www.unece.org/euro_asia_conference.html

The International Conference on “Europe-Asia transboundary water cooperation” was held from 15 to 16 December 2011 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. The Conference was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), at the invitation of the Government of Switzerland, in the framework of the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), which is currently chaired by Switzerland.

Many transboundary river basins lie at the border between Europe and Asia and are an important source of drinking water, irrigation and hydropower. Cooperation for the sustainable use of these resources are key for the social, economic and environmental development of their riparian countries. Transboundary cooperation becomes more and more crucial in view of the expected impacts of economic development, population growth and climate change on water resources, in order to prevent conflicts between riparian countries, optimize the use of resources and ensure sustainability.

The Water Convention has, since its entry into force in 1992, provided an important framework for cooperation on transboundary waters in the UNECE region. A wealth of guidance and experience has been accumulated under its umbrella. In 2003, upon a proposal by Switzerland, the Parties adopted an amendment to open the Convention beyond the UNECE region. Once in force, this amendment will allow accession by non-UNECE countries.

In adopting the amendment, Parties stressed its particular importance for neighbouring non-UNECE countries that share waters with UNECE countries, and have called for an increased exchange and cooperation, even before the formal entry into force of the amendment.

The International Conference on “Europe-Asia transboundary water cooperation” promoted dialogue and cooperation on the management and protection of transboundary waters along the border of the two continents, i.e., those shared by two or more of the following countries: Afghanistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Viet Nam.

In particular, the conference allowed participants to:

Debate the current state, the progress achieved and the remaining challenges for cooperation on waters in this border region
Exchange experiences and showcase good practices of transboundary cooperation from different basins within the European and Asian region

Increase awareness and understanding of the UNECE Water Convention and its work, including the technical and strategic guidance documents developed under its framework and the practical experiences of its application
Identify options for the way forward.

The conference focused on the following themes:

Legal and institutional aspects of transboundary water cooperation
Balancing different interests and uses in transboundary basins, and the application of integrated water resources management
Protection of ecosystem and water quality, including monitoring and data exchange
Extreme weather events and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins
Prevention and response to industrial accidents.

The report of the conference will be made available soon.

Documents
Background documents
Presentations

Documents	ENG	RUS
Information Notice	PDF	PDF
Agenda	PDF	PDF
Registration Form	DOC	
List of Participants	PDF	
Conference Conclusions	PDF	PDF

Document	ENG	RUS
Brochure of the Convention	PDF	PDF
Text of the Convention	PDF	
Amendment to articles 25 and 26 of the Convention ECE/MP.WAT/14	PDF	PDF
Programme of work 2010-2012 for the Convention ECE/MP.WAT/29/Add.1	PDF	PDF
Guidance on water and adaptation to Climate Change ECE/MP.WAT/30	PDF	PDF
Second Assessment of transboundary river, lakes and groundwater ECE/MP.WAT/33	PDF	PDF
Brochure of the Protocol	PDF	PDF
Text of the Protocol	PDF	PDF

	ENG	RUS
Opening Session		
Cooperation between Europe and Asia on transboundary waters - key to regional stability *Ms. Charlotte Warakaulle, Chief of Section, Political Affairs, External Relations and Inter Agency Affairs, United Nations Office in Geneva, on belalf of Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Director-General, United Nations Office in Geneva*	PDF	
Promoting transboundary cooperation at the global level by using the experience of the Water Convention *Mr. Andrey Vasilyev, Deputy Executive Secretary, UNECE*	PDF	
The UNECE Water Convention: obligations and practical application *Ms. Francesca Bernardini, Secretary to the UNECE Water Convention, UNECE*	PDF	
Session 1: Setting the Scene		
Statements from the delegations of Afghanistan		
Statements from the delegations of Islamic Republic of Iran	PDF	
Statements from the delegations of Democratic People's Republic of Korea		
Statements from the delegations of Kazakhstan		
Statements from the delegations of Kyrgyzstan		PDF
Statements from the delegations of Mongolia		

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Statements from the delegations of Russian Federation
Statements from the delegations of Tajikistan PDF
Statements from the delegations of Thailand PDF
Statements from the delegations of Turkmenistan
Statements from the delegations of Uzbekistan PDF
Statements from the delegations of Vietnam

Session 2: Protection of ecosystems and water quality, including monitoring and data exchange

Mr. Alexandr Bragin, Director, Department of International Environmental Conventions and Agreements, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Kazakhstan, *on the cooperation between Kazakhstan and China* PDF

Mr. Eugene Simonov, Coordinator, Rivers without Boundaries International Coalition, *on the protection of ecosystems and wetlands in the transboundary Amur / Argun river basin* PDF

Mr. Talaibek Makeev, Director, Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia, *on the launch of a platform for cooperation on water quality in transboundary rivers in Central Asia* PDF

Session 3: Legal and institutional aspects of transboundary water cooperation and management

How to develop transboundary agreements and institutions for their implementation based on the Water Convention PDF
Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia,UNECE

The Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin and its implementation PDF
Mr. Samo Groselj, Deputy Secretary, International Sava River Basin Secretariat

Legal and institutional framework for transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia PDF PDF
Mr. Saghit Ibatullin, Chairperson, Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC-IFAS)

Transboundary water cooperation between the Russian Federation and its neighbours: legal and institutional aspects PDF
Mr. Vasily Kuriyanov, Deputy Head, Federal Agency for Water Resources, Russian Federation

Ongoing process of institutional reform to decentralize the Mekong River Commission: towards more ownership to the countries PDF
Mr. Duc Trung Le, Director General, Viet Nam National Mekong Committee, Mekong River Commission

Session 4: Disaster risk reduction and prevention, preparedness and response to accidental water pollution

Mr. Shukhrat Talipov, Chief Specialist, State inspection Gosvodhoznadzor, Uzbekistan, *on the cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia* PDF

Ms. Heide Jekel, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany, *on the cooperation on the prevention of accidental industrial water pollution in the Rhine and Elbe basins* PDF

Mr. Boris Minarik, Director, International Water Assessment Centre, *on the cooperation on the prevention of accidental industrial water pollution in the Danube basin* PDF

Session 5: Balancing different interests for development in transboundary basins

	ENGRUS
Iran and Turkmenistan: lessons learned from transboundary water cooperation *Mr. Mohammad Reza Attarzadeh, Deputy Minister of Energy in Water and Waste Water Affairs, Ministry of Energy, Islamic Republic of Iran*	PDF
Sharing costs of water infrastucture and joint decision-making on water allocation: the Agreement and Commission on the Chu Talas Rivers *Mr. Chyngyzbek Uzakbaev, Commission on the Use of Water Management - Facilities of Intergovenmental Status on the Chu and Talas Rivers, Kyrgyzstan*	PDF
Hydropower and flood protection: the cooperation between Finland and the Russian Federation *Mr. Kai Kaatra, Director, Head of Unit, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland*	PDF
Mining developments in Mongolia and possible transboundary impact of water transfers from Orkhon and Herlen Rivers *Ms. Sukhgerel Dugersuren, Executive Director, Mongolian Council of Environmental NGO's Mongolia*	PDF

Session 6: Extreme weather events and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins

Ms. Sonja Koeppel, UNECE Secretariat, *on the importance of transboundary cooperation in climate change adaptation*	PDF
Mr. Sulton Rahimov, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Melioration and Water Resources Tajikistan, *on the adaptation to climate change in Tajikistan*	PDF
Mr. Antonio Guerreiro de Brito, President, River Basin Administration of the Northern region, Portugal, *on the integration of climate change and variability into transboundary agreements, with the example of Spain and Portugal*	PDF
Mr. Badrakh Tsend, Director, Water Authority, Mongolia, *on climate change and its effects on water resources*	PDF

Information session on activities under the UNECE Water Convention

Regional Dialogue and cooperation on water resources management in Central Asia *Mr. Volker Frobarth, GUZ and Mr. Bo Libert, UNECE*	PDF
EU Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues *Ms. Gulnara Roll, UNECE*	PDF
The Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters *Ms. Annukka Lipponen, UNECE*	PDF
Support to implementation and conflict prevention *Ms. Francesca Bernardini, UNECE*	PDF

Information session on the activities of the other UNECE environmental conventions

Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution *Ms. Albena Karadjova, Secretary to the Convention, UNECE*	PDF
Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context *Mr. Nick Bonvoisin, Secretary to the Convention, UNECE*	PDF
Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters *Ms. Ella Behlyarova, Secretary to the Convention, UNECE*	PDF
Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents *Ms. Virginia Fusé, Programme Support Officer, UNECE*	PDF
Protocol on Water and Health *Ms. Franziska Hirsch, UNECE*	PDF