

Why being a Party to both water Conventions?

Massimo Cozzone

Chair of the Bureau of the UNECE Water Convention

Amman, 10 March, 2015

Italy: a Party to both Conventions – why?

- Ratified UNECE Water Convention: 1996
- Ratified UNECE Water Convention amendments: 2011
- Ratified UN Watercourses Convention: 2012
- Adopted Water Framework Directive, as EU Member State
- Comply with international water law principles

Italy actively promotes both Conventions:

- Chair of the Bureau of the UNECE Water Convention 2013-2015
 - Hosted the 6th session of the UNECE Water Convention MoP (Rome, 2012) and Roundtable on transboundary water cooperation for the Mediterranean region → decision to promote synergies
- *UNECE Water Convention offers an inter-governmental framework for discussion on the two Conventions*

Italy: a Party to both Conventions – why?

To support national processes & cooperation with riparians

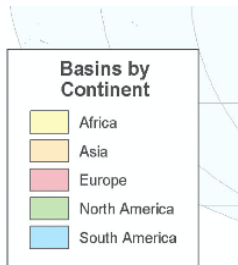
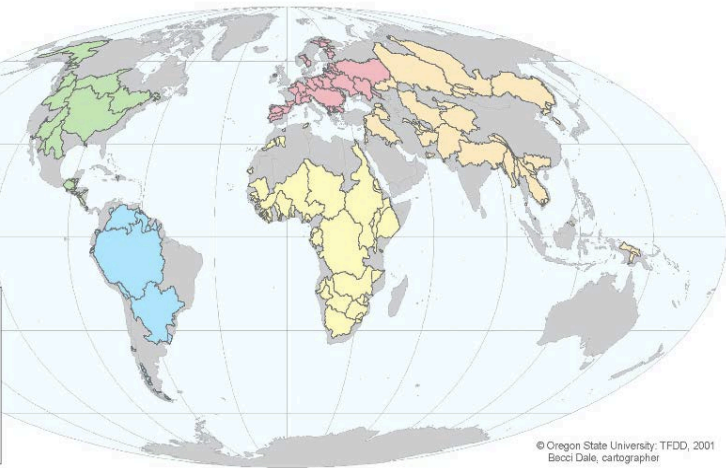
- Bilateral cooperation with France, Switzerland, Slovenia based on principles of both Conventions, in particular the UNECE Water Convention (joint bodies, agreements)

- Guidance developed under the UNECE Water Convention supports main activities of the bilateral commissions:
 - flood management
 - adaptation to climate change
 - intersectoral cooperation (nexus)



Italy: a Party to both conventions – why?

To promote transboundary water cooperation worldwide – diplomatic aspects



- Increase awareness on importance of transboundary water cooperation (to international community, donors..)
- Provide a solid legal and institutional framework as well as a platform for dialogue for countries which do not have an existing cooperation framework
- Promote the basin approach and IWRM
- Promote the coherent development of international water law and of the different legal instruments

Different levels of commitment

❖ UN Watercourses Convention:

- codifies customary international law
- detailed about principles and procedures

❖ UNECE Water Convention is more detailed in practical terms:

- preventing, controlling and reducing transboundary impacts
- ecologically sound and rational management of transboundary waters
- provides special obligations for riparian countries, e.g. joint bodies

❖ EU Water Framework Directive:

- good status of water bodies
- detailed technical provisions on monitoring, measures and planning
- cooperation in river basins

EU Council Conclusions on Water Diplomacy

- Para 9:

*”The Council also encourages the promotion of international agreements on water cooperation. The relevant **UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki 1992)** and **United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (New York 1997)** are important instruments to promote equitable, sustainable and integrated management of trans-boundary water resources. EU water diplomacy should develop systematic promotion of these and other relevant international agreements.....”*

Conclusions

Being a Party to both water Conventions to:

...share experience and knowledge effectively through multilateral mechanisms

... have a voice in global discussions

... contribute to increasing global stability, peace and security by preventing water conflicts

... be part of solid international legal frameworks on water issues