



National workshop related to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes:

Niger's accession process

2 – 3 March 2023

Niamey, Niger

Concept note

1- Background and rationale

Niger shares 90% of its water resources with neighbouring countries. Rapidly increasing demand due to population growth, increased urbanisation, increase in irrigation farming and industrialization constitute the current challenges to these shared resources. Moreover, these challenges have been exacerbated by persistent drought and have led to greater dependence on groundwater resources. Effective cross-border cooperation can help address these challenges. In this regard, Niger has signed several agreements on its shared water resources. Niger is notably party to the Niger Basin Authority and the Lake Chad Basin Commission.

The secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) has a long-standing cooperation with these two river basin commissions. 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 Pan-European region, the 1992 Water Convention has been opened up for accession by all United Nations Member States, since 1 March 2016. Six African countries have already acceded to it and many others are in various stages of the process of accession.

In view of Niger's possible accession to the Water Convention, the Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation has been actively participating in the Convention's activities since 2018. In 2021 awareness raising activities at the regional level were organised to sensitise relevant stakeholders on the Water Convention. A national workshop is now being convened to raise awareness of the Convention and commit to a roadmap for accession and eventual implementation.

2- Objectives

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

Information and sharing workshop on the 1992 UN Convention - Niger

Specifically, this will involve:

- ✓ Inform stakeholders about the Water Convention;
- ✓ To identify the challenges of cooperative management of transboundary rivers and international lakes at national, regional and international levels;
- ✓ Outline the content of the water convention in terms of benefits and obligations for Niger,
- ✓ Discuss the practical implementation of the Water Convention to address the challenges of water resources management in Niger, based on the experience of existing Parties;
- ✓ Examine the interaction and complementarity between the Water Convention and regional (ECOWAS and UEMOA) and sub-regional (NBA and LCBC) legal frameworks
- ✓ Discuss the next steps and road map in the accession process.

3- Expected results

- Stakeholders are informed about the Water Convention
- The challenges of concerted management of transboundary rivers and international lakes for Niger and at regional and sub-regional level are identified;
- The content of the water convention in terms of benefits and obligations for Niger is outlined and clarified;
- The interaction and complementarity between the Water Convention and regional (ECOWAS and UEMOA) and sub-regional (NBA and LTBC) legal frameworks is outlined
- The main lines of action for the practical implementation of the Convention have been identified;
- The next steps in the accession process are clearly defined.

4- Organisation of the national workshop

A national sharing workshop on the Convention will be held from **2-3 March 2023 in Niamey**. This national meeting will provide an opportunity to explain to all stakeholders the contours of the Convention and to agree on the next steps in the process of accession to the Water Convention.

The workshop will be co-facilitated by the Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation and the Secretariat of the Convention with the logistical support of UNDP. The workshop will be organised with the financial support of the European Union through the project "Promoting accession to the Water Convention" which aims to support the accession and implementation of the Water Convention and thus strengthen transboundary cooperation on water and the sustainable and peaceful management of shared water resources. The United Nations system will support the logistical organisation of the event as agreed with the host country.

5- Target audience

The participation of the basin organisations (NBA and LCBC) and the Niger riparian countries which are either parties to the Convention or also engaged in the accession process (Chad, Nigeria) is envisaged.

The targets for participation in this national meeting are as follows:

Information and sharing workshop on the 1992 UN Convention - Niger

- Representatives from sectoral ministries (Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation, Agriculture, Livestock, Environment, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Land Use and Community Development, Interior, Health, Communication, Social Action, Justice)
- The Parliament and the decentralised authorities
- Key private sector actors (NGOs and associations) ;
- Local authorities and local populations;
- Basin organisations (NBA ; LCBC);
- Countries sharing basins with Niger (Chad, Nigeria);
- ECOWAS, UEMOA, and other regional integration organisations
- Convention Secretariat and UN System in Niger
- European Union and other technical and financial partners
- Resource persons

6. Draft programme

N°	TIME	ACTIVITIES
Day 1 / Thursday 2 March 2023		
1	7:00 - 8:30 a.m.	Arrival and registration of participants
2	8.30am - 9.00am	Arrival of officials (M / S. UNECE/ Ambassadors, UN-Niger other partners)
3	9.00 - 9.30 am	<p>Opening session (2.00 pm – 2.45 pm)</p> <p>Welcome Address: <i>Representative of Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation</i> Goodwill messages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dr. Sonja Koepfel</i>, Secretary of the Water Convention (5 mins) • <i>Mr. Harry Liiv</i>, Special Envoy for Transboundary Waters (Estonia), Chair of the Meeting of the Parties of the Water Convention (5 mins) • <i>M. Géza Strammer</i>, Head of Cooperation of the EU Delegation in Niger (5 min) • <i>H.E. Sylvain Itté</i>, Ambassador, Embassy of France in Niger (5 mins) <p>Opening Address by <i>H.E. Mahaman ADAMOU</i>, Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation (7 mins)</p>
4	9.30am - 10.00am	FAMILY PHOTO / COFFEE BREAK
5	10:00 - 11:00 am	<p>Presentation of the context, objectives and agenda of the workshop</p> <p>Session 1 Overview of the 1992 Water Convention</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- <i>Niger's accession process to the Water Convention: history of the process and Why Niger should join (15 min)</i> (Ministry of Sanitation and Hydraulics); 2- <i>Presentation on the content, institutional framework and activities of the 1992 United Nations Water Convention and the advantages of Niger's accession to it (15 min)</i> (Dr Sonja Koepfel, Secretary to the Water

		<p>Convention)</p> <p>3- <i>Presentation on the obligations of the Convention, including link to regional and sub-regional legal frameworks (15 mins)</i>, (Dr. Komlan Sangbana, Legal Officer, Water Convention Secretariat)</p> <p><i>Questions from the floor and discussion (30 Mins)</i></p>
6	11:00 - 12:30	<p>Session 2. National and regional contexts of transboundary water management and relevance of accession for Niger (Presentations followed by discussions)</p> <p>1- <i>Issues and challenges of transboundary water management in Niger and presentation of the existing national regulatory framework</i> (Ministry of Sanitation and Hydraulics)</p> <p>2- <i>Cooperation in the Niger basin and experience with the Water Convention</i> (M. Didier Sèyivè ZINSOU, Director of the Niger Basin Observatory, NBA)</p> <p>3- <i>Cooperation in the Lake Chad Basin and experience with the Water Convention</i> (M. Rohallati Ndara, Expert in Water Management and Coordination Policies, LCBC)</p> <p>Discussion</p>
7	12:30 - 14:00	LUNCH BREAK
8	14:00 - 15:30	<p>Session 3. The Water Convention in practice and support to transboundary cooperation: the perspective of the parties to the Convention on opportunities and prospects</p> <p>1- <i>Estonia's experience in implementing the Water Convention</i> (Mr. Harry Liiv, Special Envoy for Transboundary Waters (Estonia))</p> <p>2- <i>Chad's practical experience: the context of accession to the Convention, the benefits, and the development of a roadmap</i> (Mr. Mahamat Alifa Moussa, Secretary-General, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Republic of Chad)</p> <p>3- <i>Nigeria's practical experience: the context of accession to the Convention, benefits, and prospects for implementation</i> (Mrs. Alice O. Ojowu, Expert, Former Director (WRP&TSS), Nigeria)</p> <p>Discussion</p>
10	15:30 - 16:00	COFFEE BREAK
11	16:30 - 17:30	<p>Group work on the benefits and challenges of Niger's accession</p> <p>Group work to discuss in more detail the benefits and challenges of accession and implementation of the Convention for Niger.</p>
12	6pm - 8pm	Closing day 1 & Dinner reception
Day 2 Friday 3 March 2023		
13	8.00 - 9.00 am	Arrival and Registration
14	9.00 - 10.00 am	Summary of the previous day's work

		Restitution of groups work
15	10:00-10:30 a.m.	COFFEE BREAK
16	10.30am - 12pm	<p>Session 4: The Water Convention in practice and support to transboundary cooperation: Thematic issues related to transboundary cooperation</p> <p>Session chaired by Niger Basin Authority</p> <p>1- <i>The Water Convention and thematic issues: selected cases of implementation</i> (monitoring and assessment, adaptation to climate change, groundwater) (Dr. Sonja Koeppel, Secretary of the Water Convention)</p> <p>Panel discussion: PTFs perspective</p> <p>2- Mr. Kouassivi Bougonou DJERI – ALASSANI, Ag. Director ai. ECOWAS Water Resources Management Center</p> <p>3- M. Jochen Rudolph, Program Manager, GIZ</p> <p>1- M. Mourtala Sani, Chargé de programme, UNDP</p> <p>2- Prof Yahaya Nazoumou, Représentant GWP/WA</p> <p>4- World Bank (tbc)</p>
17	12:00-12:30 pm	<p>Update on the preparations for the UN Water Conference</p> <p>o Netherlands (tbc)</p>
18	12 :30 - 14:00	LUNCH BREAK
19	14:00 - 15:00	<p>Session 5. Accession Roadmap and next steps</p> <p>Session chaired by ECOWAS</p> <p>1- <i>The experience of Nigeria: Sharing their road map to accession as well as key challenges and advice to share</i> (Mrs. Alice O. Ojowu, Expert, Former Director (WRP&TSS), Nigeria)</p> <p>2- <i>Presentation on the legal requirements under the Water Convention to accede to the Water Convention</i> (Dr Komlan Sangbana, Legal Officer, Water Convention Secretariat)</p> <p>3- <i>Presentation on the process of accession to the Convention in Niger</i> (CT/MHA)</p> <p>Exchange-discussion on the roadmap</p>
20	15:00 - 15:30	<p>Synthesis of the work recommendations</p> <p>Closing session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mr. Jean-Paul Adam</i>, Director for Technology, Climate Change and Natural Resources Management, UNECA • <i>Mr. Harry Liiv</i>, Special Envoy for Transboundary Waters, Ministry of Environment, Estonia, and Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention • <i>Ms. Sonja Koeppel</i>, Secretary of the Water Convention • <i>H.E. Mahaman ADAMOU</i>, Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation

21	15h 30 - 16.00	DEPARTURE COFFEE
----	----------------	------------------