



**RESOURCE**

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

## Description / Abstract

The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was adopted in Helsinki in 1992 and entered into force in 1996.

The Convention is a unique legally binding instrument promoting the sustainable management of shared water resources, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the prevention of conflicts, and the promotion of peace and regional integration.

The Water Convention requires Parties to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact, use transboundary waters in a reasonable and equitable way and ensure their sustainable management. Parties bordering the same transboundary waters have to cooperate by entering into specific agreements and establishing joint bodies. As a framework agreement, the Convention does not replace bilateral and multilateral agreements for specific basins or aquifers; instead, it fosters their establishment and implementation, as well as further development.

The Convention was originally negotiated as a regional framework for the pan-European region. Following an amendment procedure, since March 2016 all UN Member States can accede to it. Chad and Senegal have become the first African Parties in 2018. Then, Ghana acceded in 2020 and was followed by Guinea-Bissau and Togo in 2021. These countries' accession offers new prospects for enhanced transboundary cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa, conflict prevention and regional stability.

The Water Convention is a powerful tool to promote and operationalize the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs. It directly supports implementation of target 6.5, which requests all countries to implement integrated water resources management, including through transboundary cooperation, as appropriate. The Convention and its programme of work are also relevant for other SDGs, such as all the other targets of goal, but also: goals 2, 7, 13, 15, 16, 17 and target 11.5.

## Publication year

1992

## Publisher

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe - UNECE

## Keywords

[Water Convention](#) [Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs](#) [water resources management](#) [peace promotion](#) [regional integration](#)

## Thematic Tagging

[Private Sector](#) [Transboundary](#)

Language English

[View resource](#)

## Related IWRM Tools



● Tool

## Transboundary financing

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