



Management, conservation and restoration of wetlands in transboundary basins

7th Meeting of the Global Network of Basins working on Climate Change Adaptation

25 May 2023



172 parties

Wetlands of international importance

Wise use of all wetlands

International cooperation

... as a contribution to sustainable development

Over 1.5 billion ha of wetland worldwide support

- 40% of all species
- water and food security
- climate change adaptation and mitigation
- disaster risk reduction

The Convention and transboundary basins

Strategic Plan Target 9 The wise use of wetlands is strengthened through **integrated resource management at the appropriate scale, *inter alia*, within a river basin** or along a coastal zone

Resolution XIV.16 encourages parties to develop international wetland conservation, restoration, sustainable use and management **partnerships, including for transboundary water basins**

Resolution XIV.6 encourages establishment of **cooperative mechanisms for the management of shared wetlands and hydrological basins** to enhance transboundary cooperation, including establishment of transboundary Ramsar Sites

Resolution XIV.7 invites transboundary river and groundwater basin organizations to **participate in or collaborate with Ramsar Regional Initiatives (RRI)**

Resolution X.19 provides consolidated scientific and technical **guidance on wetlands and river basin management**



The Convention and transboundary basins

National Reporting to COP14:

75% of contracting parties reported that wetlands are considered as natural water infrastructure, integrated into water resource management at a river-basin scale

An increase from 63% for COP13

11% reported planning such integration



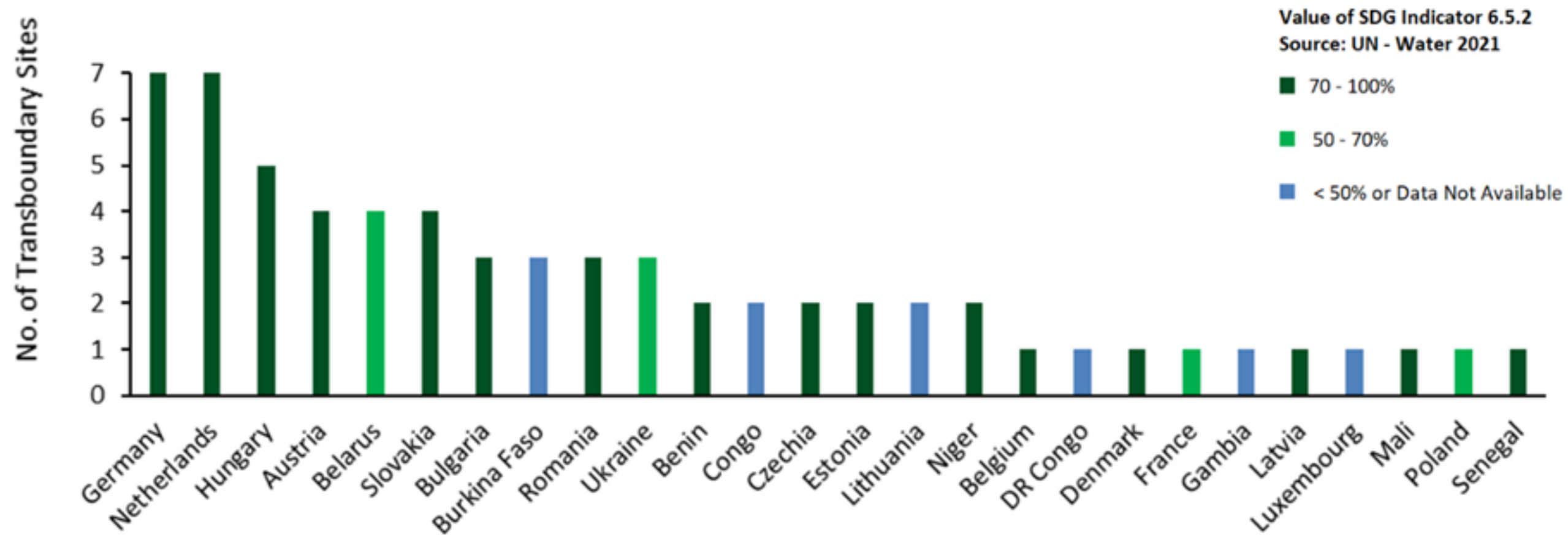
Wetlands of International Importance

2,493 sites covering 256,759,538 ha: 2,022 inland; 1,014 marine and coastal; 890 human made

65 sites form 22 transboundary complexes in Africa and Europe, covering a total of 17,809,574 ha in 26 countries

e.g. Larger Danube Basin: a total of 48 sites, of which 21 transboundary in 9 complexes in 7 countries

e.g. Lac Télé - Grands Affluents - Lac Tumba (Congo and DR Congo), transboundary complex of 3 Sites, 12,916,658 ha



Ramsar Regional Initiatives

centres for training and capacity building

networks for regional cooperation

Geographical Region
Ecological Region - River Basin
Ecological Region – Coastal
Ecological Region – Mountain
Ecological Region – Migratory bird flyway

	Ramsar Regional Initiatives	Geographical Coverage	Number of members (non-CP)
Centres	RAMCEA	Eastern Africa	7
	RRC-CWA	Central and West Asia	18(3)
	RRC-EA	East and South Asia	18
	CREHO	All CPs in Americas	30
Net-works	NigerWet	Niger River Basin	9
	SenegalWet	Senegal River Basin	4
	WACoWet	Coastal Zone	13
	SADC	Southern Africa	?
	RRI-CA	Central Asia	5
	EAAFP	East Asia-Australasian Flyway	18
	IBRRI	Indo-Burma region	5
	BlackSeaWet	Black Sea and Azov Sea	7
	CWI	Carpathian Mountains	7
	MedWet	Mediterranean Coastal	27
	NorBalWet	Nordic Baltic Sea Coastal	10
	Amazon	Amazon River Basin	7
	CariWet	Caribbean	11
	High Andean	Andean Mountains	8
	Mangroves and Coral Reefs	Coastal countries in Americas	14
La Plata	La Plata River Basin	5	

Ramsar Regional Initiatives: examples of transboundary cooperation activities



Carpathia Wetland Initiative (CWI): transboundary RS designation and management facilitation



EAAFP: support the transboundary cooperation among protected wetlands in the Tumen Estuary



RRCEA: sub-regional level capacity building program for wetland managers from one of the three prioritized transboundary wetland areas in Asia on wetland management and relevant tools

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Handbook 9

River basin management



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International cooperation



Implementing environmental flows with benefits for society and different wetland ecosystems in river systems

Wetlands need an adequate amount and quality of water at the right time to maintain their ecological character¹, to sustain nature and to provide water-related ecosystem services and benefits to humans.

These water requirements are also known as "environmental flows". Consideration of environmental flows can help reconcile the different demands for water and reduce the degradation and loss of wetlands, protect and restore their ecological integrity and halt the loss of biodiversity they sustain. Within the context of climate change, an understanding of environmental flows can provide a better understanding of the changing nature of water availability and allocation needs within river basin systems. Environmental flows can also help achieve the wise use of wetlands and contribute to all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 6, "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all".

This Policy Brief supports policy makers by facilitating an understanding of the linkages between the water needs of wetlands and of people, as well as the different levels of decision making needed (for example, at local wetland scale, across river basins, or in national sectoral plans) to implement environmental flows. It highlights the complexity of trade-offs between stakeholders required to sustainably meet competing water needs. This Brief also presents a set of actions to assist with successful implementation of environmental flows.

¹ Ecological character refers to "the combination of the ecosystem components, processes and benefits/services that characterize a wetland at a given point in time" (Ramsar Convention, 2005 a).



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