



# The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention)

Twenty-eighth session of ECE Committee on Environmental Policy  
1-3 November 2023

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# Water Convention Status



## ENVIRONMENT



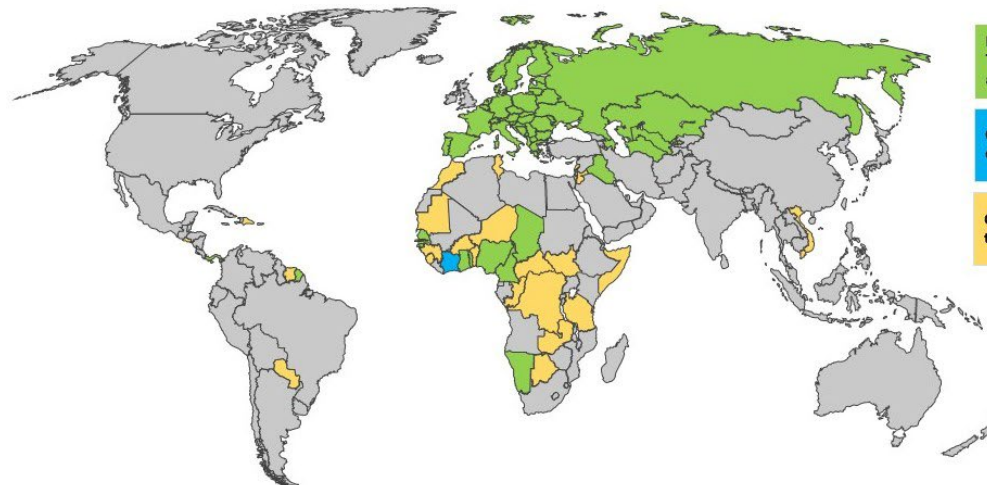
The Water Convention:

- ✓ **Signed on 17 March 1992 in Helsinki**
- ✓ **Entered into force on 6 October 1996**
- ✓ **Since 2016 amendment in force to allow accession to countries outside the UNECE region (art. 26 and art. 26),**
- ✓ **52 Parties** out of which 11 from outside the UNECE region

Under the Convention:

- ✓ **Protocol on Water and Health**
- ✓ **Protocol on Civil Liability** was adopted in Kiev in 2003

Unique global legal and intergovernmental United Nations framework on transboundary water cooperation



Parties to the Convention (52) – newest: The Gambia, Panama, Namibia, Nigeria and Iraq (2023)

Countries very close to accession: Côte d'Ivoire

Countries in the process of accession to the Convention (>20)

# Water Convention

## Developments and achievements



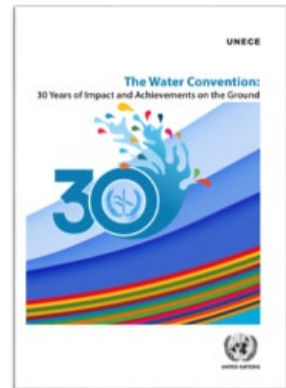
### ENVIRONMENT



Since its adoption, **more than 100 agreements on shared waters** have been signed. They have increased water security and thereby sustainable development, promoted regional integration, and supported flood protection, early warning and data exchange.

#### Enlarged geographic coverage

- ✓ Membership to the Water Convention is **growing steadily**.
- ✓ **11 Parties from outside the UNECE region** have joined in 2018–2023
  - 9 African countries
  - 1 Latin America country
  - 1 Middle East country
- ✓ **More than 20 countries from different regions** are in the process of accession.
- ✓ **130 countries worldwide** take part in activities of its institutional platform.



#### Water Convention as a “UN hub” for transboundary water cooperation:

*UN-Water conference in March 2023:* strong involvement: preparing interactive dialogue 4 on water for cooperation, organized regional preparatory meeting, submitted and facilitated commitments to the Water Action Agenda, active within UN-Water  
*UNECE co-custodian (with UNESCO) for SDG indicator 6.5.2 on transboundary water cooperation- interacting with 153 countries and submitting data to UNSD*



# Water Convention

## Lessons and challenges



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Despite the Water Convention's achievements, progress on transboundary water cooperation in accordance with **SDG indicator 6.5.2 is globally off track.**

Only **24 countries worldwide have all their transboundary basin area covered by operational arrangements** (19 of which are Parties of the Water Convention). In addition, disputes are on the rise due to climate change, industrial development and other pressures

#### Lessons learnt:

- ✓ Importance of **involving partners** at global, regional and national level
- ✓ **Increasing cooperation with IFIs** such as World Bank, GEF, IADB etc. paid off
- ✓ Ministries of foreign affairs and development cooperation have become more involved
- ✓ Expanding **cooperation with UN resident coordinators** and UN country teams as well as other regional commissions has been crucial in promoting accession and implementation
- ✓ Increasingly, providing **input into global processes eg UNFCCC, UNDRR** etc.
- ✓ **Need for more sustainable and predictable funding** for the Convention's activities.

# Water Convention Plans and prospects



## ENVIRONMENT



The 10th **Meeting of the Parties** of the Water Convention will take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia in October 2024, incl. adoption of the future programme of work for 2025-2027.



### Emerging topics and priorities:

- ✓ **Pollution prevention**
- ✓ Promoting basin-wide approaches to **climate change adaptation, flood and drought management**
- ✓ Protecting **biodiversity** through transboundary water cooperation
- ✓ Strengthening **conjunctive management** of groundwaters and surface waters (e.g. workshop in October 2023)
- ✓ Facilitating **financing** of transboundary water cooperation
- ✓ Strengthening **source-to-sea** management (e.g. workshop in December 2022)
- ✓ Water-energy nexus, water for climate change mitigation





# Thank you!

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