



8th Session of the
**MEETING OF THE PARTIES
TO THE WATER CONVENTION**
10-12 OCTOBER 2018 | ASTANA | KAZAKHSTAN

Progress on Transboundary Water Cooperation under the Water Convention

Report on Implementation of the Water
Convention prepared by the Secretariat

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1. Background and context

- Decision to introduce reporting under the Water Convention in November 2015
- Transparent means by which to
 - assess implementation
 - identify gaps and difficulties
 - highlight good practice and lessons learned
- Support future implementation by helping to focus efforts on key challenges and measure progress
- Secretariat requested to prepare synthesis report based on national reports submitted

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PROGRESS ON TRANSBOUNDARY WATER COOPERATION UNDER THE WATER CONVENTION

Report on implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

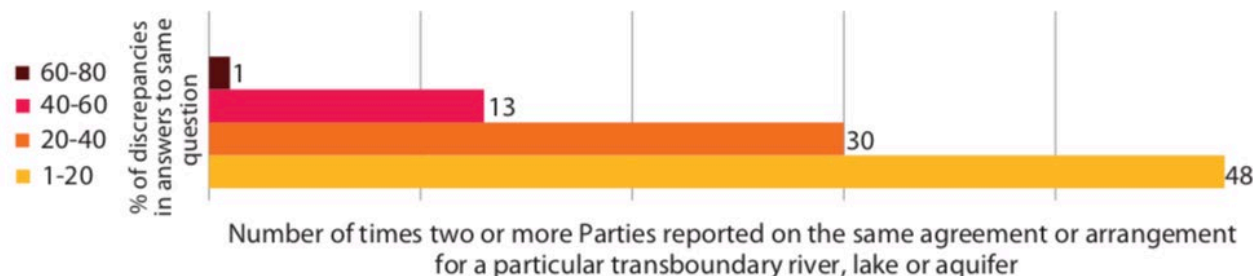


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2. Overview of the reporting process



- Invitation to report under Water Convention (and SDG6.5.2) in January 2017
- 38 out of 40 Parties reported (95%)
- Major collective effort by Parties
- Challenge to collate data and analyze due to
 - Late submissions (60% after the deadline of May 2017)
 - Out of 92 occasions when Parties reported on same agreement for the same basin, not one example where all yes/no answers tallied
- Total of 73 basins and 79 sub-basins listed in national reports
 - 19 basins included in 2nd Assessment *and* shared by one or more Parties not reported
 - 37 basins or sub-basins only reported by one Party but shared by two or more



3. Key findings - Transboundary water management at the national level

- Ensuring legal, administrative, economic, financial and technical measures are in place to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact is well reflected in Water Convention (Arts. 2 & 3)
- Most countries have adopted:
 - Laws and policies related to transboundary impact
 - Systems for licensing, control and monitoring pollution (point and non-point source)
 - EIA laws and policies at the national level



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4. Key findings – agreements and arrangements (Art. 9(1))

- Almost all reported basins have arrangements in force
 - Only one instance where no agreement exists in reported basin shared by Parties
 - Situation not clear in 19 transboundary waters not reported on
- At least 15 basins lack arrangements that cover the entire basin
 - Reasons given include lack of specificity or ambiguity within the agreement, and a narrow sectoral or geographic focus
- At least 29 basins do not have arrangements covering transboundary aquifers
- Arrangements reflect many of the key topics of cooperation within the Water Convention
- Topics less well reflected in arrangements include elaboration of water quality objectives, mutual assistance, maintenance of joint pollution inventories and climate adaptation

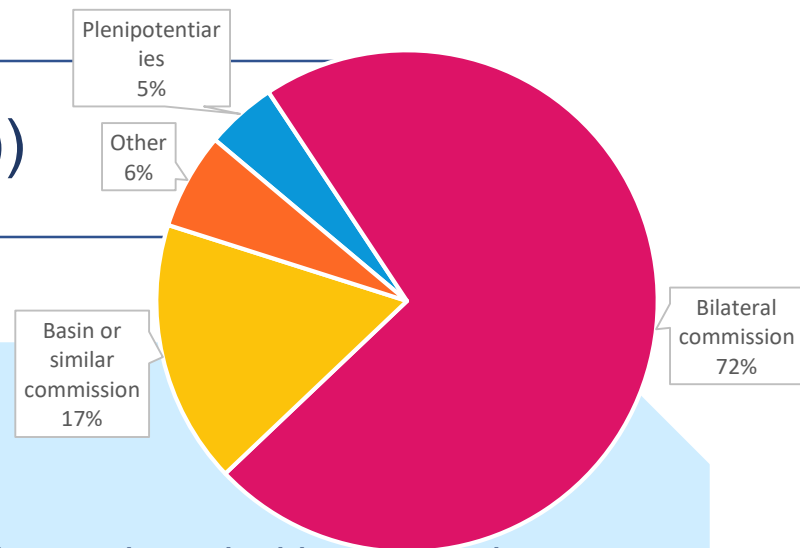


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5. Key findings – joint bodies (Art. 9(2))



- Widespread practice of adopting joint bodies to implement arrangements
 - Only four basins reported no joint body, two of which are shared with non-parties
- Many tasks and activities set out in Art. 9(2) of Water Convention well reflected in Joint Bodies
- Tasks and activities of joint bodies less well reflected:
 - Maintenance of pollution inventories
 - Setting of emission limits
 - Climate change adaptation
 - Basin-wide or joint public participation and consultation



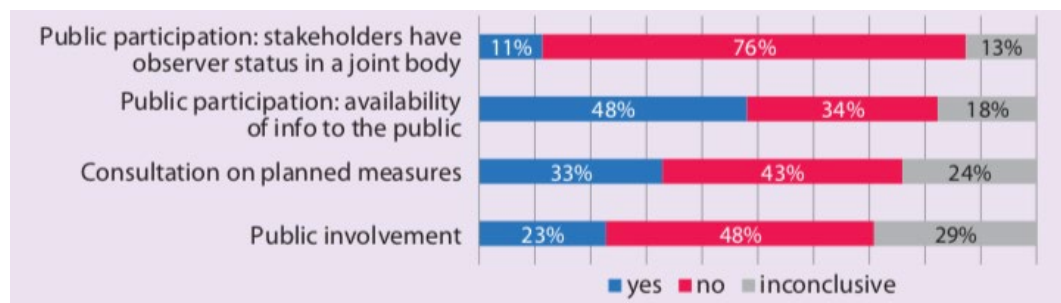
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6. Key findings – implementation

- Widespread practice of adopting joint or co-ordinated water management plans (Arts 2&3)
- Measures to protect ecosystems of transboundary waters commonly incorporated (national and basin level) (Arts 2&3)
- Data and information is exchanged in almost all transboundary waters reported, although at least 7 basins where it does not take place, and shared databases or platforms are not widely used (Arts 6&13)
- Concerted effort to adopt joint monitoring and assessment programme, although in at least 32 reported basins such programmes are not in place at the basin level (Art 11)
- Joint water quality standards in place in the majority of basins although they are lacking in at least 15 reported basins (Art 3)
- Provisions related to accidental pollution (Art. 3(1)(l), mutual assistance for extreme events (Art 15) and public participation (Art 16) appear not to be widely implemented



7. Lessons learned and next steps

- Reporting an effective means by which to measure implementation although lessons can be learned
 - Enhance harmonisation of reporting for same basins and arrangements
 - Reporting template can be improved through clearer questions and guidance
 - Consider gaps/challenges in
 - Reporting
 - Geographic scope of arrangements and joint bodies
 - Functional scope and implementation
- While gaps and challenges remain pilot reporting exercise shows a high level of implementation of the Water Convention
 - Reflects concerted effort by the Parties to protect and jointly manage transboundary waters over the course of more than 20 years leading to concrete outcomes



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Further information:

Report on Implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, UN Doc. ECE/MP.WAT/51

Water Convention Website:

<https://www.unece.org/env/water.html>

Areas of work of the Convention >
Reporting under the Water Convention
and Sustainable Development Goal 6.5.2

