

Findings of the Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters

Status of cooperation in the UNECE region

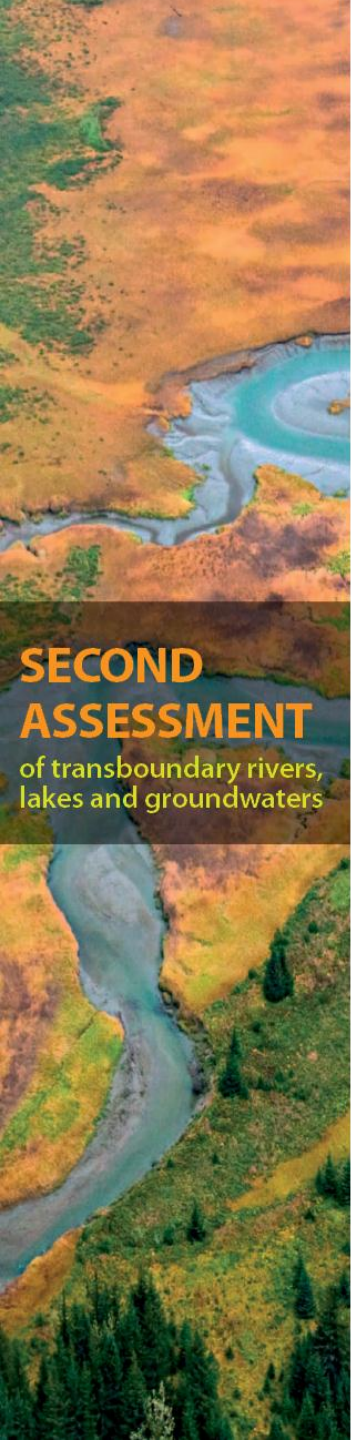
Gulnara Roll

**United Nations Economic Commission
for Europe - UNECE**

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About the Second Assessment

- In 2003 the Parties to the Water Convention decided to regularly carry out regional assessments; First Assessment in 2007
- Second Assessment prepared at the request of the 6th “Environment for Europe” Ministerial conference



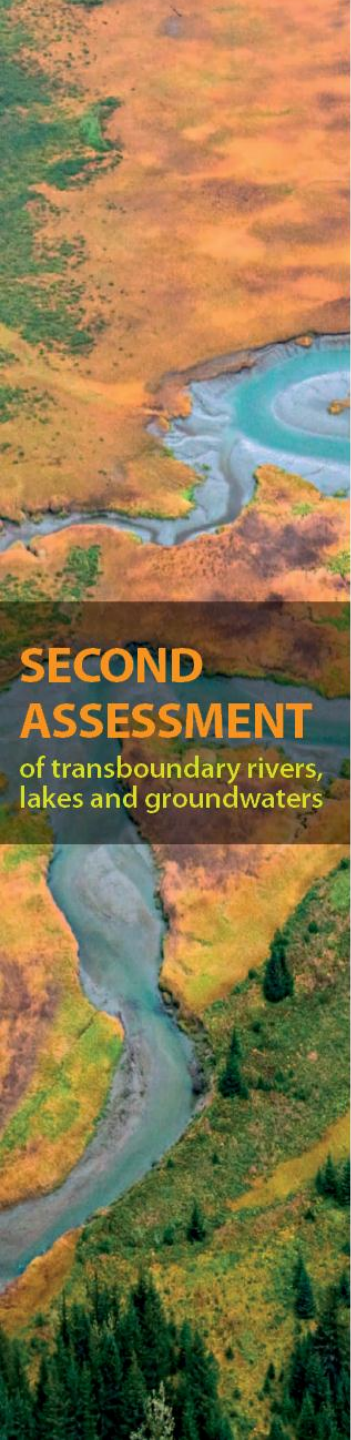
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Scope and Approach of the Second Assessment

- More than 140 rivers, 25 lakes, about 200 groundwaters covered in 50 countries
- Assessment of pressure factors, status of water resources, transboundary impacts, responses and future trends

- ➔ A comprehensive and up-to-date overview of the state of transboundary waters
- ➔ A tool to inform, guide & stimulate action

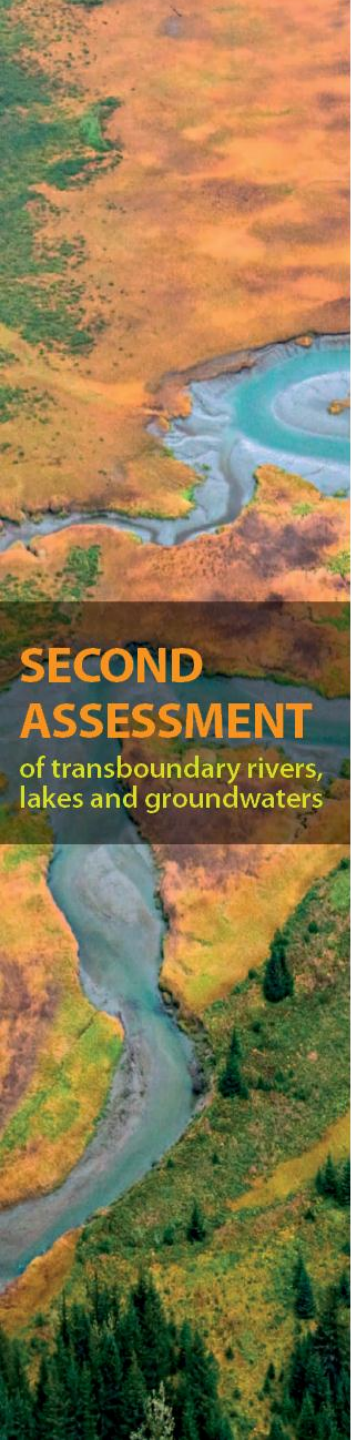


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Characteristics

More focus compared to the first assessment on:

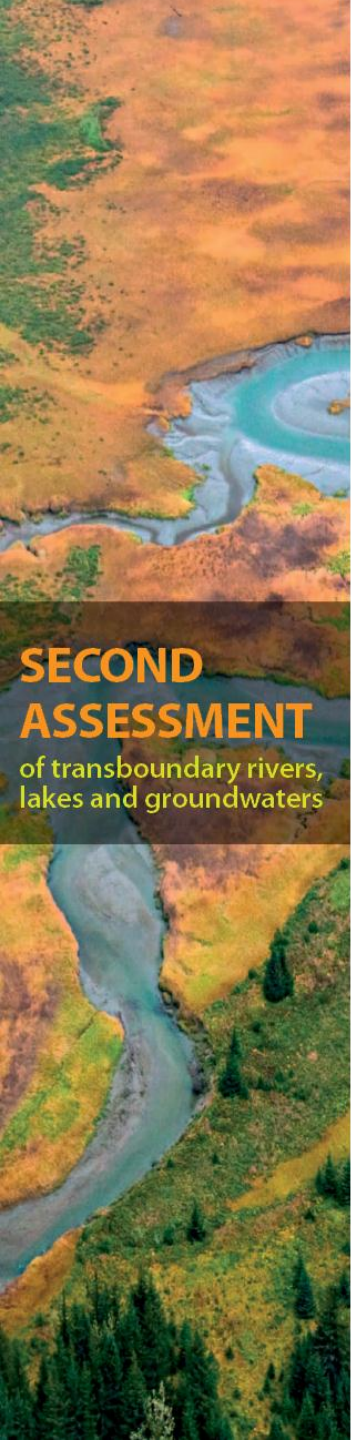
- Institutional aspects of transboundary cooperation (agreements, joint bodies, M&A...)
- Economic and social aspects, health issues, security aspects
- Water quantity issues
- Groundwaters
- Impacts of climate change
- Ecological aspects



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Outline

- Scope of the Assessment
- Main conclusions: sub regional focus
 - Western and Central Europe
 - Eastern and Northern Europe
 - Central Asia
 - South-Eastern Europe
 - The Caucasus



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Transboundary waters in Western & Central Europe

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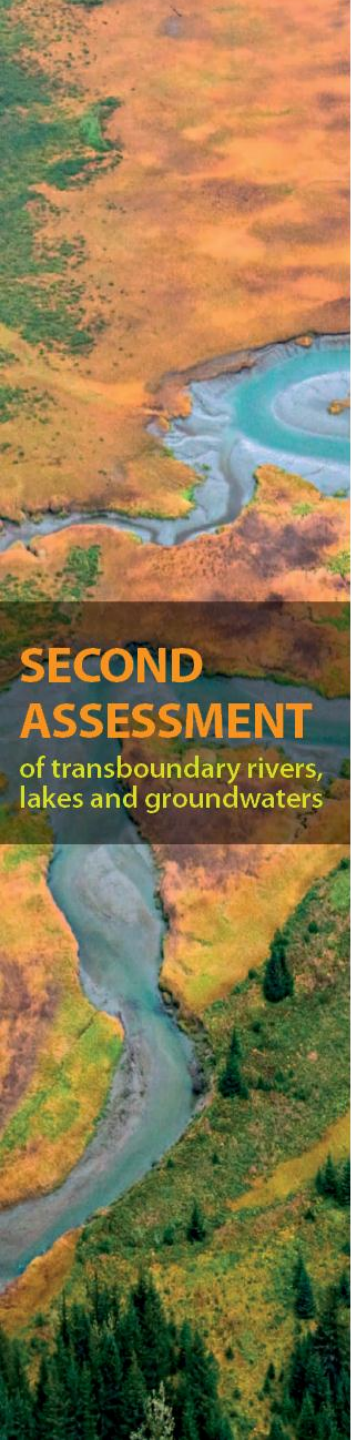


Western and Central Europe

An advanced cooperation

- Strong legal framework for water management & pollution control: EU WFD, Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive
- IWRM well established
- Effective cooperation at multilateral and bilateral levels

- Slow identification of transboundary groundwater bodies
- Dominant pressure from agriculture
- Heavy hydro morphological changes
- Ecological impacts: loss of biodiversity
- Problem of integration of policies



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Transboundary waters in Eastern & Northern Europe

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Eastern & Northern Europe

Difference EU countries / Eastern neighbors

- Progress in water protection and IWRM
- Influence of EU legislation across EU border (alignment)
- Transboundary cooperation agreements on the basis of the Water Convention

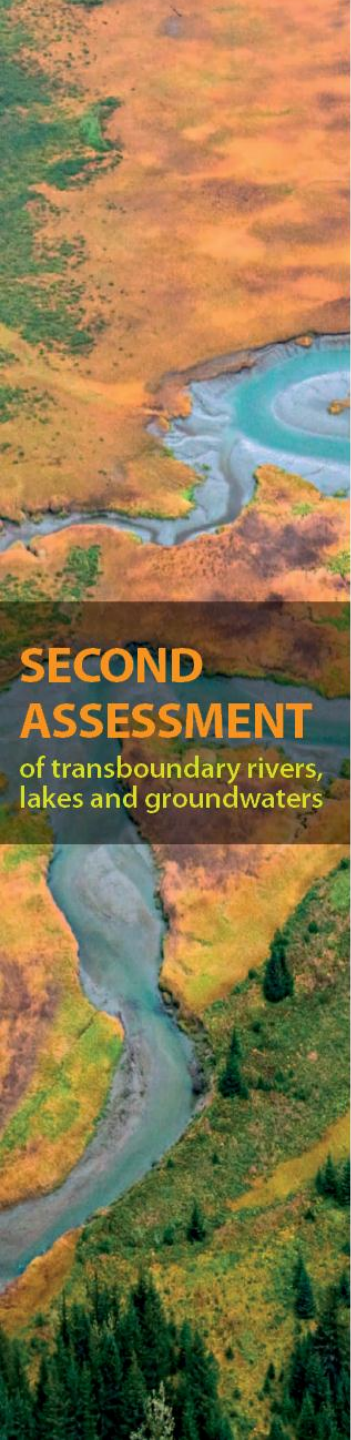
- Less effective transboundary institutions and lower level of cooperation in the Eastern part
- Little coordination at national level
- Shortage of fundings for the water sector
- Discharge of insufficiently treated wastewater
- Reduction of wetland areas



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Caucasus



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- The absence of stable cooperation in the Kura River Basin is the main challenge
- IWRM is not applied but positive developments in approximation towards the WFD and other international frameworks. Role of ENP
- This risk of water scarcity downstream – need in water saving technologies
- Tighter regulation and control of the use of fertilizers will not only reduce the harmful effects on water quality in rivers,
- but also improve the potential for reusing return waters.

Central Asia

Conflicting water uses in an arid region

- Some outdated legal framework: Amur Darya and Syr daria (1990's)
- Cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers
- Bilateral agreements: CHN/RUS, CHN/KAZ

- Differences in socio-economic development and availability of resources
- High dependence on transboundary waters but no effective regional framework for cooperation. Cooperation linked to political relationship between countries
- Economic interests dominate > environmental concerns



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Cooperation on transboundary waters: Asia

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Map produced by ZOI Environment Network, August 201

Watercourse related agreements

-  Bilateral
-  Multilateral

Lake or specific water use agreements

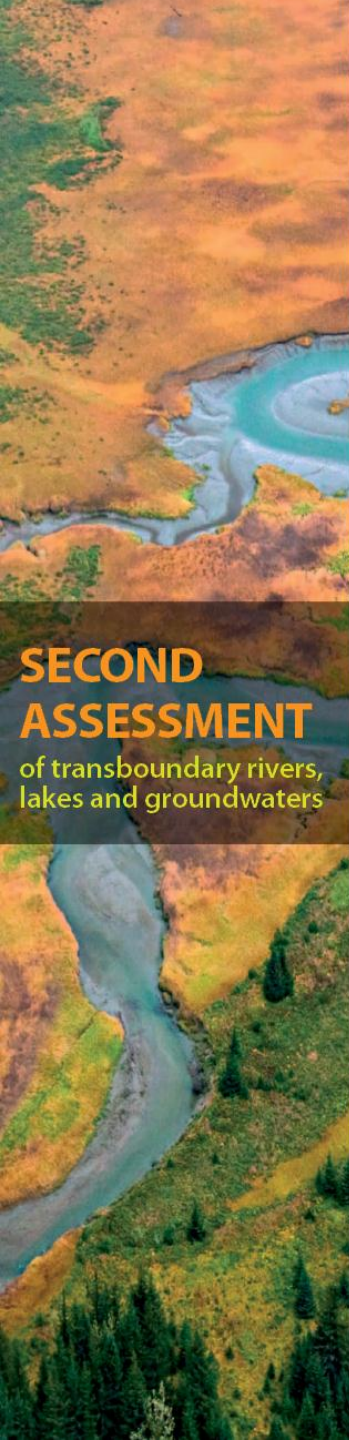
-  Bilateral
-  Multilateral

 PT — ES

Bilateral agreement covering all shared waters

Main messages

- **Progress in transboundary cooperation** in the region (cf. Water Convention) but many gaps & ineffective arrangements (e.g Bug, Daugava, Neman, Dnieper, South-Eastern Europe, Kura, and Central Asia)
- **Uneven application of IWRM.** Sectoral policies not integrated and sometimes conflicting
- Focus on economic development >> environmental protection concerns => high **risks for long term sustainability** in countries with economies in transition
- Information on **climate change impacts** rarely available at the basin level; seldom **transboundary** cooperation in CC adapt°



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Future of assessing transboundary waters under the UNECE Water Convention

- Next extensive assessment in 8-10 years
- A special edition in 4 years with a different scope and approach:
 1. Focus on a specific theme
 - A pressure (e.g. agriculture, hydropower)
 - A cross cutting theme (e.g. climate change and extreme events)
 - A response measure (e.g. monitoring and assessment system)
 2. Assessment limited to a representative number of basins



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Thank you for your attention

Document available at:

<http://live.unece.org/env/water/publications/pub.html>

“Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters” (August 2011)

For more information, :

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