

Summary of the Tenth Meeting of the Parties to the UN Water Convention: 23-25 October 2024

The vast majority of countries (some 80% or 153 nations) share rivers, lakes, and aquifers, and indeed, more than half (approximately 60%) of available freshwater on this planet is shared. To support transboundary water cooperation worldwide, the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was adopted in 1992. It aims to promote the sustainable use of transboundary water resources, facilitate cooperation, support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contribute to peace and stability, and support cooperative climate action.

The tenth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention (MOP 10) adopted 25 decisions, reaffirming the fundamental role of transboundary water cooperation for peace and sustainable development at global and regional levels, including through its work on the SDGs. Highlights included the adoption of a new Programme of Work (PoW) for the period 2025-2027, as well as a budget to support these activities, and the initiation of work on a financial mechanism to secure guaranteed cyclical funding, as the Water Convention currently relies on voluntary contributions.

Delegates in Slovenia kicked off MOP 10 with a pre-MOP Match-making Event on 22 October, the first of its kind for the Convention and viewed as very successful by its 120 invited participants. The interactive session brought together those needing support and those able to provide it, to prompt implementation of the Convention and thus strengthen transboundary water cooperation worldwide. The event identified technical and financial resources for implementation of Water Convention-related plans and projects in new Parties to the Convention. Partners included representatives of the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Commission (EC) Directorate-General for International Partnerships, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), and the World Bank.

MOP 10 itself began with a high-level segment titled “Our Waters, Our Future: Transboundary Water Cooperation to Power Climate Resilience,” which catalyzed strategic debates on how transboundary water cooperation plays a crucial role in realizing climate resilience and sustainable development in transboundary river basins and among countries involved.

Participants discussed new approaches, such as “source-to-sea” management, with an emphasis on integrated river basin

management and integration of ocean considerations, and twinning initiatives, where new Parties linked arms with seasoned ones as an opportunity for learning and growth.

Several publications were launched or presented during the four days, including: Good Practices and Lessons Learned in Data-Sharing in Transboundary Basins; the Third Progress Report on SDG Indicator 6.5.2 (which pertains to the proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation); and the Third Progress Report on the Water Convention.

Several side events took place on the sidelines of the MOP, including on innovative financing, early warning systems, climate action with a nexus approach, and drought management.

Overall, participants reaffirmed the importance of water as a vehicle for peace and collaboration. In closing, they vowed to keep water, as an issue underpinning all others, in the spotlight of the international community and decision makers at all levels.

Water Convention MOP 10 was held in Ljubljana, Slovenia, from 23 to 25 October 2024, and was organized by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning of Slovenia, on behalf of the Government of Slovenia, in close cooperation with the Secretariat of the Water Convention, and hosted by the United

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View of the room during the morning plenary

Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). More than 500 participants from 100 countries participated, representing Parties and non-Parties, UN agencies, research organizations, multilateral development agencies, the private sector, and civil society.

A Brief History of the UN Water Convention

The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was adopted in Helsinki, Finland, on 17 March 1992 and entered into force in 1996. The Convention was amended in 2003 to allow accession by all UN Member States. On 8 November 2012, the necessary number of ratifications for the amendments on the opening of the Convention to all UN Member States to enter into force was reached, and the amendments entered into force in February 2013. Countries beyond the UNECE region have been able to join the Water Convention since March 2016, when all Parties had ratified the amendment. Chad, Senegal, Ghana, and Guinea-Bissau were the first Parties outside the UNECE region to join, followed by Togo, Cameroon, Nigeria, Iraq, Namibia, Panama, the Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. With nine of those Parties joining since the last MOP, membership now stands at 55 Parties, including the European Union. More than 20 countries are in the process of accession.

The Water Convention's objective is to strengthen national measures for the protection and sound management of transboundary surface water and groundwater and to promote transboundary water cooperation. Under the Convention, Parties are required, *inter alia*, to: prevent, control, and reduce transboundary impacts; use transboundary waters reasonably and equitably; and manage them sustainably. Parties should develop agreements and set up joint bodies for their transboundary basins. The Convention also includes provisions on monitoring, research

and development, consultations, warning systems, mutual assistance, and access to information by the public.

There are two protocols to the Convention. The UNECE/World Health Organization (WHO)-Europe Protocol on Water and Health was adopted in London, UK, in 1999 and entered into force in 2005. There are currently 29 Parties to the Protocol, which aims to protect human health and wellbeing through improved water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and by preventing, controlling, and reducing water-related diseases. The Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters to the Water Convention and to the 1992 Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accident Convention), was signed in Kiev, Ukraine, in 2003, at the Fifth "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference as a response to the Baia Mare cyanide spill in Romania. It has been signed by 24 countries, ratified by one country, and has not yet entered into force. The Civil Liability Protocol provides for a comprehensive regime for civil liability and compensation for damage resulting from the transboundary effects of industrial accidents on transboundary waters. The 1997 Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses (Watercourses Convention), although not serviced by UNECE, is considered a "sister convention," entered into force on 17 August 2014, and currently has 39 Parties.

MOP 7: This session took place from 17-19 November 2015 in Budapest, Hungary. The meeting marked the global opening of the Water Convention to countries beyond the UNECE region. MOP 7 addressed many substantive issues, including: support for implementation and compliance; adoption of a reporting mechanism; climate change adaptation in transboundary basins; benefits of transboundary water cooperation; contingency

planning for industrial accidents; and thematic assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary waters, among other matters.

MOP 8: This meeting took place from 10-12 October 2018 in Astana, Kazakhstan. The Convention welcomed Chad and Senegal as the first countries from outside the Pan-European region to accede. Parties adopted a strategy for implementation of the Convention at the global level and addressed many substantive issues, including reporting under the Convention and SDG indicator 6.5.2 (proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation). Other substantive issues included support for implementation and compliance, climate change adaptation in transboundary basins, and a methodology for assessing the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus. The meeting adopted the Programme of Work (PoW) for 2019-2021. MOP 8 was preceded by a high-level workshop, “Financing Transboundary Basin Development,” where participants discussed different financing sources for transboundary cooperation and ways to match these sources to financing needs.

MOP 9: MOP 9 was held from 29 October – 1 November 2021 in a hybrid format in Geneva, Switzerland, and virtually. Highlights included a high-level special session on water and peace, revealing increased political attention on water-related issues and highlighting the role of transboundary water cooperation in building trust, stability, and peace. MOP 9 welcomed the expansion of the Water Convention with Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, and Togo as new Parties. It also included the signing of the Ministerial Declaration on the Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin (SMAB), which paves the way for sustainable management of regional water resources, ensuring water security and stability. MOP 9 adopted its PoW 2022-2024 and two innovative guidance documents on the development of agreements for transboundary water cooperation and on water allocation in a transboundary context.

Water Convention MOP 10 Report

Pre-MOP Match-making Event

Following the concepts of supply and demand, an interactive Match-making Event, held on Tuesday 22 October 2024, brought together those needing support and those able to provide it, to prompt implementation of the Water Convention. The event saw 120 participants spark ideas and channel their energies to strengthen cooperation and accelerate transboundary water cooperation worldwide by identifying technical and financial resources for the implementation of plans and related projects.

The Match-making Event was titled “Accelerating transboundary cooperation and the implementation of the Water Convention in new Parties through increased support and partnership.” It sought to provide a framework and platform for new Parties to present identified needs and priorities, and for technical and financial partners to announce concrete support to advance transboundary water cooperation and management in those countries. This one-day session was held as a precursor to MOP 10.

Opening Session: The opening session was moderated by Harry Liiv, MOP 10 Chair and Special Envoy for Transboundary Waters, Ministry of Climate, Estonia.

Tanja Fajon, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Slovenia, illustrated Slovenia’s experience in cooperating with neighboring countries on shared water resources, particularly in the Sava River Basin. She noted that Slovenia is one of the few countries to have enshrined the right to drinking water in their constitution and highlighted the numerous benefits of cross-border cooperation.

Marco Keiner, Director, UNECE Environment Division, on behalf of Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary, UNECE, explained the event is about coming together and finding financing to move forwards with transboundary water projects. He called for building bridges to address resource constraints, matching projects with donors, and making proposals bankable. He encouraged donors to increase efforts to close existing funding gaps.

Marjeta Jager, Deputy Director-General, Directorate-General for International Partnerships, European Commission (EC), recognized the role of the Water Convention as a convening platform to foster transboundary water cooperation. She announced an additional three million euros to the six already allocated to water-related activities, noting these are key to addressing the triple planetary crisis (pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss) and achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 on clean water and sanitation for all.

Sibylle Vermont, Deputy Head of Section Global Affairs, International Affairs Division, Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland, called for implementation of the Convention to be accelerated at the national level, commended the different projects presented, and called for increased South-South cooperation.

Malam Sambu, Minister of Natural Resources, Guinea-Bissau, provided an overview of his country’s freshwater resources and challenges. He drew attention to the impacts of climate change and the need for transboundary cooperation, and noted that Guinea-Bissau was the fourth African country to accede to the Convention.

Addressing the event’s preparatory process objectives and expected outcomes, Francesca Bernardini, Chief, UNECE Transboundary Cooperation Section, said identifying and addressing needs and gaps requires strong political commitment and ownership. Among priorities, she identified strengthening



Water Convention Chair **Harry Liiv**, Estonia



Niels Vlaanderen, the Netherlands

countries' implementation capacity and robust cooperation with potential development partners, including financing agencies but also experienced Parties.

Bernardini highlighted the 18 initial project proposals prepared for the session, noting they serve to inspire dialogue and address a variety of topics, ranging from cooperation on water allocation and climate change adaptation to monitoring, assessment, and early warning systems, as well as infrastructure to regulate water flow.

Implementing the Water Convention and Financing Transboundary Water Cooperation: This session was moderated by Niels Vlaanderen, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands.

Sonja Koeppel, Secretary of the Water Convention, provided examples of successful recent actions at the national level, including: Kazakhstan revising its national water policy; Turkmenistan developing a national water law; and Azerbaijan approving a national water strategy and creating a national water agency. Koeppel also highlighted several support mechanisms under the Convention's PoW, including capacity building on technical and policy issues, and practical tools, including publications on various topics and the reporting mechanism.

In an online message, Bob Alfa, Water Resources Commission, Ghana, shared his country's experiences with mobilizing national resources for implementing the Convention. He noted that Ghana has used the Water Convention to guide its national water policy and implementation plan, and has mobilized financial resources for implementation. Describing the step-by-step process, Alfa highlighted cooperation with financial institutions, a focus on enhancing participation of all stakeholders, and an incentive-based strategy to involve public and private partners.

Three speakers presented examples of financial instruments for transboundary water cooperation and management. Mtchera Johannes Chirwa, Acting Director, Water and Sanitation Development Department and Coordinator of the African Water Facility, African Development Bank (AfDB), elaborated on lending windows and financing instruments in Africa. On regional operations financing, he highlighted a focus on overcoming critical bottlenecks in dialogue between countries. Among financial instruments, he drew attention to the African Water Facility, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility, and the African Development Fund.

Anders Jägerskog, Cooperation in International Waters in Africa Trust Fund, World Bank, presented on World Bank options for support, partnerships, and financing. He noted similarities with the AfDB and drew attention to tools for countries to access different types of support. He expanded on financing options including the World Bank trust funds, such as the one focusing on transboundary water management in West Africa. He encouraged participants to engage with national and regional level country teams.

Konstantina Toli, project coordinator, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the Global Environment Facility's (GEF) International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN), presented, also on behalf of Astrid Hillers, GEF, on global partnerships. She illustrated the GEF's replenishment cycles, noting the current cycle focuses on a "healthy planet and healthy people," with the focal areas of biodiversity, climate change mitigation, land degradation, international waters, and chemicals and waste. She noted the focal area of international waters addresses shared large marine ecosystems, areas beyond national jurisdiction, and transboundary freshwater (surface and groundwater). She provided details of how to match a project proposal to a funding mechanism.

Questions from the floor pertained to financing and taxation, with Alfa explaining that nationally, only the commercial use of water is taxed. Participants also discussed accessing funding when proposals are not put forward by all transboundary countries involved and supporting projects that do not present immediate financial return or focus on social impacts, for instance.

The Water Convention's Catalyst Role in Unlocking Financial and Technical Support for Transboundary Water Cooperation: This session was moderated by Dimka Stantchev Skeie, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

Landing Bojang, Department of Water Resources, The Gambia, presented on his country's experiences with the SMAB cooperation initiative, noting it focuses on transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management



Water Convention Secretary Sonja Koeppel



Dimka Stantchev Skeie, Switzerland

(IWRM). He described the timeline of the development of regional dialogue through, among other things, a regional working group, and underlined support from the Water Convention Secretariat and other technical and financial partners.

Kevin Chrétien, Directorate-General for International Partnerships, EC, described the EC's support in establishing the SMAB initiative and the Water Convention, noting they are useful instruments in this context.

François Bertone, Senior Water Resource Management Specialist, World Bank, commended the strong commitment of those involved in establishing the SMAB, but stressed that "it should not stop there."

Stanley Hantambo, Ministry of Water Development and Sanitation, Zambia, presented on a twinning initiative undertaken by Zambia, Ghana, and Hungary in 2023 and 2024, illustrating how new and experienced Parties can collaborate to implement the Convention and find opportunities for technical support. He gave an overview of Zambia's transboundary water challenges, and highlighted areas of bilateral cooperation in the Water Convention context, including on sanitation and water infrastructure, and pollution prevention and mitigation. Among key outcomes of the twinning initiative, he mentioned: Zambia's accession to the Water Convention in September 2024; the implementation of joint activities; and strengthened cooperation.

Péter Kovács, Ministry of Energy, Hungary, commended the twinning project as a successful exercise despite its limited budget, and underlined the importance of sharing the experiences with a wide range of partners. He drew attention to the major in-kind contributions of the partners involved and encouraged others to undertake similar initiatives.

Gninpale Konlani, Water Resources Director, Ministry of Water, Togo, discussed how the development of Togo's national plan has been a useful process to identify possible technical and financial partners to enhance transboundary water cooperation. He provided information about Togo's water resources and steps taken since acceding to the Convention in 2021, including the action plans and work undertaken to identify appropriate partners, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). He stressed how the Convention provides the space for dialogue and cooperation that can subsequently lead to funding.

Questions from the floor addressed, among other things: working with countries that are not Parties to the Convention;

how non-neighboring countries cooperate; and the distinction between joint and transboundary projects.

Connecting Place: Financial Mechanisms and Tools Offered by International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and Other Partners: On Tuesday afternoon, a small-group session provided participants with an opportunity to interact with partners from finance institutions and technical assistance programmes, to discuss mechanisms and tools that support transboundary water cooperation. The setting gave participants the opportunity to discuss their projects with representatives of the AfDB's African Water Facility, the EC Directorate-General for International Partnerships, the GEF IW:LEARN initiative, UNCDF, and the World Bank.

In-Depth Discussion and Exchange on Project Proposals Prepared by New Parties: Julien Favier, Water Convention Secretariat, introduced the interactive discussions, which took place in small groups. Following short presentations of project proposals by new Parties, delegates engaged in in-depth discussions of the respective proposals to get recommendations from technical and financial partners present on how to improve these proposals to mobilize financial resources. Insights from these conversations were harvested by three Secretariat consultants, who subsequently shared them in plenary.

Forward-Looking Synthesis: Moderator Stantchev Skeie, SDC, noted the session would share the outcomes of the afternoon discussions and define key lessons learnt.

Lovaso Christine Razanamahandry, one of the Secretariat consultants who helped prepare the project proposals, highlighted the importance of financial and technical support, and the need for capacity building to ensure proposals are bankable and follow funders' criteria. As recommendations, she said session participants had encouraged Parties to: continue discussions at a national level; follow nexus approaches; link proposals with national strategic priorities; engage riparian countries to develop joint proposals; and work on costings and timelines. She noted Parties should engage with Regional Economic Communities and transboundary organizations to increase project visibility. She further called for technical and financial partners to prioritize the needs expressed by new Parties.



Lovaso Christine Razanamahandry, Water Convention Secretariat



Kathia Havens, World Bank

CAMEROON, CHAD, NIGERIA, TOGO, and PANAMA voiced appreciation for the Match-making Event, highlighting its usefulness in better understanding how to move their project proposals forward by pinpointing their shortcomings and defining ways to better align them to funding agency requirements.

In a panel discussion, Kathia Havens, World Bank, commended participants on the proposals. She underscored the next steps in continuing the work initiated during the session, advocating for these projects to receive support from different national ministries and across different countries.

Samuel Blazik, African Water Facility, AfDB, suggested smaller projects could be integrated into larger country investments and maybe aligned with AfDB projects. He underscored the importance of approaching country offices to ensure the proposals are prioritized nationally and have political support.

Arnaud de Vanssay, Directorate-General for International Partnerships, EC, noted the Convention as one of solidarity and joint work. He highlighted three ways to further support the proposals: sharing knowledge and know-how; promoting scientific assistance, such as through data sharing and university exchanges; and seeking financial support by integrating the proposals into existing projects. He suggested approaching UN Resident Coordinators for support, asking for aid to be formalized, and emphasizing linkages, such as with climate change issues and other topics that are underpinned by water security.

Diane Guerrier, Water Convention Secretariat, said the Convention helps countries commit to concrete actions and provides a reporting mechanism, and thus an accountability framework. Flagging that there is room for increased cooperation with financial and technical partners, she called for facilitation of discussions with these partners, particularly at the national level.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed, among other things: ways to enhance innovative financing mechanisms on the ground; the importance of “the human factor” in partnerships; the specific needs of riparian states; transboundary cooperation as an instrument of peace; and a checklist for countries to make sure their projects are aligned with the Convention.

Conclusion and the Way Forward: This session was moderated by Tanja Miškova, Ambassador-at-Large for Water Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Slovenia.

Meike van Ginneken, Water Envoy for the Netherlands, cautioned against wasting time pursuing matches that are unpromising, recommending countries seek advice from experts on how to build financial partnerships.

Christian Frutiger, Assistant Director General, SDC, suggested shifting the narrative “from grants to investments,” recommending a focus on building investment pipelines that mobilize other funding. He said this requires working together, going beyond match-making and removing bottlenecks in the system.

Sonja Koeppel, Water Convention Secretary, recalled that while MOPs only drew around 50 countries a mere decade ago, around one hundred were expected to attend MOP 10, identifying this widening scope as an achievement of the Convention. She advocated reflecting on the needs of new Parties and how to integrate lessons learned during the Match-making Event into future proceedings of the Convention. Koeppel concluded that implementation of the Convention is “a responsibility of all of us” and called on participants to think outside the box.

MOP 10 High-Level Segment

Opening: On Wednesday, 23 October, MOP 10 Chair Harry Liiv, Ministry of Climate, Estonia, opened the high-level segment, which kicked off with a video promoting Slovenia’s nature where almost 60% of the land is covered in forests and over a third of the land area is protected, illustrating lessons in sustainability and in preserving pristine ecosystems.

Jože Novak, Minister of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia, took the floor on behalf of Robert Golob, Prime Minister of Slovenia. He recalled recent damages caused by climate change-induced extreme events of flooding and forest fires worldwide. He noted the world is also facing a security crisis, and peace can no longer be taken for granted. He called for further collaboration on transboundary water management and for effective cooperation between countries, underscoring the potential of new technologies.

In a video message, Amina J. Mohammed, UN Deputy Secretary-General and Chair of the UN Sustainable Development Group, drew attention to the UN’s work on water. She highlighted the outcomes of the recently-held [Summit of the Future](#), which offer strategic tools to accelerate action on the SDGs, including on water.



Jože Novak, Minister of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia

Tatiana Molcean, Executive Secretary, UNECE and UN Under-Secretary-General, drew attention to the many global crises related to water and called for furthering transboundary water cooperation and work on the SDGs, in particular [SDG indicator 6.5.2](#) (proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation). She commended new partnerships and agreements, underscoring how collaboration helps mobilize funds for water projects, and concluded that “transboundary water cooperation is an act of empowerment, of trust, and of hope in the face of increasing uncertainty.”

Chair Liiv recalled work carried out from 2022 to 2024, with a focus on management issues in transboundary water basins, with monitoring and assessment, stocktaking and the use of concepts such as source-to-sea management in bringing together different actors and stimulating collaboration between upstream and downstream communities.

UKRAINE lamented the environmental catastrophe brought about by the Russian aggression in Ukraine, including impacts on the country’s transboundary water resources. He said nature remains a silent victim of Russia’s ecocide and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice.

The EU voiced support for Ukraine, deplored the environmental destruction waged by the war, recalled that targeting civilians and critical infrastructure is a war crime, and called for unity to transform water management for peace and prosperity, and for Russia’s withdrawal from Ukraine.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION opposed the two previous interventions and urged the MOP to focus on the work of the Water Convention. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and NAMIBIA suggested the meeting turn its attention to water and follow the agenda, with NAMIBIA noting that wars affecting water infrastructure are occurring worldwide.

MOP 10 then adopted its annotated provisional agenda ([ECE/MP.WAT/74](#)) without amendment.

Status of Ratification of the Convention and Its Protocols, Report on Credentials, and Celebration of New Accessions: Sonja Koeppel, Water Convention Secretary, reported that to date, 54 countries and the EU have ratified the Water Convention ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/INF.2](#)). She noted that since the Water Convention was opened to countries worldwide in 2016, 14



Witner Kapembwa Mutale Nalumango, Vice-President, Zambia

countries outside the UNECE region have joined, with Côte d’Ivoire, Zimbabwe, and Zambia as the newest Parties. Koeppel further reported that the Convention’s [Protocol on Water and Health](#), which entered into force in 2005, has been ratified by 29 countries, with North Macedonia and Uzbekistan having joined most recently, and that the [Protocol on Civil Liability](#) has only been ratified by Hungary and has, therefore, not yet entered into force.

Witner Kapembwa Mutale Nalumango, Vice President of Zambia, identified international cooperation on shared water resources as a cornerstone of global cooperation. She announced that Zambia intends to host the Third Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water in May 2025 in Lusaka, Zambia, and expressed hope that water remains a source of peace, prosperity, and sustainable development for all.

Bougui Laurent Tchagba, Minister of Water and Forests, Côte d’Ivoire, said his country’s recent accession to the Convention consolidates the already strong cooperation that exists in Africa, where more than 90% of water resources are shared in 63 transboundary water basins. He noted that food security and a healthy industrial sector are instrumental to becoming an “emerging economy,” and both require well managed water resources.

Vangelis Peter Haritatos, Deputy Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Development, Zimbabwe, described Zimbabwe’s recent accession to the Water Convention as “a giant step forward.” He noted that in the face of climate change, water scarcity, and rapid population growth, transboundary cooperation is indispensable. He expressed hope that Zimbabwe’s accession will inspire other countries to join, particularly in Africa.

Chair Liiv and Minister Novak then officially welcomed the nine new Parties that joined the Convention since MOP 9 in 2021.

On Friday, Daniyar Sagadiyev, Vice-Chair of the Water Convention Bureau, Kazakhstan, reported that all Parties had submitted credentials, except Turkmenistan, and that all submitted credentials were in order.

Decision: In its decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP welcomes Côte d’Ivoire, Zimbabwe, and Zambia as new Parties, and calls on donors, IFIs, international



Vangelis Peter Haritatos, Deputy Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, and Rural Development, Zimbabwe

organizations, and other actors involved in transboundary water cooperation to support implementation of the Convention, especially by new Parties.

Special Session: “Our waters, Our future: Transboundary Water Cooperation to Power Climate Resilience”

This [high-level session](#) was held on Wednesday and [comprised three parts](#), each with its own panel discussion and high-level interventions.

Transboundary Water Cooperation for Climate

Adaptation: This part of the Special Session was moderated by Danilo Türk, Chair of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, and former President of Slovenia. Before entering into discussions, delegates heard presentations on the following two topics.

Progress on transboundary water cooperation with a focus on building climate resilience (SDG indicator 6.5.2 reporting): Sonja Koeppel, Water Convention Secretary, presented the Third Progress Report on SDG indicator 6.5.2 ([ECE/MP.WAT/76](#)), commending the high level of country engagement but lamenting that the indicator is not on track to be met. She drew attention to the recommendations to embed climate change considerations into new or existing water arrangements and to strengthen the work of joint bodies. She encouraged countries to make use of the report and engage in the next reporting exercise in 2026.

Action-oriented document on mainstreaming transboundary water management and cooperation into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs): Meike van Ginneken, Special Envoy for Water, the Netherlands, and Sibylle Vermont, FOEN, Switzerland, presented the document ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/3](#)). Vermont noted that climate change is intensifying the water cycle. She underscored that 80% of countries on the planet share rivers, lakes, and aquifers and 60% of available freshwater is shared. Thus, she urged mainstreaming transboundary water cooperation into NDCs and NAPs. Van Ginneken presented actions outlined in the report, including to further baseline assessments, enforce national engagement, and promote a shared vision and joint adaptation

strategy. She called for more engagement with actors outside the water community.

Panel discussion: In the ensuing panel discussion, Carl Schlettwein, Minister of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, Namibia, stressed the aim of fostering collaboration over water resources while lamenting that negotiations of water rights can sometimes be difficult, for instance in drought situations.

Aun Dheyab Abdullah, Minister of Water Resources, Iraq, provided a national perspective, discussed the impact of climate change on shared water resources, and noted the importance of joint framework agreements and collaborating with neighboring countries.

Stating his country shares river basins with France and Portugal, Hugo Morán, State Secretary of Environment, Spain, drew attention to the success of the [Albufeira Convention](#) on the use waters of the Spanish-Portuguese hydrographic basins. He stressed the importance of communicating with citizens to promote understanding.

Dwikorita Karnawati, Head of the Agency for Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics, Indonesia, shared information about disaster risk reduction strategies, tools to counter hydro-meteorological disasters, and early warning systems. She underscored the importance of collaborating with other partners and involving communities at all levels, and shared the results of the [10th World Water Forum](#), held in May 2024 in Bali, Indonesia.

Saying “we are becoming increasingly clear about why the patient is sick and what the remedies are,” Veronica Manfredi, Director for Zero Pollution, Directorate-General for Environment, EC, noted that the continent has many shared water resources and several conventions pertaining to water cooperation; yet the quality of the continent’s water resources is poor.

Mohamed Abdel Vetah, High Commissioner, Senegal River Development Organisation, described his country’s experience working with neighboring countries in the management of the Senegal River as visionary and innovative. Declaring the River a common good that irrigates hectares of land and feeds thousands, he counted solid institutional mechanisms, equity, and resource sharing as factors of success.



Meike van Ginneken, Special Envoy for Water, the Netherlands



Tanja Fajon, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Slovenia

Tanja Fajon, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Slovenia, addressed climate adaptation and flood risk reduction programmes in her country. She emphasized that meaningful participation of women in water diplomacy can make a significant difference, and that transboundary water and climate cooperation can be an entry point for peace and development.

Persis Ramirez, OpenHydro/International Water Association, provided a youth perspective, noting that issues such as water scarcity, extreme weather events and sea-level rise will increasingly affect future generations. She stressed that young people bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and a natural inclination towards cooperation to the debate, but “to unlock this potential we need recognition, opportunities and support.”

High-level statements: Several Ministers and other high-level officials addressed the meeting on behalf of their countries. SOUTH SUDAN discussed the importance of effectively managing the Nile River, noting the impacts of flooding, climate change, and human activities. He called transboundary water cooperation “not merely an option, but a necessity.” GREECE outlined sustainable development initiatives in his region, noting the importance of transboundary collaboration for healthy ecosystems, and advocated for the establishment of joint river management plans. The CZECH REPUBLIC noted the Danube River Basin is the most international river basin in the world, as it is shared by 19 countries. He described regional water cooperation initiatives, including nature-based solutions to mitigate floods.

Celebration of the Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin cooperation initiative: Participants witnessed a short ceremony celebrating [this transboundary initiative](#) by The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, and Senegal. Amal Maouloud, Minister of Water and Sanitation, Mauritania, described the background of this initiative and highlighted steps forward.

Transboundary and Intersectoral Cooperation for Climate Mitigation: Implementing the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus: This part of the Special Session was moderated by Giovanna Valverde Stark, Minister Counsellor, Climate Change Special Advisor, and former Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to Kenya.

Panel discussion: Baboucar Mboundor Ngom, Secretary-General, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Senegal, described water challenges in his region and water-related adaptation and resilience projects in Senegal. He identified surface and groundwater management cooperation as key to achieving a sustainable future.

In a video message, Nurlan Aldamzharov, Vice-Minister of Water Resources and Irrigation, Kazakhstan, described the impact of extreme climate events on the water resources in his country, as well as recent water infrastructure upgrades. He called for effective long-term, transboundary, and intersectoral cooperation mechanisms to strengthen peace and stability in the region.

Bettina Hoffmann, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection, Germany, described flood risk mitigation measures in the Rhine River basin and activities undertaken under the umbrella of the Nexus Regional Dialogues Programme.

Highlighting benefits across various sectors, but calling for coherence, including across ministries, Tuula Paakkala, Director-General, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland, described

various activities undertaken in the Torne River basin in northern Scandinavia.

Alan AtKisson, Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership, said that intersectoral cooperation needs to be done effectively and offered to share his organization’s expertise and ideas.

High-level statements: High-level interventions were made by AZERBAIJAN, CROATIA, EGYPT, FRANCE, ITALY, LESOTHO, NORTH MACEDONIA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SOMALIA, and SAUDI ARABIA. They focused on national experiences of managing transboundary water resources within changing climatic realities and described actions carried out nationally. Speakers highlighted prerequisites to success including: identifying common goals; engaging upstream and downstream states; ensuring equitable and sustainable water allocation and benefit sharing; preventing unilateral measures that could undermine regional stability; addressing gaps in collaborative management; paying attention to the water needs of nature and biodiversity; working on water scenarios for the future; addressing wastewater and groundwater issues; following a holistic approach in addressing floods and droughts; ensuring solutions are innovative; and promoting the vision that water lies at the heart of multilateralism.

They also highlighted upcoming gatherings pertaining to water, including: events at the [29th session of the Conference of the Parties](#) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2024; the first [Euro-Mediterranean Water Forum](#), in Rome, Italy, in 2026; and the [11th World Water Forum](#) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2027.

Building Climate Resilience Through Ecosystem and Biodiversity Preservation and Restoration in Transboundary Settings: The third part of the Special Session was also moderated by Valverde Stark.

Panel discussion: Jože Novak, Minister of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia, addressed the effects of the major flooding events in his country in 2023, describing effective response mechanisms and cross-sectoral cooperation, as well as major funding restraints in the rebuilding phase, inviting support from partners.



Alan AtKisson, Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership

Christian Frutiger, SDC, described the history of international cooperation on management of the Rhine River and current efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change on flood risks. Among measures, he mentioned giving more space to the river, infrastructure adaptations, and regulation reform.

Mtchera Johannes Chirwa, African Water Facility, AfDB, outlined various examples of AfDB support of transboundary water cooperation, including though the provision of knowledge and data.

Sareen Malik, Executive Secretary, African Civil Society Network on Water, stated that civil society involvement is key to achieving effective transboundary water cooperation as they are increasingly knowledgeable about the structures and rules of environmental governance. She also promoted the inclusion of gender equality and biodiversity interests in transboundary water governance.

High-level statements: ALGERIA stressed the importance of states' sovereignty over their water resources, providing examples of mismanagement of transboundary water resources in the region and its impacts on people and the environment. ARMENIA described his country's vulnerability to climate change, and its impacts on water and food security. POLAND elaborated on national nature-based approaches, including in the field of ecohydrology, which provides low-cost ways to combat water pollution.

UKRAINE described how water resources are being destroyed in his country due to the Russian invasion and urged that aggressors be held accountable for the ecosystem damages they inflict. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION objected to Parties using the current meeting as a platform for voicing political views on current events.

NIGERIA, SIERRA LEONE, and SLOVAKIA provided examples illustrating the long-standing tradition of water cooperation in their respective regions.

The ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE (OSCE) described its initiatives in the area of transboundary cooperation and IWRM in Europe and Central Asia, including the [Women in Water Management Network](#). The UNION FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN urged putting ecosystem health and community involvement at the core of transboundary water diplomacy. The FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UN (FAO)

provided examples of how transboundary water cooperation is mainstreamed in FAO's programmes and work.

Closing: In closing the High-level Special Session, Jože Novak, Minister of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Slovenia, and Tatiana Molcean, UNECE Executive Secretary and UN Under-Secretary-General, enumerated an extensive list of conclusions, including: the call to prepare projects that increase climate change resilience; mainstreaming water into national climate policies and other sectors such as biodiversity, energy, and agriculture; focusing on nature-based solutions and harnessing innovative technologies; and providing a space for meaningful engagement with youth groups, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities.

MOP 10 General Segment

MOP 10 Chair Harry Liiv opened the general segment on Wednesday afternoon

Adapting to Climate Change in Transboundary Basins: Chair Liiv invited Sibylle Vermont, Switzerland, and Niels Vlaanderen, the Netherlands, on behalf of the Co-Lead Parties on [this programme area](#), to present on work on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins carried out since 2022 under the overall guidance of the [Task Force on Water and Climate \(ECE/MP.WAT/2024/1\)](#).

Vermont introduced the main achievements in the area of adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins, including major milestones such as contributions to developing the UNFCCC COP 29 Presidency's initiative, the [Baku Dialogue on Water for Climate Action](#). She drew attention to the outcomes of two thematic workshops on water, agriculture, and climate change, and on droughts in transboundary basins.

Vlaanderen expanded on lessons learned for future work, including with institutions and on water scarcity. He called for more efforts on global climate processes, and on the integration of groundwater in basin water management. He provided input on suggested future areas of work including meetings of the Task Force on Water and Climate.

On Thursday, Chair Liiv invited interventions of representatives of the Global Network of Basins working on Climate Change Adaptation. UKRAINE presented on the cooperation between Ukraine and Moldova on the Dniester River basin. The OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN WATER COMMISSION (OKACOM) SECRETARIAT discussed the [Cubango-Okavango River Basin](#). The UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (UNCCD) described actions taken under the UNCCD, such as the [International Drought Resilience Alliance](#). The INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS (INBO) described their work, including the [TwinBasin Initiative](#). The UNFCCC called for transboundary issues to be addressed through cooperation. The EU characterized data management, funding climate resilience strategies, and applying transboundary early warning systems as challenging.

Comments from the floor included: SWITZERLAND drawing attention to the importance of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, noting that wetlands include rivers and lakes; THAILAND describing national experiences including in the Mekong River basin; and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION illustrating collaboration with neighbors, such as Kazakhstan.



Adeyinka Adenopo, Nigeria

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- welcomes the document on Mainstreaming transboundary water management and cooperation into NDCs and NAPs ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/3](#));
- invites Parties to comment on the document by 31 October 2024 for it to be finalized by UNFCCC COP 29;
- encourages its use among water and climate colleagues and communities;
- entrusts the Task Force on Water and Climate to review its implementation and progress in this area and revise it as needed;
- encourages countries and basins to mainstream water and the benefits of transboundary cooperation into national climate policies such as NDCs and NAPs;
- expresses appreciation for the progress made within the basins of the Global Network of Basins Working on Climate Change Adaptation, welcomes the Cubango-Okavango River Basin, and encourages more transboundary basins to join the Network; and
- decides to include “Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Reporting Under the Convention and on SDG Indicator

6.5.2: On Thursday, Iulia Trombitcaia, Secretariat, presented the report “Progress on Transboundary Water Cooperation under the Water Convention: Third Report on Implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (2020–2023)” ([ECE/MP.WAT/77](#)). She noted that only 54% of Parties had submitted their reports in time. Among key findings, she highlighted that 140 transboundary water agreements have been concluded since the adoption of the Water Convention in 1992, 13 of which in the past three years. However, she noted room for improvement in the areas of: coordination on aquifers and groundwater bodies; involvement of national geological surveys in reporting; gender considerations; exchange of data and information; and procedures for mutual assistance in critical situations, such as natural or industrial disasters. Among conclusions, she highlighted that the report shows: many positive achievements in the period 2020–2023; an overall high level of implementation of the Convention; and the average value of SDG indicator 6.5.2 for Parties is 81%, while the global average is 59%.

Tatiana Dmitrieva, UNESCO, and Julia Trombitcaia, Secretariat, presented the report “Progress on Transboundary Water Cooperation: Mid-term status of SDG indicator 6.5.2, with a special focus on Climate Change, 2024” ([ECE/MP.WAT/76](#)). Dmitrieva noted that in 2023: 129 responses had been received, of which seven were from first-ever respondents; 43 countries have operational arrangements in place for 90% or more of their shared waters; the global average of SDG indicator 6.5.2 (59%) has not changed significantly over the past three reporting cycles; eight countries showed improved cooperation in 2023; and more than 20 countries have no arrangements in place. She noted significant progress in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 16 countries now have 90% or more of their transboundary waters covered by operational arrangements, versus only five in 2021.

During invited responses, NIGERIA reported on key factors that helped his country to accelerate progress on transboundary water cooperation, including technical support from the UNECE and other partners. ITALY described how SDG 6.5.2 monitoring



Klas Moldéus, UN-Water

helps to identify areas of action to advance transboundary water cooperation, highlighting bilateral agreements and an adaptive approach. BENIN shared advice for countries looking to trigger cooperation, including participation in international platforms and the adoption of relevant laws and regulations. The WORLD BANK described how it supports countries in transboundary water cooperation, including through: investments, information and institutions; and tools for financing through, for example, the International Development Association.

Klas Moldéus, UN-Water, reported on measuring progress towards SDG 6. He said the majority of [SDG regions](#) show a positive trend for six out of 11 indicators, including 6.5.2, but a negative trend for three, namely water quality, water stress, and water- and sanitation-related official development assistance.

SWITZERLAND shared optimism regarding progress made and the upcoming work programme. The EU identified room for improvement, including harmonization of cooperation frameworks and gap identification.

UKRAINE noted the major negative impacts of the Russian aggression in Ukraine on progress towards SDG indicator 6.5.2. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION objected to the previous statement and described its national reporting process.

ROMANIA highlighted the establishment of national water-related regulations, including in the areas of: flood protection; exchange of data; establishing procedures to measure water quality and respond to incidents; and bilateral cooperation. CHILE and SOMALIA reported on operational agreements with neighboring countries, and national and regional coordination mechanisms and management plans.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, among other things:

- welcomes that all Parties have submitted reports under the Water Convention in the third reporting exercise in 2023–2024;
- expresses appreciation to the 129 out of 153 UN Member States sharing transboundary waters that have submitted reports on SDG indicator 6.5.2;

- calls on countries and partners to make use of the reports in order to advance transboundary cooperation;
- welcomes the two synthesis reports presented by the Secretariat and UNESCO; and
- decides to include reporting under the Convention and on SDG indicator 6.5.2 in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Increasing Awareness of and Accession to the Convention and Application of Its Principles Drawing on the Benefits of Cooperation: On Thursday, Chair Liiv introduced this agenda item, explaining that it contains four sub-items, each with a respective draft decision.

Increasing capacity for implementation of the Convention and supporting national processes towards accession: Fanny-Tsilla Koninckx, France, Co-Lead Party for [this programme area](#), provided an overview of activities and insight into future proposed activities. She noted that nine new countries had acceded since 2022, while eleven more have made significant progress in their accession process or launched national initiatives to discuss accession benefits. Among lessons learned, she highlighted the importance of: strengthening strategic collaboration; sharing experiences of champion countries; planning future implementation; and ensuring country ownership. She called for organizing training sessions for practitioners, national tailor-made workshops, and providing legal and technical advice.

Koninckx further presented the Review of the implementation of the Strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/4](#)), noting it is built around five strategic objectives for the Convention and includes progress reports and lessons learned.

BANGLADESH, BENIN, BURKINA FASO, COSTA RICA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC), JORDAN, LESOTHO, MALAWI, MAURITANIA, MONGOLIA, PANAMA, SIERRA LEONE, SOMALIA, SOUTH SUDAN, and UGANDA shared their national experiences with the accession process and progress to date. They commended inter-ministry collaboration and experience sharing, among other things, and identified ways to accelerate the ratification process, such as convincing the main stakeholders involved in the process of the value of accession and seeking presidential approval.

The EU and SPAIN informed about their efforts to promote accession, with the prior announcing a three million euro

contribution for the process and commending Senegal on becoming a donor as well. SPAIN described efforts focusing on countries of the Mediterranean and Latin America. The UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) provided a regional perspective.

Anna-Stiina Heiskanen, Finland, Co-Lead Party for this [programme area](#), drew attention to two twinning initiatives involving: Namibia and Finland; and Zambia, Hungary, and Ghana. She provided details of major milestones including workshops and project launches, and suggested future areas of work, such as providing support to up to five new Parties to develop national implementation plans, fostering peer-to-peer exchanges through the Twinning Initiative under the Convention; and supporting basin and regional dynamics towards the application of the Convention's principles.

SWITZERLAND presented on the main highlights and outcomes of the pre-MOP [Match-making Event](#) aimed at accelerating transboundary cooperation and implementation of the Water Convention in new Parties through increased support and partnership. She described key lessons learned, including that the Convention is a useful platform and provides a robust framework for accountability to support projects. She said funding to implement the Water Convention needs to come from domestic funds but technical and financial partners should provide further funding. She noted an appetite for more twinning initiatives and called for more coherent and bankable project proposals. On next steps and recommendations, she underscored that new Parties should engage in twinning processes with more experienced Parties; and technical and financial partners should continue to prioritize new Parties, identify bottlenecks, and address financial gaps.

During interventions from the floor, NAMIBIA gave insights into its twinning with Finland, and ZAMBIA and HUNGARY discussed their on trilateral twinning with Ghana. CHAD, TOGO, and TURKMENISTAN provided national perspectives. FINLAND drew attention to the theme of this year's [World Water Day](#): "Water for prosperity and peace." ECOWAS noted that accession to the Water Convention provides many opportunities and GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP WEST AFRICA gave examples from the region.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- welcomes progress towards accession by many countries and encourages them to complete their accession processes as soon as possible;
- calls on other countries to explore accession to the Convention and to start national dialogues on the derived benefits and implications;
- welcomes progress made in implementing the Strategy for the Implementation of the Convention at the global level and calls on Parties, other countries, partners and the Secretariat to further advance that work;
- reaffirms its commitment to support accession processes through the provision of technical and legal assistance, including by sharing Parties' expertise in implementation;
- encourages the promotion of the 1997 Watercourses Convention together with the 1992 Water Convention, where appropriate; and
- decides to include the publications on increasing awareness and capacity in the PoW for 2025-2027.



Anna-Stiina Heiskanen, Finland



Heide Jekel, Germany

Promoting and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation: Chair Liiv introduced the document “The Water Convention: 30 Years of Impact and Achievements on the Ground” ([ECE/MP.WAT/69 and 69/Corr.1](#)). Among suggestions for future work, he highlighted integrating information on the benefits of transboundary cooperation into other areas of work.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP welcomes [the publication](#) “The Water Convention: 30 Years of Impact and Achievements on the Ground,” and encourages countries and partners to use it.

Supporting the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies: Heide Jekel, Germany, Co-Lead Party for [this programme area](#), presented on efforts to promote the “Practical Guide for the Development of Agreements or Other Arrangements for Transboundary Water Cooperation” ([ECE/MP.WAT/68](#)). Describing how this document had been prepared, she highlighted: the need for attention to the development and implementation of legal frameworks; and challenges to respond to all requests and to further the engagement of partners. She identified various areas for future work, including on an online toolkit, a global workshop on legal frameworks, and tailored assistance and support.

DRC highlighted bilateral cooperation with Zambia that made use of the Practical Guide to develop an agreement on the Luapula River. The CENTRAL AMERICAN COMMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT described how guidance on developing transboundary cooperation is being developed in the region, including through participatory processes.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- welcomes progress achieved in different projects supporting the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies, including through applying the “Practical Guide for the Development of Agreements or Other Arrangements for Transboundary Water Cooperation” ([ECE/MP.WAT/68](#));
- encourages countries, interested basins, and partners to use and disseminate the document; and
- decides to include “Supporting the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies” in the PoW for 2025-2027.

Implementation Committee: Attila Tanzi, Chair of the [Implementation Committee](#), presented the Report of the

Implementation Committee and draft decision on general issues of implementation ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/5](#)). He described activities of the Committee in the past triennium, including relating to its advisory procedure, and its assessment of the current status of and challenges relating to implementation of the Convention.

ALBANIA and MONTENEGRO voiced their appreciation for the assistance they received from the Implementation Committee in setting up their bilateral water cooperation. Chair Liiv extended words of appreciation and gratitude to outgoing Committee Chair Tanzi, who reflected on ways the Committee had contributed to implementation of the Convention and on steps ahead.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

- takes note of the report on the work of the Implementation Committee in 2012–2024 ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/5](#)) and the outcomes of the first advisory procedure;
- encourages Parties and other stakeholders to seek the Committee’s assistance, support, and facilitation, by using the advisory procedure;
- adopts the decision on general issues of implementation as contained in the Annex to the document;
- re-elects Pedro Cunha Serra and Martins Paporinskis to the Implementation Committee, and elects Mahdi Ahmad, Cyrille Valet, Gabriel de los Cobos, and Maria Gwynn as new members; and
- expresses gratitude to the outgoing Implementation Committee Chair as well as to the three outgoing members.

Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus in Transboundary Basins: Chair Liiv drew attention to three relevant publications: Methodology for Assessing the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus in Transboundary Basins and Experiences from its Application: Synthesis ([ECE/MP.WAT/55](#)); Solutions and Investments in the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus: A Synthesis of Experiences in Transboundary Basins ([ECE/MP.WAT/66](#)); and Towards Sustainable Renewable Energy Investment and Deployment: Trade-offs and Opportunities with Water Resources and the Environment ([ECE/ENERGY/127](#)).

Annukka Lipponen, Chair of the [Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems \(WFEE\) Nexus](#), Finland, presented on the work on the WFEE nexus in transboundary basins carried out since 2022. She listed main achievements including the mutual benefits of intersectoral cooperation between the different sectors and including experts in discussions. She noted major milestones, including: several meetings; the publication of project documents; the outcome of dialogues, such as the energy-water dialogue held in Sarajevo; and an analytical brief on water for climate mitigation which will be launched at UNFCCC COP 29.

Lipponen described some lessons learned such as that the effectiveness of climate action could benefit from cross-sectoral synergy and regional projects, but operationalization and financing are complex. She noted that challenges persist at different levels in coordinating across sectors, and said it is crucial to mainstream water and the benefits of transboundary cooperation into NDCs. For future work, she suggested two task force meetings, capacity-building events, and the promotion of methodologies and toolkits.

During interventions from the floor, ALBANIA provided a national perspective of the nexus assessments. BOLIVIA drew attention to the importance of technical and scientific data to



Carl HG Schlettwein, Namibia

support the nexus approach. In discussing a consortium project in Central Asia, the ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) said cooperation is at the heart of the nexus, yet it is “easy to talk about but difficult to do in practice.” MONTENEGRO described national realities and efforts to improve regional climate resilience. GEF IW:LEARN illustrated the nexus projects they support and facilitate.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, among other things:

- calls on Parties to increase synergies between WFEE sectors to more sustainably manage resources in transboundary basins, and to tackle cross-cutting issues, like climate change, more effectively;
- highlights the importance of water for climate change mitigation and calls on countries to consider this aspect in their national climate policies;
- welcomes progress made in supporting intersectoral dialogues and the operationalization of nexus solutions and investments, either as follow-up to nexus assessments previously carried out under the Convention (for the Drin and Drina Rivers) or contributing to basin dialogues led by partners (Niger);
- encourages countries and partners to make use of the numerous publications and tools developed;
- calls on countries and partners to engage in the work of the Task Force on the WFEE Nexus; and
- decides to include “Supporting intersectoral dialogues and assessments through the application of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus approach” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Supporting Equitable and Sustainable Water Allocation in a Transboundary Context: Antti Rautavaara, Finland, Co-Lead Party with Hungary for [this programme area](#), presented on the work carried out in this context since 2022. He underscored the main achievement as a Summary Handbook on Water Allocation in a Transboundary Context ([ECE/MP.WAT/71](#)) published in December 2023, which contains practical resources and references to a full handbook of case studies. He noted two regional workshops and two twinning initiatives focused on water allocation. He underscored that: allocation remains a highly sensitive topic in many regions; exchanges of experiences are vital to promote trust; capacity building should move beyond the perceptions of allocations as fixed quantitative amounts; and

broader, holistic approaches are needed. He said that for the next three-year period, Finland is stepping down and the Lead Parties will be Hungary and Namibia.

Interventions from the floor included: ZAMBIA providing its national perspective; NAMIBIA highlighting its new leadership role alongside Hungary; the EU welcoming the elaboration of the handbook as a very good tool; the INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSESSMENT CENTRE (IWAC) noting their participation in the work of the handbook and capacity building in Central Asia; and IRAQ suggesting further capacity building to leverage scientific studies in this field to establish a community of experts.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, among other things:

- welcomes the publication of the Summary Handbook on Water Allocation in a Transboundary Context ([ECE/MP.WAT/71](#)) as an accompaniment to the Handbook on Water Allocation in a Transboundary Context ([ECE/MP.WAT/64](#));
- invites countries, basin organizations, and regional organizations to submit offers to the Secretariat to host workshops at the basin or regional scale aimed at building capacity on transboundary water allocation and its complementary approaches under the Convention; and
- decides to include “Supporting equitable and sustainable water allocation in a transboundary context” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Promoting IWRM in Transboundary Basins: This agenda item on IWRM, containing two sub-items, was addressed on Friday, in a session chaired by Heide Jekel, Co-Chair, IWRM Working Group, Germany.

Source-to-sea management of transboundary waters:

Aleš Bizjak, Slovenia, as Co-Lead Party for [this programme area](#), explained the development of a Guidance Note on implementation of the source-to-sea approach in transboundary basins ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/6](#)), initiated during a [Global Workshop](#) on this issue held in Geneva, Switzerland, in December 2022. He said the Guidance Note’s objectives are, *inter alia*, to promote understanding of the principle, build capacity, and facilitate implementation. Noting that the current document is still under development, he invited participants to submit case studies, best practices, and comments on the draft online, to allow for finalization of the Guidance Note in 2025 in time for its presentation at the [Third UN Ocean Conference](#) in Nice, France, in June 2025, and at the twentieth meeting of the [IWRM Working Group](#), to convene in Geneva, Switzerland, in October 2025.

COSTA RICA, ESTONIA, the EU, FRANCE, PANAMA, SWEDEN, the STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL WATER INSTITUTE (SIWI) and the UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP) expressed their support for the process. SWEDEN and the EU emphasized the holistic approach that underpins the source-to-sea concept. SIWI underlined its social and economic benefits. The EU and UNEP described their relevant ongoing programmes and underscored linkages with the work of the Water Convention.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

- recognizes the importance of source-to-sea governance in transboundary cooperation, and the need for better coordination across administrative and political boundaries at all levels;

- expresses gratitude to the Parties and partners that contributed to the annotated outline of the Guidance Note ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/6](#));
- invites countries and organizations to provide written comments on the annotated outline of the guidance note to the Water Convention Secretariat no later than 30 October 2024 and submit case studies by 15 November 2024; and
- entrusts the Secretariat, in consultation with the drafting group, with the task of finalizing the Guidance Note, based on the annotated outline and comments received, and printing the publication in English, French, Russian, and Spanish, with the English version to be presented at the Third UN Ocean Conference.

Conjunctive management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters: MOP Chair Harry Liiv, Estonia, as Co-Lead Party for [this programme area](#), presented work carried out in the area of conjunctive water management, drawing attention to the outcomes of the [Global Workshop](#) on this issue, which was held in Geneva, Switzerland, in October 2023. He drew attention to the need to move from spontaneous to planned conjunctive water management, and called for integration with global and regional processes.

On challenges and lessons learned, Liiv enumerated that: surface water management and ground water management have historically been approached from separate perspectives; conjunctive water management actions are often poorly known and rarely applied to their full potential; and few transboundary agreements integrate conjunctive management in an in-depth manner, for instance. On future activities, he drew attention to an analysis of best practices, developing policy guidance, and organizing regional workshops.

THE GAMBIA committed to co-leading, with ESTONIA, activities on conjunctive water management in the PoW for 2025-2027. He noted that working together leads to better ways of managing resources for all. URUGUAY provided national perspectives and drew attention to binational commissions and regional centers for groundwater management and their activities. The INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HYDROGEOLOGISTS (IAH) noted that groundwater is often used to compensate for a lack of surface water without much planning and noted the IAH is willing to share its expertise. The SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE (SADC-GMI) described its work in the region and indicated that SADC-GMI will host the [6th SADC Groundwater Conference](#) under the theme “Promoting Peace Across Borders Through Conjunctive Water Management” from 13-15 November 2024, in Maseru, Lesotho. SWITZERLAND encouraged engagement with the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and drew attention to [COP 15](#) of the Convention in July 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. SPAIN underscored the importance of conjunctive management.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

- welcomes progress made in raising awareness of the benefits of the conjunctive management of surface waters and groundwaters, including in transboundary basins;
- encourages countries to apply conjunctive management approaches as much as possible;
- invites countries, joint bodies, and partner organizations to provide expert support to the development of the policy guidance on conjunctive water management with a focus on transboundary basins;
- requests the Secretariat to develop and publish the policy guidance on conjunctive water management with a focus on transboundary basins in Arabic, English, French, Spanish, and Russian, with translation and printing costs to be covered by the UN regular budget; and
- decides to include “Promoting conjunctive management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Water Quality in Transboundary Basins, Including Water and Industrial Accidents: This agenda item, addressed on Thursday, was facilitated by Heike Jekel, Germany, as Co-Lead Party of [this programme area](#).

Péter Kovács, Hungary, Co-Chair of the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents ([Joint Expert Group](#), or JEG), presented on work carried out on accidental water pollution prevention since 2022 ([ECE/CP.TEIA/44](#)). Among lessons learned, he underlined the need for: better access to knowledge, guidance, and good practices on preventing accidental water pollution; improved cooperation with river basin communities; and increased capacity on the safety of tailings management facilities on the ground. He suggested holding a future global workshop, producing new guidance documents, and a webpage about accidental water pollution events and good practices. He also encouraged participants to nominate experts to join the JEG.

SLOVAKIA drew attention to an [international workshop held on this topic](#) in Bratislava, Slovakia, earlier in 2024, noting a focus on innovative solutions and on transboundary environmental effects. He stressed the importance of integrating pollution issues into river basin planning and involving health organizations. The EU highlighted its focus on zero pollution solutions. NIGERIA recognized the links between this issue and peace and environmental sustainability, and advocated for capacity building, technology transfer, joint research, community engagement, and public awareness.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

- welcomes the continued close cooperation with the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on the prevention of accidental water pollution, mostly through the organization of JEG activities;



Aleš Bizjak, Slovenia

- encourages countries and partners to make use of the guidance documents prepared by the JEG;
- thanks the current JEG Co-Chairs (Hungary and Serbia) for their work and encourages countries to nominate additional members to the JEG;
- encourages joint bodies to cooperate with the JEG regarding knowledge sharing and capacity building; and
- decides to include “Improving water quality, including through pollution prevention and control” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Financing the Convention: On Thursday, this agenda item discussion was facilitated by IWRM Working Group Co-Chair Heide Jekel, Germany. Chantal Demilechamps, Secretariat, presented the Overview of contributions and expenditures in 2022–2024 ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/7](#)). She elaborated on resource requirements of the Water Convention for 2022–2024, noting that a large majority of costs are covered by voluntary contributions. She said total expenditures 2021–2024 were around 12 million euros, which is slightly less than anticipated but corresponding almost exactly with contributions received. She further listed contributing and non-contributing Parties, as well as contributing partners including UN-Water and UNESCO. She noted the important role of in-kind contributions, including through the hosting of meetings.

Demilechamps noted that expenditures are increasing in line with the increasing number of Parties. Pointing to sharp triennial variations in the amounts of contributions received, with most arriving in years following MOPs, she said contributions in 2024 have been far below expenditures, hoped for a post-MOP effect of increased contributions, and underlined the need for a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism for the Convention’s work.

Addressing targets to achieve this, she expressed hope that: more Parties will contribute; Parties will contribute regularly and not only in years following MOPs; and more contributions will not be earmarked and thus not require individual reports. Among emerging needs, she underlined: improving transboundary cooperation in the face of increasing globalization; including activities to support new Parties; the fact that needs and requests are currently beyond what can be accommodated under the PoW; and that the Convention has no funding/implementation mechanism in place, in contrast with most other global multilateral environmental agreements.

Highlighting conclusions and trends, she underscored: the importance of high reserves to absorb temporary gaps; reliance on a few main donors; and the benefits of contributions by different ministries in a same country.

Jekel expressed concern with the financial situation, urging a solution “for the benefit of us all.” Sibylle Vermont, Switzerland, Member of the MOP Bureau, introduced the draft decision on a process towards a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism of the Water Convention’s work ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/8](#)), discussing the establishment of an *ad hoc* open-ended working group to explore this issue and prepare a draft decision for consideration by MOP 11. She encouraged participants to consider the concept of a scheme for mandatory contributions.

The EU, FINLAND, FRANCE, and SWEDEN pledged their continued financial support to the Convention and backed the establishment of an open-ended working group to define a sustainable funding mechanism, with GERMANY, FINLAND, FRANCE, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, and SWITZERLAND



Francesca Bernardini, UNECE

offering to take part in this group. NAMIBIA said an inability to secure stable funding for the Convention would be a “stunning failure of the multilateral system” and suggested seeking co-funding from the UN. CAMEROON stressed that this Convention is one of solidarity and expressed hope that voluntary contributions could be increased, but, with SENEGAL, also agreed that mandatory contributions are inevitable.

Vermont introduced the draft decision on promoting equal and effective participation of all Parties in MOP sessions and other meetings under the Convention through translation and interpretation into Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/9](#)). Francesca Bernardini, UNECE, explained that any such decision needs to be approved by UNECE, the UN Economic and Social Council, and the UN General Assembly, which will take several years. She explained that the budgetary implications amount to over USD 500,000 per year. The EU, LUXEMBURG, NIGERIA, PANAMA, and SPAIN supported the translation and interpretation into Spanish, Arabic, and Chinese.

Decision: In its related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- takes note of the overview of contributions and expenditures in 2022–2024 ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/7](#));
- appreciates the valuable in-kind contributions by Parties and partners that facilitated the implementation of various activities under the 2022–2024 PoW;
- expresses concerns about the limited progress in achieving the targets for a more sustainable and predictable funding of work under the Convention ([ECE/MP.WAT/63/Add.2](#));
- underlines the necessity to establish a more predictable and sustainable funding mechanism of the Water Convention;
- adopts the decision on a process towards a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism of the Water Convention’s work ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/8](#)), invites Parties and prospective Parties to contribute to the development of the proposal by participating in the *Ad Hoc* Working Group and invites them to inform the Secretariat of the names of their representatives by 15 January 2025;
- underlines the necessity of ensuring equal and effective participation of all Parties by ensuring translation and interpretation into all official UN languages considering the global scope of the Convention; and



Delegates following the process

- adopts the decision on promoting equal and effective participation of all Parties in sessions of the MOP and other meetings under the Convention through translation and interpretation into Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/9](#)).

Decision: In the decision on a process towards a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism for the Water Convention's work ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/8](#)), adopted without amendment alongside the above decision, the MOP:

- reiterates the need to set up a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism;
- decides to establish an *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Sustainable Financing that is open-ended in nature, with the aim of developing, through an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process, a proposal for a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism of the Convention's work, entailing the establishment of a mandatory scheme for financial contributions, for consideration and possible adoption by MOP 11;
- also decides that the composition, structure, and organizational arrangements of this working group shall be those set out in the annex to the present decision;
- encourages Parties and prospective Parties to contribute to the development of the proposal by participating in the working group and invites them to inform the Secretariat of the names of their representatives by 15 January 2025;
- entrusts the Working Group on IWRM with the task of regularly reviewing progress in the development of the proposal; and
- decides to consider the *Ad Hoc* Working Group's proposal for a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism at MOP 11, with a view to adopting a decision in that respect.

Decision: In its decision on promoting equal and effective participation of all Parties in sessions of the MOP and other meetings under the Convention through translation and interpretation into Arabic, Chinese and Spanish ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/9](#)), adopted without amendment alongside the above decision, the MOP:

- decides that translation of all official Convention documents and publications into Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish shall be ensured to enable equal and effective participation of all current and future Parties and other countries in Convention activities;
- also decides that interpretation into Arabic, Chinese, and Spanish at MOP sessions and other official Convention meetings shall be ensured to enable equal and effective participation of current and future Parties and other countries in Convention activities; and
- requests the UN Secretary-General to provide translation and interpretation services to this end.

Election of Officers: On Friday, noting that the Water Convention Bureau currently has 12 members, MOP Chair Liiv shared the Bureau's recommendation to expand that number to 14 for the period 2025-2027, taking into account the growing number of Parties, while stressing that the rules of procedure ([ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2](#)) do not define the upper limit for composition of the Bureau.

Delegates elected Aleš Bizjak, Slovenia, as Chair; and Harry Liiv, Estonia, and Bakary Faty, Senegal, as Vice-Chairs, for the period 2025-2027.

Chair Liiv presented a list of nominations for Bureau members ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/INF.6](#)). UKRAINE objected to the candidature of the Russian Federation, referring to the full-scale Russian aggression in Ukraine. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION opposed Ukraine's statement, urging the MOP to refrain from politicizing the Convention. He recalled that Russian representatives have long been part of the Bureau and have provided much expertise, as one of the most water-rich countries in the world. Urging consensus on the matter, he said a vote on this issue would set a negative precedent, undermine the credibility of the Convention, and stand in the way of future cooperation. NAMIBIA supported the list as proposed, stressing the Convention should be as inclusive as possible, even if Parties disagree on other matters. NORWAY supported a vote. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, opposed by UKRAINE, proposed a procedural vote on the question of voting. Referring to the rules



Ivan Gozhev, Russian Federation



Alexander Zinke, Austria

of procedure of the Convention, Chair Liiv announced the MOP would move forward by secret ballot. Party representatives were subsequently requested to cast their vote with tellers appointed to overview the process and count the votes.

In the afternoon, Chair Liiv announced the result of the secret ballot. He said the Russian Federation nominee had not received the required majority of votes to be part of the Bureau in the next triennium. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION expressed disappointment with the decision, stressing it was counterproductive and a sign of the international platform being used for political objectives.

Decision: In its decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

- elects its Bureau for 2025-2027 as follows: Aleš Bizjak, Slovenia, as Chair; Harry Liiv, Estonia, as Vice-Chair; and Bakary Faty, Senegal, as Vice-Chair;
- elects the following other Bureau members: Heide Jekel, Germany; Luay Ali Al-Daloo, Iraq; Daniyar Sagadiyev, Kazakhstan; Fanny-Tsilla Koninckx, France; Bernadette Araba Adjei, Ghana; Péter Kovács, Hungary; Anna-Stiina Heiskanen, Finland; Salvatore D'Angelo, Italy; Mariia Shpanchyk, Ukraine; Kamala Huseynli-Abishova, Azerbaijan; and Maria Amakali, Namibia.
- agrees that the current Co-Chairs of the Working Group on IWRM and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will remain in office until the Working Groups officially elect their own Co-Chairs, who will then become Bureau members;
- expresses appreciation and gratitude to the outgoing Chair, Harry Liiv, for his leadership of the MOP and his support to the Convention over the past three years, as well as to the other outgoing Bureau members; and
- expresses its great appreciation to Slovenia for the close cooperation in the run up to MOP 10.

National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) on IWRM: Chair Liiv introduced this agenda item on Friday. Tamara Kutonova, Secretariat, and Alexander Zinke, Austrian Environment Agency addressed the topic on behalf of the consortium of partners, which includes UNECE, OECD, Environment Agency Austria, International Office for Water of France, and the Austrian Development Agency.

Kutonova presented on key achievements, citing examples of: advanced high-level legislation and institutions; legal and

policy reforms; support for transboundary cooperation; improved intersectoral cooperation; promotion of water and health agendas; and advanced technical solutions to water management. Zinke addressed three examples of topics discussed during NPDs in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia since 2022, namely: wastewater-based epidemiology; water monitoring; and river basin management plans.

Kutonova highlighted lessons learned, including: stakeholder participation and feedback demonstrates the high value of and interest in NPDs; NPDs can commission studies to provide the data for evidence-based decision making; and NPDs are instrumental in developing the strategic cross-sectoral vision of the water sector at the national level.

ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA, KAZAKHSTAN, and the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA shared national experiences with NPDs, with AUSTRIA commending the process and stressing the importance of open participation. ROMANIA voiced support for this programme area in the next triennium. IRAQ, as a new Party, expressed its interest in applying this approach. The EC pledged its continued support to the process of water policy reforms, and stressed the role of NPDs in the wider policy agendas, including on climate resilience.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- reaffirms the important role of NPDs in fostering the implementation and application of the Water Convention and its Protocol on Water and Health, the progressive approximation to EU legislation, and the enhancement of transboundary cooperation;
- welcomes the progress, strong commitment to, and ownership of countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia;
- notes how dialogue processes have evolved in all countries to adjust to different situations;
- welcomes the interest of some new Parties in applying NPD methodologies, experiences, and lessons learned, and encourages donors to support the transfer of experiences between countries;
- encourages the EC and other donors to continue to financially support the work of the NPDs in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia; and
- decides to include “Supporting National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Facilitating Funding and Financing of Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development: Dimka Stantchev Skeie, Switzerland, and Niels Vlaanderen, the Netherlands, Co-Lead Parties for this [programme area](#), introduced the agenda item.

Vlaanderen highlighted main achievements in this area since 2022, notably: strengthened partnership with key technical and financial partners; a comprehensive overview of sources of funding for transboundary cooperation and management; and new engagement with private-sector organizations. Describing how this progress was achieved, he highlighted: the development of the publication “How to Accelerate the Funding and Financing of Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development? Opportunities and Challenges” ([ECE/MP.WAT/72](#)); two global workshops; and preparation of the pre-MOP Match-making Event.

Stantchev Skeie presented the report “Funding and Financing of Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development” ([ECE/MP.WAT/61](#)). She drew attention to main challenges, including that closing the current funding gap takes time; there is a scarcity of public funds and competition between budget allocations; and common language is needed to effectively communicate with the private sector. Regarding future work, she recommended: strengthening cooperation with international and regional financial institutions, as well as relevant private-sector organizations; targeted support to new Parties; and a third global workshop.

NIGERIA and the EC expressed their appreciation for the developments in the past triennium, with the EC describing several regional initiatives it is supporting and advocating for increased use of nature-based solutions. UNCDF highlighted the [Blue Peace Financing Initiative](#) that it is undertaking together with Switzerland, the Gambia River Basin Organization, and private partners.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

stresses the importance of funding and financing transboundary water cooperation and basin development and the usefulness of the Convention platform for knowledge sharing and peer learning in this field;

- welcomes increased cooperation with financial institutions and other partner organizations, as well as the private sector, in raising awareness of the importance of financing transboundary water cooperation and basin development and



Andrii Taran, Ukraine

invited such institutions to further strengthen cooperation with the Convention as per recommendations listed in the decision on cooperation with IFIs ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/10](#));

- welcomes the publication, “How to Accelerate the Funding and Financing of Transboundary Water Cooperation and Basin Development? Opportunities and Challenges” ([ECE/MP.WAT/72](#)), and encourages countries, joint bodies, partner organizations, and other interested actors to use it to mobilize financial resources for transboundary water cooperation; and
- decides to include “Facilitating funding and financing of transboundary water cooperation and basin development” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Supporting Monitoring, Assessment and Information-Sharing in Transboundary Basins: On Friday, Anna-Stiina Heiskanen, Finland, as Co-Chair of the [Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment](#), provided an update on the Working Group’s work ([ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2023/2](#)). She introduced the documents: Updated Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters ([ECE/MP.WAT/70](#)); and Good Practices and Lessons Learned in Data-sharing in Transboundary Basins ([ECE/MP.WAT/73](#)). She said the latter contains 43 lessons learned supported by 78 case studies, describes challenges as well as solutions, complements existing guidance, and aims to inspire all actors working on monitoring and sharing of data and information.

Heiskanen summarized that data and information sharing forms a common basis for transboundary cooperation, enables informed decision making, builds trust between stakeholders, and helps to maximize the benefits of cooperation over shared waters. Among challenges, she identified comparability of data, inadequate resources, and limited spatial coverage, noting a growing interest in capacity building on new technologies.

Erik Aarnos, Secretariat, conducted a question-and-answer session, with six case study contributors reflecting on the added value of the data-sharing publication: lead consultant Jos Timmerman, the Netherlands; Birgit Vogel, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River; Norest Ndawana, Zimbabwe; Macarena Bahamondes-Ortiz, Chile; Ljupka Zaikov, North Macedonia; and Phera Ramoeli, OKACOM.

Bakary Faty, on behalf of Senegal as Co-Lead Party for this [programme area](#), underlined the indispensable role of monitoring, assessment, and information-sharing in transboundary water management and commended all partners on their work in this area.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- welcomes the publication “Updated Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters” ([ECE/MP.WAT/70](#)) and calls upon countries, basins, and partners to use it in their efforts to develop their monitoring and assessment practices and to strengthen implementation of the Convention;
- welcomes the publication “Good Practices and Lessons Learned in Data-sharing in Transboundary Basins” ([ECE/MP.WAT/73](#)) and encourages countries, joint bodies, partner organizations, and other interested actors to use it to develop their data and information sharing practices;
- thanks Finland and Senegal for leading this area of work, the Netherlands for proving expert support, and all the experts and contributors to the publications for their input;

- reaffirms its commitment to provide tailored assistance and support for developing joint or coordinated monitoring or information and data exchange in transboundary basin; and
- decides to include “Supporting monitoring, assessment and information-sharing in transboundary basins to address pressures on water resources” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Partnerships and Contribution to Global Processes: Chair

Liiv provided an overview of this issue ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/4](#) and [ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2](#)) on Friday, highlighting the growing importance of the Convention’s contributions to global processes and increased recognition at the international level.

Klas Moldéus, UN-Water, presented on the activities of [UN-Water](#) and on the [UN System-wide Strategy on Water and Sanitation](#), noting its vision of a world with available and sustainably managed water and sanitation for all. He explained the expected outcomes of the Strategy which include: strengthening leadership; improving policy coherence; and accelerating progress and transformational change. He described the collaborative implementation plan for the strategy which has time-bound actions and shows the respective contributions of UN entities. He discussed the plan’s timeline with next steps including the start of implementation in January 2025.

SENEGAL highlighted the upcoming [2026 UN Water Conference](#), co-hosted by Senegal and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), to convene in the UAE from 2-4 December 2026. The conference will support implementation of SDG 6.

Konstantina Toli, GEF, presented on cooperation between the Water Convention and the GEF, noting the GEF is a multilateral family of funds whose mandate embraces all facets of a healthy environment. Kathia Havens, World Bank, illustrated joint work with UNECE and regional members on transboundary water management.

Daniyar Sagadiyev, Vice-Chair of the Bureau, presented on the draft decision on cooperation with IFIs ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/10](#)). Fanny-Tsilla Koninckx, France, presented on the draft decision on cooperation with regional organizations for implementation of the Water Convention ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/11](#)).

Comments from the floor included the EU drawing attention to its support to water and sanitation, and to mainstreaming water and transboundary water cooperation into other areas, such as biodiversity, climate change, and desertification. The RAMSAR CONVENTION, the UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP), and the WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO) described their work and synergies

with the Water Convention. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION called for further funding to be dedicated to the Convention and for those funds to be distributed without politicization. The GENEVA WATER HUB noted that the ultimate goal of cooperation is to foster peace, and called for no longer weaponizing water, and for challenges to be turned into opportunities, with water used as an instrument of collaboration and peace.

Péter Kovács, Hungary, on behalf of Marta Vargha, Chair of the Bureau of the [Protocol on Water and Health](#), Hungary, drew attention to the [Budapest Declaration](#) in which countries commit, amongst other things, to tackle pollution and climate change, and ensure access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services. He also highlighted the [Global WaSH](#) initiative (water, sanitation, and hygiene) and drew attention to upcoming events.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- takes note of the significant contribution of the Water Convention to relevant global processes, resulting in its increased recognition at the global level and the growing awareness of the importance of transboundary water cooperation;
- highlights the importance of strengthened partnerships with various partners to support global implementation of the Water Convention;
- adopts the decision on cooperation with IFIs ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/10](#));
- adopts the decision on cooperation with regional organizations for implementation of the Water Convention ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/11](#));
- welcomes the information provided on the Protocol on Water and Health and encourages synergies between the activities under the Convention and the Protocol, as well as cooperation between the respective governing bodies; and
- decides to include “Partnerships, communication and input to global processes” in the PoW for 2025–2027.

Decision: In the decision on cooperation with IFIs ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/10](#)), adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, among other things:

- decides to establish and enhance collaboration with pertinent IFIs and further strengthen existing cooperation with the GEF and the World Bank;
- resolves to work closely with IFIs through the different bodies and activities under the Convention, for example, on the development of knowledge and exchange of experiences within the framework of the GEF IW:LEARN;
- calls on Parties to proactively engage with IFIs to leverage available financial and technical resources for transboundary water cooperation and with climate funds, considering that transboundary water resources increasingly suffer from climate change;
- calls on IFIs to provide increased technical and financial support to transboundary water cooperation processes and projects in general, and particularly those related to implementation of the Water Convention, with a special focus on new Parties with developing economies or economies in transition; and
- decides to regularly review progress.

Decision: In the decision on cooperation with regional organizations for implementation of the Water Convention ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/11](#)), adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:



Konstantina Toli, Global Environment Facility (GEF)

- decides to further strengthen cooperation with regional partners that are supporting the promotion of the Water Convention and its implementation at the national, basin, and regional levels;
- reiterates its appreciation for, and the importance of, partnerships with river, lake, and aquifer basin organizations, as well as other joint bodies for transboundary water cooperation that implement the Water Convention through their work, raising awareness, building capacity, and supporting its application on the ground;
- emphasizes its appreciation for, and the importance of, cooperation with UN regional commissions, which has significantly increased awareness of the Water Convention;
- reiterates its appreciation for, and the importance of, cooperation with other regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations;
- encourages the adoption of innovative approaches to cooperation and joint fundraising, where appropriate, to support implementation of the Convention and the promotion of transboundary water cooperation; and
- decides to regularly review progress and gaps in the development of cooperation with regional organizations.

Communication and Promotion: Elise Zerrath, Secretariat, provided an update on the communication efforts related to the Convention and its activities, as contained in the Strategy for the Implementation of the Convention at the global level ([ECE/MP.WAT/54/Add.2](#)), noting a milestone of 10,000 followers had been reached on X (formerly Twitter) and urging participants to follow it on social media and subscribe to the newsletter. She provided examples of media engagement, such as the coverage of World Water Day 2024, and highlighted focal points as Convention ambassadors.

The MEDITERRANEAN WETLANDS INITIATIVE (MEDWET) drew attention to [their work](#) and its linkages with that of the Water Convention.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP requests Parties that have not yet officially nominated a focal point to do so at their earliest convenience, and encourages non-Parties that have not yet officially nominated a focal point to take action as soon as possible.

International Water Assessment Centre: Zhanar Mautanova, IWAC, presented on the work of the Centre ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/INF.8](#)), its PoW 2022-2024 ([ECE/MP.WAT/63/Add.2](#)) and draft PoW 2025-2027 ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/12](#)). She noted activities promoting an integrated and inter-sectoral approach to water resources management at all levels, including in transboundary basins. She highlighted activities supporting monitoring, assessment, and information-sharing activities, such as the assistance in developing joint actions to prevent water pollution in transboundary basins. She presented plans to organize a regional workshop on SDG indicator 6.5.2 in 2025, noting promoting cooperation on the joint use of transboundary aquifers, and input into global events, as additional activities. KAZAKHSTAN and GERMANY commended the work of IWAC and the Water Convention, with KAZAKHSTAN pledging continuing support.

Decision: In the related decision, adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP, *inter alia*:

- welcomes the contribution of IWAC to activities under the Convention in 2022-2024;

- thanks the Government of Kazakhstan for its support provided to the Centre in 2022-2024 and its commitment to continue hosting the Centre;
- adopts the PoW of the IWAC for 2025-2027 ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/12](#)), and calls on countries, partners, and donors to support its implementation;
- requests the Centre to regularly report on the implementation of its activities to the Working Group on IWRM and to MOP 11; and
- requests Kazakhstan to prepare a draft PoW for the Centre for 2028-2030, aligned with the corresponding draft PoW under the Convention, for submission to MOP 11.

Programme of Work for 2025–2027, Terms of Reference of the Bodies Established to Implement It, and Resources Needed for Its Implementation: This item was addressed on Friday, in a session chaired by Aleš Bizjak, Vice-Chair of the Bureau, Slovenia.

Sonja Koeppel, Water Convention Secretary, gave a brief presentation on the draft PoW ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/2](#)), noting that the overall structure remains the same as in the current triennium. She emphasized that the activities in the PoW can only be carried out if sufficient funding is available. She noted that total resources required for the entire work programme amount to just under USD 19 million, including overhead, with higher costs being projected for staff, office, and translation/interpretation in the near future. She concluded that while some pledges have already been confirmed, these are far from covering all resources needs.

AUSTRIA, AZERBAIJAN, the INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN), the EU, NAMIBIA, the NETHERLANDS, UGANDA, and ZAMBIA reaffirmed the role of transboundary water collaboration in promoting peace and sustainable development, welcomed the proposed PoW, urged increased funding for its implementation, and pledged their continued support and collaboration. Vice-Chair Bizjak recalled the decision to establish a working group to elaborate a proposal for a more sustainable and predictable financing mechanism, and urged progress on that matter.

Decision: In the related decision, which was adopted without amendment on Friday, the MOP:

- thanks the Parties and organizations that have provided leadership for and support to the activities under the PoW for 2022-2024;
- conveys its appreciation to the Parties and organizations that expressed readiness to take a lead in implementing the PoW for 2025–2027 and to those that offered to finance parts of it;
- adopts the PoW for 2025–2027, the establishment of the bodies needed to implement it, and the relevant budget ([ECE/MP.WAT/2024/2](#));
- requests the Bureau to make arrangements to further develop the PoW and adapt it to changing circumstances, in line with the Rules of Procedure;
- calls on Parties to provide the extrabudgetary resources required to implement the PoW; and
- invites non-Parties and partners to also support implementation of the future PoW.

Adoption of Decisions: On Friday, Chair Liiv presented the decisions that had been addressed throughout the week. The MOP adopted them and entrusted the Secretariat to finalize the MOP 10 report.

Closing: Aleš Bizjak, Slovenia, as the new Bureau and MOP 11 Chair, noted increasing challenges in the world as a whole and

in the world of the Water Convention, but expressed optimism, stating that “together, we are working towards a better world.”

MOP 10 Chair Liiv closed the meeting at 6:20 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

Baku Climate Change Conference: The 29th session of the COP to the UNFCCC (COP 29) will convene in November 2024 under the theme “In Solidarity for a Green World.” **dates:** 11-22 November 2024 **location:** Baku, Azerbaijan **www:** unfccc.int/cop29

SADC Groundwater Conference: SADC-GMI will host the SADC Groundwater Conference under the theme “Promoting Peace Across Borders through Conjunctive Water Management.” **dates:** 13-15 November 2024 **location:** Maseru, Lesotho **www:** events.sadc-gmi.org/e/8/6th-sadc-groundwater-conference

World Toilet Day 2024: World Toilet Day is celebrated annually on 19 November to inspire action to tackle the global sanitation crisis and help achieve SDG 6, which promises sanitation for all by 2030. **date:** 19 November 2024 **location:** worldwide **www:** un.org/en/observances/toilet-day

40th UN-Water Meeting: The 40th UN-Water Meeting will be held back-to-back with the meeting of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. It will focus on will discuss how to implement the [first-ever UN system-wide water and Sanitation Strategy](#). **dates:** 4-5 November 2024 **location:** New York, US **www:** unwater.org/

UNCCD COP 16: The 16th session of the COP to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP 16) will discuss topics under three issue areas: land, resilience, and people. **dates:** 2-13 December 2024 **location:** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia **www:** unccd.int/cop16

One Water Summit: The One Water Summit will seek to accelerate action on SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation) and discuss solutions to water challenges, in preparation for the 2026 UN Water Conference. The Summit is part of the One Planet Summit initiative, an initiative of the Government of France, launched in partnership with the UN, World Bank Group, and Bloomberg Philanthropies. The event will convene on the margins of UNCCD COP 16. **date:** 3 December 2024 **location:** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia **www:** oneplanetsummit.fr/en/events-16/one-water-summit-287

PANAFCON-3: The Third Pan-African Implementation and Partnership Conference on Water (PANAFCON-3) will convene in May 2025 in Lusaka, Zambia. Held for the first time since 2009, this conference will provide an opportunity for Africa’s development partners to express commitment to the activities of the African Ministers’ Council on Water and Africa’s water development agenda. **dates:** TBD, May 2025 **location:** Lusaka, Zimbabwe **www:** amcow-online.org/

41st IAHR World Congress: The 41st International Association for Hydro-environment Engineering and Research (IAHR) World Congress will be held on the theme “Innovative Water Engineering for Sustainable Development” and focus on the importance of innovative water engineering in meeting the SDGs and water resources targets. **dates:** 22-27 June 2025 **location:** Singapore **www:** 2025.iahr.org/

Ramsar COP 15: The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP

15) will take place in July 2025 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe.

dates: 23-31 July 2025 **location:** Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe **www:** ramsar.org/meeting/15th-meeting-conference-contracting-parties

UN Water Conference: The next UN Water Conference will be co-hosted by Senegal and the UAE, in a location to be determined. The Conference will be the first to be held since the launch of the UN System-wide Strategy for Water and Sanitation in July 2024. **dates:** 2-4 December 2026 **location:** TBD **www:** unwater.org/news/united-nations-water-conference-2026

11th World Water Forum: The 11th World Water Forum will be held in Saudi Arabia in 2027. The World Water Forum, co-organized by the World Water Council and a host city, is the largest international gathering in the water sector involving various stakeholders. The Forum is held every three years and has been running since 1997. **dates:** TBC **location:** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia **www:** worldwatercouncil.org/en/11th-world-water-forum-saudi-arabia-and-riyadh-host-11th-world-water-forum-2027

For additional upcoming events, see: sdg.iisd.org/

Glossary

AfDB	African Development Bank
EC	European Commission
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IFI	International financial institution
IWAC	International Water Assessment Centre
IWRM	Integrated water resources management
IW:LEARN	International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network
MOP	Meeting of the Parties
NAPs	National Adaption Plans
NPDs	National Policy Dialogues
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
OKACOM	Okavango River Basin Commission
PoW	Programme of Work
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDG 6	SDG on access to clean water and sanitation for all
SDG 6.5.2	SDG indicator on the proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SMAB	Senegalo-Mauritanian Aquifer Basin
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCDF	UN Capital Development Fund
UNECE	UN Economic Commission for Europe
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
WFEE	Water-food-energy-ecosystems (Nexus)