



From Practitioner to practitioner: training on how to use the two global Water Conventions to promote cooperation on the ground

To be held in Geneva, 20-21 October 2016
Room VIII, Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland,
starting at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, 20 October 2016

Programme

First day, 20 October 2016

9:30-10:45 Session 1: Introduction

Opening remarks by Peter Kovacs, on behalf of the organizers (5 min)

Introduction to the objectives and agenda, *Sonja Koepfel, secretariat to the Water Convention (10 min)*

Facilitator: Lesha Witmer, WWF
Tour de table & Questionnaire

Each participant introduces him/herself to the neighbour.
Then, together they answer to the questionnaire on frequently asked questions and misunderstandings on the Water Conventions. (Report back to be done on the next day) (30min)
Back to the plenary, Please introduce in 4 words your neighbour to the audience (30min)

10:45-12:00 Session 2: Why two global Water Conventions? What are the differences and similarities?

International water law, current status and evolution of the Conventions, introduction to substantive and procedural norms *Alistair Rieu Clarke, Northumbria University*

Discussions in groups for 20 minutes to elaborate the differences and similarities in terms of physical scope, substantive principles, procedure, legal and institutional arrangements (global and basin level), dispute settlement mechanism. Each group gets assigned to a question, but is free to look at other questions as well.

Reporting back on their main questions and feedback by the facilitators.

12.00-13.00 lunch break

13:00-16:30 Session 3: What are the main obligations and how to implement them? *Moderator: Francesca Bernardini, secretary to the Water Convention*

Introductory presentation to the format of the session, *Francesca Bernardini, UNECE*

Key provisions will be introduced by a participant (10 min) based on the Implementation Guides of the Conventions and other material, provided, followed by reaction of a Party on how they implement this obligation and comments from the audience and resource persons. (30 minutes per provision)

1. Equitable and reasonable use, *Patinde Belemilga, Volta Basin Authority*, reaction by *Heide Jekel, Germany*
2. Duty to take all appropriate measures to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impacts and prevent significant harm, *Emmanuel Kasimbazi, Makerere University*, reaction by *Phani Livada, former legal adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece*
3. Protection of Ecosystems, *Aminu Magaji Bala, Lake Chad Commission*, reaction by *Sibylle Vermont, Switzerland*
4. Duty to cooperate
Lenka Thamae, ORASECOM, reaction by *Peter Kovacs, Hungary*
5. Notification and transboundary EIA, *Caridad Canales, ESCAP and former ECLAC*, reaction by *Seppo Rekkolainen, Finland*

Short concluding discussion

16:00-16:30 Coffee break

16:30-18:30 Session 4: What are the benefits of acceding to the Conventions?

Moderator: Sibylle Vermont, Switzerland

45 min Group discussion on the benefits and promotion approaches:

- 1) *How can the implementation of the Conventions support transboundary cooperation?*
- 2) a) *What are the benefits of acceding to the Conventions? Please look at this from different perspectives: according to different groups of countries (upstream-downstream) and for different target groups (experts, decision makers, high-level bureaucrats, Ministers, parliamentarians)?*
- 2) b) *What are the perceived or real risks related to accession (e.g. upstream countries, other riparian are not Parties, etc.) and how can they be overcome/ addressed?*

30 min Reporting back

45 min Panel discussion with reactions by the panellists to the group discussion by representatives of Parties and partners on the benefits they see in the Conventions, including how they concretely help on the ground (reaction on messages, complementing outcome of discussion with additional arguments/concepts, consolidation of messages)

- A representative of a country having ratified both Conventions, *Seppo Rekkolainen, Finland*
- A representative of a country having ratified the UNWC, but interested in acceding to the Water Convention, *May Yousif, Iraq*
- A representative of a regional organisation promoting the Convention(s), *Fred Mwangi, IGAD*
- A representative of a development cooperation agency, *Jukka Ilomäki, Finland*
- A representative of regional organisation, *Oseloka Zikora AMCOW*
- A representative of a UN regional economic commission, *Caridad Canales, ECLAC*

19:30 dinner

Second day, 21 October

9:00-9:10 Reflections on the previous day

Facilitators: Sonja Koepfel, UNECE & Marie-Laure Vercambre, Green Cross International

9:10-12:45 Session 5: How the Conventions promote implementation and cooperation on the ground?

Moderator: Angela Klauschen, GWP

The institutional structure and the activities of the Water Convention, *Heide Jekel, Germany (10 min)*

Questions

Tools and related activities which help countries implement the obligations of the Conventions (guidelines, pilot projects etc. under the Water Convention). For each of the areas, one participant will be asked to make a 10-min presentation using available material, followed by a 5 min reaction from the lead Party or another Party or organization engaged in the issue

Guide to Implementing the UNECE Water Convention and the UN Watercourses Convention User's Guide, *Alistair Rieu Clarke, Northumbria University (10 min)*

Questions

Monitoring and Assessment and information exchange

Janvier Bazoun, ECOWAS

Reaction by *Jos Timmerman, the Netherlands*

10.40-10.55 coffee break

Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters

Ziad Khayat, ESCWA

Reaction by *Zaki Shubber, UNESCO-IHE*

Extreme weather events and climate change

Andrés Sánchez, OAS

Reaction by *Jos Timmerman, the Netherlands*

Identifying, assessing and communicating benefits of transboundary cooperation

John Owino, IUCN

Reaction by *Roberto Martin-Hurtado*

Accidental pollution, early warning systems and contingency plans

Martine Adoube, NBA

Reaction by *Peter Kovacs, Hungary*

12:15-12:45 Concluding discussion: how to better use these tools in non-Parties, what is missing and should be developed to further support implementation

12:45-14:00 Lunch

14:00-15:00 Session 6: How the Conventions strengthen water diplomacy, prevent conflicts and foster progress

Moderator: Marie-Laure Vercambre, Green Cross International

The role of the Conventions to support the development of basin agreements and setting up institutions (e.g. on the Drin)

Dimitris Faloutsos, GWP

The Conventions as a means for dispute settlements and prevention of conflicts

Zaki Shubber, UNESCO-IHE

The role of the Water Convention to track progress on cooperation: SDG reporting and Water Convention reporting

Francesca Bernardini, UNECE

15:00-15:15: Coffee break

15:15- 17:00 Session 7: How do we take this forward? Discussion on next steps and conclusion

The quiz revisited: the scores... and discussion on the questions, the answers and with new insight.

Moderators: Alistair Rieu Clarke 30 minutes

Plenary

Discussion in groups (45 mins) on:

- 1) *How can I make more use of the Conventions, its framework and tools in my work?*
- 2) *What specific activities can I undertake to use the Conventions to promote transboundary water cooperation and support accession? What role can my organization play?*
- 3) *What additional type of materials and activities would assist in supporting the promotion and implementation of the Conventions? What kind of tools would assist?*
- 4) *Suggestions for next From Practitioner to practitioner*

Feedback in plenary

Conclusions and thanks, *Francesca Bernardini, UNECE*

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