



## **Financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins**

### **SIXTH WORKSHOP ON ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS**

**To be held in Geneva, 13-14 September 2016**  
Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland,  
starting at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 13 September 2016

#### **INFORMATION NOTICE**

##### **I. Background and objectives**

Most climate change impacts are transmitted through the water cycle. The fact that at least 276 rivers and even more groundwater bodies cross boundaries implies that risks and challenges are shared between countries and that solutions need to be coordinated. Unilateral adaptation measures can have negative effects on other riparian countries. Cooperation on adaptation, at the same time, can help to find better and more cost-effective solutions, by considering a larger geographical area in planning measures, by broadening the information base, by exchanging data and by combining efforts.

The global commitments adopted in 2015, notably the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction as well as the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, highlight the importance of regional cooperation in climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction as well as water management. The high number of signatories of the Paris Pact for Adaptation to Climate Change in the basins of rivers, lakes and groundwaters underlines increasing awareness of the need for basin-wide adaptation.

Still, little is done at the transboundary level and few concrete actions are implemented at basin scale.

One of the many reasons for this is that climate change planning and finance - from both international and national sources - is mainly focused on national and local projects and many financing mechanisms do not sufficiently take into account the transboundary dimension. Many countries have developed National Adaptation Plans and more than 80 % of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) mention water, but very few refer to transboundary issues or are coordinated between the countries. This underlines the need for mainstreaming transboundary aspect into national strategies and plans.

With regards to international climate finance, the Paris climate change conference has, among others, led to significant new commitments on financing of adaptation. While many climate funds have been created in recent years (e.g. Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund) and new climate finance sources have emerged

(green bonds, insurance etc.), most of these mechanisms and sources only finance national or local, but no transboundary projects or do not take into account the transboundary dimension. At the same time, international financing institutions, which do finance investments in transboundary basins, have been facing difficulties in finding projects agreed upon by all riparian countries.

This workshop therefore aims to facilitate implementation and financing of basin-wide adaptation - from strategies and plans to concrete measures - while considering differences in transboundary basins' governance, administrative structure, mandate, etc. The workshop has the following objectives:

- Review mechanisms for financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins from national, international and private sources and share good practices, experiences and lessons learned;
- Contribute to mainstreaming and upscaling experiences from projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins implemented all over the world, including under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourse and International Lakes (Water Convention);
- Consider ways forward for reaching agreements between riparians in shared basins on structural and non-structural adaptation measures, including multi-purpose and climate-proof infrastructure to be financed by development banks and other financing institutions;
- Distill messages for further deliberations on financial issues regarding water and climate, as well as water and disasters, for example under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UN ISDR), the Adaptation Fund Board and International Financial Institutions.

This workshop is the sixth workshop on Water and Climate Change in Transboundary Basins in the framework of the platform for exchanging experience under the Water Convention. It will build on the discussions and results of previous workshops organized since 2008. For more information please see: [http://www.unece.org/env/water/water\\_climate\\_activ.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water/water_climate_activ.html)

## **II. Topics of the workshop**

The overall focus of this workshop will be on finance and economics of climate change adaptation in basins. The following themes and questions will be covered:

- Barriers and possible solutions for financing basin-wide adaptation, how to ensure transboundary aspects are taken into account in national and local projects, without delaying needed action?
- Financing for different types of measures such as monitoring stations and information systems, stakeholder involvement, structural and natural infrastructures, etc. How to ensure sufficient financing also for operation and maintenance of infrastructure, monitoring stations and information systems?
- Practical advice for development of project proposals for adapting water management to climate change, exchange of experience, e.g. on accreditation etc.
- Market place of funding options for basins with regards to climate change adaptation, e.g. from funds, banks, bilateral, multilateral and other sources, insurance, public-private partnerships, innovative funding sources, including from private sector
- Cooperation on cost-sharing and other options for financing in transboundary basins
- Mainstreaming climate change adaptation into other sectoral policies, plans, programmes, strategies etc. at national, basin and regional level
- Private sector engagement in transboundary cooperation and climate change adaptation, including investments in natural infrastructures, making the case for business involvement
- Climate-proofing of investments, including existing and new infrastructure - how to implement investments in transboundary basins? Which safeguards can be used? Which solutions can help, e.g. multi-purpose use of infrastructure, joint management by several riparian countries?

- How to take decisions on climate change financing under high uncertainty?

### **III. Participants**

The workshop will bring together water practitioners and authorities responsible for addressing climate change impacts, at the national and transboundary levels, with representatives of bilateral and multilateral donors, financing institutions and the private sector. The target audience includes representatives of governments, non-Governmental and intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, academia, the private sector and other experts.

To gather information on ongoing activities, needs and challenges encountered in the area of financing climate change adaptation participants are invited to fill in **by 15 July 2016** a short survey on their experience in the area of climate finance available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/L8HKFKH> .

Please note that while the questions in the survey are available only in English, you can submit your answers also in French and Russian.

### **IV. Organization of work**

The workshop will be organized on 13 to 14 September 2016, back-to-back with the eighth meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate (15 September 2016).

The workshop will consist of a combination of plenary presentations and discussions, smaller group discussions and exercises. Working languages will be English, French, Russian and Spanish.

A detailed programme will be issued in August 2016.

### **V. Partners involved**

The workshop will be organized under the leadership of the Governments of the Netherlands and Switzerland, with the support of the Water Convention secretariat. Funding for the workshop and the pilot projects programme is provided by Finland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria and the European Commission.

Activities on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins under the Water Convention started in 2006 in cooperation with partners such as AGWA, OSCE, UNDP, WHO, WMO and included development of a Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change in 2009, a collection of good practices and lessons learned in 2015, a programme of pilot projects and a platform for exchanging experience. The latter was transformed in 2013 into a global network of basins, facilitated in cooperation with INBO, which aims to enable comparing methodologies and approaches, fostering exchange of experience and promoting a shared vision between the participating basins.

The following organizations are partners in organizing this workshop:

- The Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) is a network of development banks, governments, civil society organizations, and for-profit institutions that are focused on developing the best practices for implementing and operationalizing climate adaptation through the lens of water.  
<http://www.alliance4water.org>
- The GEF Project International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN) exists to strengthen Transboundary Waters Management (TWM) by facilitating portfolio learning and information management amongst GEF IW projects and partners: <http://iwlearn.net/>.
- International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) which is gathering at world level basin organisations in order to exchange good practices for better water resource management at basin scale, including the constraints related to the global changes, namely climate change: <http://www.inbo-news.org> .

- The IUCN is the world largest environmental organization composed by government and non-government organizations focused on demonstrating how biodiversity is fundamental to addressing some of the world's greatest challenges such as climate change, through innovative approaches like ecosystem-based adaptation: [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org).
- World Bank: Helping countries achieve water security for all lies at the core of the World Bank Group's goals: to eliminate extreme poverty by 2030 and boost shared prosperity for the poorest 40%. The World Bank also places water at the center of adaptation strategies to help countries cope with the effects of climate change and build a more resilient future. The World Bank's Water Global Practice (GP) was established in 2014 to confront the complexities of the 21st century.
- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO): is the UN specialized agency in the areas of meteorology, climatology and hydrology, furthering the application of meteorological, climatological and hydrological data and information for the overall benefit of the society. WMO has launched the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) as a global partnership of governments and organizations that produce and use climate information and services, water has been identified as one priority area for GFCS implementation: [www.wmo.int](http://www.wmo.int).

## VI. Practical information

The workshop will start at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 13 September and end at 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 14 September 2016. It will be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, in room VII. The workshop will be followed by the eighth meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate, which will be held on 15 September 2016 in Geneva. The working languages will be English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Eligible participants from countries with economies in transition and developing countries may apply for financial support to facilitate their participation in the meeting using the financial support request form available on the meeting website. Requests for financial support should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat ([water.convention@unece.org](mailto:water.convention@unece.org)) as soon as possible, but not later **than Monday, 25 July 2016**. No application will be accepted after this deadline.

Participants requiring entry visas should inform the UNECE secretariat as soon as possible. Since Switzerland is part of the Schengen Zone, obtaining a visa might take up to 5 weeks. Participants needing a visa are therefore requested to submit their application as soon as possible and initiate visa procedures at least four weeks before the meeting.

Delegates attending the meeting are requested to register by **1 September 2016** using the following link: <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=Gkp7at> . In case of difficulties please contact the secretariat by e-mail ([water.convention@unece.org](mailto:water.convention@unece.org)). On their way to the meeting, participants should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section located at the Pregny Gate, 14 Avenue de la Paix (see map on the UNECE website). Please allow enough time for this.

Practical information on the Palais des Nations, as well as on transport and accommodation in Geneva, is available online at: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>

Further information and relevant material will be made available on the following website in due course: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=42218>

For the Task Force: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=42220>