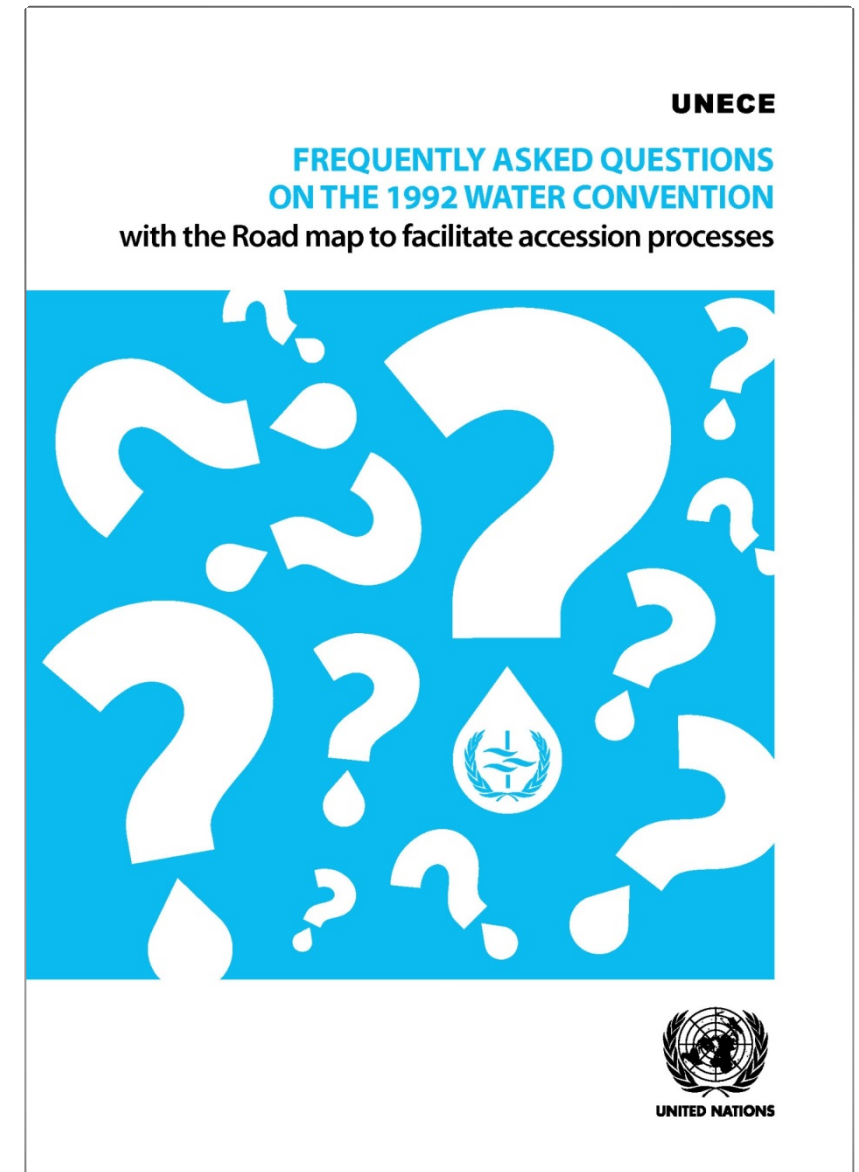


What you always wanted to know about the Water Convention

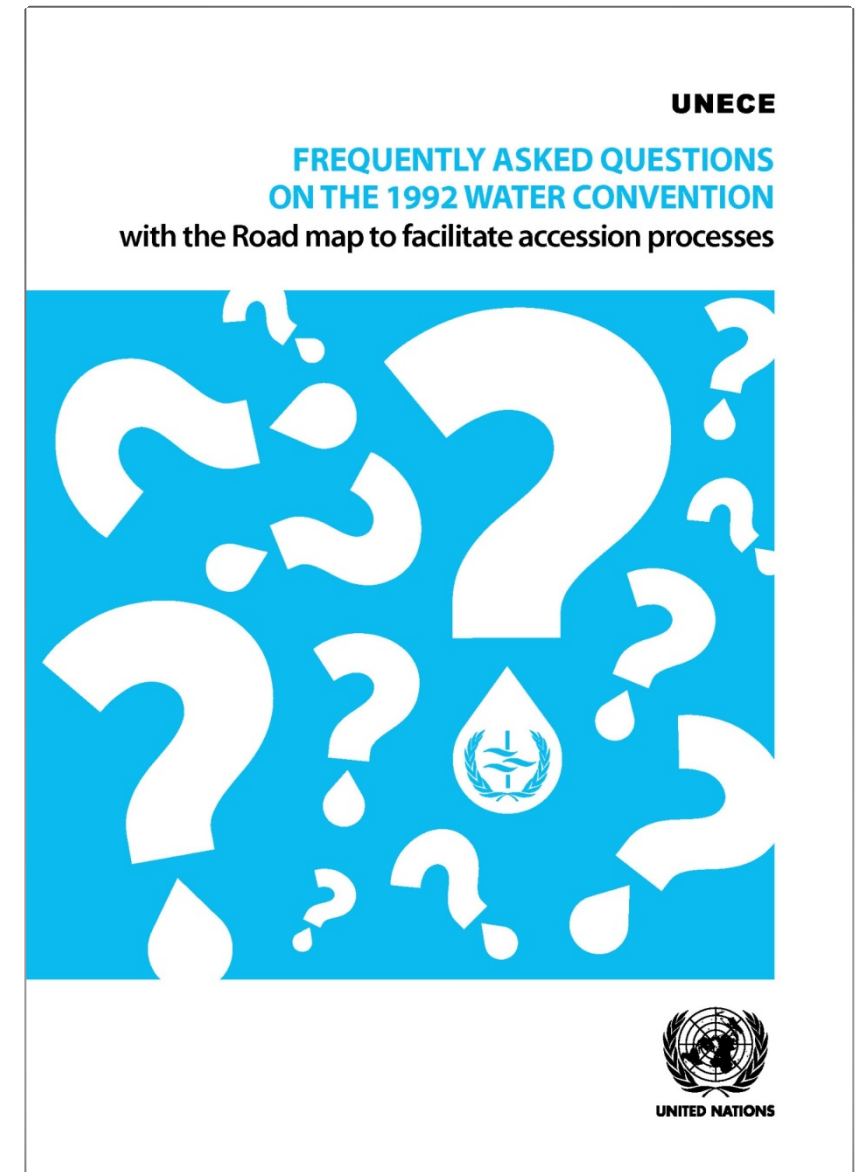
Peter Kovacs
Head of the Department of River Basin
Management and Water Protection,
Ministry of Interior, Hungary
Water Convention Bureau



Over 50 FAQs

- Added value at global, transboundary & national scales
- Global application
- Relationship with the 1997 Watercourses Convention
- Scope
- Principles and obligations
- Implementation, operation, capacity & compliance
- Accession preparation and process

<https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=55164>



FAQ 1.2: What does my country achieve by becoming a Party to the Water Convention?



FAQ 1.3: What is the added value of accession to the Water Convention for a country that already has agreements and good cooperation with neighbours?



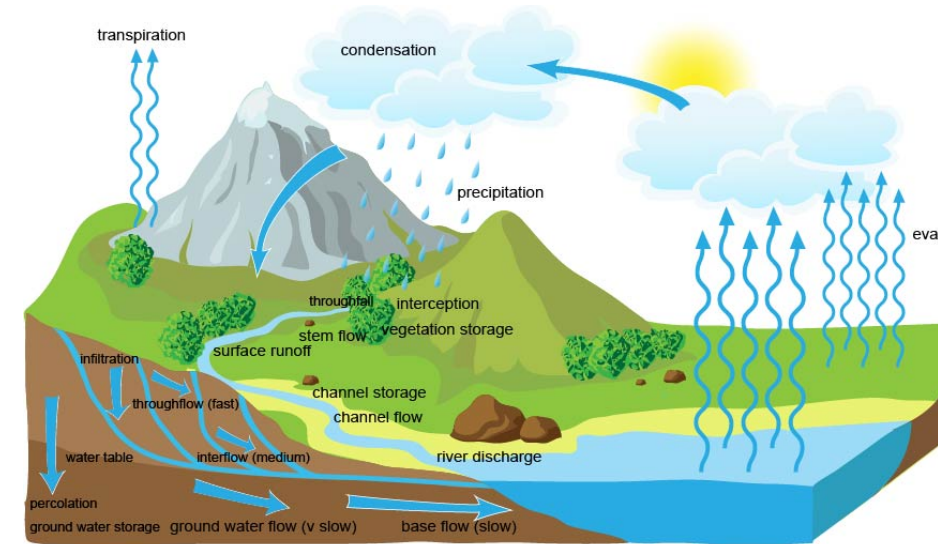
Cooperation = long-term & evolving process => Water Convention offers framework and tools to **support continuous progress**:

- Exchange of knowledge and experience
- Development of soft law tools
- Reporting to track progress achieved
- Support dealing with new and emerging issues

=>You are not alone with your riparians: you are **part of a community**

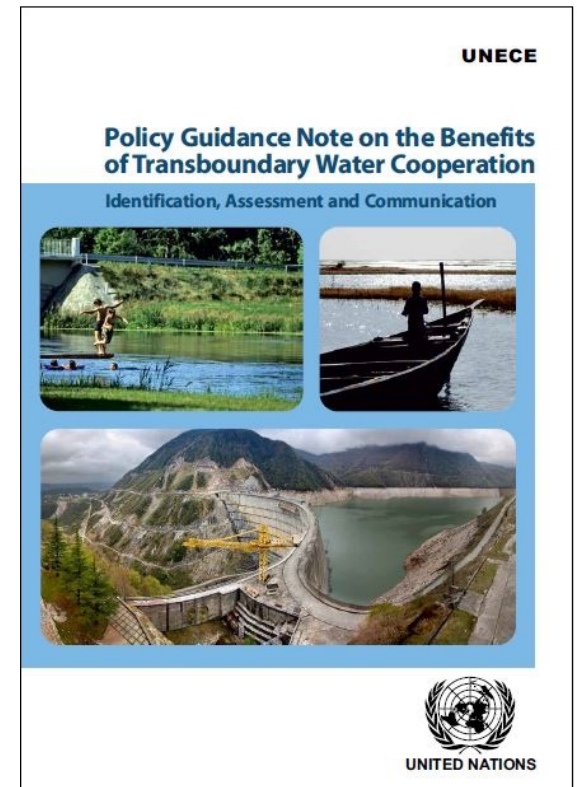
FAQ 1.5: What are the benefits of accession to the Water Convention for an upstream country?

- The Convention embeds **rights and obligations for both upstream and downstream** countries
- Upstream countries are also vulnerable to transboundary impacts
- Cooperation under the Convention brings **benefits** beyond water (trade, investment, economic integration, education and capacity building)
- Water challenges are too big to be dealt by a country alone, there is a need to **join forces** (scientific and technological exchange)



FAQ 1.8: Does the Water Convention hinder economic development?

- Financial institutions and bilateral donors value the participation in the Water Convention => **being a Party facilitates investment**
- Obligations under the Convention (joint bodies, consultations upon request) **prevent disputes over new infrastructure**
- Identification of new **benefits and investment opportunities** possible through cooperation



FAQ 1.9: How can the Water Convention prevent conflicts and wars over transboundary waters?

- Daily cooperation (agreements and joint bodies) increases trust => instrumental for preventing conflicts and wars
- Institutional framework assists to set up agreements and joint bodies (projects in Drin, Kura, Dniester and Chu-Talas basins, Senegal-Mauritania aquifer cooperation)
- Advice and assistance from the Implementation Committee



FAQ 6.1: Can a country accede to the Water Convention if it cannot implement all its requirements due to the lack of resources and capacity?

- Parties are at different stages of development, and this is fine!
- Most obligations are “due diligence” ones: Parties shall take “all appropriate measures”
- Measures should be **proportionate to the economic, financial and other capacity** of the Party, and to the degree of risk of transboundary impact
- **Step-by-step** implementation
- New Parties => Implementation Plan



Why is the Water Convention important for Hungary?

- It provides a strong base for bi- and multilateral cooperation
- Existing agreements are based on the main principles of the Water Convention (Transboundary and Basin Wide)
- Help to negotiate, re-negotiate agreements
- Improves national water management
- Use of publications (some translated into national language)
- Visibility on international/global level of Hungarian expertise
- Discussion platform related to new global challenges
- Share experiences

Hungary- lead Party for the work supporting the development of agreements in transboundary basins

UNECE

Practical Guide for the Development of Agreements or Other Arrangements for Transboundary Water Cooperation



Objective:

Support countries in the **design and drafting** of agreements or other arrangements for transboundary waters that are effective, adaptable and sustainable.

Key messages:

Several benefits to developing agreements or arrangements for transboundary water cooperation

Arrangements can take many shapes and forms

Consider existing national and international law and practices



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