

## **Economic Commission for Europe**

### **Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes**

#### **Meeting of the Parties**

##### **Tenth session**

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 23–25 October 2024

### **Membership of the Bureau**

#### **Note prepared by the secretariat in cooperation with the Bureau**

##### *Summary*

The present note on the responsibilities and membership of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was prepared by the secretariat in cooperation with the Bureau for information of the Parties to the Convention so as to facilitate the process of nomination and election of members of the Bureau at the tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties, scheduled to take place from 23 to 25 October 2024 in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

## **I. Introduction**

1. At its tenth session, scheduled to take place in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 23 to 25 October 2024, the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) is expected to elect a Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to serve for the period until the eleventh session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2027.

2. In accordance with rule 20 of the Rules of procedure of the Meetings of the Parties (ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2), the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties shall be composed of not fewer than eight persons, including the Chair and the two Vice-Chairs of the Meeting of the Parties, the Chairs of the working groups and, if applicable, the other officers elected by the Meeting of the Parties.

3. It is an established practice under the Convention that the Meeting of the Parties elects a representative of the host country to chair the Meeting of the Parties for the following three years (ECE/MP.WAT/2021/9 and Decision IX/4 (ECE/MP.WAT/63/Add.2)). In order to prepare for the chairmanship and to gain experience in the work of the Bureau, the host country is usually elected as Vice-Chair of the Bureau in the preceding intersessional period (ECE/MP.WAT/2021/9).

4. The current Bureau, elected by the Meeting of the Parties at its ninth session (Geneva, 29 September–1 October 2021), is composed of 12 persons, including the co-chairs of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (ECE/MP.WAT/63).

## **II. Responsibilities of the members of the Bureau**

5. The Meeting of the Parties is the highest decision-making body under the Water Convention. It meets in regular sessions every three years and adopts the programme of work for the following three-year period. In between the sessions of the Meeting of the Parties, the decision-making is vested with the Bureau which is elected by the Meeting of the Parties. The Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment take decisions within the scope of their mandates determined by the Meeting of the Parties.

6. The Bureau plays a fundamental role in terms of promotion of and political support to the Water Convention worldwide. It advances and steers the implementation of the programme of work and other decisions of the Meeting of the Parties. It makes every effort to strengthen the role of the Convention and ensure a balanced and efficient approach to activities organised under the Convention's programme of work.

7. The main responsibilities of the Bureau include (ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2):

- (a) Making arrangements to further develop the programme of work, adapting it to changing circumstances, clarifying, adding or skipping activities and avoiding, to the extent possible, duplication of efforts with water-related activities of other United Nations bodies and other international organizations;
- (b) Taking initiatives to strengthen the application of the Convention; maintaining liaison with the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health, the bureaux of governing bodies of other environmental conventions, the Bureau of the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy, international organizations, financial institutions, environmental policymaking bodies and non-governmental organizations to improve the implementation of the Convention; and taking other appropriate measures to facilitate the implementation of the workplan;
- (c) Carrying out other tasks entrusted to it by the Meeting of the Parties.

8. The main duties of individual Bureau members include:

- Leading the efforts to promote the objectives and implementation of the Convention, its tools and its programme of work by reaching out to Parties, non-Parties, international and regional organisations, financial institutions and other actors, as relevant;
- Actively promoting the Convention at international and regional processes and fora on sustainable development, water, environment and relevant sectors (agriculture, energy, health, etc.);

- Participating, on behalf of the Bureau, in global and regional meetings organized by the Water Convention as part of the Convention's programme of work, to bring in the relevant experience and messages;
- Initiating new and strengthening existing partnerships and initiatives to promote the objectives and implementation of the Convention;
- Participating in and contributing to the meetings of the Bureau;
- Preparing documents for consideration by the Bureau, the Meeting of the Parties and other Convention's bodies, providing inputs and undertaking the review of other documents, as needed;
- Providing voluntary contributions from their countries to the Convention's trust fund and/or in-kind contributions to implementation of the programme of work, and facilitating such contributions from other countries and organisations and thereby supporting fundraising, as appropriate.

### **III. Nominations for members of the Bureau at the tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties**

9. Bureau members shall be elected by the Meeting of the Parties from among candidates nominated by the Parties. Bureau members are elected for the period until the next ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2027 (i.e. for three years). Bureau members are eligible for re-election.

10. Candidates are expected to have experience and recognized expertise in the fields related to the Convention. While it is expected that nominated candidates hold a senior level position in their governmental body or institution, they should also have sufficient time available for implementation of duties of a Bureau member, if elected. The Bureau works in English.

11. Nominations can be sent by Parties to the Convention secretariat ([water.convention@un.org](mailto:water.convention@un.org)) in at least one of the official languages of the Convention (English, French or Russian) not later than 27 August 2024. Each nomination should include an official letter, clearly stating the name of the Party, name, title and affiliation of the nominated candidate and should be accompanied by a CV of the candidate. The secretariat will make available the nominations on the webpage of the Meeting of the Parties.

12. In accordance with Rule 17(3), in electing the officers, the Meeting of the Parties shall take due account of the need to ensure a balanced geographic representation of the Parties.

13. Parties are encouraged to take into account gender considerations when deciding on the composition of the Bureau.

14. Taking into account the current number of Parties to the Convention and to enable the Bureau function in an effective way, it would be reasonable to keep the number of members in the future Bureau within 14 members.

15. Maintaining some continuity with the past Bureau could be useful for institutional memory purposes.

16. The elections will be governed by the Rules of procedure of the Meetings of the Parties (ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2). In the past, decisions on the composition of the Bureau were taken by consensus.