Summary of the Eighth Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Waters and International Lakes (Water Convention)

The eighth Meeting of the Parties (MOP8) of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) convened from Wednesday 10 October to Friday 12 October 2018 in Astana, Kazakhstan. More than 600 people from 93 countries attended the meeting, including parties, non-party states, representatives of UN and other governmental and non-governmental organizations, and academia.

Following the opening of the Water Convention to countries beyond the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region at MOP7, the Convention welcomed Chad and Senegal as the first countries from outside the Pan-European region to accede. During the meeting, more than fifteen countries, from Africa and other regions, announced their decision or intention to accede.

Parties also adopted a new global strategy, with the goals of increasing:

- awareness of and political support for the Convention;
- accession of new parties;
- support for implementation of the Convention, transboundary water management, and water related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and
- partnerships with other actors.

Throughout the meeting, many speakers highlighted the importance of further expanding the Water Convention and making its tools globally available to enable cooperation and effective water management.

MOP8 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 for 2019-2021 and approved a budget of US$12.1 million.

MOP8 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. On the first day of the meeting, a high-level segment took place, with a Special Session on transboundary water cooperation: “Sharing water for people, planet, prosperity, and peace.”
This report presents a summary of the workshop on financing transboundary basin development, and the presentations, discussions, and decisions of MOP8. MOP Chair Péter Kovács read out the decisions under the relevant agenda items, and delegates adopted all decisions as a package at the close of the meeting.

**A Brief History of the 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 from March 2016. There are currently 42 parties to the Convention. Chad acceded on 23 February 2018 and Senegal on 31 August 2018 as first countries outside the UNECE region.

The Water Convention’s objective is to strengthen national measures for the protection and sound management of transboundary surface water and groundwater. 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. The Convention 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/WHO Europe Protocol on Water and Health was adopted in London, the United Kingdom, in 1999 and entered into force in 2005. There are 26 parties to the Protocol. The Protocol aims to protect human health and wellbeing by better 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 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.

**MOP3**: The third session of the MOP was held in Madrid, Spain, from 26-28 November 2003. At this meeting, parties decided, *inter alia*, to open up the possibility of acceding to the Convention to countries outside the UNECE region and to focus further work under the Convention on Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, where many rivers and lakes that were a national concern within the Soviet Union are now shared between sovereign states.

**MOP4**: The fourth session of the MOP was held from 20–22 November 2006, in Bonn, Germany. At this meeting, decisions included the: Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes, and Groundwaters; Model Provisions on Transboundary Flood Management; Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Pipelines, jointly with the parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention; and the Recommendations on the Payments for Ecosystem Services in Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

**MOP5**: The fifth session of the MOP took place from 10-12 November 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland. MOP5, *inter alia*: adopted the Guide to Implementing the Convention and the Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change; mandated the Legal Board of the Convention to explore options for a mechanism to support implementation and compliance in view of considering proposals for such mechanism at MOP6; decided on the continuation of the National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) under the EU Water Initiative (EUWI); and agreed a roadmap to develop the Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes, and Groundwaters in the UNECE region, to be issued by the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference.

**MOP6**: The sixth session of the MOP took place from 28–30 November 2012 in Rome, Italy. MOP6 adopted decisions on, *inter alia*: support for implementation and compliance, establishing an Implementation Committee; Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters; accession by countries beyond the UNECE region; cooperation with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the UN Economic, Social, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); and a vision for the future of the Convention.

**MOP7**: The seventh session of the MOP 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. MOP7 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.

**Water Convention MOP8 Report**

**High-Level Workshop: Financing Transboundary Basin Development**

On Tuesday, a high-level workshop was held to build capacity of ministers and other high-level officials in financing water cooperation and transboundary basin development. Over 80 representatives from 29 countries participated.

**Opening Session**: Umirzak Shukeev, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, Kazakhstan, highlighted the need for effective solutions for financing of and cooperation on transboundary basin development, stressing that “water is a
In the first roundtable, participants discussed transboundary financing, followed by two ministerial roundtables. Pio Wennubst, Vice-Director General, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), introduced the ministerial roundtable session, and stated that even though it is not specifically "spelled out," water management will follow. Wennubst underscored that implementing IWRM is a task for all countries under the United Nations. He argued that if countries have the right information and institutions, investments in transboundary water management will follow. Olga Algayрова, Executive Secretary, UNECE, highlighted the fundamental role of financing transboundary water cooperation for regional integration, and protection of human health and natural resources. She stressed that the transboundary context may increase challenges for sustainable financing, noting that: many funding sources primarily target the national and local levels; and investors often face increased challenges due to the involvement of multiple countries; and different legal responsibilities and mandates.

Ato Brown, World Bank Country Manager for Kazakhstan, underscored that implementing IWRM is a task for all countries under the United Nations. He argued that if countries have the right information and institutions, investments in transboundary water management will follow.

Ministerial Roundtables: Francesca Bernardini, Secretary, Water Convention, introduced the ministerial roundtable session and stated that even though it is not specifically "spelled out," financing is an inherent dimension of the Convention. Susanne Schmeier, UNECE consultant, outlined a proposal for categorizing financing needs and resources. She highlighted that finance is needed throughout the transboundary cooperation cycle and that ample sources of financing are available, stressing the importance of matching the financing needs with sources.

Participants then engaged in an interactive exercise on transboundary financing, followed by two ministerial roundtables. In the first roundtable, participants discussed:

- the availability of domestic sources and mechanisms to access these sources;
- the potential to mobilize the private sector, including through blended finance;
- the role of international funding sources, including climate finance;
- how basin investment plans and strategies can help mobilize financing; and
- how project preparation facilities support initial project development.

In the second roundtable, participants shared views on financing needs, including financing for information provision, support of water cooperation processes and institutions, and infrastructure.

Plenary: Danilo Türk, Chairman, Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, moderated the concluding panel.

The moderators for the first ministerial roundtable reported on key messages from each discussion, highlighting:

- the need for capacity building, technology development, and information sharing to access international funding for transboundary cooperation;
- the value of reducing risks related to private investment through public guarantees;
- the need to identify priorities for each basin through basin investment plans; and
- the important role institutional frameworks play in involving the private sector.

The moderators for the second ministerial roundtable highlighted:

- preconditions that enable finance from international funding institutions;
- the need for joint transboundary management institutions and strategies for managing water resources in shared basins;
- information sharing mechanisms and diagnostic analyses that lead to long-term investment frameworks; and
- the merits of a step-by-step approach to transboundary basin development, information sharing, and data harmonization.

In conclusion, Türk highlighted the differing modalities to fund transboundary water cooperation and underscored that the challenge is to bring them together.

MOP8 Opening Plenary

Highlighting the global opening of the Water Convention, MOP Chair Kovács, Hungary, stressed that water is the most crucial and strategic natural resource of the 21st century. He noted that transboundary water cooperation is politically sensitive and complicated, underscoring that the Convention offers a variety of tools and solutions for effective water management.

Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of Kazakhstan, via video message, stressed that a lack of water is a major obstacle to sustainable development in many regions and that competition for water sources can drive conflict. He highlighted *inter alia*: innovative approaches for international cooperation; effective water-saving technologies; measures to address contamination of water sources; and scientific and technical cooperation, including compatible legal regimes to forge partnerships.

Emphasizing the social, environmental, and economic importance of water, Umirzak Shukeev, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Agriculture, Kazakhstan, stressed that transboundary watercourses impact interstate relationships. He highlighted the need for: consistent national and regional measures for transboundary cooperation; mutual commitments for joint water resources’ management; coherent policies that account for the economic interests of neighboring countries; and effective legal systems that foster international cooperation.
Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary, UNECE, read a message from António Guterres, UN Secretary-General, which stressed that transboundary water is not just about cooperation, but also drives economic prosperity and protects sustainable ecosystems. He called for UN member states to join the Water Convention and the UN Watercourses Convention. Returning to her own remarks, Algayerova highlighted that current transboundary basin collaboration is not sufficient to address existing and future challenges. Stressing that current water agreements are not adequately enforced, she regretted that only 17 member states report that cooperation is operational in all their transboundary basins.

Péter Szijjártó, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary, outlined that, because 95% of the country’s water flows originate outside its borders, Hungary “knows the meaning of transboundary water cooperation.” He highlighted that without prevention measures, increased migration driven by water conflicts is likely. He urged members to consider whether a new intergovernmental UN platform should be established to enable comprehensive and integrative discussion of water issues.

Lamenting that 40% of the world’s population is affected by water scarcity, Michelle Yeoh, UN Development Programme (UNDP) Goodwill Ambassador, Malaysia, via video message, emphasized that water is at the core of sustainable development, underpinning many SDGs.


Secretary Bernardini presented the status of ratification of the Water Convention and its Protocols and report on credentials (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/INF.1). She addressed the ratification status of: the Water Convention, noting that Chad and Senegal have acceded since the last meeting; the Protocol on Water and Health; the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters (Protocol on Civil Liability); and the amendments to Articles 25 (ratification, acceptance, approval, and accession) and 26 (entry into force) of the Water Convention. The status of the Protocols and amendments are unchanged. MOP Chair Kovács noted that the Bureau will examine the credentials and submit its report. On Friday, Heide Jekel (Germany) and Harry Liiv (Estonia) reported that all credentials were submitted in order.

Delegates then adopted the meeting agenda (ECE/MP.WAT/53), and the revised rules of procedure (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/1).

**Special Session: Transboundary Water Cooperation: Sharing Water for People, Planet, Prosperity, and Peace**

Transboundary water cooperation and water allocation: Preventing conflict, and ensuring peace and stability:

Moderator Monika Weber-Fahr, Executive Secretary, Global Water Partnership (GWP), underscored the importance of transboundary cooperation for countries, people, economic growth, the environment, and peace and stability.

Emphasizing that “water resources are at a crossroads,” Mansour Faye, Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation, Senegal, said that global demand for water has grown 1% annually. He underscored that peace is more than the absence of conflict, it is also a framework for cooperation.

Shavkat Khamraev, Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources, Uzbekistan, highlighted interstate efforts to save the Aral Sea, including a recent international conference on “Joint Actions to Mitigate the Consequences of the Aral Catastrophe.” He underscored his country’s support for the creation of a regional center for preventive water diplomacy and a regional forum on the rational use of transboundary water.

Khan Mohammad Takal, Deputy Minister of Water, Afghanistan, said that population growth and climate change have contributed to the degradation of water resources in his landlocked and mountainous country. He highlighted Afghanistan’s data exchange on water with its neighboring states.

Danilo Türk, Chair, Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace, said water is an “instrument for peace” both with respect to conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. He outlined work by the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace on political and legal instruments for transboundary water cooperation.

Mamman Nuhu, Executive Secretary, Lake Chad Basin Commission, cited the shrinking of Lake Chad as a root cause of several crises in the region, including the rise of the terrorist group Boko Haram. He said the most durable solution is to restore water to the lake, suggesting transferring water from the Congo Basin.

Astrid Schomaker, Director for Global Sustainable Development, Directorate General for the Environment, European Commission, highlighted the EU’s long experience...
with transboundary water cooperation, especially with respect to river basin management plans. She said the EU had learned from past mistakes and expressed hope that others would learn from them as well.

Isabella Pagotto, Senior Policy Advisor and Programme Manager, Global Program Water, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, on behalf of Pio Wennhubst, Vice-Director General, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation, reported on the high-level workshop on financing transboundary basin development held on Tuesday 9 October. She said investors often see projects at the transboundary level as riskier, stressing the importance of clear and effective basin plans and shared investment plans. She said further venues to continue dialogue on finance are needed.

The Central African Republic outlined major, regional cooperation initiatives for IWRM, promoting, among others, peaceful conflict resolution. Noting that the role of water for peace and security is increasingly recognized in international fora, Austria, on behalf of the EU, highlighted a rules-based system for transboundary water cooperation, underscoring the interlinkages among water, energy, health, food security, and climate change.

Nigeria presented multilateral and bilateral activities aiming to resolve conflicts through efficient transboundary water management. Suriname highlighted new water laws and international cooperation in the region to manage environmental challenges. Iraq emphasized the need for robust legal frameworks and standardized criteria, ensuring the needs of local populations are met via international cooperation and integrated management of the two main rivers in the region.

Greece said that while the term “balkanization” often signifies division and fighting, the Balkan region has witnessed considerable cooperation on water issues, including a tripartite cooperation in the river Evros/Maritsa/Meriç that Greece shares with Bulgaria and Turkey. Germany offered relevant experience from the 68-year old International Commission on the Protection of the Rhine, including methods and tools to increase mutual understanding, build trust, and find solutions. Finland and Estonia highlighted collaboration with Russia on transboundary water management.

France highlighted the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C,” urging action to address global environmental challenges via international cooperation.

Noting previous difficulties among countries in the Horn of Africa regarding shared water resources, Somalia said that recent political developments in the region may open new opportunities for cooperation. Slovenia said that regional cooperation during “difficult times” in the 1990s could provide a useful example for other countries. Spain, Ecuador, and Peru highlighted regional forms of cooperation.

Slovakia stressed that “continuous communication and cooperation” is the best way to ensure sustainable and fair allocation of transboundary waters. Highlighting the “SDG 6 Synthesis Report on Water and Sanitation,” UN-Water said that the world is not on track to achieve SDG 6 (water and sanitation) by 2030.

Reflecting on interventions from the floor, panelists highlighted the:
- importance of knowledge sharing on water use;
- need for a vision for water governance, which is only partially provided by SDG 6; and
- possibility of convening a global multi-stakeholder conference to elevate water issues on the political agenda.

Sharing waters in the context of growing water scarcity: How can transboundary water cooperation make a difference?: Sibylle Vermont, Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland, moderated the second panel.

Yerlan Nyssanbayev, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Kazakhstan, highlighted efforts to manage the Aral Sea Basin, including three joint action plans among Central Asian countries and proposals for an automated water management system.

Mahamat Alifa Moussa, Secretary General, Ministry of Environment, Water, and Fisheries, Chad, highlighted conclusions from a Chad Basin heads of state summit on sustainable development, which recommended, inter alia: a process for including Lake Chad as a UNESCO heritage site; water transfers from the Oubangi River to Lake Chad; involving local stakeholders in basin development; and strengthening research and development to prevent water scarcity.

Tatiana Bokova, Deputy Head, Federal Agency for Water Resources, Russian Federation, outlined national efforts to address water scarcity, and improve water supply and transboundary water cooperation. She questioned the need for further intergovernmental platforms to discuss water issues, suggesting that they could undermine existing systems.

Lansana Fofana, High Commissioner, Gambia River Basin Development Organization, said existing financial mechanisms do not fit current funding needs on water scarcity and transboundary cooperation. He said that the Organization’s primary concern is to preserve existing ecosystems before considering sharing waters with other basins.

Nuno Lacasta, President, Portuguese Environment Agency, drew attention to long-standing cooperation on water between Portugal and Spain, including the Albufeira Convention, which he described as a precursor of modern international conventions on water management in transboundary settings.
Grigory Mazmaniants, Director for Central Asia, World Wide Fund for Nature, underscored that transboundary cooperation in the world’s rivers will support action to combat climate change. He highlighted the Ili river basin and the Balkhash lake, both shared by Kazakhstan and China, underscoring that effective cooperation is necessary for their conservation.

The EU highlighted efforts to address water scarcity, including reducing water demand and improving water-use efficiency, via policies that are tailored to regional needs and account for social, cultural, economic, and environmental considerations. Romania noted that climate adaptation policies and the Danube river basin management plan could address water scarcity.

Cameroon stressed the need for knowledge exchange and experience sharing on water issues. Ghana underscored regional cooperation efforts to address water related transboundary challenges, including water scarcity, flooding, and biodiversity loss. Uruguay outlined national and regional efforts to achieve integrated water action.

Finland highlighted climate change mitigation and adaptation actions, and equitable and sustainable water use, underscoring a holistic approach for water management that facilitates participation of all stakeholders. Highlighting cooperation and good governance, the Netherlands stated that the previous summer had been the driest in 200 years, noting that droughts put pressure on transboundary cooperation.

Mauritania announced his intention to accede to the Water Convention.

Guinea said out of the country’s 23 rivers, 14 are shared with other African countries, and elaborated on national and regional water related efforts. Kenya said 54% of their water resources are transboundary and outlined the development of a national transboundary water policy, as well as legal and institutional frameworks.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) highlighted its effort to support basin organizations’ project implementation and institutional capacity building.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) applauded a recently initiated GEF project in the Dniester River basin, shared by Moldova and Ukraine, which builds on a previous UNECE OSCE project.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) underscored that as much as two-thirds of the world's population could face water stress by 2030, with much of the socioeconomic impact falling on the agricultural sector.

Concluding the panel, Vermont highlighted the need for political will at the highest level, partnerships, consensus, solidarity, and monitoring to achieve transboundary water management.

**Reporting under the Convention and on SDG indicator 6.5.2**

MOP Chair Kovács referred to the report on the implementation of the programme of work 2016–2018, including partnerships (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/2) and the overview of contributions and expenditures in 2016–2018 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/3), which he said provide an overview of past achievements as well as contributions and expenditures in the past three years, and briefly reported on the Bureau’s activities since MOP7.

On SDG indicator 6.5.2 (proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation), William Reidhead, UN-Water, discussed findings in the “SDG 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation” and informed participants about progress on the Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6, which provided data for the Synthesis Report. With respect to the Synthesis Report, he highlighted the need: for the UN to speak with one voice on SDG 6; to avoid a fragmented approach on SDG 6 reporting; and to analyze data, information, and policy linkages between different SDGs. Noting that “we are currently not on track” to achieve the SDG 6 targets, he underscored that now is the time to act.

With respect to policy at the national level, he outlined recommendations to, *inter alia*: bring together different ministries and stakeholders; conduct holistic analyses that captures interlinkages; package and present data in a way that is relevant to policymakers; create linkages to existing policy processes and joint sector reviews; and strengthen national monitoring and information systems.

Bosnia and Herzegovina highlighted communication problems between UN agencies regarding SDG indicators. The Communauté Économique des États de l’Afrique Centrale and Guinea underscored the need for national coordination between focal points, with Guinea commenting on the lack of time to collect and transmit information for the SDG6 Synthesis Report. Reidhead responded that the timeline for the development of the Report was tight due to the schedule of the UN system, but said there should be more time in the future.

Sarah Tiefenauer-Linardon, Water Convention Secretariat, and Aurélien Dumont, UNESCO, presented on the progress on transboundary water cooperation, based on the global baseline for SDG indicator 6.5.2.
Tiefenauer-Linardon addressed the reporting process, noting that the reports were reviewed and analyzed by UNECE and UNESCO, and support was provided to countries to improve data quality. She stressed that 70% of countries sharing transboundary waters responded to the questionnaire, and presented initial results of the first reporting exercise, including that there are diverse types of cooperation, sectoral scopes, and arrangements.

Dumont delivered key messages, including that: transboundary water cooperation is a precondition for sustainable development, peace, and stability, as well as for the creation of social, economic, environmental, and political dependencies; and target 6.5 (by 2030, implement IWRM at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate) can play a catalytic role across multiple SDGs and relevant targets, as it is the only target that refers to transboundary cooperation. He noted that out of 62 countries considered, the results show that only 59% of basin areas on average are covered by operational arrangements.

The Netherlands emphasized that the reporting requirement is intended to increase countries’ awareness in order to achieve cooperation, urging for implementation. Guinea and South Sudan noted that support for stringent reporting requirements should be provided when needed. Turkey queried the nature of revisions on the reporting template to increase the rate of responses during the second reporting cycle.

Alistair Rieu-Clarke, Water Convention Secretariat, presented the first report on progress on transboundary water cooperation under the Water Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/51). Providing background information on data collection and analysis, he addressed key findings on transboundary water management at the national level, as well as on joint bodies and on implementation. He underscored that while gaps in implementation remain, the pilot reporting exercise shows a high level of implementation of the Water Convention.

Germany expressed appreciation for the structure and content of the report. Austria called for a clear definition of focal points. Oxfam queried the relevant evidence showing progress regarding public participation and consultation.

Secretary Bernardini presented the draft decision on reporting and the revised template for reporting under the Water Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/5). Noting that the first reporting exercise was a pilot to test the approach, she outlined the elements of the draft decision, including: aligning the processes of reporting under the Water Convention and under SDG indicator 6.5.2; defining the frequency of reporting; and improving the reporting template following relevant feedback. Bernardini underscored the need to promote the use of reports for identifying and addressing gaps in cooperation.

The EU welcomed the draft decision, emphasizing access to data, information sharing, appropriate governance, and the need to use existing data to minimize future reporting requirements. Luxembourg suggested the development of an electronic reporting system. Botswana queried the reporting requirements under the Water Convention for non-parties.

The European ECO-Forum noted room for improvement on reporting. Guinea said the exercise enabled countries to identify gaps in transboundary water management and requested support to bridge those gaps. Senegal shared national experiences regarding the organization of focal points and the coordination between different ministries and the national statistical agency.

**Final Decision:** The MOP adopted the decision on reporting (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/5) and the revised template for reporting under the Water Convention. The MOP further decided to include reporting under the Convention and on SDG indicator 6.5.2 as one of the programme areas in the future PoW of the Water Convention for 2019-2021.

**Opening of the Convention, Promotion, and Partnerships**

**Assistance with countries’ accession to and implementation of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development**

Sonja Koeppel, Water Convention Secretariat, provided an overview of activities related to the global opening of the Convention. With respect to lessons learned, she underscored, *inter alia*, the need for clear commitments from countries interested in accession, that the accession process takes time, and the importance of regional approaches to accession.

Reflecting on his country’s engagement in the process of accession, Chad said it strengthens the visibility of work on transboundary water cooperation. Reflecting on lessons learned, Senegal outlined the importance of political will for rapid accession. Chad and Senegal said they can contribute to the Water Convention by sharing their experiences on transboundary water cooperation.

As countries that are currently in the process of accession, Iraq highlighted how information sessions helped address national concerns and Tunisia outlined the benefits of accession in facilitating cooperation with neighboring countries.

The Communauté Économique des États de l’Afrique Centrale requested financial and technical assistance from the Secretariat to help raise awareness of the benefits of accession and implementation of the Water Convention to countries in Central Africa. Uganda said there is no reason for not acceding but observed that awareness within his country is low.

Kenya queried the procedure when one accedes, but a neighboring country with shared water does not. In response, Bernardini emphasized the importance of working to promote accession at several levels, especially regionally, and that accession can be a tool to work more closely with neighbors. France encouraged countries to invite embassy focal points from donor countries to national and regional workshops to initiate a dialogue on IWRM.

**Final Decision:** The MOP inter alia: adopted the strategy for the implementation of the Water Convention at the global level; entrusted the Bureau and the Working Group on IWRM to regularly review the strategy’s implementation and to report to MOP9; and adopted the decision on the designation and responsibilities of focal points.

**Cooperation with partners:** Dragana Jovanovic, Serbian Institute for Public Health, on behalf of the chair of the Protocol on Water and Health, said progress has been achieved in almost all ratifying countries on safe drinking water and water quality. Germany highlighted the value of the Protocol to EU member states as it contains elements that go beyond EU-level regulations.

Christian Severin, GEF, reported on recent development at the GEF (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/INF.3) and emphasized the importance of linking water and water security to economic development and human health to better inform political decision-making. France asked for specific examples of transboundary water projects supported by the GEF and encouraged closer cooperation between the GEF and the Convention. Severin responded that the GEF has invested in many of the biggest freshwater basins in the world.

In a panel discussion with partners, Vladimir Mamaev, UNDP, underscored that UNDP is jointly implementing the Convention through initiatives, including 22 transboundary water projects. Andrés Sánchez, Organization of American States, said the Organization is on the same “wavelength” as the Water Convention on issues related to hydro-diplomacy and associated water access, as well as shared water use problems.

On what the Water Convention can offer to basin development, Ababacar Ndao, Gambia River Basin Development Organization, said it could help address the challenges of donors preferring to fund national rather than regional water infrastructure projects.

Aneta Nikolova, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), highlighted that the principles of the Water Convention are highly relevant in the Asia-Pacific region and said there are many opportunities for further cooperation between ESCAP and the Water Convention. Francis Bougare, AfDB, said the Bank requires all states implementing water-related projects to produce evidence that all affected countries support project implementation.

Olçay Unver, Vice Chair, UN-Water, called for a high-level multi-stakeholder summit on water and invited parties to contribute to the
preparatory process. GWP highlighted its programs on water governance and offered support for countries intending to accede to the Water Convention.

**Final Decision:** The MOP, inter alia:
- decides that partnerships should continue and be further expanded;
- entrusts the Secretariat and the Bureau to further strengthen cooperation with GEF on different levels;
- decides to further strengthen cooperation between the Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health; and
- decides to include ‘Partnerships, communication, and knowledge management’ as a programme area in the 2019-2021 PoW.

**Implementation and Compliance**

Attila Tanzi, Chair of the Water Convention Implementation Committee, presented the report of the Implementation Committee and the draft decision on implementation (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/8). Tanzi discussed the Committee’s work during the intersessional period, noting it met four times. Drawing from the reports of the sixth through ninth meetings (ECE/MP.WAT/IC/2016/2 and 4, 2017/2, and 2018/2), he stressed that the Committee’s work focused on: exchanges of views on relevant roles and functions; information gathering and consultation activities; reviewing the pilot reporting exercise; helping the Secretariat to answer specific questions on the Convention by non-parties; and raising awareness on implementation and compliance. He also noted that, following two intersessional periods, five of the Committee members’ terms have expired, and he invited parties to support the new candidates, included in the report of the Implementation Committee.

The EU encouraged current and future parties to make use of the Implementation Committee’s expertise, supported the nominated candidates, and encouraged more balanced geographical representation in the Committee as the Water Convention enters a new global era.

**Final Decision:** The MOP noted the report on the work of the Implementation Committee in 2016-2018 as outlined in the report (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/8). MOP adopted the decision on general issues of implementation, contained in the Annex of the Committee’s report. The MOP further elected as members of the Committee for a full term: Pedro Cunha Serra (Portugal), Kari Kinnunen (Finland), Stephen McCaffrey (nominated by Switzerland), Martins Paparinskis (Latvia), and Ivan Zavadsky (Slovakia).

**Supporting Implementation and Application of the Convention through Projects on the Ground and Capacity Development**

Sarangoo Radnaragcha, Regional Advisor for Environment, UNECE, outlined the progress in different projects on the ground that support implementation and application of the Water Convention. She provided details for: the Chu Talas project in partnership with the UNDP, the Drin project with GWP – Mediterranean (GWP-Med), and the Dniester project with the OSCE, all funded by the GEF; and several projects in Central Asia, including the Afghanistan-Tajikistan cooperation, a water quality cooperation project in Central Asia in partnership with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC), a dam safety project in Central Asia, and Kazakhstán’s transition to a green economy model in partnership with UNDP.

Dimitris Faloutsos, GWP-Med, and Ekaterina Strikeleva, CAREC, offered insights from the Drin project and the water quality cooperation project in Central Asia, respectively.

The International Water Management Institute highlighted the role of scientific institutions and of bottom-up approaches.

**Final Decision:** The MOP invited donors to systematically promote the implementation of the Water Convention as the basis for sustainable management of transboundary waters, and decided to include ‘Supporting the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies’ into the 2019-2021 PoW.

**European Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues**

Carmen Neagu, Romania, presented on EUWI, stressing that the project’s success can be attributed to the political engagement of the countries involved. Matthew Griffiths, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Alisher Mamadzhanov, Water Convention Secretariat, highlighted key achievements of NPDs and stressed the need for strong country ownership. Eric Tardieu, International Office for Water, said that stakeholder participation mechanisms and awareness raising are key for policy implementation.

EU called on donors to continue supporting EUWI’s work. Kazakhstan, Austria, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Moldova, and Armenia highlighted cooperation with EUWI and their engagement in the NPD process.

Georgia underlined the importance of NPDs and stressed the need for further assistance from UNECE in the implementation phase of water resource management. Belarus detailed a draft strategy for water resource management and efforts to align national accounting indicators with SDG indicators for target 6.5.

**Final Decision:** The MOP, inter alia: reconfirmed the important role of NPDs in fostering the implementation and application of the Convention; agreed to continue with the policy dialogue process on IWRM; and decided to include it in the 2019-2021 PoW.
Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins

Seppo Rekolainen, Chair of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus, Finland, presented main achievements in this area, underscoring the consolidation of the nexus assessment methodology, the use of participatory methods, and awareness-rousing activities. He outlined major milestones during the intersessional period and lessons learned for future work, highlighting, inter alia: challenges to engage all relevant sectors; appropriate institutional frameworks to carry out the assessments and foster follow-up actions; the need for fit-for-purpose nexus tools; and the potential of the nexus perspective to add value in GEF projects.

Annuikka Lipponen, Water Convention Secretariat, addressed methodological advances, noting that current methodologies offer an open and flexible framework coupled with technical and governance analysis.

A panel discussion followed. Bosko Kenjić, Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations, Bosnia and Herzegovina, highlighted a step-wise approach, starting with institutional capacity development and harmonization of relevant national legal frameworks.

Rachid Taibi, Coordinator, Consultation Mechanism of the North-West Sahara Aquifer System, emphasized a dialogue mechanism between Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia that led to the realization that water is a cross-cutting issue. Claudio Bacigalupi, Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, European Commission, stressed that the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus is global, outlining the relevant programme of the Directorate-General that covers 80 countries and is implemented through different partners across the world.

OECD outlined its work developing tools on nexus assessments at the national level, highlighting the development of indicators on water, food, and energy security. The EU called for synergies, particularly on methodologies and assessments, noting that nexus efforts involve actors in a more comprehensive way, supporting regional integration and collaboration between riparian countries.

FAO highlighted a solar power irrigation system and a publication called "Alternative Pathways to 2050." GWP-Med underscored the need to find entry points for cooperation, stressing the need to "use figures" and measure risk in terms of implementation.

Kazakhstan called for a pragmatic approach accompanied by water diplomacy, noting that without economic benefits "cooperation is impossible."

Rekolainen presented the main outcomes of the Global Workshop on Water Allocation in transboundary basins, including considerations on benefit sharing, stakeholder participation, ensuring minimum environmental flows, and joint infrastructure investments.

Kenya highlighted water volume changes that may influence allocation activities. Botswana requested including the Okavango river basin in the future PoW in order to finalize the water allocation strategy in the region.

Final Decision: The MOP inter alia: endorsed the ‘Methodology for assessing the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus in transboundary basins and experiences from its application: Synthesis’ (ECE/MP.WAT/55) and its summary ‘A nexus approach to transboundary cooperation: The experience of the Water Convention’ (ECE/MP.WAT/NONE/12); and decided to include ‘Supporting intersectoral dialogues and assessments through the application of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus approach’ in the 2019-2021 PoW.

Identifying, Assessing, and Communicating the Benefits of Transboundary Cooperation

Harry Liiv, Deputy Secretary General, Ministry of Environment, Estonia, presented on progress in identifying and assessing benefits of transboundary water cooperation. He highlighted key achievements since 2016, including: development of a methodology for benefit assessment exercises; awareness raising on benefits of transboundary cooperation; dialogues focused on final outcomes of cooperation; and multi-stakeholder consultations to develop “basin perceptions" on benefits of cooperation.

Chantal Demilecamps, Water Convention Secretariat, outlined lessons learned since 2016, including inter alia: the need to adopt a "benefits lens" to help find opportunities for improvement; that there is no “blueprint" for benefit assessments, but that each should be tailored to the basin context; and the need for more robust methodologies to conduct qualitative assessments.

Presenting on a benefits assessment analysis conducted in the Sio-Malaba-Malakisi river basin, Callist Tindimugaya, Ministry of Water and Environment, Uganda, emphasized the benefits of enhanced trust between countries in the basin, especially regional economic cooperation, and enhanced peace and security.

Tracy Molefi, Permanent Okavango-Cubango River Basin Commission (OKACOM), Botswana, highlighted key outcomes from benefits assessment in OKACOM, stressing that the three countries benefited in different ways and to different degrees.

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development underscored: the benefits of water cooperation in the East Africa region; regional economic cooperation, including linked markets, regional investments, and diversified economies; and enhanced political stability.
**Final Decision:** The MOP, *inter alia:* welcomed progress in applying the Policy Guidance Note; encouraged interested basins and partners to consider applying and using the note; and decided to include ‘Promoting and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation’ in the 2019-2021 PoW.

**Adapting to Climate Change in Transboundary Basins**

The Co-Chairs of the Task Force on Water and Climate, Sibylle Vermont, Switzerland, and Niels Vlaanderen, the Netherlands, presented on the task force’s work, lessons learned, and future work (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/2 and ECE/MP.WAT/2015/4). Vermont highlighted pilot projects in the Neman, Chu Talas, Dniester, and Sava Basins, a range of workshops on climate change organized since 2016, a training workshop on preparing bankable projects for climate change adaptation, and two publications. Vlaanderen underscored lessons learned regarding, *inter alia:* the overexploitation of groundwater in water-stressed regions; and the need to support basin organizations in developing bankable projects, given the complicated nature of climate adaptation finance in transboundary basins.

As a member of one of the Water and Climate Task Force pilot projects, Bosnia and Herzegovina highlighted cooperative work between the UNECE and the Sava Commission on addressing climate change adaptation and flood risk management, and assessing climate impacts on the water sector. Moldova, recipient of another pilot project in the Dniester Basin, said the relevant implementation plan is lacking full financial coverage to implement the first stage of adaptation measures. Ukraine highlighted measures implemented under the pilot programme on the Dniester river, such as vulnerability and financial analyses, development of an adaptation strategy, and an implementation plan.

Francis Bougaire, AfDB, reported on a training conducted in Dakar in June 2017 on how to prepare bankable projects for financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins. He outlined recommendations for basin authorities related to, among others: identifying the root cause of the climate challenge; ensuring adaptation-specific design and scope; and understanding the finance landscape and establishing relationships with financing partners.

Paola Albrito, UNISDR, reported on the latest developments in the Sendai Framework and on the cooperation between UNECE and UNISDR. She highlighted, *inter alia,* that water-related disaster risks are increasing and that water is a key component of the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction.

Jos Timmerman, the Netherlands, presented the “Words into Action” implementation guide for addressing water related disasters and transboundary cooperation (ECE/MP.WAT/56), which focuses on integrating disaster risk management with water management and climate change adaptation, specifically outlining strategies to reduce risks. The guide was launched by UNECE and UNISDR.

The EU said adaptation to climate change is one of the most important future management issues in all river basins of the world. France outlined the importance of innovative approaches like nature based and agro-ecological solutions for promoting interlinkages with water and climate change adaptation.

UN-Water outlined a side event to showcase the organization’s work at the upcoming Katowice Climate Change Conference. FAO highlighted its role as the Secretariat of the Alliance on Climate Smart Agriculture, and said that it provides substantive support with the vision to improve food security, nutrition, and resilience in the face of climate change.

**Final Decision:** The MOP, *inter alia:* adopted the “Words into Action - implementation guide on addressing water related disasters and transboundary cooperation” (ECE/MP.WAT/56); recommended countries, basins, and partners use it in their efforts to reduce water related disaster risks, and when implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Water Convention; and decided to include ‘Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins’ in the 2019-2021 PoW.

**Water and Industrial Accidents**

Co-Chair of the Joint *Ad Hoc* Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG), Péter Kovács, Hungary, presented on the progress achieved by the JEG. He noted that the composition of the JEG is unbalanced, calling for more input from the Water Convention.

Heide Jekel, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety, Germany, presented the draft safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water: general recommendations (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/9-ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/12) and technical and organizational recommendations (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/10-ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/13). She said the guidelines recommend that governments provide leadership and create suitable administrative frameworks for firefighting water management and retention in case of emergencies.

The EU encouraged parties and non-parties to disseminate and recommend the use of the guidelines to prevent accidental pollution of soil and water. The Russian Federation proposed an additional paragraph to the guidelines related to wastewater use. MOP Chair Kovács responded that the JEG will take this proposal onboard and to COP 10 of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.
**Final Decision:** The MOP, *inter alia*, took note of the safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water: general recommendations and technical and organizational recommendations. The MOP recommended their use and implementation to prevent accidental pollution of soil and water, including pollution causing transboundary effects and endorsed the work plan for the JEG as included in the 2019-2021 PoW.

**International Water Assessment Centre**

Serik Akhmetov, Director, International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), presented on the process for hosting IWAC in Kazakhstan and outlined IWAC’s activities, including signing three memoranda of understanding with relevant partners. He highlighted IWAC’s draft workplan for 2019-2021 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/11), providing details for its planned future projects, including: the development of cooperation in the field of water quality assessment; training in hydro-meteorological services; identification of good practices for supporting water allocation; and integrated drought management in a transboundary context.

Slovakia, the previous IWAC host, outlined past activities, looking forward to future cooperation with Kazakhstan. Chad queried the potential for expanding IWAC’s work in other continents.

**Final Decision:** The MOP: congratulated Kazakhstan for IWAC’s opening, requested the preparation of a draft PoW for 2022-2024 for submission at MOP9; adopted IWAC’s work programme for 2019-2021; and requested IWAC to report regularly on the implementation of its activities to the Working Group on IWRM, as well to report to MOP9.

**Programme of Work for 2019–2021, Terms of Reference of the Bodies Established to Implement it, and Resources Needed for its Implementation**

Secretary Bernardini presented the PoW for 2019-2021, focusing on the process of development, the main objective, the new overall structure, the institutional structure, and future proposed activities (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/4). She highlighted that the main challenge was to account for the interests of all parties.

Regarding increasing awareness of and accession to the Convention (area 1), Uruguay asked if the Secretariat can help promote cooperation with neighbors to which Bernardini responded that the PoW has foreseen assisting interested non-parties with such activities.

On supporting monitoring, assessment, and information sharing (area 2), Peru queried the possibility of including a pilot monitoring project on a basin shared by Peru and Ecuador. Senegal requested support in monitoring and assessing groundwater aquifers shared between Senegal and Mauritania.

Considering promoting an integrated and intersectional approach to water management (area 3), the Stockholm International Water Institute encouraged further integration and consideration of source-to-sea issues in the activities of the Convention and invited the Convention to join the Action Platform for Source-to-Sea Management. Uganda, supported by Kenya, called for further consideration of water allocation, especially regarding environmental flows.

On adapting to climate change (area 4) and facilitating financing of transboundary water cooperation (area 5) there were no comments.

Considering reporting on SDG goal indicator 6.5.2. (area 6), UNESCO said the organization is ready for further collaboration on groundwater and water allocation activities. Germany expressed willingness to fund the publication of the guide on reporting.

On partnerships, communication, and knowledge management (area 7) there were no comments.

Bernardini noted that the increase in the budget is driven by the global opening of the Convention and that only 50% of required funding has been secured.

The EU appreciated the comprehensive and inclusive participatory process of the development of the PoW. The European Commission said the EU notes its general commitment to continue to contribute 2.5% of operational core costs that are not covered by UN regular budget. Luxembourg, Germany, France, and Hungary said they will continue to contribute financial support for the Convention in line with previous contributions. Switzerland announced an increase in the financial support it provides to the Convention in accordance with the increased budget.

The Netherlands, supported by France, expressed concern that the PoW may be overambitious given the lack of funding and suggested to include an option to reduce activities if funding targets are not reached. MOP Chair Kovács suggested to add language in the decision to that effect.

**Final Decision:** The MOP *inter alia*:

- adopted the PoW for 2019–2021, the bodies established to implement it, and the relevant budget, and amended during the session;
- entrusted the Bureau and the Secretariat to estimate costs for those activities that needed further definition;
- called on parties, non-parties, and partners to provide the required extra budgetary resources to implement the PoW;
- requested the Secretariat in cooperation with the Bureau to prepare options for a more sustainable and predictable funding of the work under the Convention for discussion at MOP9; and
• requested the Secretariat to take all necessary measures, including the provision of human and financial resources from the regular budget, to ensure the implementation of the PoW.

Election of officers
MOP Chair Kovács outlined the election process and read out the list of proposed candidates identified in earlier Bureau consultations. Delegates elected the proposed candidates by acclamation: Ardak Zebeshev (Kazakhstan) as MOP Chair; Péter Kovács (Hungary) and Harry Liiv (Estonia) as Vice-Chairs; Heide Jekel (Germany) as Co-Chair of the IWRM Working Group; Lea Kauppi (Finland) as Co-Chair of the IWRM Working Group and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment; and Leyla Aliyeva (Azerbaijan), Salvatore D’Angelo (Italy), Boško Kenjić (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Marie-Flore Michel (France), Sibylle Vermont (Switzerland), and Ekaterina Veselova (Russian Federation) as Bureau members.

Zebeshev noted that the global opening of the Water Convention provides a unique opportunity to strengthen transboundary water cooperation worldwide, inviting all countries to contribute to the Convention’s implementation.

Final Decision: The MOP elected its Bureau and agreed that the Bureau members in charge of the Working Group on IWRM would remain in office until the Working Group officially elects its own chair(s).

Date and venue of the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties
MOP Chair Kovács reported that Estonia had offered to host MOP9.

France suggested the development of detailed modalities for the submission of hosting offers in the future. Benin officially announced his intention to ratify the Water Convention and Suriname expressed appreciation for receiving support for its own chair(s).

Final Decision: The MOP elected its Bureau and agreed that the Bureau members in charge of the Working Group on IWRM would remain in office until the Working Group officially elects its own chair(s).

Presentation of the Main Decisions
On Friday afternoon, MOP Chair Kovács read out the draft unedited list of decisions and delegates adopted the package by acclamation.

Final Decision: The MOP reviewed and adopted the decisions taken during the session and entrusted the Secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, with finalizing the MOP8 report.

Closing Plenary
In closing remarks, MOP Chair Kovács, thanked all colleagues and praised the Secretariat. He said that it had been a particular pleasure to oversee the global opening of the Convention.

Secretary Bernardini thanked the Kazakh government, the numerous volunteers who supported the MOP, the Secretariat, and MOP Chair Kovács, who she lauded as a “superhero of super capabilities.”

Yerlan Nyssanbayev, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Kazakhstan, hailed MOP8 as milestone, as it was the first meeting with participation from all continents.

MOP Chair Kovács officially closed the meeting at 6:11 pm.

Upcoming Meetings

13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP13): The 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (COP13) will take place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. dates: 21-29 October 2018 location: Dubai, United Arab Emirates contact: Ramsar Convention Secretariat phone: +41 22 999 01 70 e-mail: info@ramsar.org www: https://cop13dubai.ae/

7th Africa Water Week: Under the theme ‘Toward Achieving Water Security and Safely Managed Sanitation for Africa’, the 7th Africa Water Week will address: the role of infrastructure, investments, and innovation in achieving water security; choices, approaches, and actions for safely managed sanitation in Africa by 2030; the nexus approach to water governance; and financing Africa’s SDG 6 ambitions. dates: 29 October - 2 November 2018 location: Libreville, Gabon contact: AMCOW Secretariat e-mail: africaewaterweek@amcow-online.org phone:+234 909 607 4166 www: https://africaewaterweek.com/aww7/
17th Meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Protocol on Water and Health to the Water Convention: The Compliance Committee will address: the review of compliance with the obligation to set targets and target dates under the Protocol; the consultation process; awareness-raising on the compliance procedure; and its programme of work. dates: 5-6 November 2018 location: Geneva, Switzerland contact: UNECE Secretariat phone: +41 (0) 22 917 12 34 email: unece_info@un.org www: https://www.unece.org

Joint Conference on Forests and Water 2018: The International Union of Forest Research Organizations will hold its fifth Conference on Forests and Water in a Changing Environment in conjunction with the Second Latin American Congress on Forests and Water. dates: 5-9 November 2018 location: Valdivia, Chile email: forestandwater2018@zentidos.cl www: http://forestandwater2018.cl/

Our Future Water Berlin Event: The event, organized by Our Future Water, will address achieving water security; generating and disseminating knowledge through fact-based analysis; and advocating for water education at all levels to build a community of water leaders that can see and solve water challenges from various vantage points. date: 7 November 2018 location: Berlin, Germany www: http://www.ourfuturewater.com/berlin/

21st Meeting of the Bureau of the Protocol on Water and Health to the Water Convention: The Bureau will continue its work addressing the interlinkages between water and health. dates: 7-8 November 2018 location: Geneva, Switzerland contact: UNECE Secretariat phone: +41 (0) 22 917 12 34 email: unece_info@un.org www: https://www.unece.org

2018 UN Biodiversity Conference: The 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the 9th Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the 3rd Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing (CBD COP 14, Cartagena Protocol COP/MOP 9, and Nagoya Protocol COP/MOP 3) are expected to address a series of issues related to implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, including on marine biodiversity and digital sequence information. A High-level Segment will be held from 14-15 November. dates: 17-29 November 2018 location: Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt contact: CBD Secretariat phone: +1-514-288-2220 fax: +1-514-288-6588 email: secretariat@cbd.int www: https://www.cbd.int/conferences/2018

Sustainable Blue Economy Conference: Under the theme “The blue economy and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, participants will address issues related to how to build a blue economy that will harness the potential of our oceans, seas, lakes and rivers to improve the lives of all. dates: 26-28 November 2018 location: Nairobi, Kenya contact: The Kenya Conference Secretariat phone: (+254) 20 3318888 (ext. 219) www: http://www.blueeconomyconference.go.ke/

Katowice Climate Change Conference: The Katowice Climate Change Conference includes COP 24, along with meetings of the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, and the COP serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement. dates: 2-14 December 2018 location: Katowice, Poland contact: UNFCCC Secretariat phone: +49-228-815-1000 fax: +49-228-815-1999 email: secretariat@unfccc.int www: https://unfccc.int/cop24/ and http://cop24.katowice.eu/ and http://cop24.gov.pl/

Water Security and Climate Change Conference: The Water Security and Climate Change Conference 2018 will bring together researchers, professionals, practitioners, politicians, industry, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders to advance discussions towards water secure societies. dates: 3-7 December 2018 location: Nairobi, Kenya contact: UNECE Secretariat email: wscc2018@ku.ac.ke www: http://watersecurity.web.th-koeln.de

Sanitation Workshop under the Protocol on Water and Health: The sanitation workshop will gather different stakeholders to discuss sanitation issues, pertinent to the work of the Protocol. dates: 4-5 December 2018 location: Geneva, Switzerland contact: UNECE Secretariat phone: +41 (0) 22 917 12 34 email: unece_info@un.org www: https://www.unece.org

Glossary

| ADB | African Development Bank |
| EUWI | EU Water Initiative |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GWP | Global Water Partnership |
| IWAC | International Water Assessment Centre |
| IWRM | Integrated Water Resources Management |
| JEG | Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents |
| MOP | Meeting of the Parties |
| NPDs | National Policy Dialogues |
| OAS | Organization of American States |
| OKACOM | The Permanent Okavango-Cubango River Basin Commission |
| OMVG | Gambia River Basin Development Authority |
| PoW | Programme of Work |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| UNDP | UN Development Programme |
| UNECE | United Nations Economic Commission for Europe |
| UNESCO | UN Economic, Social and Cultural Organization |
| UNISDR | UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction |
| Water Convention | Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes |

Online at: http://enb.iisd.org/water/unece/mop8/