



Welcoming three new Parties to the Water Convention!

Over the last three months, three countries have acceded to the Water Convention - **Namibia** (8 June 2023), **Panama** (6 July 2023) and **The Gambia** (17 July 2023) - bringing the total number to **52 Parties to the Water Convention**.

Namibia becomes first Southern African country to join UN Water

Convention

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Panama is the first Latin American country to join UN Water

Convention

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**The Gambia joins
UN Water Convention
to boost cross-border cooperation**

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#HLPF2023 - UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) concluded on 19 July in New York. Calls for enhanced transboundary water cooperation were made during the review session of SDG 6. The SDG 6 & Water Action Agenda Special Event followed-up on the discussions of the 2023 UN Water Conference. The Water Convention secretariat contributed to several side events, engaged in a dozen bilaterals and used the occasion to welcome new Parties in a ceremony. The next milestone will be the UN SDG Summit (18-19 September 2023, New York) and **we encourage all to highlight the importance of transboundary water cooperation in order to achieve the SDGs.**

18th meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) under the Water Convention

With four new Parties (Cameroon, Nigeria, Iraq and Namibia) since its last meeting in June 2022, the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management under the Water Convention gathered 300 participants, including government representatives from over 80 countries, in Geneva and online, from 19 to 21 June 2023, to review progress of the work under the Convention and guide its future implementation. Discussions reflected the diverse areas of work and wide range of partners of the Convention. A thematic session on public participation facilitated a rich exchange on its importance for effective and sustainable transboundary river basin management. The meeting welcomed the four new Parties to the Water Convention, and numerous countries also reported on progress in their process of accession to join the Convention. At the meeting, plans were also presented for the 10th session of the Meeting of the Parties, to be held from 23–25 October 2024 in Ljubljana. [Learn more](#)

What happened under the Protocol on Water and Health?

Ministers from Pan-European countries commit to urgent action to safeguard our environment and health, harnessing UNECE tools

To accelerate collective commitments for healthier people and a sustainable future, Ministers and representatives of pan-European countries responsible for health and the environment came together under the [Seventh Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health](#) (Budapest, 5-7 July 2023) convened by WHO/Europe in collaboration with UNECE and UNEP.

The parallel session "From assessment to action: Realizing the human rights to water and sanitation through the Protocol on Water and Health" showcased how the various guidance and tools developed drive action towards the universal human rights to safe water and sanitation.

[Learn more](#)

Montenegrin authorities and civil society come together under the Protocol on Water and Health to advance equitable access to water and sanitation

To assess the policy landscape on equitable access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in Montenegro, the country carried out a self-assessment exercise using the [Equitable Access Score-card](#), a tool first developed ten years ago to support countries to assess policies in place to ensure equity in access to water and sanitation, and which has already been applied in [12 countries across the pan-European region](#).

The project took place under the framework of the Protocol on Water and Health, serviced by UNECE and WHO-Europe, and to which Montenegro is a

Party since 2020. Several guidance and tools on how to enhance equitable access to water and sanitation have been developed.

[Learn more](#)

Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan to improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene by joining Protocol on Water and Health, learning from experience of Serbia

Central Asian countries are actively working towards improving access to water and sanitation. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan affirmed their commitment to accede to the Protocol on Water and Health at a subregional workshop hosted by the Government of Serbia in Belgrade on 26-27 June 2023. At the workshop, participants could benefit from the extensive experience of Serbia, former Chair of the Bureau of the Protocol and currently a Bureau member. The Protocol on Water and Health facilitates cooperation between different authorities responsible for water and health and helps to identify gaps in policy and legislation. It also supports countries to jointly find solutions at national and local levels, and facilitates the scaling up of successful practices at the pan-European level.

[Learn more](#)

What else has happened?

- **10 countries, 5 RBOs, 7 international organizations and 5 academia and NGO representatives learnt how to promote and implement the two UN Water Conventions in the workshop “From practitioner to**

practitioner: how to use the two global Water Conventions to promote cooperation on the ground” (3–4 July 2023, Geneva). [Learn more](#)

- **Webinars on SDG indicator 6.5.2:** To support the third reporting exercise, taking place in 2023, UNECE and UNESCO, co-custodian agencies for SDG indicator 6.5.2 organized webinars to support countries in preparing national reports, on the global level as well as for Asia-Pacific and Latin America. Countries sharing transboundary waters were invited to submit their national reports by 30 June 2023. UNECE and UNESCO are still accepting the submission of national reports. [Learn more](#)
- **Water Convention’s Implementation Committee supports Albania and Montenegro as part of the advisory procedure on the Cijevna/Cem River:** Experts from Albania and Montenegro met in Shkoder (Albania) on 25 April 2023 to progress with the exchange of information on the shared Cijevna/Cem River. Two members of the Implementation Committee joined the meeting to facilitate the development of data exchange. [Learn more](#)
- **Togo approved its plan of action to implement the Water Convention,** during a national workshop organized jointly with the ECOWAS Commission. [Learn more](#)
- **In June 2023 the Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) joined the Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation.** This was a result of the seventh meeting of the Global network of basins working on climate change adaptation (25-26 May 2023, Geneva / online) which focused on drought management, wetland and biodiversity conservation and climate financing as well as mainstreaming the benefits of transboundary cooperation in climate processes. [Learn more](#)
- **The EU and the Republic of Moldova review progress in the water sector:** On 25 April 2023, national and local authorities, academic and NGO communities, and Moldova’s international partners reviewed

progress and discussed priorities in the water sector in the frame of the 7th meeting of the National Policy Dialogue, organized by UNECE and other partners of the consortium. [Learn more](#)

- **The EU supports the reform and implementation of Ukraine's water policy, taking into account urgent needs and for the country's long-term recovery.** On 15-16 June 2023, a wide range of water sector stakeholders gathered at a meeting of the National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Management in Ukraine. The Water Convention secretariat supported the process. [Learn more](#)

[Learn more](#)

Save the date - Upcoming events

- 20-24 August 2023 [World Water Week 2023](#) (Stockholm and online) - the Water Convention Secretariat will (co-)host events
- 16-17 October 2023 [Global workshop on conjunctive management of transboundary surface water and groundwater](#) (Geneva)
- 17-18 October 2023 [Eighteenth meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment](#) (Geneva)

Now available in Russian: Updated Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters

The Updated Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters provide strategic guidance on monitoring, assessment and data sharing in a transboundary context, building on global experience on these issues. The publication is now also available in Russian language, in addition to the English version.

[Learn more](#)



**Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and
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