



Ministry of Water and Environment
REPUBLIC OF UGANDA



National Workshop

National workshop related to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes: Uganda's accession process

15 (full day) & 16 (half day) February 2022

Entebbe, Uganda

1. Background

Uganda, which has 98% of its water resources in the Nile River Basin, has taken numerous measures to promote cooperation with neighbouring States in the management and development of its shared waters, in accordance with the provisions of international law. Uganda has ratified the Nile Basin Cooperative Framework Agreement (CFA) and hosts the secretariat of the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) in Entebbe. Additionally, Uganda is party to the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC). In addition, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kenya regarding the Sio-Malaba-Malakisi (SMM) transboundary basin is in its final stages.

The secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was directly involved in supporting the development of the SMM Basin Investment Framework which led to the development of the SMM MoU. Adopted on 17 March 1992 in Helsinki, Finland, the Water Convention aims to strengthen cooperation in the field of transboundary waters and to promote protection and sustainable use of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters. Initially limited to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region, the 1992 Water Convention has been opened up for accession by all United Nations Member States, since 1 March 2016. Five African countries have already acceded to it and many others are in various stages of the process of accession.

The 1992 Water Convention, the Secretariat of which is hosted by UNECE, and the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention) provide unique global legal frameworks and essential intergovernmental platforms to support cooperative development and prevent conflicts related to shared waters. The United Nations Secretary-General encourages countries to accede to and implement both conventions.

With a view to possible accession of Uganda to the Water Convention, a national meeting was conducted on 15 November 2019 in Kampala by the Ugandan Ministry of Water and Environment and UNECE to increase awareness and understanding of the Convention with officials, including those from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development. A national workshop is now being convened to raise broader awareness of the Convention and develop a road map for accession.

2. Workshop objectives

The general objective of the workshop is to inform stakeholders about the Water Convention, to share about the processes initiated by Government of Uganda to become party to the Water Convention and to discuss the next steps in the accession process.

Specifically, the workshop will allow to:

- Inform stakeholders about the Water Convention;
- Identify the benefits, possible advantages and strategic objectives of a possible accession to the Convention for Uganda;
- Inform about the accession process, benefits and implementation by new African Parties;
- Discuss the practical implementation of the Water Convention to meet the challenges of water resource management in Uganda, based on the experience of existing Parties;
- Present the initiatives started by the Ministry of Water and Environment as part of Uganda's accession process to the Water Convention;
- Hold a Question and Answer session to respond to questions from stakeholders about the Water Convention;
- Discuss the next steps and road map in the accession process and the contribution of this process to Uganda's transboundary and national water management.

3. Expected results

The expected results pursued through this workshop are:

- Stakeholders are informed about the cooperation framework of the Water Convention at the global level and discuss the future engagement of Uganda with the Convention's Programme of Work 2022-24;
- The advantages for States to become party to the Water Convention are presented;
- Update on the efforts initiated for Uganda's accession to the Convention is presented;
- The actors are informed on the next steps of the accession process and the contribution of this process to Uganda's national water management and transboundary water cooperation are discussed;
- Actors define a roadmap, with key milestones agreed, for accession to the Water Convention.

4. Participation

The workshop will bring together representatives from:

- Relevant ministries in Uganda regarding transboundary water resources, including Ministry of Water and Environment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, parliamentarians;
- Relevant basin organizations pertaining to Uganda's shared waters, including Nile Basin Initiative, Lake Victoria Basin Commission, and Sio-Malaba-Malakisi Basin;
- Relevant diplomatic missions, including the European Union;
- Relevant international and regional organizations, including African Union, ECA, AMCOW, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, and East African Community;
- Relevant academia, civil society and independent national and international experts.