



Results of the second reporting exercise on the SDG 6.5.2. indicator

Preventing water conflicts through improving
transboundary water cooperation in the Pan-European
region

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Background and rationale



Historically, sharing waters has driven more cooperation than conflict. But growing water scarcity and pollution, climate change impacts and increasing water needs from a growing population **can trigger conflicts over shared waters**

Observed trend: conflicts aggravating at both national and transboundary level

Solutions?

Cooperation - a powerful means to prevent and resolve conflicts

What does evidence tell us?

Key elements needed to prevent conflict and sustain long-term cooperation:

- strong institutions
- exchange of information and transparency, and
- avoidance of unilateral measures through joint planning.

This is why SDG indicator 6.5.2 is so important

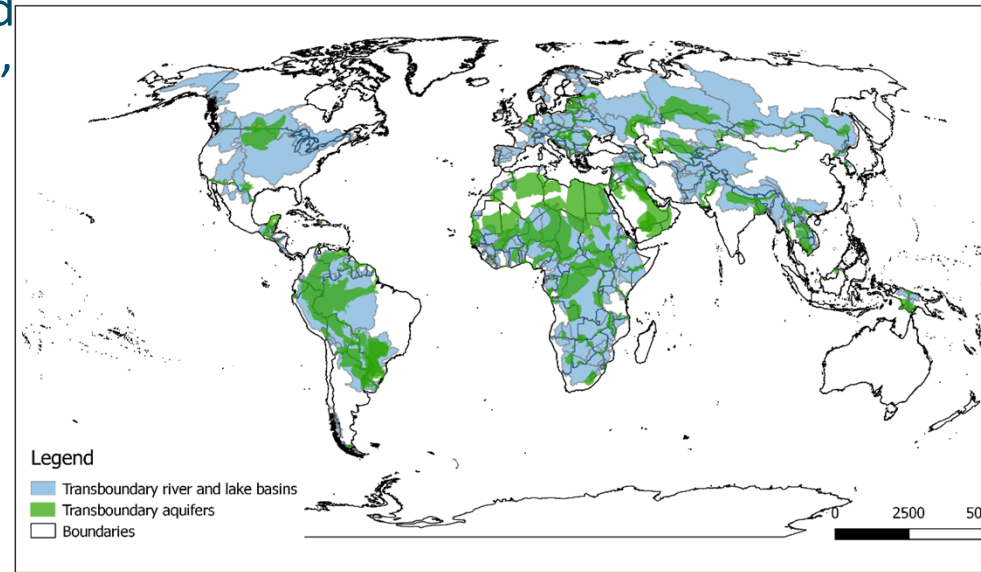


SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.

Target 6.5: By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate.

The first UN-negotiated text since Agenda 21 with a reference to transboundary water cooperation

Indicator 6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation



- Most of the world's water resources are shared => cooperation required.
- The only SDG indicator on transboundary cooperation => important for other natural resources



SDG indicator 6.5.2 and reporting under the Water Convention



Indicator 6.5.2: Proportion of *transboundary basin area* with an *operational arrangement* for water cooperation

- SDG indicator framework adopted by the General Assembly in 2017
- Co-custodian agencies for SDG 6.5.2: UNECE and UNESCO

In 2015 regular reporting introduced under the Water Convention to monitor its implementation by Parties

=> one template for both Convention and SDG 6.5.2 reporting

- 2017 - 1st reporting exercise, 2020 - 2nd reporting exercise
- **What is an ‘operational’ arrangement?**
 - Treaty, convention, agreement or other formal arrangement
 - Joint body for transboundary water cooperation
 - Annual meetings
 - Annual exchange of data and information
 - Adoption of joint/coordinated water management plan, or joint objectives
- Two components necessary for indicator value
 - Transboundary River and lake basins
 - Transboundary aquifers
- Aquifer component:
 - Directly (= a dedicated arrangement about the aquifer)
 - Groundwater / Aquifers included in river basin/ upper level (binational) arrangement

Structure and content of national reports on SDG indicator 6.5.2 and the implementation of the Water Convention

SDG 6.5.2 calculation

Additional information to explain, substantiate and complement indicator data

Section I Calculation of SDG indicator 6.5.2

Section II Transboundary basin and aquifer arrangements

Section III National Water Management

*Calculation of SDG indicator 6.5.2 value for **transboundary rivers and lake basins** (table 1); and **transboundary aquifers** (table 2).*

*Questions to be completed for **each** river or lake basin, or aquifer system, as well as sub-basins, parts of a basin or groups of basins where appropriate*

Gathers information on agreements and arrangements scope of cooperation, joint bodies / mechanism for cooperation, tasks and activities, exchange of information, measures, challenges and achievements, etc) => very detailed picture of the status of cooperation on each basin

Questions relate to governance arrangements in place at the national level that concern transboundary waters

Section IV Final Questions

Policy-focused summary and questions on how template was completed

Step-by-Step methodology contains guidance to completing this section

Guide to reporting contains guidance to completing these sections



Results of the 2nd reporting in 2020 on SDG 6.5.2

Indicator 6.5.2: Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation

High level of engagement

⇒ In 2020: **129** out of 153 countries submitted reports (all Parties to Water Convention responded)

Not on track

⇒ Only **24 countries** report **all** transboundary surface waters and groundwaters covered by **operational arrangements**

⇒ Only additional **22 countries** with more than **70%** of their waters covered by operational arrangement

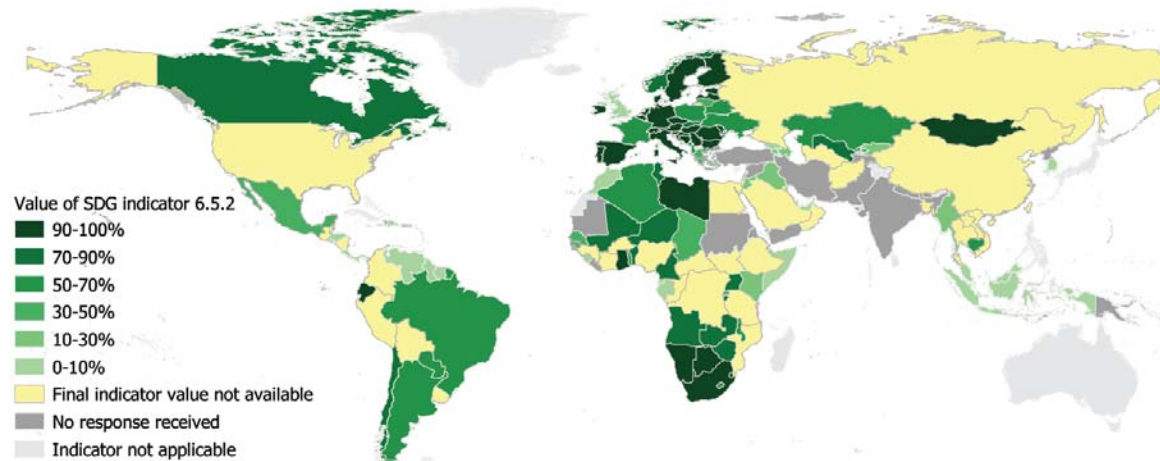
⇒ Progress must be **accelerated** to ensure that all transboundary basins are covered by operational arrangements by 2030

⇒ Insufficient knowledge on **groundwater** systems

Positive impact

⇒ Reporting triggered **follow-up actions** in countries to **improve cooperation**

SDG Indicator 6.5.2 values and responses received during the 2nd exercise

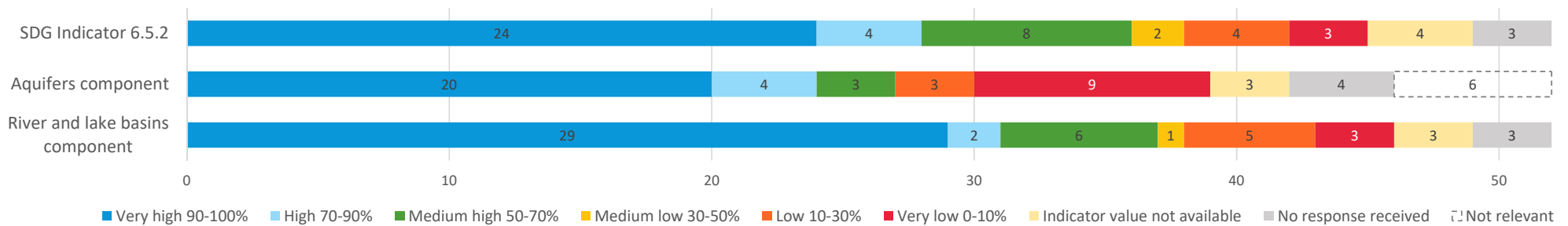




Results of the 2nd reporting in 2020 on SDG6.5.2 UNECE region – 1

- **49 out of 52** countries sharing water resources responded
 - Region with the **highest responses rates** in 2017 and 2020
 - 4 additional countries, that did not respond in 2017, responded in 2020
- **20 countries** with **all** transboundary waters covered by operational arrangements, vs 14 countries in 2017
 - Increased responses rate & Increased quality of the responses – more information provided on aquifers
 - Some countries improved their cooperation
- **24 countries** (out of 52 countries) with overall SDG Indicator above 90%, vs 19 countries in 2017

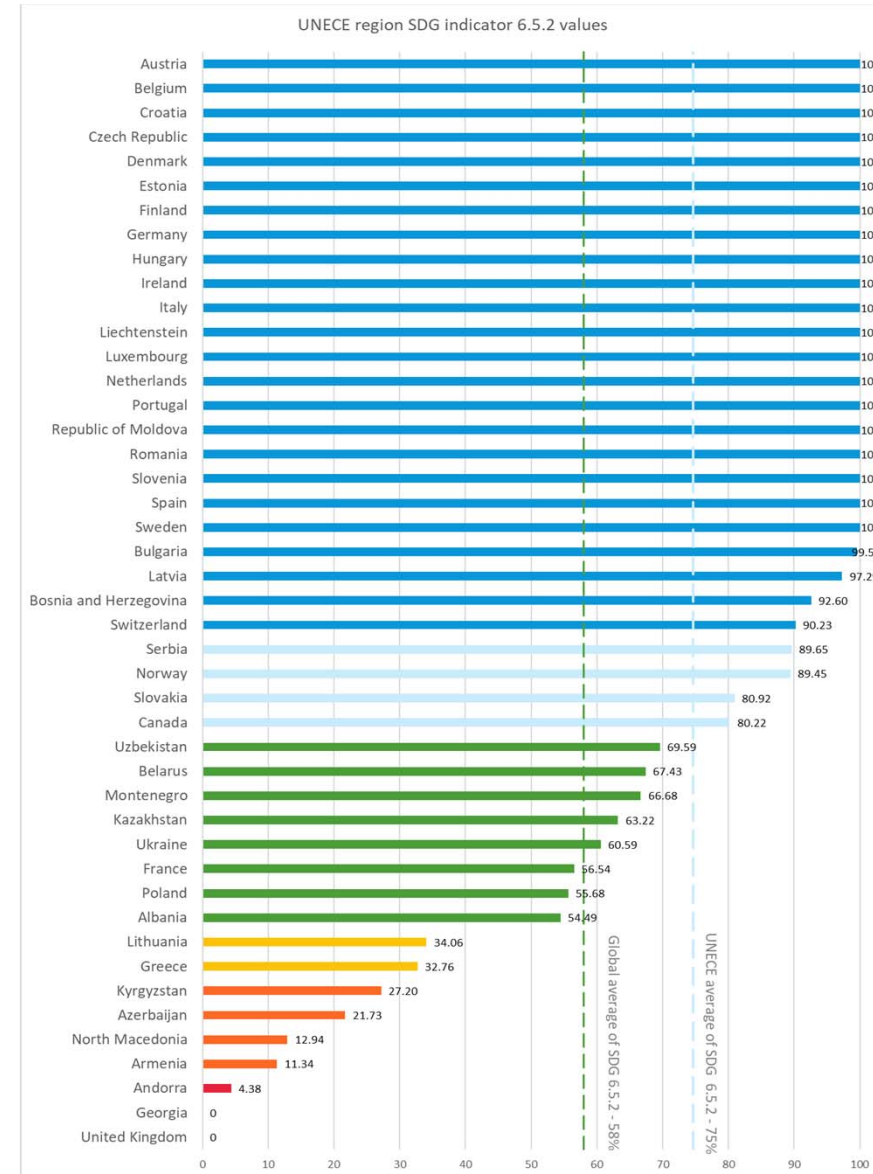
Breakdown of the 52 UNECE countries sharing waters SDG indicator 6.5.2 values



Results of the 2nd reporting in 2020 on SDG 6.5.2

UNECE region – 2

- 1st reporting – 2017 – Indicator 6.5.2 value available for **29 countries** of the region (transboundary river & lake basins and aquifers),
 - **39 countries** provided accurate data for transboundary river & lake basins, and
 - **29 countries** for transboundary aquifers
- 2nd reporting – 2020 – Indicator 6.5.2 value available for **45 countries** of the region (transboundary river & lake basins and aquifers),
 - **46 countries** provided accurate data for transboundary river & lake basins, and
 - **45 countries** for transboundary aquifers
- Reporting enhanced in 2020 through
 - Stronger interaction with custodian agencies (advice, questions, draft reports)
 - High quality of reports
 - Coordination with riparians
 - Inclusion of aquifers: challenging but promising



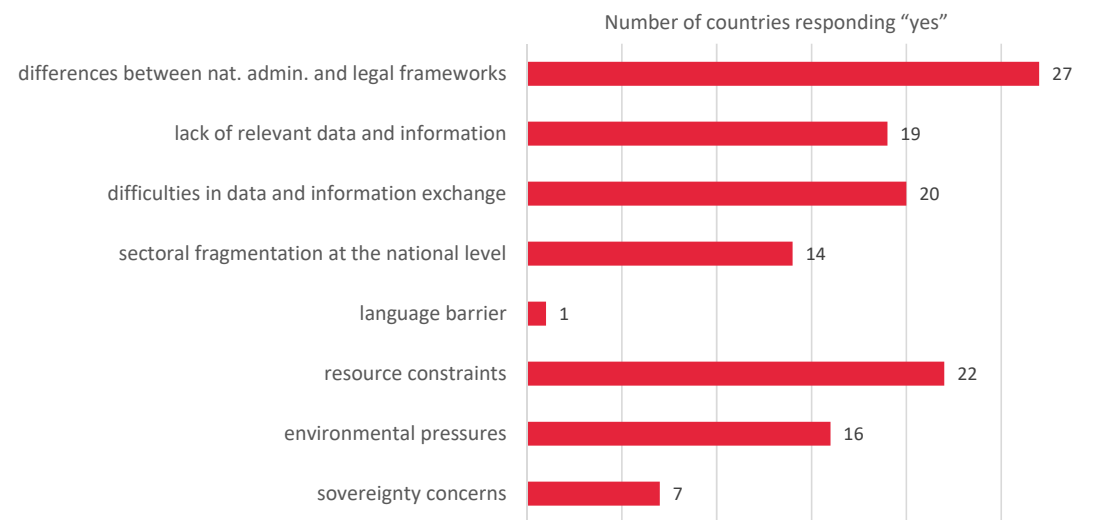


Transboundary water cooperation and the work of the UNCTs and RCOs

Transboundary water cooperation features in some 2021-2025 CCAs and UN SDCFs for countries in the South Caucasus, Central Asia, and Eastern Europe as a tool for advancing the sustainable development agenda:

- ✓ Cooperation on shared waters is considered a challenge in many countries
- ✓ In very few, the link with peace / stability is made: e.g., in the Multi-dimensional Risk Assessment for North Macedonia the likelihood of tension with neighbouring countries over water is medium/high
- ✓ Examples of using SDG indicator 6.5.2: for Kazakhstan, UNSDCF sets the target of increasing the value of SDG indicator 6.5.2 to 87% (from the baseline of 73%)

Main **challenges** faced by countries in cooperating on transboundary waters – Sect. IV, Q°1, UNECE region



Key areas to accelerate progress and role of RCOs and UNCTs



Building political will

addressing **structural barriers** and finding **innovative financing mechanisms** is needed to address current financing shortfalls



Upscale capacity development

Capacity building is important for negotiating and implementing operational arrangements

Leveraging and mobilizing expertise

There is a need to **upscale and coordinate** the activities of international organizations to **provide targeted support** to countries



Strengthen legal frameworks

The water conventions and the draft articles on transboundary aquifers offer a **solid basis** upon which to **revise or negotiate** new arrangements



Address Data Gaps

There has been **strong country engagement** in the monitoring exercise, but data remains a challenge, particularly for transboundary **aquifers and countries with no SDG indicator value**



Benefits of transboundary water cooperation for the overall sustainable development agenda



Multiple benefits of cooperation

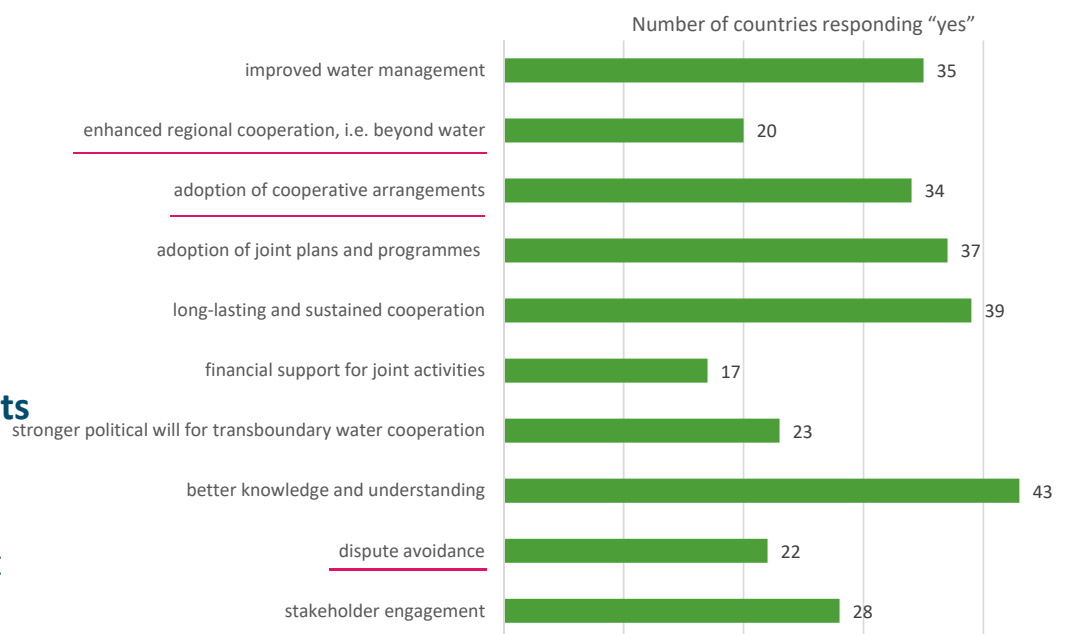
include peace, regional integration, sustainable development and environmental protection



The 6.5.2 and Water Convention's reporting highlighted the key role of institutional arrangements for peace and conflict prevention:

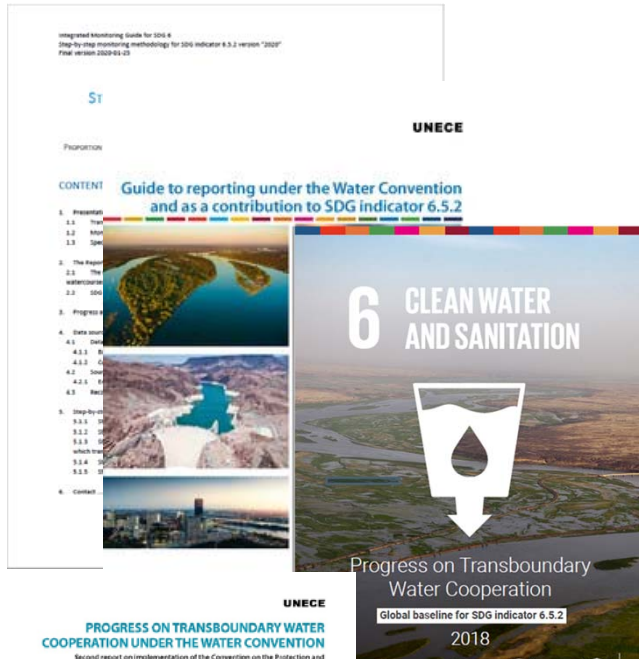
- dispute and conflict prevention is a subject of cooperation in water agreements or arrangement in 74% of responses
- settling of differences and conflicts is part of the joint body tasks and activities in 58% of responses

Main achievements in cooperating on transboundary waters – Sect. IV, Q°2, UNECE region



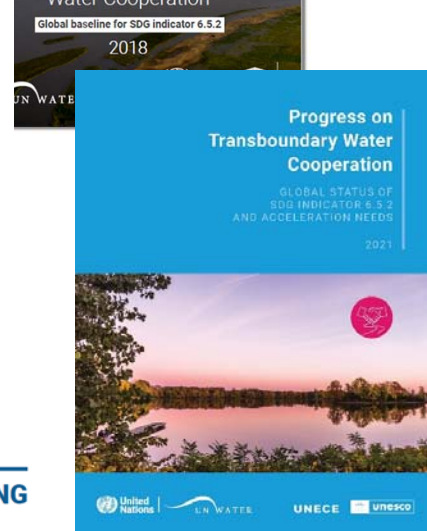


Thanks for listening!



UNECE: www.unece.org/water/transboundary_water_cooperation_reporting.html

UNESCO: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/water-security/hydrology>



UN-WATER SDG6 monitoring:
www.sdg6monitoring.org/indicator-652

UN-WATER SDG6 data portal:
www.sdg6data.org/indicator/6.5.2



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