

5th joint meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment under the Water Convention, 6-8 May 2024

Item 6 (a)

Increasing capacity for implementation of the Convention and supporting national processes towards accession]

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1. Main achievements – West and Central Africa regions

National level: 1 new Party, 4 national workshops

Supporting Accession

- **The Gambia** becomes the 52 Party to the Convention (17 July 2023)
- Increased officials' awareness and understanding of the Convention and capacity to implement in Burkina Faso (national workshop – 18-19 January 2024),
- Increased officials' awareness and understanding of the Convention and capacity to implement in Sierra Leone (national workshop – 23-24 January 2024)
- Côte d'Ivoire is finalizing the process for submission of the accession instrument in New York.
- Mauritania expressed interest in learning about the accession received in November 2024.

Supporting Implementation through the development of National Plans (NIP)

- Guinea Bissau launched the development of NIP (Kick-off meeting and field visit in Bissau, 5-8 February 2024).
- Chad: validation workshop of the NIP (N'Djamena, 4-5 Apr 2024).

Contribution to several regional meetings at the invitation of RECs and regional partners (ECOWAS, UEMOA, GWP-AO) to promote the Convention and reinforce partnerships



1. Main achievements – East and Southern Africa regions

National level: 1 new Party, 1 national workshop

- **Namibia** becomes the first Party to the Convention in the region of Southern Africa (8 June 2023)
- **Botswana** National Workshop held on 25-26 October 2023.
- **Zambia** accession approved by the Cabinet in February 2024.
- **Zimbabwe** has accession approved by the Cabinet in April 2024. National workshop planned for 17-18 June 2024.
- **South Sudan** assistance preparing for National Workshop, planned 18-19 July.
- **Malawi** expression of interest to learn about accession received April 2024.

Supporting accession and implementation through Twinning Initiatives

- **Ghana, Hungary, Zambia** launched a Twinning Initiative (planned in Budapest, Nov 2023; Kick-off meeting in Accra, Dec 2023; meeting in Livingstone, Apr 2024).
- **Namibia & Finland** ongoing implementation of Twinning Initiative launched in May 2023 (meeting in Livingstone, Apr 2024). Study tour to Finland in Sept 2024.

Regional level: attention on Water Convention value add; stronger partnerships

- **Water Allocation workshop** in Zambia brought together more than 60 participants from Southern Africa region (countries, river/lake basin organisations, INGOs etc).



1. Main achievements – Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region

Participation in the Fourth International Baghdad Water Conference (Baghdad, 27-29 April 2024)

- Organization of a high-level session in partnership with SDC and Blue Peace Middle East to highlight the benefits of transboundary water cooperation in addressing current and emerging challenges and socio-economic development with Deputy Ministers and other high-level representatives from Iraq, Iran, Syria, League of Arab States and others
- Organization of a technical session on the 1992 UN Water Convention with the objective to address frequently asked questions and showcase the guidance developed under the Convention to adapt to climate change in basins.



Involvement in the UN Water Task Force in Iraq

- The Task Force was established by the RC in Iraq and comprises various UN agencies working in Iraq to support the country's implementation of the Water Convention and to launch a national dialogue on water. UNECE is a member of the Task Force.
- In line with this, UNECE has shared its experience on the National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management in Central Asia, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus and briefed the Iraqi Prime Ministers' Advisory Council on lessons learned and advantages of this process.

1. Main achievements – Latin America and Caribbean region

National level: one new Party, three countries holding multi-stakeholder discussions

- **Panama** becomes the first Party to the Convention in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean (5 June 2023)
- **El Salvador** discusses accession (inter-ministerial coordination and as part of national dialogues on water (ECLAC “ROSA” workshop in San Salvador, September 2023)
- **Uruguay** hosts a national workshop on the Convention (Montevideo, Ministry of Environment, November 2023)
- **Costa Rica** hosts one consultation and one national workshop to discuss the Conventions and the process of accession (San Jose, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, October 2023 and March 2024)

Regional level: increased attention on water and peace; stronger partnerships

- **High Level Session “Transboundary Waters: management, cooperation and peace”** at the IV Regional Dialogue on Water (ECLAC event, 11-13 March 2024, Costa Rica) co-organized with OAS and IADB with speakers from Honduras, Panama, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Chile, Plan Trifinio, Organization Treaty for the Cooperation in the Amazon.
- **Regional Workshop on Transboundary Waters – focus on droughts** (CCAD/SICA, GWP Centromerica, UNECE and partners) (ongoing, 7-8 May 2024, Tegucigalpa, Honduras)



1. Main achievements – Asia

National level: individual awareness raising of Convention and technical advice

- Vietnam mission (back-to-back with IPU Meeting in Vietnam – see below) to present on benefits of Convention & SDG 6.5.2 to MONRE on 14 Sept 2024.

Regional level: raising awareness of Convention; stronger partnerships

- Southeast Asia Water Security - IWRM Regional Conference to discuss common regional water security challenges with focus on transboundary water cooperation and data exchange on 10-11 October 2023, Indonesia (Back-to-back with 10th World Water Forum 2nd Preparatory Meeting). Co-organized with GWP Southeast Asia and partners FAO Asia Pacific and UNESCO with speakers from Vietnam, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines

- Inter-Parliamentary Union Science for Peace Parliamentary Meeting “Water security and insecurity: Rebuilding peaceful coexistence with science” (11-13 September 2023 in Quy Nhon, Vietnam): Water Convention presented on role and relevance of Convention in water diplomacy and transboundary cooperation

- 10th World Water Forum preparations: including the 2nd Stakeholders Meeting on 12-13 October in Indonesia to promote Convention and co-organize sessions



1. Main achievements – Overview of Progress

Better knowledge and understanding of benefits of the Convention, and progress towards accession, supported by legal & technical guidance by the secretariat to countries:

Benin	Bolivia	Botswana	Burkina Faso	Central African Republic	
Costa Rica	Côte d'Ivoire	Congo	Democratic Republic of Congo		
Dominican Republic		Ecuador	El Salvador	Guatemala	Guinea
Honduras	Lebanon	Lesotho	Malawi	Mauritania	Mongolia
Mozambique	Niger	Paraguay	Peru	Sierra Leone	Somalia
South Sudan	Tanzania	Tunisia	Vietnam	Uganda	Uruguay
Zambia	Zimbabwe				

2. Challenges and lessons learned

- Increased attention to water issues in all countries (driven esp. by climate vulnerability and issues of pollution) and **increased recognition of Water Convention as an instrument**. Countries, RBOs and regional organisations urgently seek practical solutions to common challenges. The Water Convention can add practical value with its tools & support from Secretariat e.g water allocation, WEFE nexus and developing agreements. This showcases benefits of engaging and acceding to the Convention for other countries and organisations
- **Awareness of the Water Convention and its benefits still limited amongst States in some regions**. Need to leverage strategic opportunities in these regions and global platforms for promotion (ie 10th World Water Forum in Indonesia) to engage directly with states and strengthen/establish partnerships with regional and basin actors.
- **Increased requests from new parties for practical implementation**. Challenges to responding to all requests due to financial and capacity constraints. Further engagement from partners is key to supporting countries and regional organizations. Need to implement the Convention building on/strengthening/learning from existing cooperation frameworks

3. Proposed future activities for 2025-2027 for Programme area 1.1. Increasing awareness of and supporting national processes towards accession to the Convention (led by Finland, France, Ghana and Hungary)

- **Promote the Convention, its activities, and the guidelines** developed thereunder on relevant occasions, including through the organization of presentations, sessions, and/or side events at global and regional meetings (e.g., United Nations Water Conference, World Water Forum, World Water Week, Africa Water Week, Arab Water Week, Asia-Pacific Water Forum).
- **Up to two training sessions for practitioners** on the United Nations 1992 and 1997 Water Conventions and international water law will be organized to strengthen the capacity of key actors and experts involved in transboundary water cooperation
- **Contribute to international water law trainings organized by partners.** In addition, the Convention will facilitate access to online training sessions videos and materials on transboundary water cooperation and international water law by making available existing online materials and tools on the Convention's website with link to partners' platforms

3. Proposed future activities for 2025-2027 for Programme area 1.1. Increasing awareness of and supporting national processes towards accession to the Convention (led by Finland, France, Ghana and Hungary)

- Upon request, **support will be provided to countries to accede** to the Convention. Such support will include the provision of legal and technical advice to understand the Convention's provisions. **National tailor-made workshops will be organized to build capacity** on the Convention, and to discuss the benefits of accession and the following steps
- **Up to five regional, subregional or basin events on the Convention** will be organized in Africa, Asia and Latin America to prompt basin or regional dynamics towards accession to the Convention and application of its principles.

3. Proposed future activities for 2025-2027 for Programme area 1.2. Increasing capacity for implementation of the Convention at the national and regional levels, especially for new Parties (led by Finland, Ghana)

- **Support will be provided to up to five new Parties to develop national implementation plans** for the Convention. Such support will include the organization of national tailor-made workshops to build capacity on the Convention's implementation, identify strategic areas to enhance water governance and interventions at the national, basin and regional levels and discuss possible financing options with technical and financial partners.
- **Peer-to-peer exchanges will be fostered through the Twinning Initiative under the Convention**, aiming to link countries close to accession and/or new Parties with established Parties to enable the transfer of practical experience and lessons learned on accession to and implementation of the Convention

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- **Peer-to-peer exchanges will be fostered through the Twinning Initiative under the Convention**, aiming to link countries close to accession and/or new Parties with established Parties to enable the transfer of practical experience and lessons learned on accession to and implementation of the Convention
- **Support will be provided to prompt basin and regional dynamics towards application of the Convention's principles**, in cooperation with and by strengthening synergies with activities of regional and global partners

1. Partners



OEA | OAS



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NEWCASTLE

Thank you!

(please include your contact information)



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