

# **The preparation of the Second Assessment: challenges, successes and lessons learned**

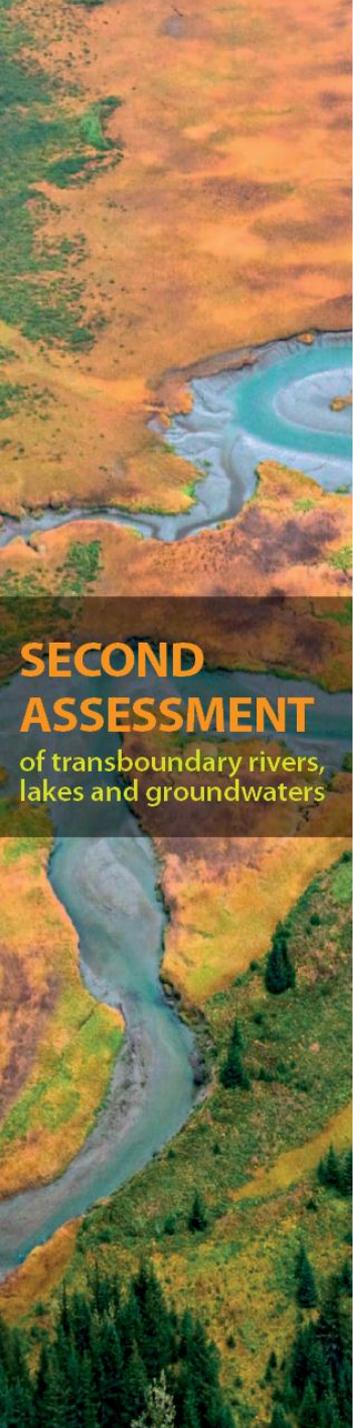
## **SECOND ASSESSMENT**

of transboundary rivers,  
lakes and groundwaters

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Director General  
Finnish Environment Institute  
(SYKE)  
Chair of the Working Group on  
Monitoring and Assessment**

# About the Second Assessment

- In 2003 the Parties to the Water Convention decided to regularly carry out regional assessments; First Assessment in 2007
- Second Assessment prepared at the request of the 6th “Environment for Europe” Ministerial conference

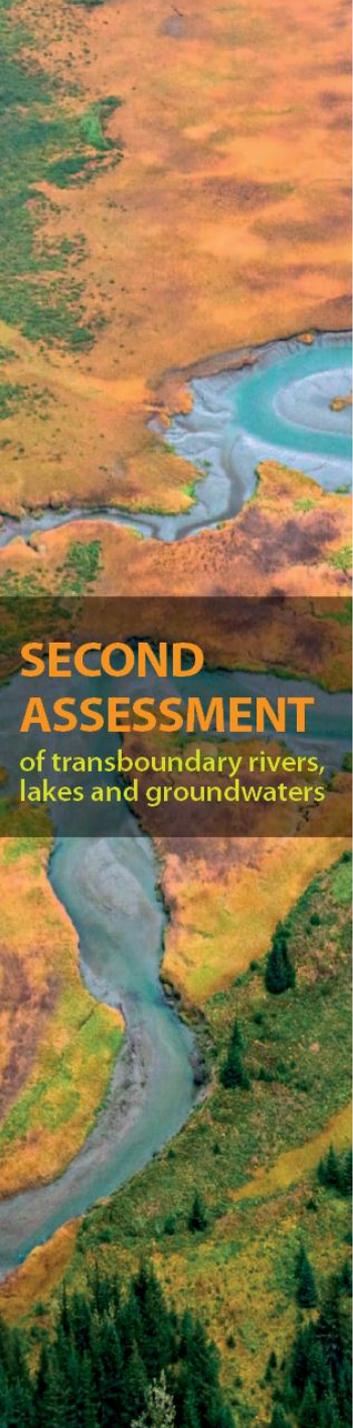


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# Scope

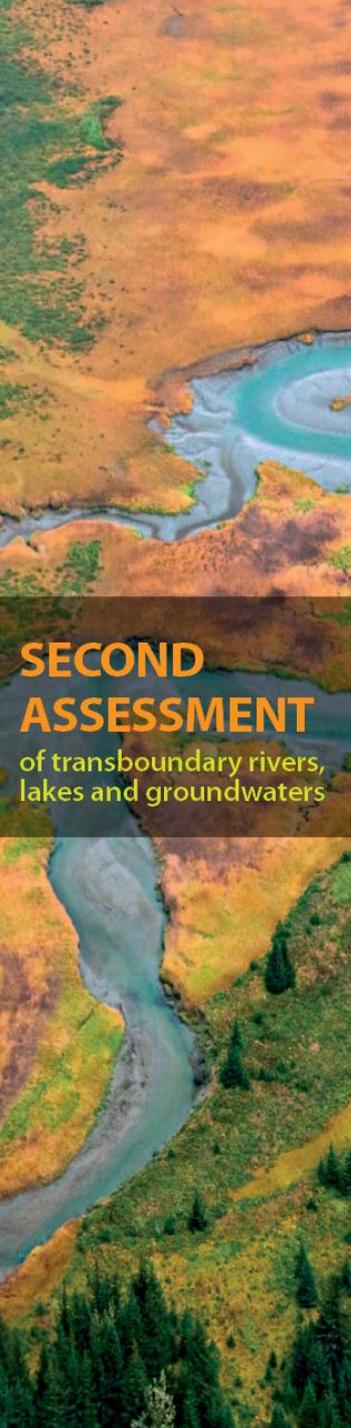
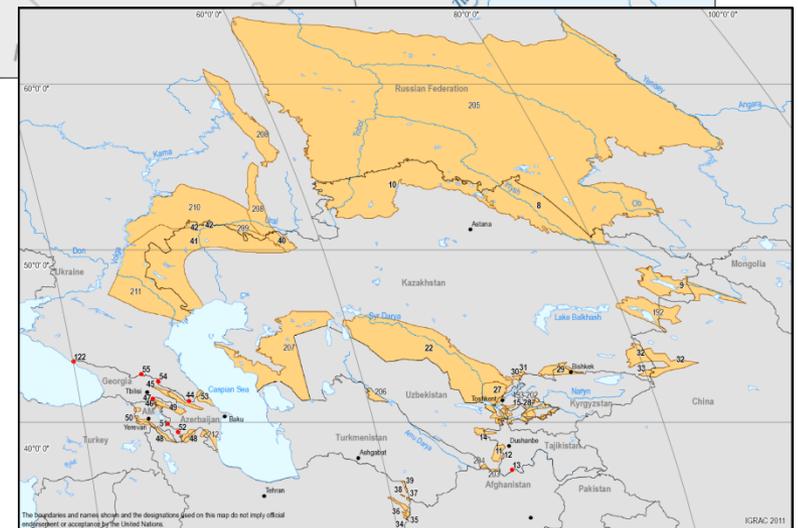
- Covers more than 140 rivers, 25 lakes, about 200 groundwaters and 25 Ramsar Sites and other wetlands of transboundary importance
- Covers pressure factors, quantity and quality status of waters, transboundary impacts, responses and future trends



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# Main transboundary surface waters and groundwaters in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

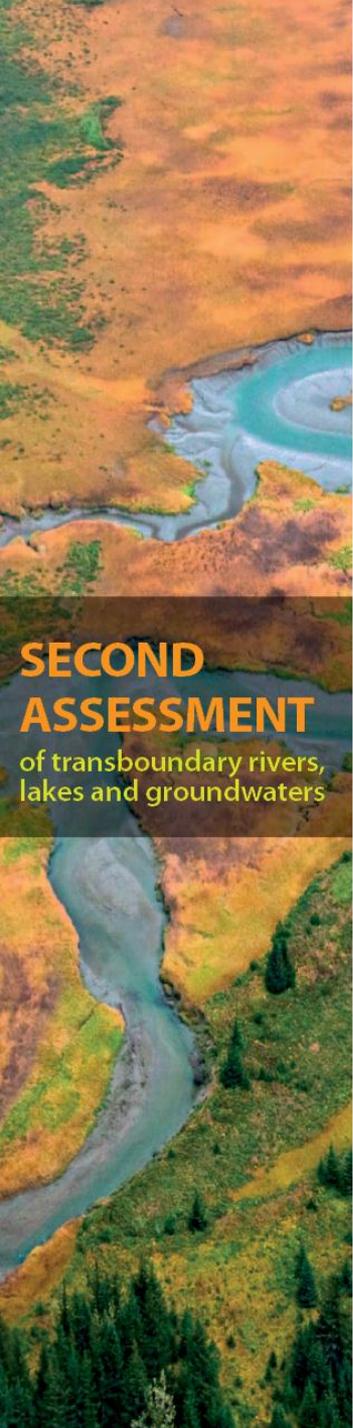


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# Characteristics

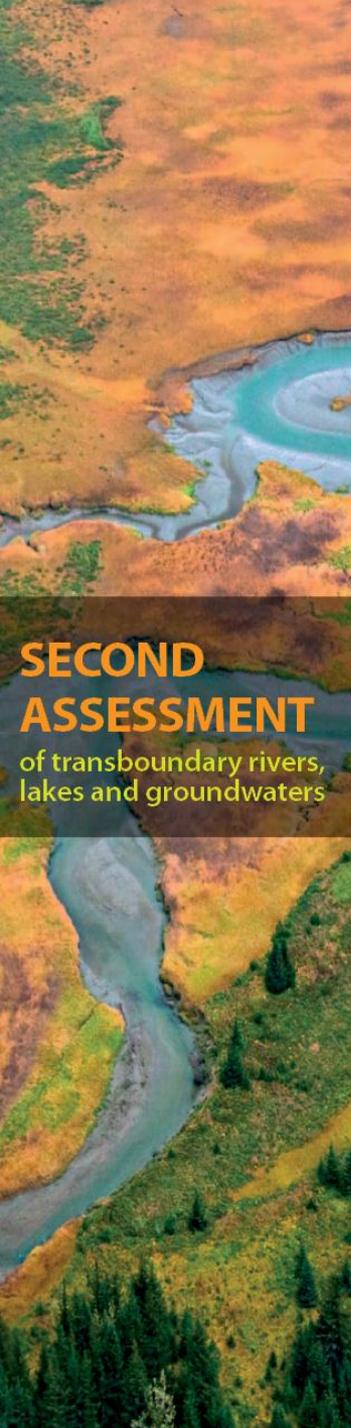
More focus compared to the first assessment on:

- Institutional aspects of transboundary cooperation (agreements, joint bodies, M&A...)
- Economic and social aspects, health issues, security aspects
- Water quantity issues
- Groundwaters
- Impacts of climate change
- Ecological aspects



# Approach

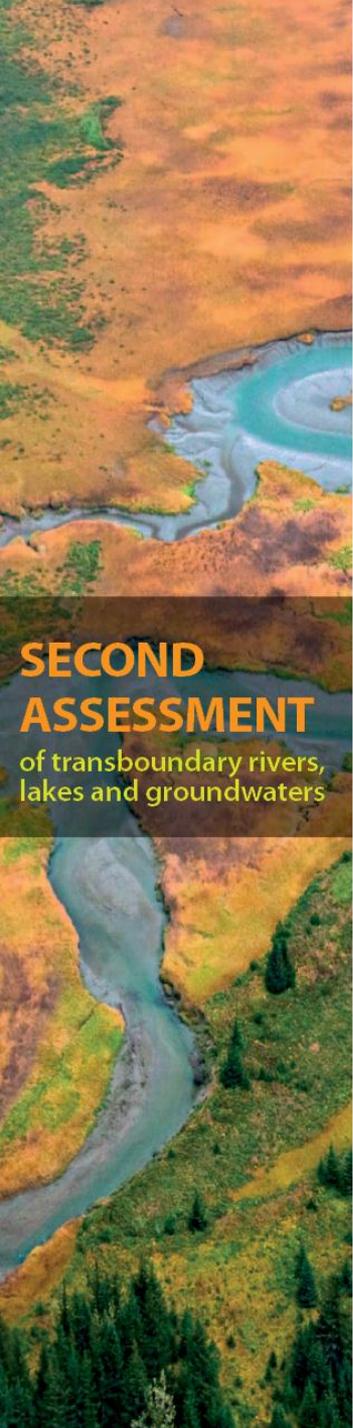
- Subregional focus
- Collective effort by Parties and non-Parties to the Water Convention, and countries outside the UNECE region
- Input from the Ramsar Secretariat
- Integration of groundwater and surface water



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# Process

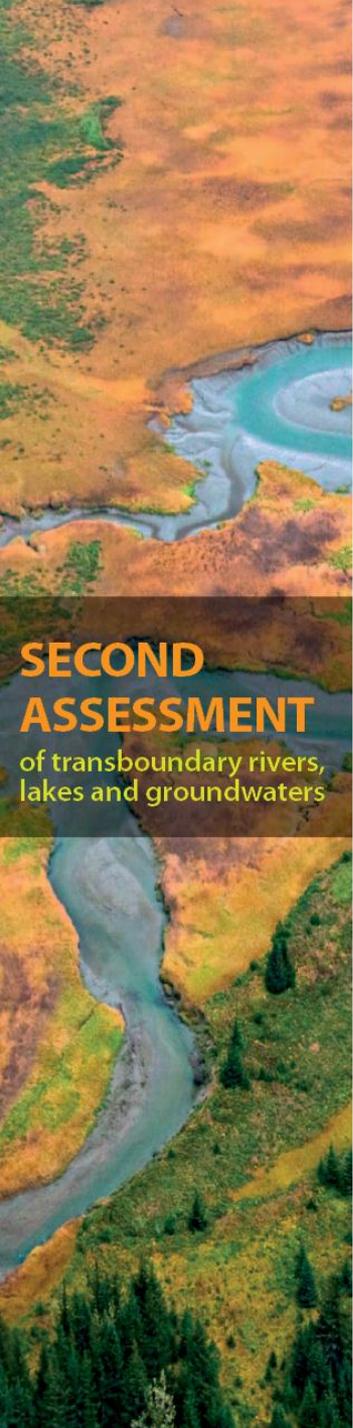
- Based on information submitted by the countries
- Subregional workshops a key step
- Country representatives reviewed and endorsed the material



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# Challenges

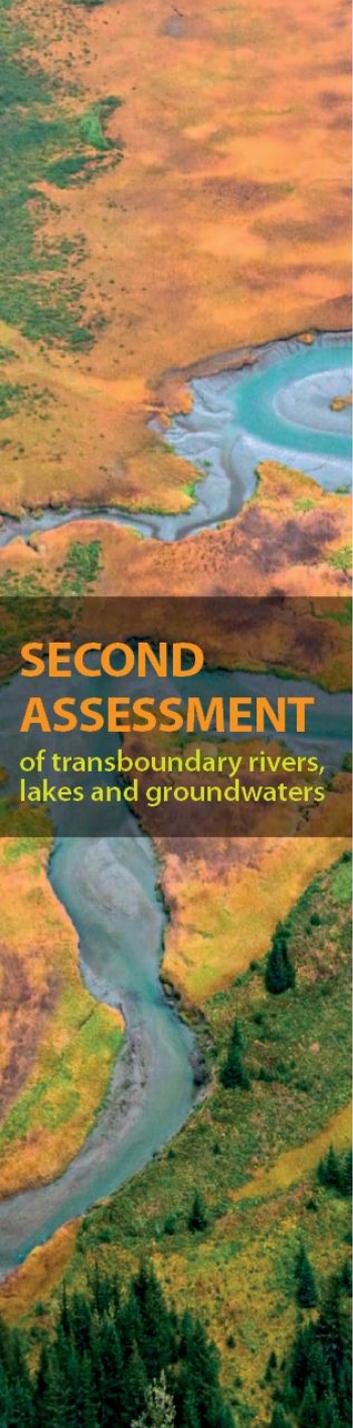
- Extremely labourous process
- Not all countries participated
- Weak tradition on intersectoral cooperation
- Changes in the nature are slow, and thus difficult to verify between the first and second Assessment
- Different approaches complicate comparisons



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# Successes

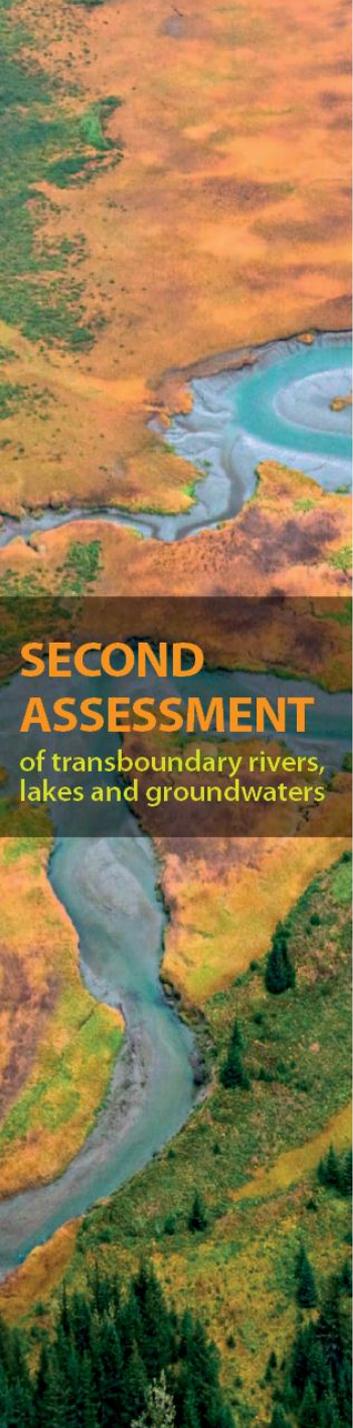
- Builds on the first Assessment - continuity
- Preparatory process as such promoted exchange, cooperation and capacity building
- Common assessment as a tool to harmonize approaches
- Provides a strong basis for all the work under the Convention, supports other initiatives
- A lot of information compiled – a reference piece of work



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# Successes (...)

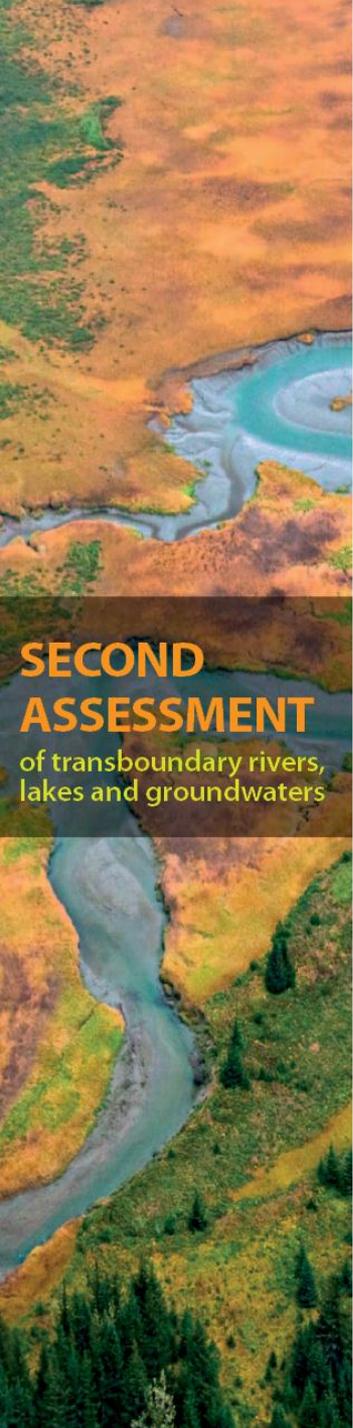
- Some non-Parties and countries outside the region very active (Turkey, Iran, Mongolia)
- A true partnership:
  - IWAC
  - Ramsar secretariat and expert network
  - River commissions
  - UNEP/DEWA/GRID
  - IGRAC



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# Lessons learned

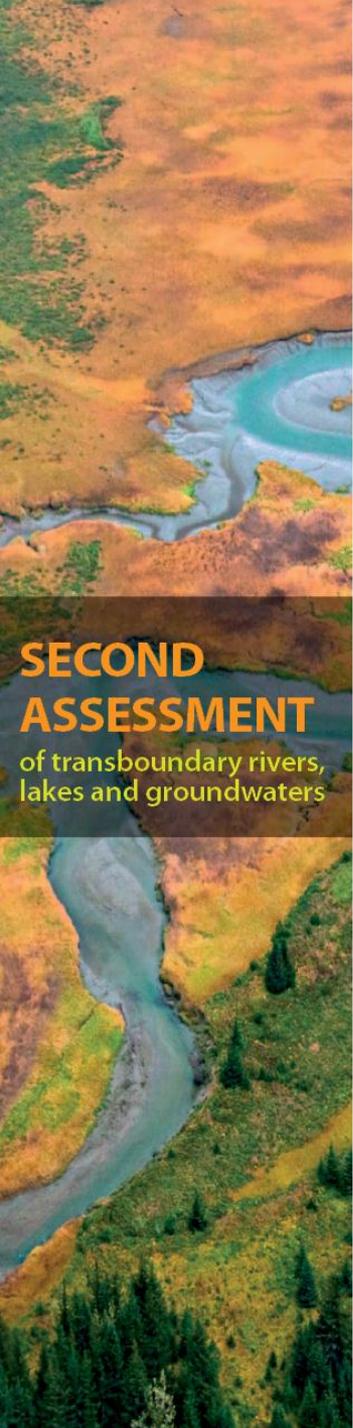
- Countries need to invest in intersectoral cooperation and coordination
- Cost of and access to information is a major issue in many countries
- Basin level information commonly not available



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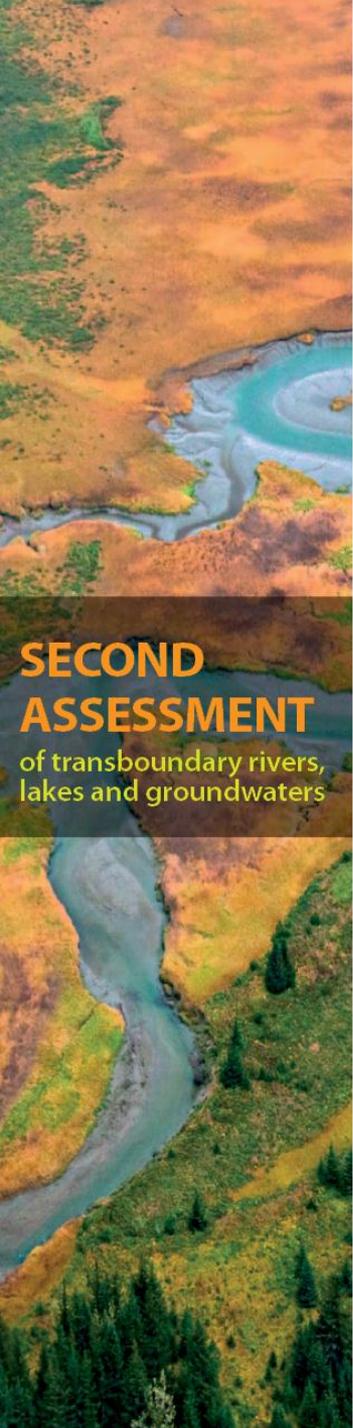
# Future of assessing transboundary waters under UNECE Water Convention

- Next extensive Assessment in 8-10 years
- A special edition within 4 years with a different scope and approach:
  - 1) focus on a specific theme
    - A pressure (e.g. agriculture, hydropower)
    - A cross-cutting theme (e.g. climate change and extreme events, ecosystems and biodiversity)
    - A response measure (e.g. river basin management plans, monitoring and assessment systems)
  - 2) assessment limited to a representative number of basins



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# Future of assessing transboundary waters under UNECE Water Convention (...)

- Options to be discussed and decision to be taken by the 6<sup>th</sup> MoP of the Water Convention in 2012
- Partnerships sought

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# Many thanks to the following partners for their generous contribution to the Second Assessment



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND



CONVENTION ON WETLANDS  
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Office for the Environment FOEN



SWEDISH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety



HUNGARIAN MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT



Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment of the Netherlands



Ministry of Environment Protection of Georgia



International groundwater resources assessment centre



Global Water Partnership  
Mediterranean



SYKE



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