



UNECE



Global Water
Partnership
Mediterranean



REPUBLIQUE TUNISIENNE
Ministère de l'Agriculture,
des Ressources Hydrauliques
et de la Pêche

National Workshop on the "Benefits of cooperation and the UNECE Convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes"

21-22 September 2016
Hôtel Belvédère – Tunis

Recognizing the significance of future water challenges and issues, Tunisia is determined to promote transboundary water management based on effective cooperation. In this perspective, Tunisia continues reviewing and evaluating the opportunity to access new international legal instruments. Thus, in 2009, Tunisia began ratifying the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (entered into force in 2014). In addition, after deciding a strategy against climate change wherein water is a major challenge, Tunisia signed the Paris Agreement of December 2015 (COP 21). These two conventions are closely linked and complementary.

Since 2011, Tunisia also participates to meetings and activities under the framework of the Convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes, which was adopted in 1992 in Helsinki and entered into force in 1996. Since the Convention became global, Tunisia has repeatedly expressed its interest to access it. For this, a National committee was established in 2015, to study and discuss a potential accession to the Water Convention.

This Convention is a mechanism whose function is to promote international cooperation and to strengthen national actions for the protection and ecological sound management of transboundary ground and surface water. Furthermore, it is an intergovernmental platform for the daily development and progress in transboundary cooperation.

UNECE and GWP-Mediterranean have supported the organization of the Workshop on clarifying provisions, benefits and obligations deriving from the Water Convention for Tunisia, as well as the procedures of the accession process. Thus the Workshop will aim to continue discussions on the opportunity for Tunisia to access the 1992 Water Convention, which just became global.

WEDNESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2016

8:30 - 9:00 Participants welcome

9:00 - 9:45 Opening of the Workshop

Opening statements:

- Mr. Samir TAIEB, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries
- Mr. Peter KOVACS, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention, Ministry of Interior, Hungary
- Ms. Francesca BERNARDINI, Secretary of the Water Convention, UNECE
- Ms. Sarra TOUZI, Senior Programmes manager, GWP-Med

Presentation of the workshop program

Prof. Fadhel MOUSSA

9:45 - 11:15 SESSION 1:

General framework of the 1992 Water Convention

Session chaired by Prof. Fadhel MOUSSA

- **General introduction to the Water Convention, including links with the 2030 Agenda**
Ms. Francesca BERNARDINI, secretary of the Water Convention
 - **Principles and general obligations under the Water Convention: no-harm principle, reasonable principle and cooperation principle**
Ms. Phani LIVADA, former head of the legal office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece.
 - **International legal framework: The New York and Helsinki Conventions: similarities and differences: what does the ratification of the Helsinki Convention can bring to a State that is already Party to the New York Convention**
Prof. Johan LAMMERS, former Legal adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and member of the Implementation Committee of the Water Convention
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10:45 - 11:30 Discussion

11: 30 – 12:00 Coffee Break

12:00 -13:15 SESSION 2:

The UNECE Water Convention applied to the Tunisian context

Session chaired by Mr. Ameur HORCHANI, former Secretary of State for Water Resources

- **Tunisian transboundary water resources and existing cooperation mechanisms**
Mr. Hassen Lotfi FRIGUI, General Director water resources
- **General Tunisian legal framework in relation to the 1997 and 1992 Conventions**
Ms. Hekma ACHOUR, Legal expert

- **Outcomes of the Paris climate conference: implications for Tunisia and how the Water Convention can support its implementation**

Mr. Jean François Donzier, Director General of the International Office for Water, and expert of the task force of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries

13:15 - 14:30 Lunch Break

14:30 - 16:00 Panel discussion on expectations, benefits and perceived risks of ratifying the Water Convention, followed by reactions of international experts

- Mr. Abdallah Cherid, Director General of Dams and Major Hydraulic Works
 - Mr. Khalili Bahri, Coordinator of the SASS mechanism
 - Ms. Hayet BEN MANSOUR, Director of Surface Water Resources - Directorate General of Water Resources
 - Ms. Awatef MESSAI LARBI, Deputy Director, Directorate General for the Environment and Quality of Life - Department of Local Affairs and the Environment
 - Mr. Issam Nouiri, Institute of Agricultural Research and Higher Education
 - Mr. Fadhel MOUSSA, Legal expert
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16:00 - 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 - 18:00 SESSION 3:

Interactive discussion on the main provisions of the 1992 Water Convention and its implementation

Session chaired by Mr. Rachid KHANFIR

- **Obligations in terms of prevention, control and reduction of transboundary impacts: contamination**
Ms. Ana DRAPA, National Administration "Romanian Waters", International Cooperation Division
Mr. Harry LIIV, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment of Estonia
 - **Issues related to water quantity: drought and climate change adaptation**
Ms. Sonja KOEPEL, secretariat of the Water Convention and
Mr. Pedro CUNHA SERRA, former President of the Portuguese Institute for Water, former member of the Spanish-Portuguese Commission on transboundary waters
 - **How to cooperate on the basis of the Convention with a non Party riparian?**
Ms. Phani LIVADA, former head of the legal office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece
Ms. Ana DRAPA, National Administration "Romanian Waters", International Cooperation Division
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17:30 - 18:00 Discussions

18:00-19:30 Reception

THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

08:45 - 10:15 SESSION 4:

Responsibilities and benefits

Session chaired by Hafedh KHLIF

- **Summary of the discussions from day one by Prof. Fadhel MOUSSA**
 - **Responsibility in case of-compliance with the obligations, dispute resolution and Implementation Committee**
Prof. Lammers, former Legal adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and member of the Implementation Committee of the Water Convention
 - **Institutional cooperation under the Convention, assistance to Parties and other benefits of accession**
Mr. Peter Kovacs, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention, Ministry of Interior, Hungary
 - **Reservations and declarations**
Ms. Phani Livada, former head of the legal office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece
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09:45 - 10:15 Discussions

10:15-10:45 Coffee break

10:45 - 12:30 SESSION 5:

Panel discussion "How the Convention supports cooperation efforts: experiences, challenges, successes and advice for future Parties"

- Mr. Peter KOVACS, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention, Ministry of Interior, Hungary
- Mr. Harry LIIV, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment of Estonia
- Ms. Ana DRAPA, National Administration "Romanian Waters", International Cooperation Division
- Mr. Pedro CUNHA SERRA, former President of the Portuguese Institute for Water, former member of the Spanish-Portuguese Commission on transboundary waters
- Ms. Phani LIVADA, former head of the legal office of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Greece
- Mr. Johan LAMMERS, former Legal adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and member of the Implementation Committee of the Water Convention

Questions, answers and discussions

12:30 -13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-15:30 SESSION 6**Evaluation of the benefits of transboundary cooperation****Session chaired by Francesca BERNARDINI, UNECE**

- **Presentation of the Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation**
Mr. Harry Liiv, Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment of Estonia
 - **Group exercise:**
 - **What would be the objectives of an exercise to identify the benefit of cooperation between Tunisia and Algeria?**
 - **What questions should we answer?**
 - **Who should be convinced?**
 - **What benefits can be expected?**
- Reports from the groups and discussion on next steps**

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 - 17:30 SESSION 7**Lessons and perspectives****Round table: "Main concerns and expectations of participants, followed by synthesis and recommendations"**

Chaired by Fadhel MOUSSA

- Mr. Rachid KHANFIR, former Director General of Water Resources and former Coordinator of SASS
- A representative from the Ministry of Environment or from the Ministry of Health
- A representative from foreign affairs
- Mr. Lotfi FRIGUI, General Director water resources
- Mr. Hafedh KHLIF, International Cooperation Director at the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries
- Mr. Peter KOVACS, Chair of the Water Convention
- Ms. Francesca BERNARDINI, secretary of the Water Convention
- Ms. Sarra TOUZI, GWP-Med

Discussion with the room

Synthesis of discussions and recommendations by the rapporteurs: Ms. Hayet BEN MANSOUR, Prof. Fadhel MOUSSA, Ms Sarra TOUZI and Ms. Francesca Bernardini**Closing speech by Mr. Samir TAIEB, Minister of Agriculture, Water Resources and Fisheries**