

The First and Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE Region

Lea Kauppi

Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)



Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

International River Basins of

EUROPE



International River Basins of ASIA



Value of joint monitoring and shared information

- A common understanding on the state of and pressures on transboundary waters is a prerequisite for developing joint management
- Co-operation on monitoring is politically less "sensitive" than management planning. Thus it provides a good starting point for further co-operation



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses
and International Lakes



OUR WATERS: JOINING HANDS ACROSS BORDERS

First Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters



140 rivers

30 lakes

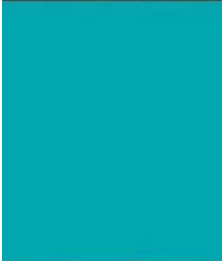
70 aquifers

>150 experts

40 countries

Objectives

- Serve as point of reference for Governments, IGOs, NGOs to improve management and status of waters
- Highlight achievements in IWRM at transboundary level
- Develop knowledge and understanding for further action
- Identify situations of water crisis
- Provide guidance for strategic investments



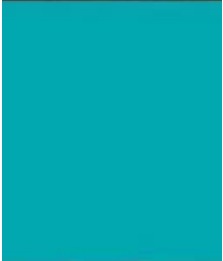
Major findings of the first assessment

- Action to decrease water pollution from point sources (municipal sewage treatment; old industrial installations) is of primary importance in basins in EECCA and SEE
- Pollution from diffuse sources (e.g. agriculture, urban areas) is of high importance for action in basins in Western and Central Europe



Major findings of the first assessment

- The effects of climate change became visible in almost all of the analysed river basins
- In transboundary river basins, water sharing among countries in the same basins is often a major water-quantity issue, and continues to cause upstream-downstream conflicts



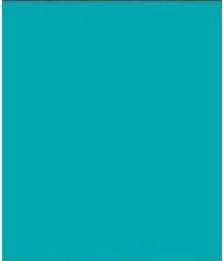
Major findings of the first assessment

- In transboundary aquifers, increasing abstraction for agricultural purposes and drinking water supply is often a major water-quantity issue, and in some cases leads to overuse.
- Eutrophication is the worst phenomenon affecting transboundary lakes. It is increasing constantly except in areas where wastewater treatment has been effectively implemented and where small improvements are visible



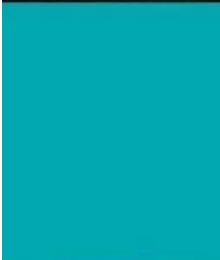
Major findings of the first assessment

- Plans for integrated water resources management still need to be developed for almost all basins.
- Proper attention should be devoted to land-use planning and the joint management of surface waters and groundwaters



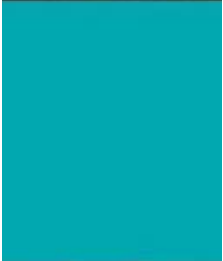
Second assessment under preparation (1)

- Geographically specific attention will be paid to the EECCA region
- Strengthening the integrated river basin approach, e.g. the role of wetland protection



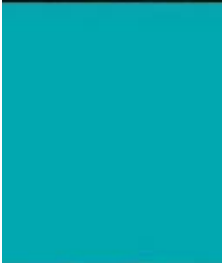
Second assessment under preparation(2)

- Thematically more focus on:
 - the status of institutional arrangements of co-operation
 - Water quantity issues and impacts of climate change
 - Groundwaters
 - Health aspects



Second assessment under preparation(3)

- Steering group and the UNECE secretariat coordinate the work
- Regional workshops are an important part of the preparatory process
- Cooperation and coordination with EEA (EfE process) and streamlining with other relevant processes



Second assessment under preparation(4)

- Support from focal points important: nomination of experts and their active involvement, esp. groundwater experts
- Involvement of joint bodies
- Keep the time schedule
- To be published in the next EfE Ministerial Conference in 2011 in Astana

