

THE EXPERIENCE OF GHANA: SHARING THE ROAD MAP TO ACCESSION TO THE WATER CONVENTION, KEY CHALLENGES, AND ADVISE

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GHANA

**National workshop related to the Convention on the Protection and Use of
Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes: Uganda's accession process
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Sharing the Road Map to Accession to the Water Convention -1

- Lead institution to lead the process
 - Water Resources Commission (Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources) identified as lead institution and led the process
- Developed a Ratification Toolkit
 - Served as main material for decision making; and shared with stakeholders to inform, educate and seek buy-in and consensus
 - It contained elements:
 - An overview of the Water Convention;
 - National context- policies and the convention; regional context -relationship between existing agreements/ arrangements and the Water Convention
 - The country as a responsible player in the international community
 - Advantages of joining the Water Convention
 - How does the convention work?
 - Country's obligations under the Water Convention
 - How the Water Convention follows international customary law
 - How can the country can join the Water Convention?

Sharing the Road Map to Accession to the Water Convention -2

- Identification of Key Stakeholders:
 - Institutions that need to know, provide assistance in the accession, decision makers, potential beneficiaries (regulators, water users, research and academia), engaged in public awareness and communication (media, civil society), etc.
- Engagement/Consultation of the Stakeholders:
 - Organised a national stakeholder workshop for consensus and the way forward
 - Follow up strategic engagements with key decision-makers (Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice; Cabinet; and Parliament)
- Materials and platforms for communication:
 - Establish collaborative arrangements to assist in communication and advocacy.
 - Provide necessary briefs.
- Timelines for the accession:
 - Define timeline for completion of accession
- Resources and Support Required (Internal and External):
 - Cost for the process and knowledge transfer
 - Technical assistance

Challenges to the Accession

- Initial lack of dedication from the lead Ministry was missing and had to be worked on
- Creating stakeholder interest and understanding took time to be created – requires zeal and tact.
- Sustained financial support through the accession process
- Flexibility should be factored into timing of the process – Timely approvals required from key decision-makers were missed.

Lessons Learnt and Advise

- Key to the accession process is commitment at the highest level.
- Support of a willing and dedicated Ministry in Charge of water and Agency to lead and coordinate the entire process.
- Significant to adequately engage the key decision-making institutions – cabinet and parliament
- Ensured effective collaboration with relevant ministries - evident in the unanimous adoption of the ratification bill by Parliament.
- In seeking political commitment – promote linkage of Water Convention with major global initiatives (2030 Agenda) as a primary instrument and support for the implementation of SDG6.
- The accession toolkit packaged as a simple document with all relevant information was handy and disseminated in educating the general public.
- Mobilize all sector wide stakeholders around the processes and sustain the education and dissemination process.
- Established collaborative arrangements with NGOs and the media who took charge of the communication and advocacy as part of their outreach programs.
- Push from the transboundary basin organisation was critical - the accession is central within the Volta Basin Authority - recognised as an activity to be carried out by the riparian states.

THANK YOU