



Transboundary water cooperation and the Helsinki Water Convention

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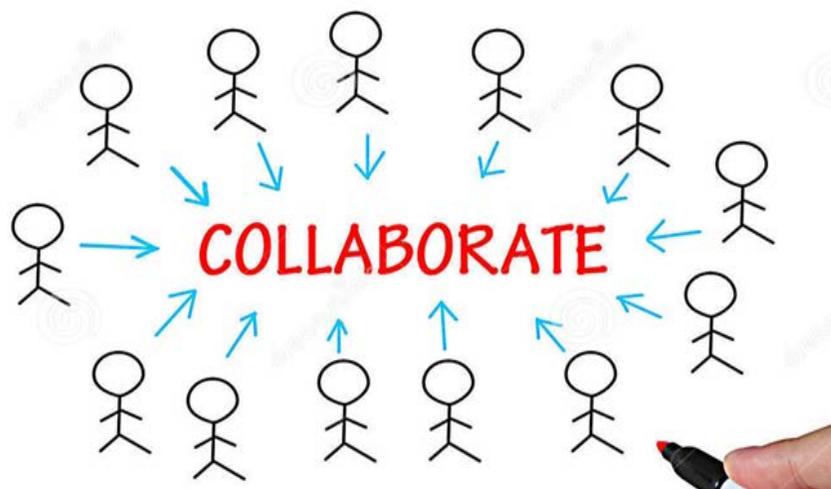
Secretariat of the Helsinki Water Convention, UNECE

Windhoek, 9-10 May 2017



UNECE

Transboundary water cooperation regulated at different levels

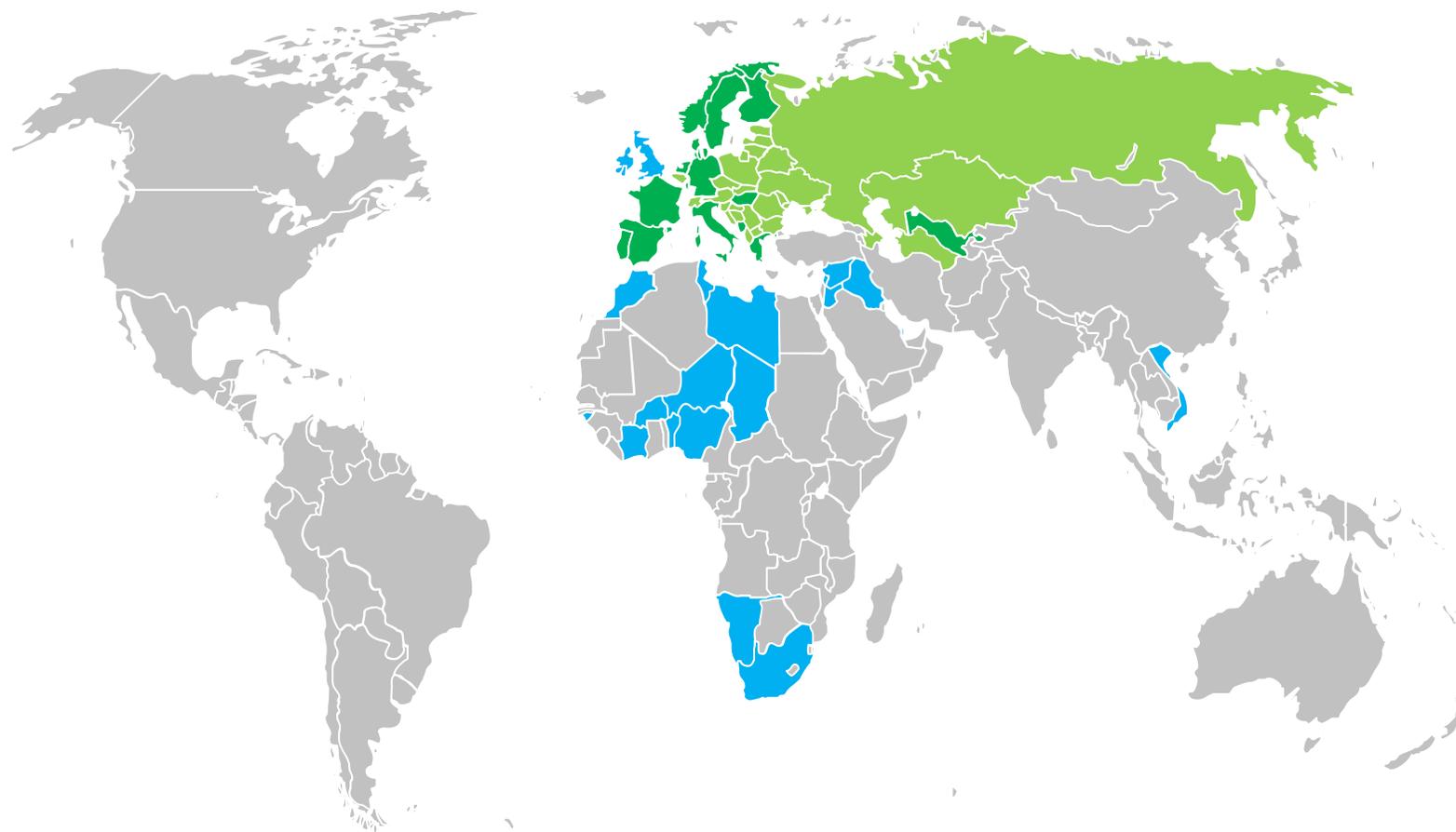


- Sound legal frameworks at the global, regional and basin levels essential for stable and reliable cooperation:
 - OKACOM agreement (1994)
 - Revised SADC Protocol (2010)
 - 2 universal framework Conventions:
 - 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses - UN Watercourses Convention (entry into force 2015)
 - 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes - under auspices of UNECE (opening 2016)

→ What added value does international framework conventions have for the region?



Parties to international Water Conventions



Party to Helsinki
Water Convention
(1992)

Party to UN
Watercourses
Convention (1997)

Party to both
Conventions



The Helsinki Water Convention

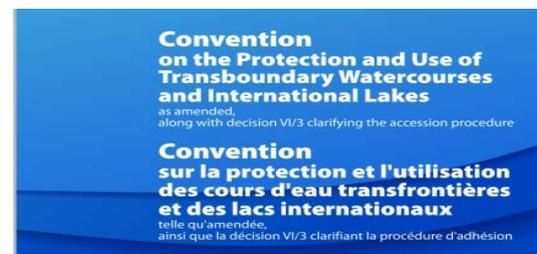
Objective

Protect and ensure the quantity, quality and sustainable use of transboundary water resources by facilitating cooperation

3 main pillars

- Prevent, control and reduce transboundary impacts
- Reasonable and equitable utilization of transboundary waters
- Cooperate through establishment of agreements and joint bodies responsible for joint management

Support to transboundary water cooperation thanks to:



A sound legal
framework



An active institutional
framework



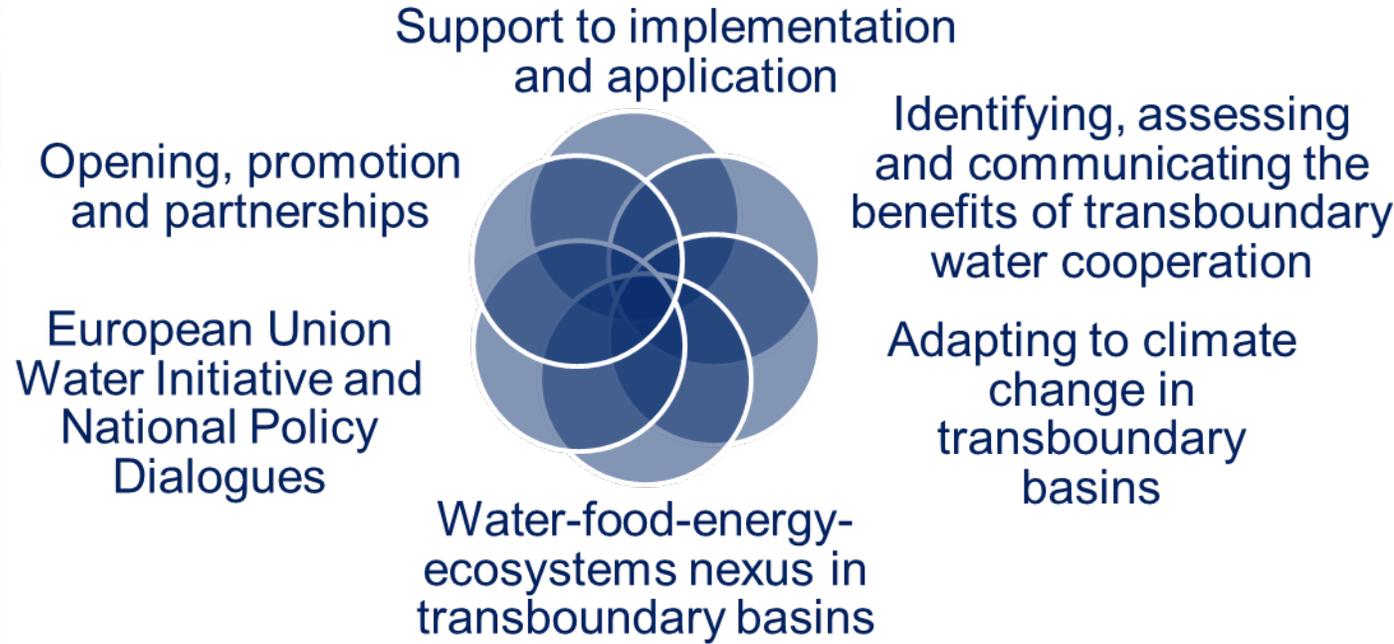
Activities and projects
on the ground



Strenghts: 1. A permanent platform to share experiences and good practices worldwide



Programme of work for 2016-2018



A global instrument now available

Opening of the Helsinki Water Convention to allow accession to all UN Member States with the objective to:

- ✓ Build on success achieved (practice has shown progress)
- ✓ Share experiences of transboundary water cooperation worldwide
- ✓ Learn from others
- ✓ Broaden political support for transboundary cooperation
- ✓ Jointly develop solutions to common challenges

More than 60 countries outside the pan European region participate in the Convention's activities

Several are in the process of accession

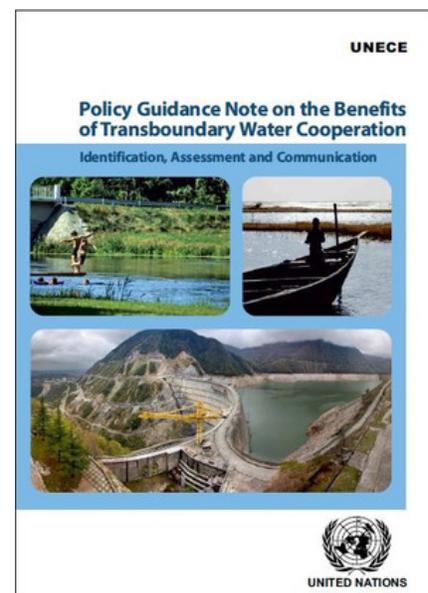


Lessons learned from the work under the Convention as a basis for the work on the benefits of cooperation

- Cooperating countries, countries considering accession or Parties to the Convention **naturally reflect on what benefits such cooperation can bring.**
- A constructive **dialogue** and **identification of common interest** among riparians and with partners is necessary
- Sharing / solidarity/political **willingness** essential for progress, and identification of **windows of opportunity!**
- A benefit assessment exercise can help countries to **fully realize the potential benefits of cooperation.**

→ Development of the **Policy Guidance Note on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation**

→ **3 pilot projects:** Okavongo basin, Sio-Malaba-Malakisi basin (Kenya-Uganda), Drina basin (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia)



Thank you for your attention!

More information

including guidelines, publications and information on activities under the Convention can be found at:

<http://unece.org/env/water>

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Upcoming meetings in Geneva

Workshop on recent progress on transboundary water cooperation: from getting cooperation started to its long-term sustainability (4 July 2017)

12th meeting of the Working Group on IWRM (5 - 6 July 2017)

Global Workshop on Water Allocation (17 - 18 October 2017)

Global Workshop on Climate Change Adaptation (11 - 12 December 2017)

Global workshop on benefit assessment (February 2018)

www.unece.org/env/water/meetings.html#/

