



**National workshop on frameworks  
for transboundary water cooperation:  
Focus on the UNECE Water Convention  
Amman, Jordan, 10 March 2015**

**Report**

**Report prepared by  
the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) , in  
collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
(UNECE)**

## Background

Recently, major steps forward in international water law have been made. The 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (United Nations Watercourses Convention), which Jordan ratified in 1999, entered into force in 2014. The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (known also as the Helsinki or 1992 Water Convention) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) turned into a universally open multilateral legal framework for transboundary water cooperation in 2013.

The UNECE Water Convention has provided, since its entry into force in 1996, an important legal and institutional framework for improving the management of transboundary surface water and groundwater resources in the pan-European region. With its opening for accession by all United Nations Member States, the UNECE Water Convention could be a source of inspiration for progress in the management of shared surface waters and groundwaters for Jordan and could offer a solid cooperation framework.

Since 2011, representatives from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation of Jordan have participated in activities implemented under the UNECE Water Convention, in particular events related to water and adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins, river basin commissions for transboundary water cooperation and integrated water resources management. On several occasions, Jordan has expressed interest in exploring further the modalities of the UNECE Water Convention.

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation requested UNECE to organize a dedicated workshop in Jordan to present and discuss in detail the UNECE Water Convention in order to facilitate the national process of reflection about possibly joining the Convention. In this context, a national workshop took place in Amman, Jordan, on 10 March 2015, co-organized by the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, UNECE, the Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean (GWP-Med) and the International Hydrological Programme (IHP) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The workshop was held under the Patronage of the Secretary-General of the Jordanian Ministry of Water and Irrigation.

Prior to the workshop, an Inter-ministerial Committee had been created under the leadership of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. The committee is composed of members representatives from the Ministries of Water and Irrigation, Foreign Affairs, Planning and International Cooperation, Environment and Agriculture as well as from the Jordan Valley Authority. It aims to study the UNECE Water Convention and possible accession by Jordan. The Committee had gathered once before the workshop, in order to be introduced to the Convention by Mr Al-Atrash, Ministry of Water and Irrigation, national focal points for Jordan to the Convention.

All presentations and related workshop documents are available at: [www.unece.org/env/water/workshop\\_jordan2015\\_waterconvention.html#/](http://www.unece.org/env/water/workshop_jordan2015_waterconvention.html#/)

## **Participation**

Representatives of institutions and other stakeholders that play a role in/work on transboundary water cooperation attended the workshop, in particular representatives from:

- Ministry of Water and Irrigation
- Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ)
- Jordan Valley Authority (JVA)
- Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Environment
- Ministry of Agriculture
- International organizations
- Donor organizations and cooperation agencies
- Universities and research institutes
- NGOs and civil society representatives

as well as international experts.

The full list of participants is attached in Annex I.

## **Outcomes of the workshop**

The one-day workshop:

- Increased awareness and understanding of the different legal frameworks for cooperation on shared waters resources (surface water and groundwater)
- Detailed the guiding principles and general provisions of the UNECE Water Convention, its main obligations, their potential relevance to the specific situation of Jordan and possible benefits of joining the Convention
- Described the institutional arrangements under the Convention
- Described how the Convention has promoted cooperation in transboundary basins using examples from Spain and elsewhere
- Presented the thematic work within the framework of the Convention, including technical and strategic guidance documents on issues of interest for Jordan, as well as intergovernmental platforms for exchanging experience, e.g., in the areas of water and adaptation to climate change, benefits of cooperation and transboundary groundwater management
- Provided information to facilitate the national process of reflection and consideration about possible accession to the UNECE Water Convention.

## Summary of the main points of discussion

The full agenda of the meeting is available in Annex II.

### 9:00-9:30 Opening and welcoming remarks

HE Mr. Basem Telfah, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation

Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention

Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, UNESCO-IHP

Pr. Michael Scoulllos, Chairman, GWP-Med

The workshop was opened by H.E. the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Mr. Basem Telfah, who highlighted the big challenge addressing the energy-food-water nexus represents, not only in Jordan but for the whole region, which faces the challenges of regional instability and an influx of refugees. He emphasized the limited financial resources and investments in the water sector. He insisted on the necessity to have a stable framework for the sustainable management of the Jordanian water resources and mentioned ongoing efforts to enhance the water situation, in particular through amendments to the water legislative framework and the Red Sea – Dead Sea project. Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention, highlighted that the Convention could be an effective instrument to support transboundary water cooperation also beyond the UNECE region. He also underlined that the Parties to the Convention would very much welcome a new Party such as Jordan in the Water Convention community of Parties. Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, from UNESCO-IHP, and Prof. Michael Scoulllos, from GWP-Med, stressed that transboundary water cooperation was crucial for the stability of the region. Pr. Scoulllos acknowledged the role that Jordan had as a factor of stability in the region and the important water management challenges the country faces in dealing with the water needs of more than 1.4 million of Syrian refugees, and its ability to overcome it.



Opening panel

(from left to right: Mr. Mohammad Al-Atrash, Mr. Ali Subah, Mr. Massimo Cozzone, H.E. Mr. Basem Telfah, Pr. Michael Scoulllos, Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, Ms. Sonja Koepfel)

**9:30-10:00 Theme 1: Situation of transboundary water cooperation in Jordan**

*Chair: Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, UNESCO-IHP*

Introduction to challenges and progresses of transboundary water cooperation in Jordan, *Mr. Ali A. Hayajneh, Ministry of Water and Irrigation*

*Discussion with participants*

In this session, Mr. Ali A. Hayajneh summarized the key national water stress factors (such as the population growth rates, the limited funding in the water sector and the weak coordination between neighbouring countries for managing the shared waters). He spoke of the progress made and challenges on transboundary cooperation with Israel, Syria and Saudi Arabia, stressing the need for a conceptual framework or a methodology to manage shared water resources.

The discussion highlighted, among other topics, the over-abstraction of the aquifer shared by Jordan and Syria, which resulted in strongly decreasing the flow of the Yarmouk River in Jordan. Participants also discussed the status of the Joint Committee under the agreement signed between Jordan and Syria.

**10:00-11:15 Theme 2: International water law supporting transboundary water cooperation**

*Chair: Pr. Michael Scoullas, GWP-Med*

Recent development in international water law: two global legal agreements for transboundary water cooperation, *Mr. Alistair Rieu Clarke, Centre for Water Law, Policy & Science, University of Dundee*

Why to be a Party to both water conventions? *Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Ministry of the Environment Land and Sea, Italy*

Fostering cooperation on transboundary aquifer resources: 2008 draft Articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers and Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters, *Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, UNESCO-IHP*

*Reaction from representatives from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and interactive discussion with participants*

Mr. Alistair Rieu Clarke compared the evolutionary paths of both Conventions (United Nations Watercourses Convention and UNECE Water Convention), and the current status of ratification, and provided a comparative analysis. Mr. Rieu Clarke stressed the role of the conventions as framework instruments, which comprise general rules and principles that can be tailored to the specificities of the basins, guiding the process of negotiation. He referred to the institutional framework of the UNECE Water Convention as a major added value, with the Meeting of Parties and the secretariat. Mr. Cozzone presented the benefits for a country of being a Party to both conventions, which provides the possibility to share experience and knowledge effectively through multilateral mechanisms, to have a voice in global discussions, to

contribute to increasing global stability, peace and security by preventing water conflicts and to be part of solid international legal frameworks on water issues. Ms. de Chaisemartin presented the 2008 Draft Articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers and the 2012 Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters, which are two non-binding instruments (so not additional conventions) aiming to provide a set of practical guidance for elaborating and strengthening bilateral and multilateral agreements relative to transboundary groundwater management.

During the discussion, participants raised questions about a possible overlapping between both conventions. Mr. Clarke clarified that the UNECE Water Convention and the United Nations Watercourses Convention (to which Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine are already Parties) are fully compatible and complementary, with no contradiction between them. 14 countries are already Parties to both Conventions, which shows that there is no conflict for a country in being a Party to both Conventions: a country can benefit<sup>1</sup> from joining the UNECE Water Convention even if the other riparian countries are not Party to it. A country which is a Party the UNECE Water Convention would have a stronger persuasive power – especially when many riparians are also Parties. Prof. Scoullos clarified that the conventions can however not solve all issues related to the management of shared waters; they are strong frameworks which can create an enabling environment to facilitate cooperation.

### **11:45-13:10 Theme 3: Implementing the UNECE Water Convention on the ground**

*Chair: Ms. Chantal Demilecamps, UNECE*

Strengthening transboundary water cooperation on the ground under the UNECE Water Convention, *Ms. Chantal Demilecamps, UNECE*

The UNECE Water Convention supporting cooperation in the Drin River Basin, *Ms. Anthi Brouma, GWP-Med*

The Albufeira Convention: cooperation between Spain and Portugal for the management of transboundary waters, *Ms. Pilar Garcia Doñoro, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain*

Concretely addressing water challenges in transboundary basins: adapting to climate change in transboundary basin, *Ms. Sonja Koepfel, UNECE*

*Q&As between participants and presenters*

Ms. Chantal Demilecamps presented the ways in which the UNECE Water Convention promotes transboundary water cooperation on the ground, where it has already contributed to the strengthening of cooperation in many basins, in particular through the obligation to cooperate by entering into specific agreements and

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<sup>1</sup> More information is available in Annex III and in the brochure *The Global Opening of the UNECE 1992 Water Convention* available at: [www.unece.org/env/water/publications/ece\\_mp.wat\\_43.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/ece_mp.wat_43.html)

establishing joint bodies. It is a framework agreement and its implementation can be tailored to very diverse basin contexts in terms of political landscapes, economic and social conditions and water availability situations.

Ms. Anthi Brouma presented the case of the Drin River Basin and how the UNECE Water Convention supported transboundary cooperation for better (and eventually joint) management of the river basin shared by five riparians. Mr. Ali Subah, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, expressed some concerns related to the transferability of the example from countries in South Eastern Europe (SEE) to the Jordanian case, due to the different nature of the political and water-availability situations in the SEE and the MENA regions. Ms. Brouma stressed that SEE has been facing serious political issues (e.g., recent open conflict, lingering non-recognition between some of the countries, etc.) that were overcome to ensure the joint management of shared waters. The neutral platform provided by the UNECE Water Convention and the third-party role played by GWP-Med facilitated the process and provided inspiration towards the development of a joint Memorandum of Understanding between the five riparians.

Ms. Pilar Garcia Doñoro, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment of Spain, presented the evolution of transboundary cooperation between Spain and Portugal within the framework of the Albufeira Convention, and how the UNECE Water Convention supported the development of cooperation during a period in which the countries were not coordinating the management of their transboundary water resources due to political reasons.

Ms. Sonja Koeppel showed the ability of the UNECE Water Convention to address new challenges identified by Parties, as demonstrated by the extensive work carried out on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins. She also clarified that a country becoming a Party to the UNECE Water Convention is not bound to implement the Water Framework Directive, which is applicable only to the European Union member countries. Still, Parties to the UNECE Water Convention have to implement a number of measures to protect the environment and to ensure the conservation and restoration of ecosystems.

**13:10-14:10 Theme 4: Detailing the UNECE Water Convention obligations**

*Chair: Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention*

Interactive discussion on the obligations under the UNECE Water Convention and benefits of being a Party, *Ms. Sonja Koeppel, UNECE and panel of experts (Party to the UNECE Water Convention, UNESCO-IHP, Dundee University, GWP-Med)*

*Reflections by the Inter-Ministerial Committee*

*Questions and answers between participants and a panel of experts (UNECE, Party to the UNECE Water Convention, UNESCO-IHP, Dundee University, GWP-Med)*

An overview of the main obligations<sup>2</sup> under the Convention and benefits<sup>3</sup> of becoming a Party was presented by Ms. Koepfel, which was followed by reflections of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. The main issues discussed were:

- The principle of sovereignty

It was clarified that the prevailing theory in international water law is the one of limited territorial sovereignty. The UNECE Water Convention provides that transboundary waters should not be limited to water bodies (e.g., a river or an aquifer) but should cover the whole catchment area, promoting integrated water resources management.

- The obligation to harmonize existing agreements

The UNECE Water Convention stipulates that Riparian Parties have to adapt existing bilateral or multilateral agreements “where necessary to eliminate the contradictions with the basic principles of the Convention”. Representatives from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation raised their concerns about possible conflicts between the obligations under the UNECE Water Convention and obligations raised from bilateral agreements that Jordan has already concluded with its neighbouring countries and mainly those deriving from the Peace Treaty with Israel signed in 1994.

It was clarified that the reference to “basic principles” should be read in line with the ordinary meaning of its wording in sense that the pre-existing water agreements between the Riparian Parties shall not contravene the fundamental provisions of the Convention. As the Convention is based on the recognized principles of international law, it is unlikely that the existing agreements contravene its fundamental principles; though such agreements can be less detailed on some issues covered by the Convention and can include areas not covered by the Convention.

Furthermore, the discussion clarified that this obligation (like other obligations under the Convention) is linked to the due diligence nature of the general obligations of the Convention, according to which Parties are expected to take appropriate measures proportionally to their capacity (financial, economic and technical situation) and to progressively implement the Convention’s obligations.

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<sup>2</sup> More information on the obligations under the UNECE Water Convention are available in the *Guide to Implementing the Water Convention* available at :

[www.unece.org/env/water/publications/ece\\_mp.wat\\_39.html](http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/ece_mp.wat_39.html)

<sup>3</sup> Additional information on the benefits of accession to the UNECE Water Convention is provided in Annex III.



### **More information on the obligation to harmonize existing agreements**

#### ***Extract from the Guide to Implementing the Water Convention***

The Convention urges the Riparian Parties to conclude agreements where these do not yet exist and it does not require extinction of the existing ones. The reference to the “basic principles” of the Convention avoids the requirement to incorporate every single provision of the Convention in case there is a need to adapt existing agreements to the Convention. Measures to adapt existing agreements or other arrangements may include amendments to the text of existing instruments or adoption of additional protocols, memoranda, etc. or preparing a new agreement or arrangement. In cases where the existing agreement does not contradict the Convention – while being, however, less explicit than the latter – the Parties to the existing agreement should implement it also taking into account the corresponding provisions of the Convention, as pertinent rules applicable to their relations. In this respect, they should endeavour to take into account the provisions of the Convention in the regulatory framework established by the existing agreement, for instance through agreed minutes drawn up by the relevant joint body and signed by its members, or more formally through protocols.

The representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Jordan asked about the possibility for a country not to follow all provisions. A country has the right to express reservations when becoming a Party, but reservations should not go against the object and purpose of the Convention, according to the principles of international law.

- Rights of Parties

The question of the rights of Parties which are recognized by the UNECE Water Convention was raised. The UNECE Water Convention focuses on the reasonable and equitable utilization of shared water resources, which provides for equality of the right of each riparian States to use the shared water body.

- Dispute settlement

The representative of the Royal Scientific Society drew attention to the enforcement of the Convention’s obligations. Arbitration and adjudication are not compulsory under the Convention, but are only optional, as in general international law. This is balanced by the dispute prevention and assistance functions that are performed by the Meeting of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies and by the obligation to establish joint bodies, which often exercise functions close to dispute prevention and management. If a dispute arises between two or more Parties about the interpretation or application of the Convention, solution by negotiation should be sought. Arbitration can be another option, as foreseen in many agreements. In addition, the newly-created Implementation Committee under the Convention is a mechanism which can help to address such situations.

**14:00-15:00 Theme 5 – Next steps and closing**

*Chair: Mr. Ali Subah, Ministry of Water and Irrigation*

Summary of the highlights of the workshop, *Prof. Michael Scoullas, GWP-Med*

Discussion on next steps and on a possible roadmap to study possible accession to the UNECE Water Convention

Concluding remarks, *Ministry of Water and Irrigation, UNECE, UNESCO-IHP, GWP-Med*

The discussion on next steps concerned primarily the work of the Inter-Ministerial Committee. It was agreed that the Committee would study the UNECE Water Convention in detail and explore in depth the relevance of acceding to it in the specific Jordanian context. UNECE, GWP-Med and UNESCO-IHP expressed their commitment to provide information and technical assistance to Jordan, if needed and requested, to support an informed decision-making process. Finally, it was mentioned that the Convention's new three-year work programme (2016–2018) would be adopted by the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session on 17–19 November 2015. The Chair of the Meeting of the Parties invited the Committee to develop a roadmap in order to be able to present the conclusions on possible accession of Jordan to the UNECE Water Convention to the Meeting of the Parties, if possible.

The workshop concluded by acknowledging that transboundary water management is a great opportunity for countries to collaborate on increasing peace and stability within and across the countries of the region. The UNECE Water Convention, along with other legal frameworks, can be a useful tool to support countries to manage better their shared waters; the international legal frameworks discussed are separate from the European Union system.

Jordan faces different challenges and strengthening its capacity vis-à-vis international legal frameworks for transboundary water cooperation can assist the country with overcoming them. The UNECE Water Convention, especially through its institutional framework, indeed provides a platform to address new challenges related to transboundary water resources management and for finding solutions with neighbours. The workshop closed by accentuating that countries should proceed in the way that they consider most appropriate in their specific context and according to their specific needs.

## ANNEX I

### List of participants

	Organization	Name	Title	Email
1	EcoPeace Middle East	Mr. Munqeth Mehyar	Director Ecopeace Jordan	info@foeme.org, samar@foeme.org
2	Embassy of the United States of America	Ms. Elizabeth Hattingh	Regional Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Officer - MENA	HattinghEF@state.gov
3	French Development Agency (AFD)	Ms. Atika Ben Maïd	Project officer, Water Sector	benmaida@afd.fr
4	Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)	Ms. Anthi Brouma	Head of MENA Region	anthi@gwpmed.org
5	Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)	Ms. Varvara Vasilaki	Assistant Programme Officer	varvara@gwpmed.org
6	Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)	Prof. Michael Scoullou	Chairman	secretariat@gwpmed.org
7	JICA Jordan Office	Eng. Hani Kurdi	Deputy Chief Officer	hanikurdi.JD@jica.go.jp
8	Jordan Environment Society	Eng. Ali Zidan	Consultant Engineer	eng.alizid@yahoo.co.uk
9	Jordan National Commission for UNESCO	Mr. Naser Seder	Head of the sectors of Culture, Science and Communication, Member in the National Committee of IHP	nasser_seder@yahoo.com
10	Jordan Valley Authority (JVA)	Mr. Fouad Eijilat		Fuadeijilat@yahoo.com
11	Jordan Valley Authority (JVA)	Dr. Khaleel AlAbsi		
12	Ministry of Agriculture	Eng. Osama Kattan	Head of Water and Environment Section	o.qattan@gmail.com
13	Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain	Ms. Pilar Garcia-Doñoro	Technical Advisor	pgdonoro@magrama.es
14	Ministry of Environment	Eng. Faraj Altaieb	Head of Adaptation Section	altalibfaraj@yahoo.com
15	Ministry of Environment	Mr. Mohammad Al-Agha	Legal Expert	mhammadelagha@yahoo.com

16	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mr. Rami Abu Salim		n_Rame_s@yahoo.com
17	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Eng. Ebaa AlEessa	Project Engineer	ebaa.eassa@mop.gov.jo
18	Ministry of the Environment Land and Sea, Italy	Mr. Massimo Cozzone	Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Water Convention	cozzone.massimo@minambiente.it
19	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Mr. Ali Hayajneh	Geologist	Ali_Hayajneh@mwi.gov.jo
20	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Mr. Ali Subah	Secretary General Assistant for Strategic Planning	Ali_Subah@mwi.gov.jo
21	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Mr. Basem Telfah	Secretary General	
22	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Mr. Mohammad Al Atrash	Assitant Secretary General for Technical Affairs	Mohammad_Al-atrash@mwi.gov.jo
23	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Ms. Janseit Haobsh	Legal Adviser	janseitm@yahoo.com
24	Ministry of Water and Irrigation	Ms. Suha Al-Mughrabi	Media Department	suhamughraby@yahoo.com
25	Royal Scientific Society (RSS)	Mr. Othman Al-Mashaqbeh	Assistant Researcher / Ph.D Water Engineering	othman.mashaqbeh@rss.jo
26	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)	Mr. Patrice Moix	WASH Expert	patrice.moix@eda.admin.ch
27	UNECE	Ms. Chantal Demilecamps	Environmental Affairs Officer	Chantal.demilecamps@unece.org
28	UNECE	Ms. Sonja Koepfel	Environmental Affairs Officer	Sonja.Koepfel@unece.org
29	UNESCO-IHP	Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin	Consultant	mdechaisemartin@hotmail.com
30	University of Dundee, Centre for Water Law, Policy & Science	Mr. Alistair Rieu-Clarke	Reader	a.rieuclarke@dundee.ac.uk
31	USAID/Jordan Institutional Support and Strengthening Program (ISSP)	Ms. Barbara Rossmiller	Chief of Party	brossmiller@ISSPJORDAN.ORG
32	Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ)	Mr. Mohd Abu Gohdeoh		

33	Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ)	Mr. Yazeed Rood		
34		Eng. Rakan Abu Saleem	Engineer	rakabusaleem@gmail.com

## ANNEX II

### Agenda

**8:30-9:00**      **Registration and welcoming coffee**

**9:00-9:30**      **Opening and welcoming remarks**

Mr. Basem Telfah, Secretary General of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation  
Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Water Convention  
Pr. Michael Scoullou, Chairman, Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med)  
Ms. Costanza Farina, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Representative in Jordan (tbc)

Introduction to the organization of the workshop, *Ms. Chantal Demilecamps, UNECE*

**9:30-10:00**      **Theme 1 - Situation of transboundary water cooperation in Jordan**

*Chair: Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, UNESCO-IHP*

Introduction to challenges and progresses of transboundary water cooperation in Jordan  
*Representative from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation*

**10:00-11:15**      **Theme 2 - International water law supporting transboundary water cooperation**

*Chair: Pr. Michael Scoullou, GWP-Med*

Recent development in international water law: two global legal agreements for transboundary water cooperation

*Mr. Alistair Rieu Clarke, Centre for Water Law, Policy & Science, University of Dundee*

Why to be a Party to both water conventions?

*Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Ministry of the Environment Land and Sea, Italy*

Fostering cooperation on transboundary aquifer resources: 2008 draft Articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers and Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters

*Ms. Marguerite de Chaisemartin, UNESCO-IHP*

*Reaction from representatives from the Ministry of Water and Irrigation and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and interactive discussion with participants*

**11:15 – 11:45 Coffee break**

**11:45-13:10 Theme 3 – Implementing the UNECE Water Convention on the ground**

*Chair: Ms. Chantal Demilecamps, UNECE*

Strengthening transboundary water cooperation on the ground under the UNECE Water Convention

*Ms. Chantal Demilecamps, UNECE*

The UNECE Water Convention supporting cooperation in the Drin River Basin

*Ms. Anthi Brouma, GWP-Med*

The Albufeira Convention: cooperation between Spain and Portugal for the management of transboundary waters

*Ms. Pilar Garcia Doñoro, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Environment, Spain*

Concretely addressing water challenges in transboundary basins: adapting to climate change in transboundary basin

*Ms. Sonja Koepfel, UNECE*

*Q&As between participants and presenters*

**13:10-14:10 Theme 4 – Detailing the UNECE Water Convention obligations**

*Chair: Mr. Massimo Cozzone, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention*

Interactive discussion on the obligations under the UNECE Water Convention and benefits of being a Party

*Presentation by Ms. Sonja Koepfel, UNECE*

*Reflections by the Inter-Ministerial Committee*

*Questions and answers between participants and a panel of experts (UNECE, Party to the UNECE Water Convention, UNESCO-IHP, Dundee University, GWP-Med)*

**14:10-14:45 Theme 5 – Next steps**

*Chair: Ms. Janseit Haobsh, Legal adviser, Ministry of Water and Irrigation*

Summary of the highlights of the workshop

*Mr. Massimo Cozzone and Pr. Michael Scoullas*

Discussion on next steps and on a possible roadmap to study possible accession to the UNECE Water Convention

*Introduction by the Inter-Ministerial Committee*

*Tour de table followed by moderated discussion*

**14:45-15:00 Closing**

Concluding remarks

*Ministry of Water and Irrigation, UNECE, UNESCO-IHP, GWP-Med*

**15:00 Lunch**

## ANNEX III

### **Advantages for States to become Party to the Convention (Extracts from the brochure *The Global Opening of the 1992 Water Convention*)**

The advantages for countries to join the Water Convention include:

- **Solid international legal framework**

By becoming a Party, a country joins the international legal regime of the Convention that has already proven its effectiveness over the past two decades and provides benefits for cooperation to both upstream and downstream countries.

- **Developed institutional platform**

When becoming a Party, a country can participate in the Water Convention's institutional structure and decision-making, so fostering the implementation of the Convention and its further development. While the vast majority of the meetings under the Convention's framework are open to non-Parties, it is the Parties that decide on the development of the Convention, sit in the Convention's governing bodies and lead activities under the Convention.

- **Recognition by the international community**

By being a Party to the Water Convention, a State signals to other countries, international organizations, financial institutions and other actors its willingness to cooperate on the basis of the norms and standards of the Convention. Such a State is respected by other actors in the international community for adhering to certain rules and standards.

- **Developing the Convention's regime**

Parties to the Water Convention collectively decide on the development of the Convention's regime at the meetings of the Convention's governing bodies. They can initiate the negotiation of new legally-binding instruments such as protocols or amendments to the Convention. They can elaborate new soft-law instruments, such as guidelines, recommendations, model provisions, checklists and other tools. They can decide on the interpretation of the Convention. In this way, they participate in further developing the Convention and international water law.

- **Advice and sharing of experience**

A Party to the Water Convention benefits from the existing experience under the Convention, e.g. its guidance documents, activities and projects on the ground. For example, a State suffering from frequent floods or droughts would benefit from the Convention's activities on adaptation to climate change or on transboundary flood management. A State interested in the joint management of water infrastructure on transboundary rivers would benefit from Convention's activities on dam safety. A basin struggling with the allocation of water for irrigation and energy production would benefit from the Convention's activities on the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus. The programme of work under the Convention is demand-driven and



therefore able to respond to the differing and evolving needs of the Parties. All Parties – no matter whether “new” or “old” – actively participate in the sharing of knowledge and experience and learn from each other.

- **Support to bilateral and basin cooperation**

The Water Convention not only obliges its Parties to enter into bilateral and multilateral agreements for specific basins and establish joint bodies, but provides support to its Parties in establishing such agreements and bodies or in strengthening existing ones. This is particularly valuable in those basins where there are difficulties in achieving agreements.

- **Improvement of water management at the national level**

The implementation of obligations under the Convention, especially of the obligation aimed at prevention, control and reduction of significant transboundary impact, improves water resources management at the national level. The Convention’s standards to be applied by all Parties — e.g. pollution prevention, control and reduction at source, prior licensing of waste-water discharges, application of biological treatment or equivalent processes to municipal waste-water, or application of the ecosystems approach — enhance national systems for water resources management and protection.

- **Access to financial assistance and donor cooperation**

Parties to the Water Convention may benefit from the use of the Convention’s trust fund, which supports the effective implementation of the Convention. Interested Parties contribute voluntarily to the trust fund, so allowing them to target efficiently their assistance and to join forces with other donors in a coordinated way. The trust fund can be used for technical support to Parties, particularly to promote and implement the Convention through the organization of seminars and other training activities, studies and pilot projects, as well as for support to participation of experts from eligible countries in workshops, seminars, symposia and other meetings organized within the framework of the Convention. While non-Parties can also benefit from the Convention’s trust fund, priority is given to Parties.

- **Support from the community of Parties**

The Water Convention is a collective forum. A Party may bring its needs and expectations to the attention of all other Parties. In other words, a Party is not left alone in its dealings with riparians – its concerns can be voiced at the Meeting of the Parties. The Convention’s Implementation Committee can help Parties in all questions regarding implementation of the Convention and facilitate the settlement of the various differences and disputes.

- **Contribution to international peace and security**

Participation in and cooperation through the intergovernmental platform of the Water Convention reduces uncertainty in relations between riparian States and helps prevent potential tensions, disagreements and differences, so contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security.