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North Macedonia joins Protocol on Water and Health

North Macedonia became the 28th country to join the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health in October 2023, thus committing to drive action on water, sanitation and hygiene, protecting its natural resources and fostering a healthier environment for its citizens. This milestone was celebrated during the Task Force on Target Setting and Reporting in Geneva on 14 November.

[Learn more](#)

What happened under the Water Convention?



Water crises show need to link management of underground and surface waters in international basins, urge countries and UN

The Global Workshop on Conjunctive Management of Surface Water and Groundwater: National to Transboundary Level (16-17 October 2023) brought together hundreds of experts from countries, the United Nations, international partners and water experts - who stressed the urgent need to better connect groundwater and surface water management, both at national level and in shared basins.

[Read more](#)

Over 40 countries gathered to drive development of transboundary water cooperation agreements

The Water Convention secretariat, under the leadership of the Governments of Hungary and Germany and with several partners, held a global workshop in Budapest on 7-8 November to support the development of transboundary water cooperation agreements and other arrangements.



[Read more](#)



Botswana accelerates progress on Water Convention accession and shared river agreements

A concrete road map to guide Botswana's accession process was the main outcome of the National workshop related to the Water Convention, organized in Gaborone on 25-26 October 2023 by the Ministry of Lands and Water Affairs in partnership with UNECE and financed by the European Union.

[Read more](#)

Water-energy "nexus" approach is key to renewable energy transition and managing climate vulnerability: the case of the Drina River Basin

As part of the Sarajevo Energy and Climate Week (25-29 September 2023), UNECE and partners joined discussions looking at renewable energy development in the Drina River Basin.



Read more

What happened under the Protocol on Water and Health?



Pan-European countries convene to increase resilience to climate change under the Protocol on Water and Health

As extreme weather events increase, pan-European countries took stock and identified key directions and priority actions at a Strategic Roundtable on Increasing Resilience to Climate Change in the Water and Sanitation Sector (Geneva, 13-14 November 2023).

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What else happened?

- **Armenia and its partners develop new approaches for water resilience at the National Policy Dialogue on water:** Chaired by Armenia's Ministry of Environment and organized within the "European Union for Environment" Programme framework, the National Policy Dialogue on Water focused on water resilience in the context of increasing pressures, including climate change. [Read more](#)
 - **Trilateral Prut Declaration signed:** The Trilateral Declaration on Cooperation on the Management of International Water Issues in the Prut River Basin between Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Romania was signed by the three countries at the International Conference "United for Justice. United for Nature" in Kyiv, Ukraine in 20 October. [Read more](#)
 - **Representatives of the Eastern Partnership countries have discussed status, challenges, lessons learned and potential for advancing transboundary cooperation in the region.** Representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and partners have looked at the results of the latest round of the SDG 6.5.2 reporting and case studies at a meeting in Geneva on 19 October.
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Transboundary water cooperation as a means to address climate change

With one week remaining until the 2023 UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) kicks off in Dubai on 30 November 2023, the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition issued a policy brief providing strong arguments for transboundary water cooperation to tackle climate change.



Transboundary water cooperation as a means to address climate change

A policy brief of the Transboundary Water Cooperation Coalition to inform climate discussions and negotiations at COP28 and beyond

Water resources globally are suffering from climate change impacts. At the same time, water resources and associated ecosystems provide a significant potential for climate change adaptation and mitigation. Freshwater was thus for the first time included in the COP27 cover decision which "emphasizes the importance of protecting, conserving and restoring water and water-related ecosystems, including river basins, aquifers and lakes, and urges Parties to further integrate water into adaptation efforts."¹

An additional challenge, but also an opportunity, is that transboundary waters account for 60 per cent of the world's freshwater flows and more than 3 billion people depend on them. The resources and people in many transboundary basins are particularly vulnerable to climate change. The 5th IPCC assessment (2022)² and the IPCC synthesis (2022)³ reports recognize transboundary risks as an important challenge resulting in the rise of new and unexpected types of risks. They state that increasing transboundary risks are projected across the food, energy and water sectors requiring climate-informed transboundary management. Effective and sustainable cooperation over the world's transboundary lakes, rivers and aquifers is a critical yet often under-registered facet of climate change adaptation strategies. Below are some ways that advancing transboundary cooperation can support climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Global Stocktake

Effective and sustainable transboundary water cooperation helps to address climate change more effectively by analyzing transboundary risks, reducing uncertainties through exchange of data, enlarging the planning space, developing joint strategies and plans which results in better coherence of adaptation and mitigation actions at the basin scale and more efficient and fair use of resources as well as avoidance of unilateral measures. For instance, cooperation on conjunctive use of surface water and groundwater in transboundary basins can reduce vulnerabilities of water supply systems and mitigate water supply stress. Furthermore, transboundary cooperation provides many opportunities for learning and knowledge transfer,⁴ which is especially valuable in the on-going Global Stocktake process. The Synthesis report on the technical dialogue of the first Global Stocktake states: "For example, early warning systems can integrate data collection into developed risk profiles and help decision makers understand transboundary risks more clearly."⁵

#watercooperation #COP28



Read the policy brief

Save the date - Upcoming events

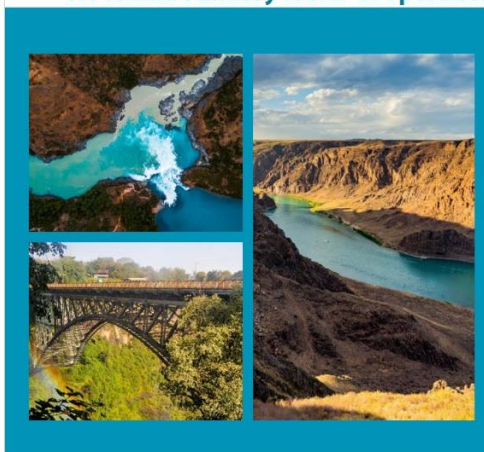
- 30 November - 12 December 2023: **UN Climate Change Conference (COP28)** - The Water Convention Secretariat co-organizes various events
- 5 - 6 December 2023: **Global workshop on Funding and Financing Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development** (Geneva and online)
- 7 - 8 December 2023: **Eighth meeting of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus** (Geneva and online)
- 11 - 12 December 2023: **Sixteenth meeting of the Implementation Committee of the Water Convention** (Geneva)

**Now available in French and Arabic:
Practical guide for the development of
agreements or other arrangements for
transboundary water cooperation**

The Practical Guide aims to support countries and other stakeholders in the design and drafting or review of agreements or other arrangements for transboundary waters. The publication is now also available in French and Arabic, in addition to the English and Russian language version.

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**Practical Guide for the Development of
Agreements or Other Arrangements
for Transboundary Water Cooperation**



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**Updated Strategies for Monitoring and
Assessment of Transboundary Rivers,
Lakes and Groundwaters**



**Now available in French: 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 French, in addition to the English and Russian language version.

[Read more](#)



Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International
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