

Support to water cooperation on the basis of the UNECE Water Convention



Region
Global

Partners
UNESCO, UNFCCC, FAO, WMO, other UN Regional Commissions, GEF, the Ramsar Convention, GWP, IUCN, INBO, WWF, OSCE and many more

Background information
The intervention aims to promote at both technical and political level cooperation on transboundary waters touching upon different aspects of water management and use.

Project target
Cooperation on transboundary waters is fostered through implementation of the Water Convention at the global level by building capacity on the Convention outside the UNECE region and by promoting the benefits of cooperation.

Beneficiaries
Water authorities, decision-makers from other sectors, experts and decision makers on various levels, NGOs and international organizations

Costs
CHF 1,220,000

Duration
2016 - 2018

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The Swiss contribution will support sustainable development in transboundary basins by fostering transboundary water cooperation on the basis of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). As a result, the project will strengthen the sustainable use of shared water resources, promote water security, water diplomacy, the respect of the rule of law and political stability. The Swiss contribution will support a number of activities in the programme of work of the Convention, in particular through capacity-building, policy guidance development, pilot projects on the ground, and exchange of experience.

The UNECE Water Convention is the only global legal and intergovernmental framework for transboundary water cooperation. Since the 1990s, the Convention has fostered the development of transboundary agreements, the establishment of joint institutions and the strengthening of cooperation in the UNECE region. In March 2016, it turned into a global framework open for accession by all UN Member States. More than 60 non-UNECE countries have already participated in the Convention's activities and several started national accession process.

Intervention strategy and components

The project aims to promote at both technical and political levels cooperation on transboundary waters. It constitutes a core contribution to the work under the Convention; thus most activities will be co-funded by other donors.

- *Build capacity on the Water Convention in non-UNECE countries, support national accession processes, increase understanding and awareness on the Convention and lay the basis for the creation of a "common home" for transboundary water cooperation issues, also taking into account the entry into force of the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention);*
- *Promote transboundary water cooperation through the application of policy and technical tools developed under the Convention, in particular on the benefits of cooperation, the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus and adaptation to climate change. While supporting action in specific countries, transboundary basins and re-*

gions, the project will promote the scaling up of results through the promotion of exchange of experiences and good practices.

While the project will support the whole programme of work, priority will be given to activities in the following areas:

1) Opening of the Convention to countries outside the UNECE region

The Convention, its products and achievements, and transboundary water cooperation in general will be promoted by i) raising awareness and developing capacity on the Convention in non-Parties; ii) Promoting exchange of experience with other regions of the world; iii) Ensuring synergies with other multilateral legal instruments on water, in particular the United Nations Watercourses Convention; and iv) Supporting countries in their efforts to accede to the Convention.

2) Identifying, assessing and communicating benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Support countries, at their request, in improving cooperation on their transboundary waters by identifying, assessing and communicating the significant benefits for cooperating countries. This will be done by applying the policy guidance note on this topic developed in 2013-2015 in various basins worldwide.

3) Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins

On the basis of the methodology developed under the Convention in 2013-2015, nexus assessments based on intersectoral dialogues to enhance cooperation will be carried out in a number of basins, for example in the North-Western Sahara Aquifer System, in the Drina basin in South-Eastern Europe as well as possibly the Niger basin. The methodology will also be promoted for application by partners in other basins worldwide.

4) Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

Cooperation in the development of vulnerability assessments, adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies and their implementation in transboundary basins will be promoted within projects implemented together with partners

Additional information:
www.unece.org/env/water