Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

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Since the early 2000s, the Water Convention has supported building resilience for **33 million people** across 6 basins:

- **Drin**: 19,686 km² (1.6 million population)
- **Sava**: 97,200 km² (8.2 million population)
- **Chu-Talas**: 124,300 km² (3 million population)
- **Neman**: 98,200 km² (5.4 million population)
- **Dniester**: 72,100 km² (10 million population)

North Western Sahara Aquifer:

- 4.8 million population
- 1,030,000 km²
The Water Convention supports countries through the 5 stages of the Climate Change Adaption process:

1. Dialogues
2. Agreements / Treaties
3. Joint bodies working on Climate Change Adaptation
4. Climate Impacts, Vulnerability Assessments, Adaptation Strategies and Plans
5. Implementation of Adaptation Strategies and Plans
6. Integration of Climate Change into River Basin and Flood Risk Management Plans

Climate Change resilience + Improved transboundary cooperation
Milestones from the Water Convention’s support to the Sava River Basin include:

- Transboundary dialogues initiated in 2000
- Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin in 2003
- International Sava River Basin Commission
- Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into the first River Basin Management and Flood Risk Management Plan in 2010
- Outline of the Climate Adaptation Strategy and basin-wide priority measures for the Sava River Basin in 2017

Water Convention Support:
Milestones from the Water Convention’s support to the Chu-Talas River Basin include:

- **2000**: Agreement on the Use of Water Management Facilities of Inter-governamental Status on the Rivers Chu and Talas ratified
- **2003**: Chu-Talas Water Management Commission
- **2010**: Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change and Long-term Programs of Action
- **2015**: Climate impact and vulnerability assessment finalized
- **2017**: Implementation of priority adaptation measures in the Chu-Talas basin
- **2022**: Climate Change adaptation integrated into joint and national action programs

**Water Convention Support:**

- **2000-2010**: Agreement on the Use of Water Management Facilities of Inter-governamental Status on the Rivers Chu and Talas ratified
- **2010-2015**: Working Group on Adaptation to Climate Change and Long-term Programs of Action
- **2015-2017**: Climate impact and vulnerability assessment finalized
- **2017-2022**: Implementation of priority adaptation measures in the Chu-Talas basin
- **2022**: Climate Change adaptation integrated into joint and national action programs
Milestones from the Water Convention’s support to the Dniester River Basin include:

- **2000**: Transboundary dialogues initiated.
- **2003**: Working Group on Flood Management and Climate Change Adaptation.
- **2010**: Climate impact and vulnerability assessments conducted.
- **2015**: Implementation plan for the Strategic Framework for Adaptation to Climate Change.
- **2017**: Implementation initiated.

**Water Convention Support:**
- Treaty for cooperation in Protection and Sustainable Development between Moldova and Ukraine.
- Strategic Framework.
- Dniester Basin Commission.
The Water Convention’s support to countries progressing through the 5 stages of Climate Change Adaption began in the early 2000s, and continues still to this day.
Main achievements in this area of work since April 2021

• Global Workshop on Water, Agriculture and Climate Change (17-18 October 2022)

• Continuation of activities in the pilot basins (the Dniester and the Chu-Talas)

• Inputs to global processes on water, climate change and disasters

• Progress within the Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins
Inputs to global processes on water, climate change and disasters

- 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP 26, Glasgow, United Kingdom, 31 October–12 November 2021)
  - Water Pavilion (transboundary day)

- Side-event “Governance of climate change and technological risks in transboundary water bodies” at the seventh session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (27 May 2022)

- Contribution to the World Water Development Report 2023 “Accelerating Change: Partnerships and Cooperation” (Chapter 7 on Climate Change)
Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation

6th meeting of the Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation (25 April 2022)

Recent progress report
Challenges and lessons learned/1

based on the April meeting of the Global network

• **Financing** and **implementation** and **concrete results** on the ground
  • Insufficient financial resources for regional initiatives
  • Sustainability of investments
  • Coordinated action in an integrative way addressing all sectors
• Need to **share experiences** regularly as well as demonstrations at the basin and regional levels
  • Regional Organization (joint body)
  • Technical Working Group at the regional level
  • Cooperation between states and including the enriching contribution of observers (NGOs, other river commissions, etc.)
• Networking between stakeholders
• Common projects
Challenges and lessons learned/2

*_based on the April meeting of the Global network_

- Governance **from local to transboundary level**
  - Agreements and organizations to bring people together and coordinate across countries and sectoral
  - Reaching consensus with a range of stakeholders
  - Balancing regional interests vis a vis national and subnational (adaptation) priorities and needs
  - Harmonization of national texts and policy frameworks
  - Strengthen and operationalize the technical, legal and regulatory tools
Challenges and lessons learned/3

*Based on the April meeting of the Global network*

- Involve **sub-basins and communities** (stakeholder involvement)
  - Small grants for community projects
  - Awareness raising and advocacy of stakeholders
  - Community implementation of measures
  - Consultation processes
  - Mix of top-down and bottom-up measures
- **Strategies** needs to be put into a plan and need **regular revision**
  - Mainstreaming climate change adaptation in all institutional strategies
  - Based on joint understanding of scenarios, impacts and adaptation measures
  - Communication, coordination and stakeholder involvement
  - Clear vision and instruments to implement the vision
  - Sometimes quicker than originally anticipated
Challenges and lessons learned/4

based on the April meeting of the Global network

• Integrate **groundwater** in basin water management
• **Ecosystems** (wetlands, forests and soils)
  • Restoration for food security
  • Nature-based Solutions
  • Sustainable management of transboundary ecosystems
• **Data and information**
  • Get data on time (early warning)
  • Hydrological forecasting and Decision Support System
  • Regional data and information - regional information platform
  • Uncertainty about the impacts of climate change
  • Communicate and disseminate for awareness raising and ownership
Challenges and lessons learned/5

based on the April meeting of the Global network

• Socio-economic issues
  • User-pays principle
  • Management of dams (hydropower)
  • Availability of clean water
  • Allocation/sharing of water resources
• Water quality and especially rising temperature
• Capacity development
  • Good knowledge facilitates decision making
  • Decrease in asymmetries among basin countries
• Benefit sharing
• Transboundary agreement and governance mechanism
  • Leadership