOW, the European Commission, FAO, GEF and its IW:LEARN project, the Geneva Water Hub, GWP, Green Cross International, INBO, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River, the International River Foundation, IUCN, OSCE, the Ramsar Convention, other regional commissions, SIWI, UNFCCC, UNEP, the UNESCO International Hydrological Programme Centre for Water Law, Policy and Science at the University of Dundee, UNISDR, UN-Water and its Members and Partners, the World Water Council, the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) and others.

F. Programme area 6: European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues

Responsible bodies: The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management.

Lead Parties/organizations: The secretariat, in cooperation with OECD, Romania and the European Commission.

Objectives: To strengthen water governance and the application of integrated water resources management (IWRM), in particular intersectoral cooperation, in countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, in line with the principles of the Convention, the Protocol on Water and Health, the EU Water Framework Directive⁸ and other ECE and EU instruments.

⁸ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

Work to be undertaken

Within the framework of the EU Water Initiative component for countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, the National Policy Dialogues support the development and implementation of IWRM at the national, transboundary and regional levels. Work under this programme area will strengthen IWRM in the target countries and improve the corresponding legal, regulatory, administrative, technical and economic frameworks. It will also develop capacity in countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia through a dialogue process involving public authorities and civil society representatives. The activities will assist countries in achieving the water-related sustainable development goals, as well as setting and implementing targets and target dates on sustainable water management, safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. In countries with an EU Association Agreement, the transposition of the respective water legislation will be supported.

National Steering Committees that include stakeholders of key importance to IWRM will continue to lead the country-specific dialogue processes. The outputs of the dialogues will include policy packages, such as new legislative acts, ministerial orders, development strategies and background studies, as well as pilot projects for further replication. Activities under the National Policy Dialogues on IWRM presently involve Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. Possibilities for launching activities in Belarus and Uzbekistan will be explored, as well as engaging Afghanistan.

Exchange of experience with other components of the EU Water Initiative will be promoted, especially with the Mediterranean component. Moreover, cooperation and synergies with the ECE Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme will be sought; National Policy Dialogues will build on the recommendations generated by the EPRs and will also inform their reparation, whenever possible.

Work under the National Policy Dialogues will be closely coordinated, will provide inputs to and will benefit from activities under all the other programme areas. It will enable implementation of some activities in other programme areas, such as programme area 2 (identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation), programme area 3 (water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins) and programme area 4 (adapting to climate change in transboundary basins).

Resource requirements for programme area 6: US\$ 2,670,000.⁹

Possible partners: the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC-IFAS), GWP, OSCE, the Regional Environmental Centres in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, UNDP, WHO, the World Bank and bilateral donors — in particular Finland, Germany, Norway, Switzerland and the EU, primarily through the European Commission Directorates-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and for International Cooperation and Development, the European External Action Service and EU Delegations.

III. Overview of resource requirements

22. The estimated costs shown below are limited to those intended to be covered by voluntary contributions, either through the Convention's trust fund or in kind. They include the costs associated with the organization of the eighth session of the Meeting of the

⁹ Most of these resources have already been pledged by the EU.

Parties. They do not include costs that are expected to be covered by the United Nations regular budget or other sources. The estimate is mostly based on the experience with previous programmes of work and may vary according to the further definition of the activities during implementation, as well as according to United Nations administrative regulations.

23. The secretariat will continue to produce the agendas, reports and other documents of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, the Legal Board and the Implementation Committee as official documents and to make them available in time for meetings in the three official languages of ECE, without recourse to additional extrabudgetary resources. The following documents are specifically foreseen, with possible additional documents being identified by the Bureau as necessary:¹⁰

24. Interpretation in the three official languages of ECE will be provided from regular budget resources for meetings of the two Working Groups, the Legal Board, the Implementation Committee, the Task Force on Water and Climate, the core group of pilot projects and the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus, as well as for global and regional workshops organized in Geneva within the framework of the programme of work.

25. Where necessary, and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, translations and interpretation may be provided into other languages of the United Nations.

Overview of resource requirements for 2016–2018

(in thousands of United States dollars)

<i>No.</i>	<i>Programme area or activity</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Resource requirements</i>
	Organization of meetings of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and the Bureau	Travel of eligible experts to meetings of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (3 meetings, approximately 30 experts per meeting), the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (1 meeting, back to back with the other Working Group, 30 experts) and of the Bureau (3 meetings, 3 experts per meeting)	258.0
		Additional General Service (G) staff time (2 months)	18.0
	Organization of the eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties, with some costs expected to be covered by the host country	Travel of experts and staff, reporting service, additional interpretation costs, etc.	240.0
		Additional Professional (P) staff time (P-2 level) (8 months)	106.6
		Additional G staff time (4 months)	36.0
	Meetings of Convention bodies		658.6
1	Support to implementation and application of the Convention		
1.1	Assistance supporting implementation and application of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development	Project-driven activities, with resources provided by individual projects	—
1.2	Implementation and compliance	Travel of eligible experts to meetings of the Committee (6 meetings, 9 experts per meeting)	108.0
		Other travel costs	6.0

¹⁰ Key documents will be listed in the draft presented to the Meeting of the Parties, so as to foresee unambiguous mandates for their processing.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Programme area or activity</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Resource requirements</i>
		P-2 staff time (6 months)	80.0
		G staff time (3 months)	27.0
1.3	Reporting under the Convention	Consultancy costs (software, translations, synthesis)	50.0
		P-2 staff time (6 months)	80.0
		G staff time (2 months)	18.0
1.4	Development of a concept for a possible third comprehensive assessment	Consultancy costs	40.0
		P-3 staff time (3 months)	50.0
1.5	Exchange of experience of joint bodies	Travel of eligible experts (40 experts, 2 workshops)	160.0
		Publication costs	20.0
		P-3 staff time (3 months)	50.0
		G staff time (5 months)	45.0
Subtotal programme area 1			734.0
2	Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation	Grants, consultancies, travel of experts and staff, organization of basin workshops, materials (translation and printing) for pilot exercises (approximately 3)	270.0
		Travel of eligible experts, consultancies (moderator), organization of regional meeting, materials, printing and other costs	120.0
		P-3 staff time (10 months)	166.5
		P-2 staff time (6 months)	80.0
		G staff time (6 months)	54.0
Subtotal programme area 2			690.5
3	Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins	Grants, consultancies, travel of experts and staff, organization of basin workshops, materials (translation and printing) for basin-level processes (approximately 3)	240.0
		Global nexus assessment stocktaking workshop, including travel of eligible experts, consultancies materials, printing and other costs	150.0
		Global workshop on water allocation in transboundary basins, including travel of eligible experts, consultancies, materials, printing and other costs	80.0
		Organization of two Task Force meetings, back to back with workshops	60.0
		P-3 staff time (17 months)	283.1
		G staff time (7 months)	63.0
		Publication costs (editing, layout, translation and printing)	60.0
Subtotal programme area 3			936.1
4	Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins		
4.1	Pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins: moving towards implementation, scaling up and mainstreaming	Consultancy costs (national and international consultants in the different basins)	150.0
		Grants for the organization of local meetings and other services	60.0

<i>No.</i>	<i>Programme area or activity</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>Resource requirements</i>
		P-3 staff time (16 months)	266.4
		G staff time (3 months)	27.0
		Travel of experts and of the secretariat	40.0
4.2	Regular thematic global workshops and meetings of the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins	Consultancy costs	20.0
		Organization of 2 global workshops, 2 meetings of the Task Force and 3 meetings of the core group on pilot projects	320.0
		P-3 staff time (4 months)	66.6
		G staff time (4 months)	36.0
Subtotal programme area 4			986.0
5	Opening, promotion and partnerships	Organization of workshops at the national, subregional and regional levels to raise awareness and prepare countries for accession	300.0
		Opening workshop	100.0
		Meeting of the Joint Expert Group (co-funding with Industrial Accidents Convention)	20.0
		Travel of secretariat and experts	150.0
		P-3 staff time (15 months)	216.5
		P-2 staff time (10 months)	133.3
		G staff time (7 months)	63.0
		Translation and interpretation costs	180.0
Subtotal programme area 5			1 162.8
6	European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues	Travel of eligible experts, staff travel, consultancies, organization of meetings, materials, printing and other costs	1 386.9
		P-4 staff time (36 months)	721.5
		P-3 staff (24 months)	399.6
		G staff time (18 months)	162.0
Subtotal programme area 6			2 670.0
Subtotal (programme areas 1–6 and meetings of Convention bodies)			7 838.0
		Overhead (7–13%) (rounded)	892.0
Total (rounded)			8 730.0