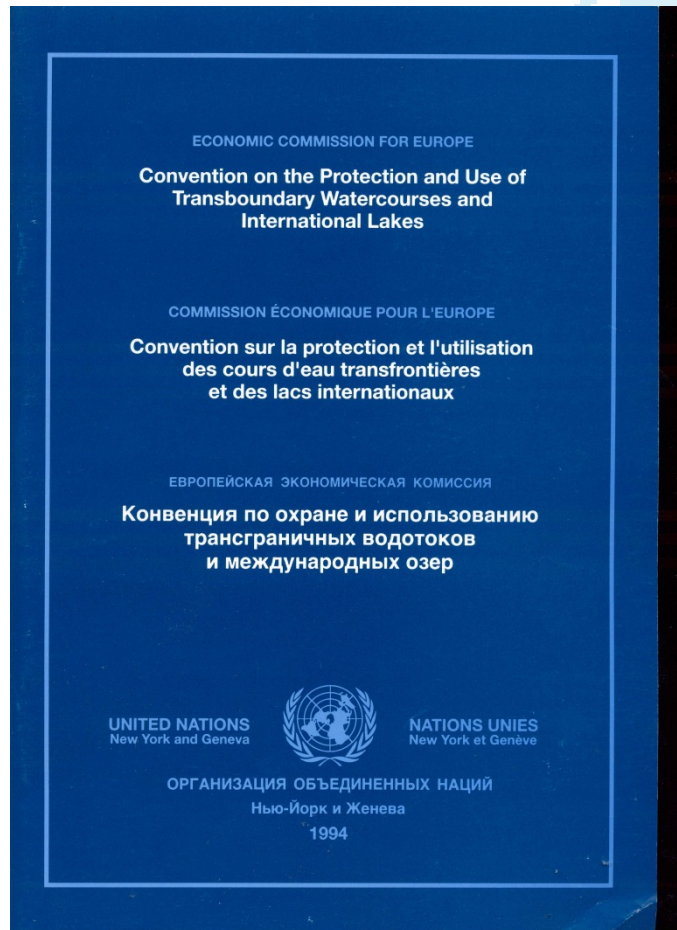




UNECE Water Convention celebrates 20 years: achievements and challenges ahead

Bo Libert, UNECE

The Water Convention

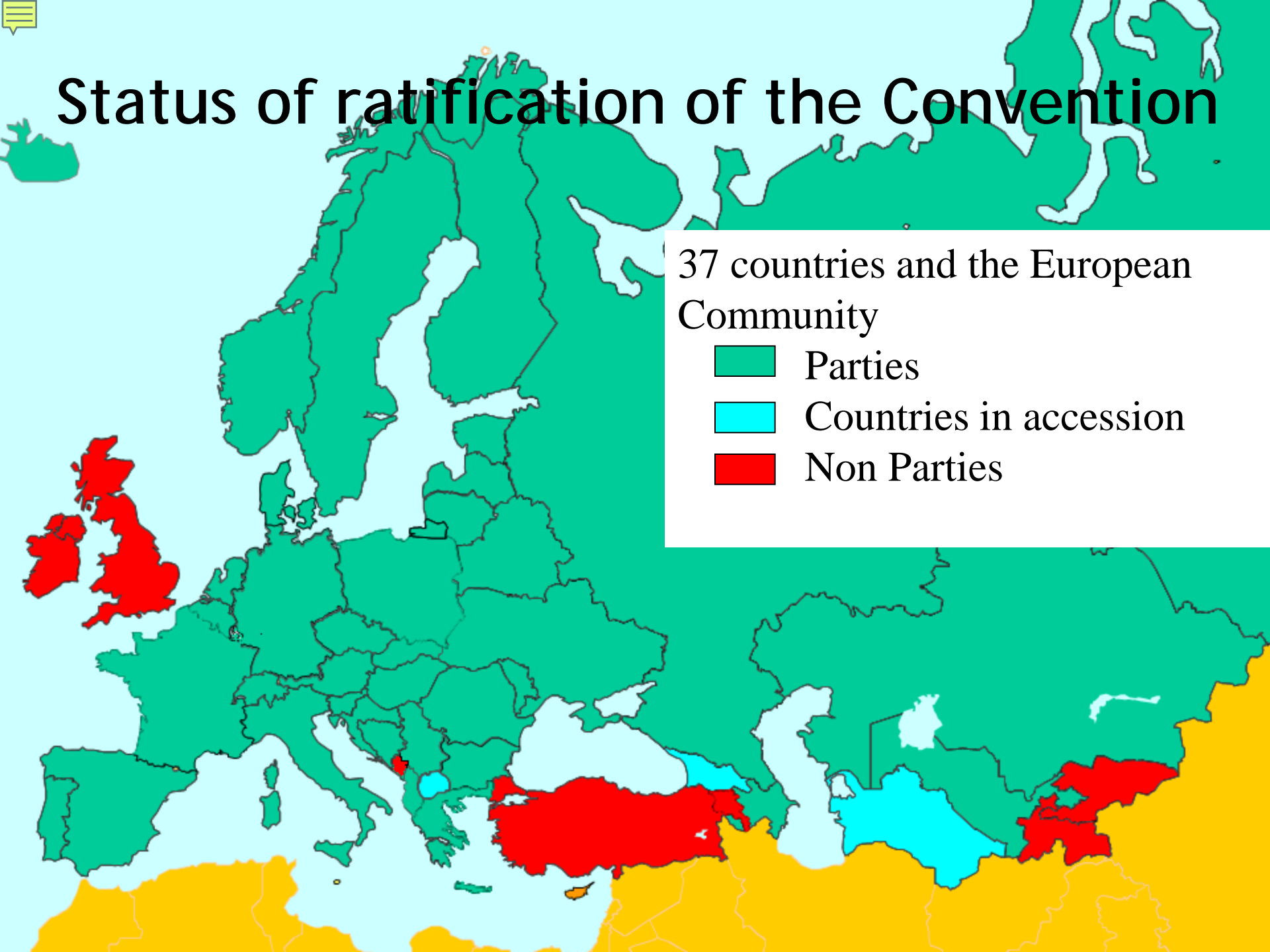


- Signed on 17 March 1992
- Entered into force on 6 October 1996
- Protocol on Water and Health adopted in 1999, entered into force in 2005
- Protocol on Civil Liability adopted in 2003

Status of ratification of the Convention

37 countries and the European Community

-  Parties
-  Countries in accession
-  Non Parties



Going global: Amendment 2003



- Opening up the Convention to non-UNECE states
- Strong commitment to entry into force by 2012
- Strong interest from non-UNECE countries



Holistic approach

- Transboundary impacts means significant adverse effect on human health and safety, flora, fauna, soil, air, water, climate, landscape and historical monuments or other physical structures, and socio-economic conditions
- Surface and groundwaters, and links to the recipient seas
- Catchments area concept => IWRM

Main obligations under the Convention



- Protection of transboundary waters by preventing, controlling and reducing significant transboundary impacts
 - Reasonable and equitable use of transboundary waters
 - Obligation to cooperate through agreements and joint institutions
- => **Overall objective of sustainability**



Provisions relating to Riparian Parties

- Cooperate on the basis of equality and reciprocity
- Conclude bilateral and multilateral agreements - 165 agreements in the Second Assessment (UNECE and UNECE/non-UNECE)
- Establish joint bodies
- Consult and exchange of information
- Joint monitoring and assessment
- Joint objectives, action programmes



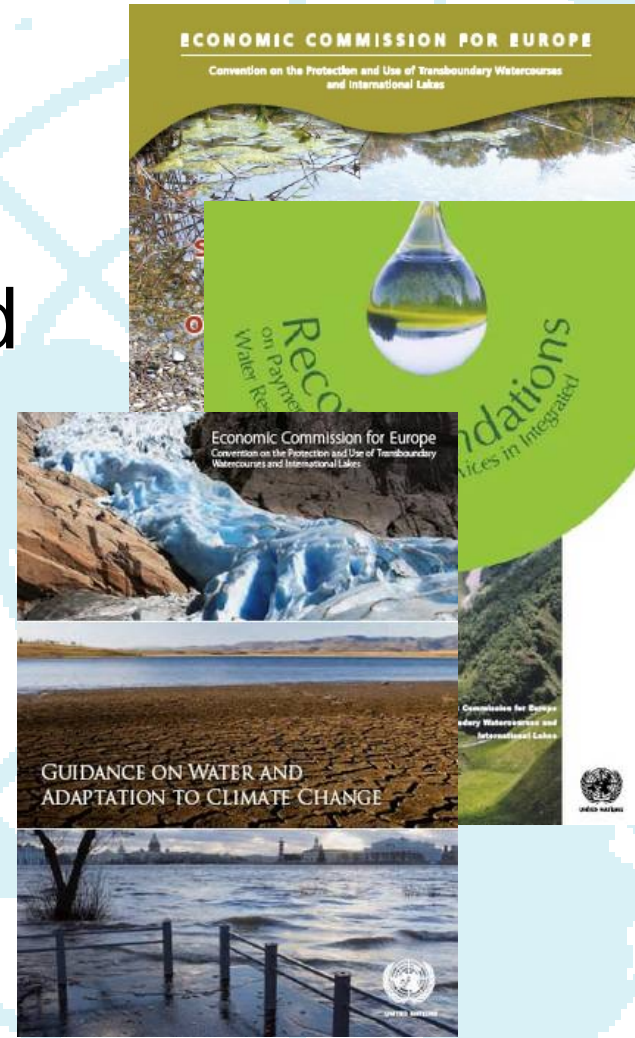
Not only rights and obligations

Becoming a Party = joining an institutional regime

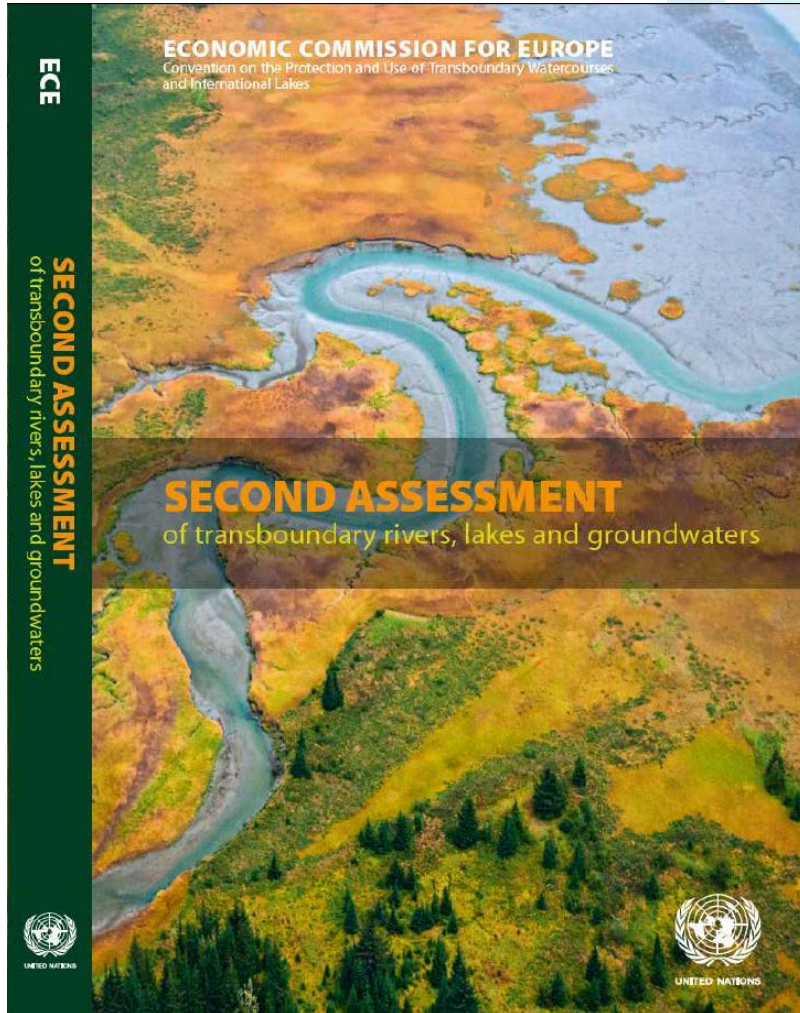
- Progressive development of the Convention
- Forum for bilateral and multilateral cooperation
- Sharing of experience and good practices
- Address requests on clarifications
- **Assistance to implementation**

Guidance and recommendations

- Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change
- Guidelines for M&A of transboundary rivers, lakes and GW
- Model provisions for transboundary flood management
- *Draft Model provisions for transboundary groundwater - for MOP 2012*



Assessing results



- Covers more than 140 rivers, 25 lakes, about 200 groundwaters and 25 Ramsar Sites and other wetlands
- Pressure factors, quantity and quality status of waters, transboundary impacts, responses and future trends
- Focus on national and transboundary legal and institutional frameworks, climate change aspects and subregional specificities
- 250 experts from 50 countries (Parties and non-Parties, also outside UNECE) contributed



Major achievements

- Strong framework for transboundary water cooperation after political changes in early 1990s
- A balanced approach to cooperation - many upstream States Parties
- An early instrument for basin management and IWRM
- Strong support to joint bodies and agreements on the ground
- A critical look - the Assessments
- A responsive instrument - climate change, Implementation Committee
- A supportive institutional framework of the MOP



Looking ahead - new programme of work 2013-2015

- Area of work 1: Support to implementation and accession (projects; Implementation Committee)
- 2: EUWI NPDs
- 3: Quantifying the benefits
- 4: Adapting to climate change
- 5: Water-food-energy nexus
- 6: Opening of the Convention outside the ECE region

Thank you!

More information

including guidelines, publications and information on activities under the Convention can be found at

<http://www.unece.org/env/water>

water.convention@unece.org