

Accelerating Progress on transboundary water cooperation in Africa: SDG6, UN Water Convention and UN Water Conference

Remy Kinna, Water Convention Secretariat

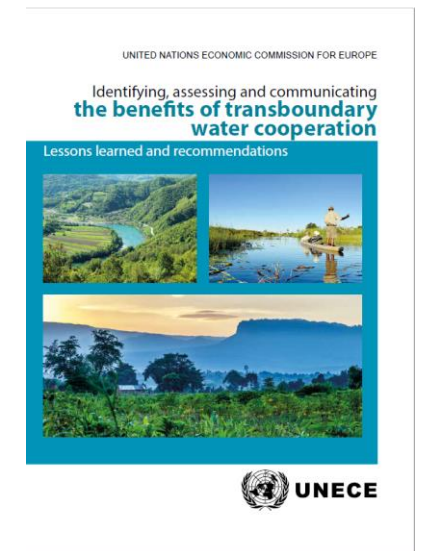
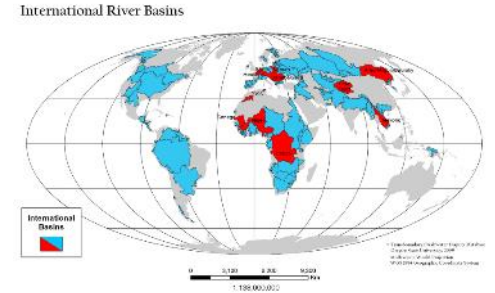
PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

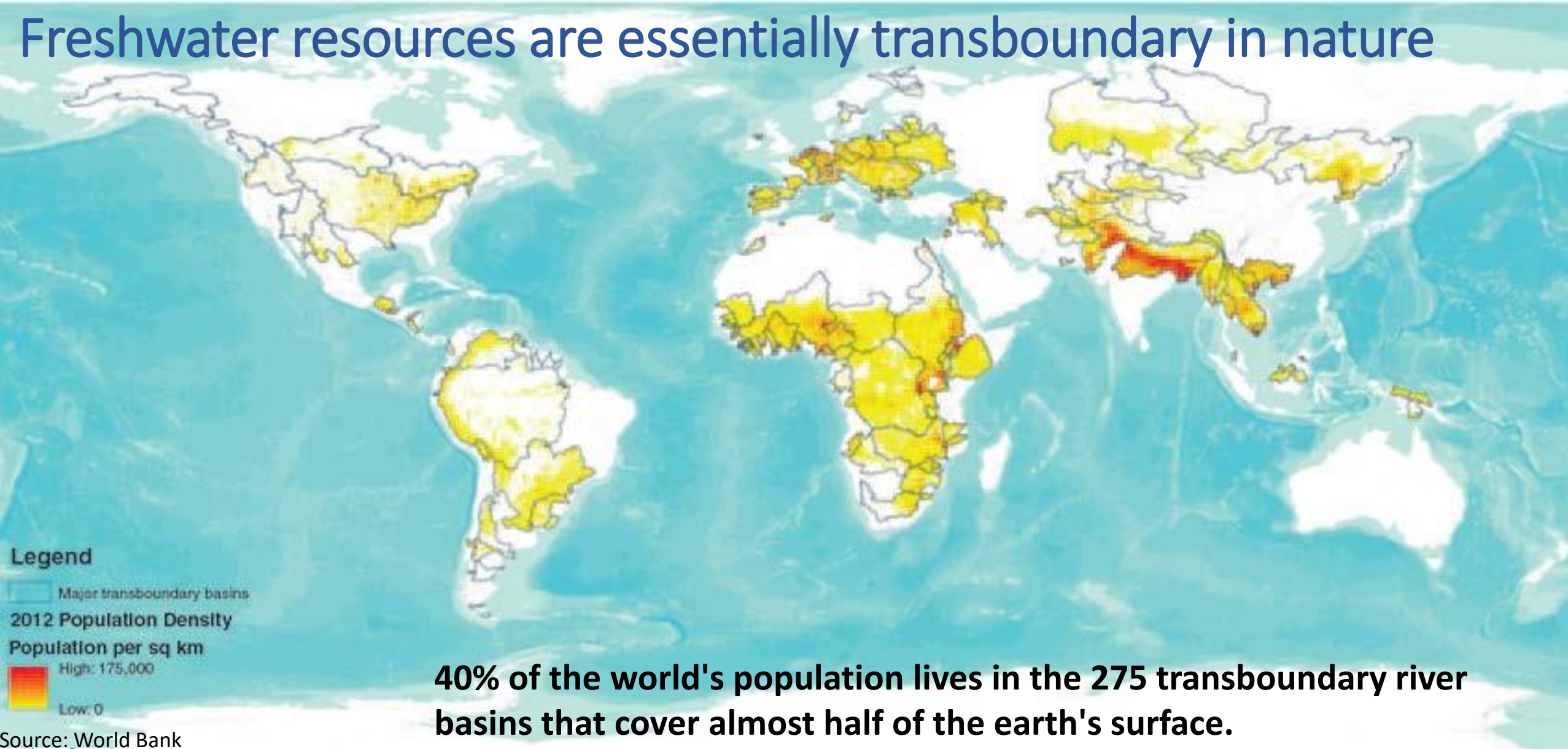
**Measuring and accelerating progress on SDG 6,
including transboundary water cooperation**

**Strengthening transboundary water
cooperation: role of the UN Water Convention**

UN 2023 Water Conference & beyond

****Questions & feedback after each segment
focusing on what Journalists can do****





Source: World Bank

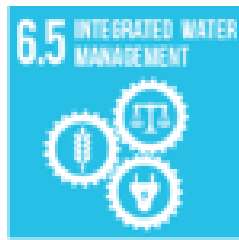


WATER
CONVENTION

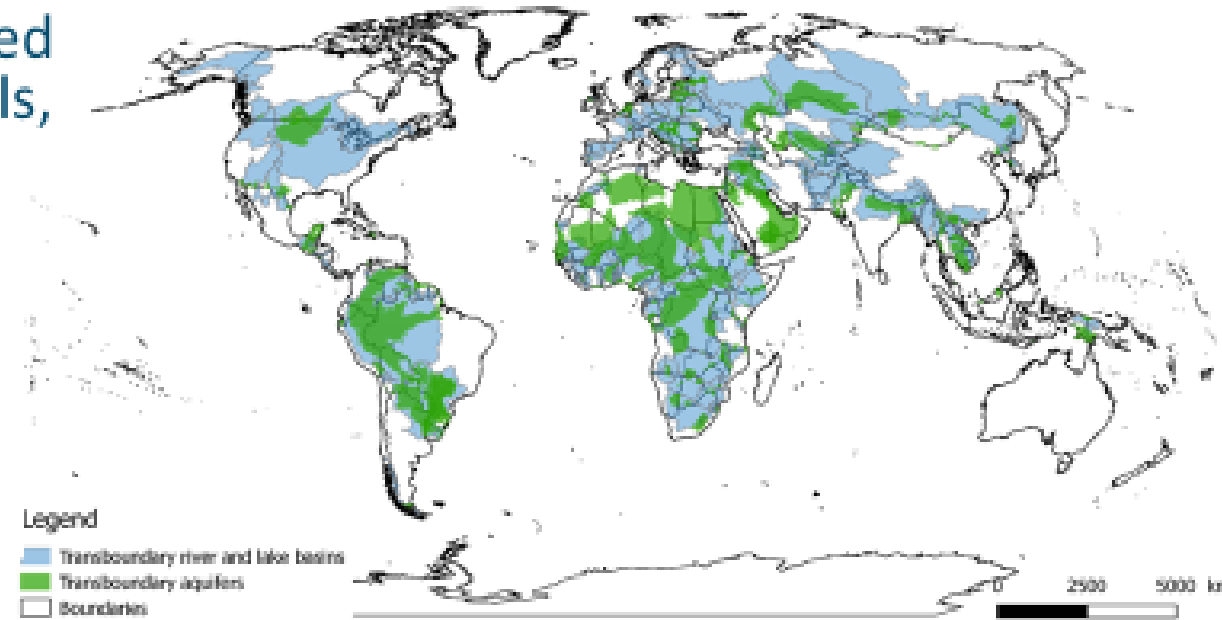
Transboundary rivers represent 60% of the world's freshwater flows.



SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.



Target 6.5: By 2030, implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through **transboundary** cooperation as appropriate.



UNECE



unesco

Indicator 6.5.1 Degree of IWRM

Indicator 6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation

- Most of the world's water resources are shared => cooperation required.
- The only SDG indicator on transboundary cooperation => important for other natural resources



United
Nations

UN WATER

6.5.2 TRANSBOUNDARY WATER COOPERATION

Only
24 countries



reported that all the rivers, lakes and aquifers that they share with their neighbours are covered by operational arrangements for cooperation



Globally, transboundary water cooperation is lagging behind (Results of the 2nd reporting in 2020 on SDG 6.5.2)

SDG Indicator 6.5.2 Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation

UNESCO and UNECE custodian agencies

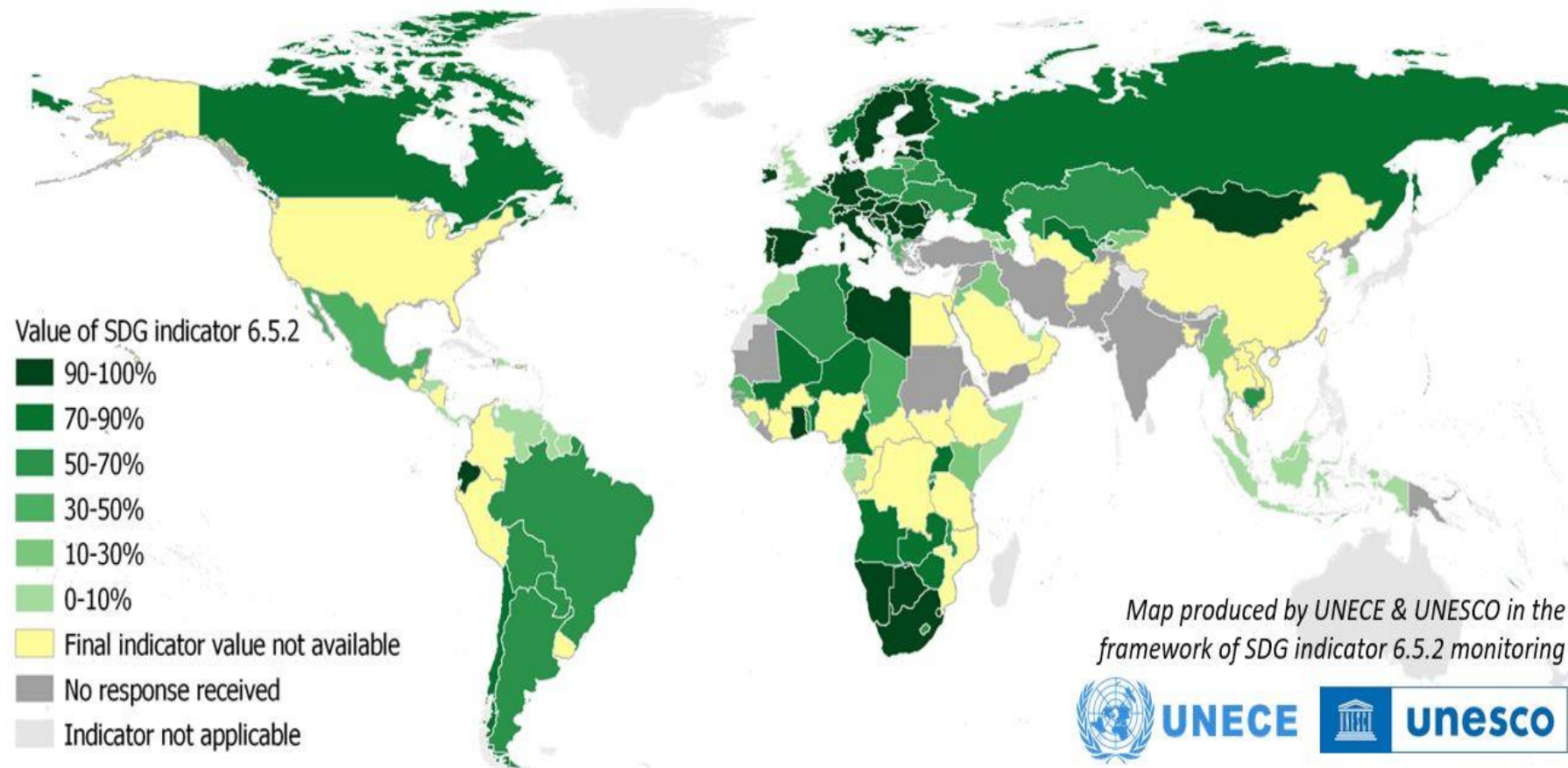
High level of engagement

- In 2020: **129** out of 153 countries sharing tb waters submitted reports

Not on track

- Only **24 countries** report **all** transboundary surface waters and groundwaters covered by **operational arrangements**
- At least **128 basins reported lack agreements**
- Insufficient knowledge on **groundwater** systems

SDG Indicator 6.5.2 values and responses received during the 2nd exercise

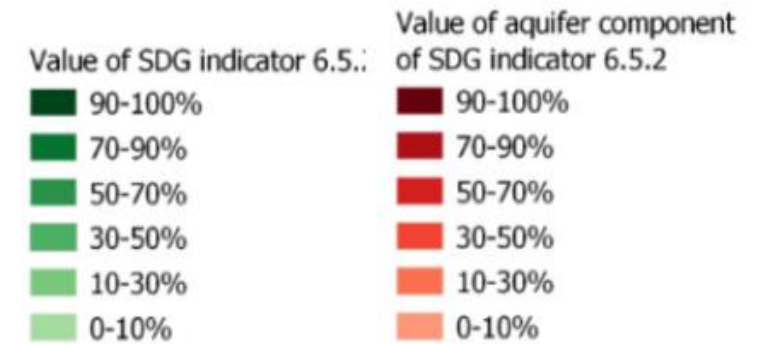
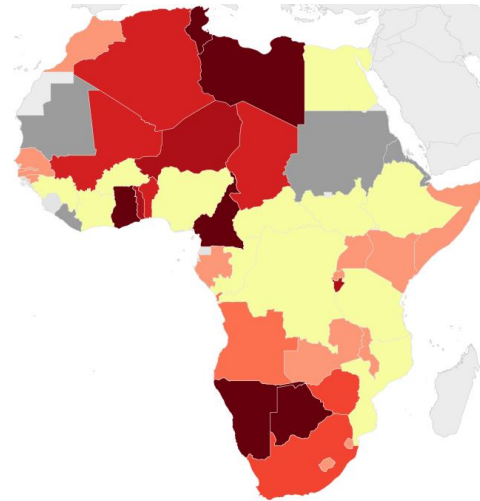
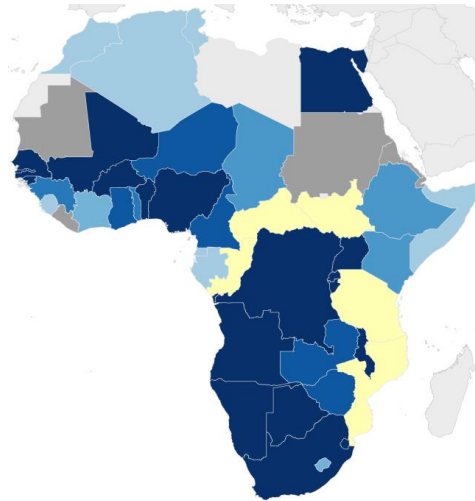
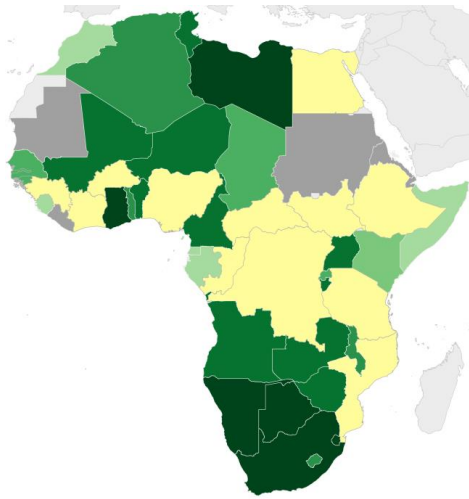


Progress must be accelerated to ensure that all transboundary basins are covered by operational arrangements by 2030

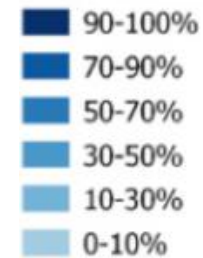
Results of the 2nd monitoring in 2020 on SDG 6.5.2

Africa region

- **43** out of **48** countries sharing water resources responded, vs 37 in 2017
- Indicator 6.5.2 overall value available for 31 countries in 2020, vs 23 countries in 2017
- Increased responses rate & increased quality of the responses
 - more information provided on aquifers, but still a challenge



Value of river and lake basin component of SDG indicator 6.5.2



Final indicator value not available

No response received

Country not considered for regional analysis

Key areas to accelerate progress on transboundary water cooperation

Address Data Gaps



There has been **strong country engagement** in the monitoring exercise, but data remains a challenge, particularly for transboundary **aquifers** and **countries with no SDG indicator value**

Strengthen legal frameworks



The water conventions and the draft articles on transboundary aquifers **offer a solid basis** upon which to **revise** or **negotiate** new arrangements

Leveraging and mobilizing expertise

There is a need to **upscale and coordinate** the activities of international organizations to **provide targeted support** to countries



Upscale capacity development

Capacity building is important for negotiating and implementing operational arrangements

Building political will

addressing **structural barriers** and finding **innovative financing** mechanisms is needed to address current financing shortfalls



SDG 6 Global Acceleration Framework

What can African journalists do?

- **Raise the profile** of the 3rd reporting exercise for SDG 6.5.2 and other SDG 6 monitoring initiatives. DATA = PROGRESS!
- **Motivate officials through reporting on SDG6 progress** in your country and highlight progress on transboundary water cooperation to build political support for accelerating progress on SDG 6



QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

International water law: integrated transboundary cooperation frameworks from global conventions to basin / national contexts

Global

- 1997 Watercourses Convention
- **1992 Water Convention**

Main objective =

Foster cooperation over transboundary waters in order to **ensure** that they are **sustainably and equitably managed**

Regional

- SADC Revised Protocol
- EU Water Framework Directive
- ECOWAS Directive
- ECCAS Convention

Basin

- Congo Basin Agreement
- Senegal River Water Charter
- Rhine Convention
- Danube Convention
- Zambezi Watercourse Agreement

Sub-Basin

- Sava Agreement
- International Boundary Waters Treaty
- Treaty of the River Plate Basin
- Mekong River Agreement

National

- Human Right to Water and Sanitation



WATER
CONVENTION

Why are the UN global water conventions needed?

Instruments of preventive diplomacy and confidence-building between riparian states

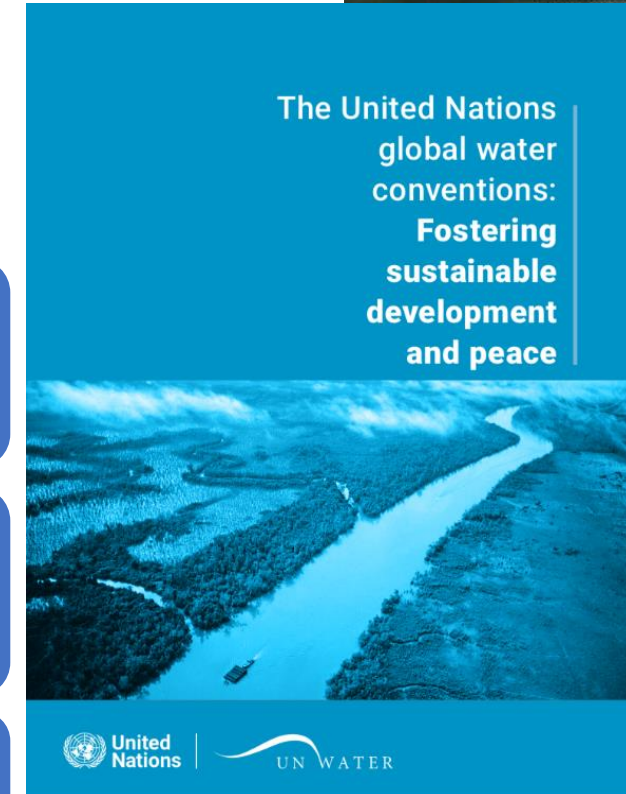
Support transboundary cooperation when it is not established:

- *No specific legal / institutional mechanism at basin level, i.e. more than 60% of basins*
- *Weak existing legal and institutional arrangements at the basin level, eg. many agreements do not provide for data sharing, provision for dispute resolution*
- *Not all basin states are party to the basin agreement, i.e. more than 80% of basins*

Promote the gradual improvement of cooperation when it is established and strengthen implementation, for example, through a platform to share experiences and good practices

Support ≠ replace existing treaties and where basin agreements are to be created the Conventions can facilitate negotiations and cooperation

Strengthen the profile of 'transboundary waters' at national and international political level, and foster synergies with other global initiatives, for example for climate change



WATER
CONVENTION

“The global opening of the Water Convention, the accession of the first countries from outside the UNECE region and the momentum in support of the Convention are promising developments. Along with the Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, the world has the ability to strengthen the rule of law in transboundary cooperation worldwide. **I call on Member States to join both Conventions and to strive for their full implementation.**”



UN Water Convention



A legal and institutional framework for **transboundary water cooperation** contributing to **sustainable development**, international **peace** and **security**.



A **unique platform** to discuss progress of **transboundary water cooperation** worldwide under the umbrella of the **United Nations**



Opened to all interested countries, with **more than 130 countries** exchanging experiences and knowledge to prompt progress in cooperation



The Water Convention institutional mechanism



Meeting of the Parties

Implementation
Committee



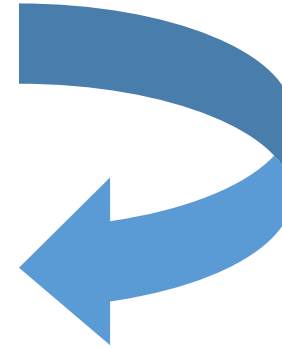
Bureau



Working Group on IWRM
Working Group on M&A



Water Convention Secretariat
UNECE

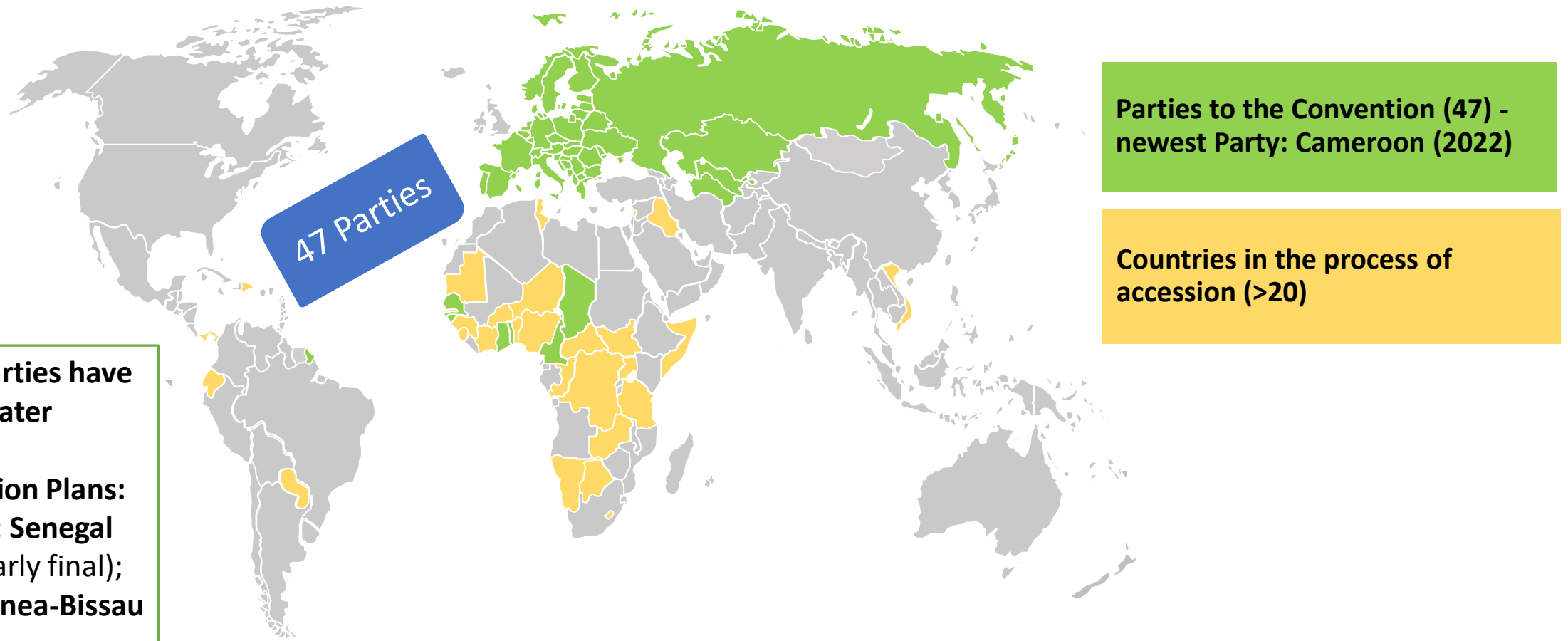


- Task Force on Water and Climate
- Task Force on Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus
- Expert Groups
- JEG on Water and Industrial Accidents



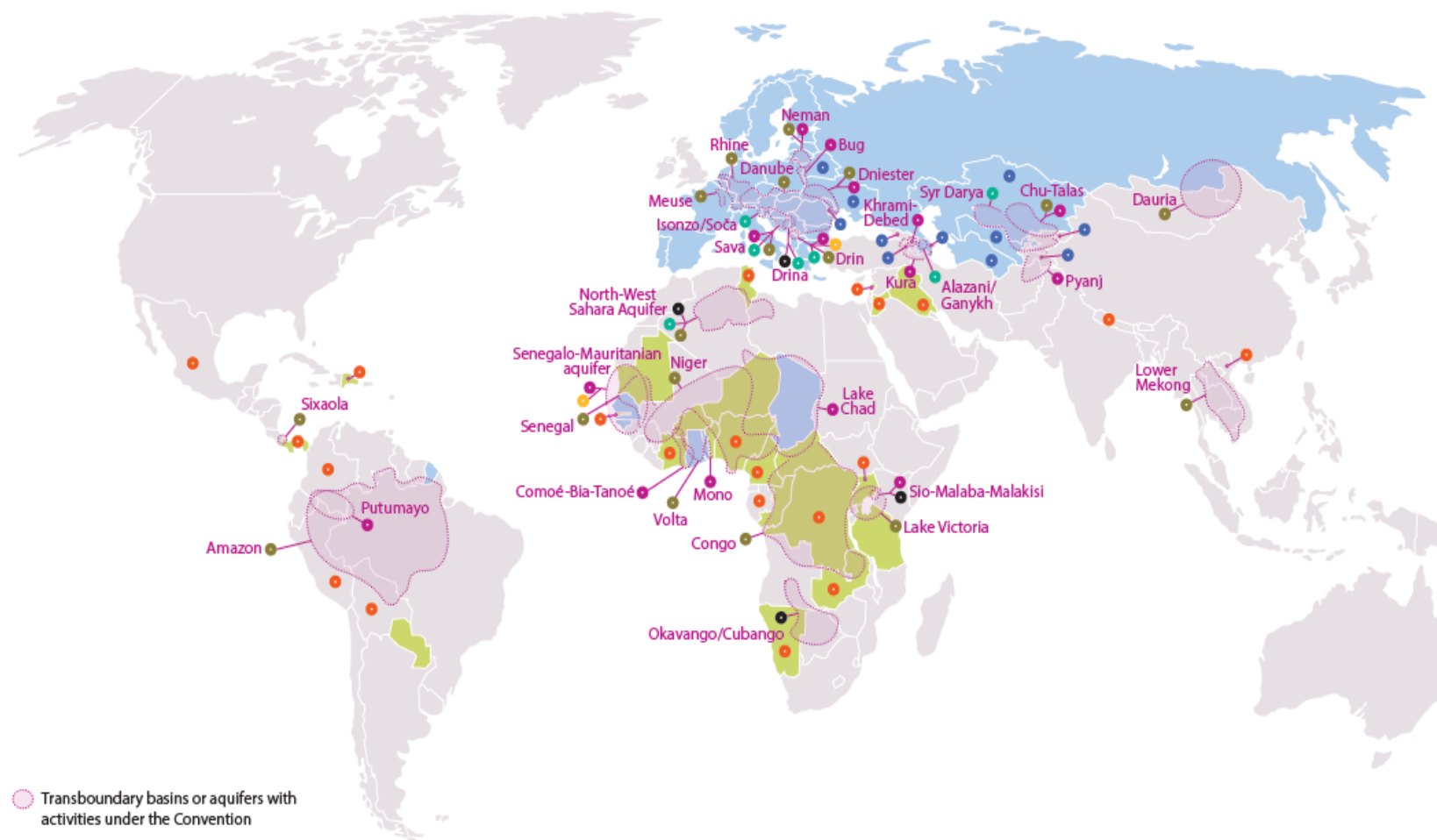
WATER
CONVENTION

Global Opening of the 1992 Water Convention



More than 130 countries are engaged in our meetings and activities.

Activities under the Water Convention 2015-2022 PoW activities 2022-2024



Transboundary basins or aquifers with activities under the Convention

- Areas of work**
- Support the development of agreements and the establishment of joint bodies
 - Identify, assess and communicate the benefits of transboundary water cooperation
 - Assess and promote the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins
- Country Status**
- Adapt to climate change in transboundary basins
 - Increase knowledge of and accession to the Water Convention
 - Monitor, assess and share information in transboundary basins
 - National Policy Dialogues on IWRM under the European Union Water Initiative
 - Parties to the Water Convention
 - Countries in the process of accession

Last update: July 2022

Note: The boundaries and names shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations



1: Increasing awareness of & accession to the Convention & application of its principles drawing on cooperation



2: Supporting monitoring, assessment and information sharing in transboundary basins



3: Promoting an integrated and intersectoral approach to water management at all levels



4: Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins



5: Facilitating financing of transboundary water cooperation

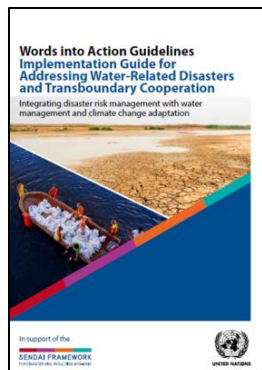
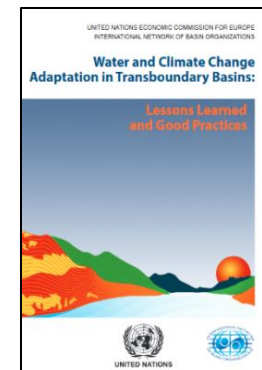
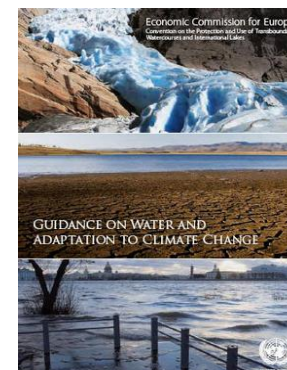
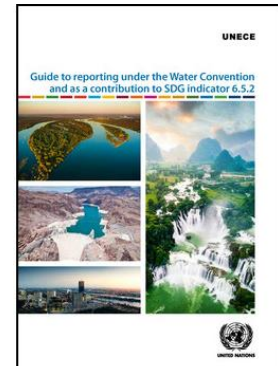
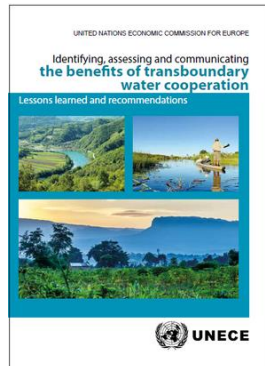
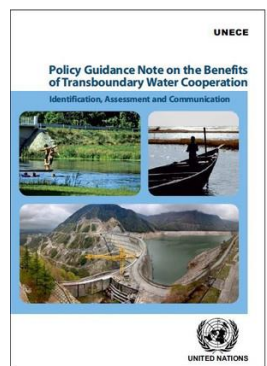
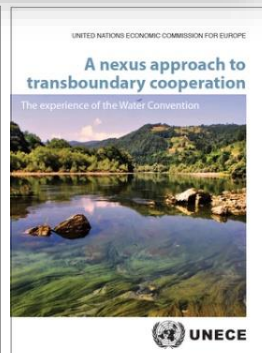
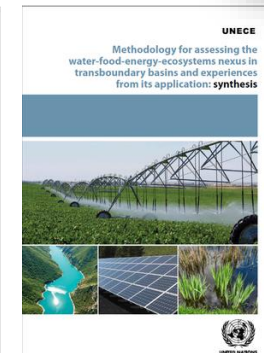
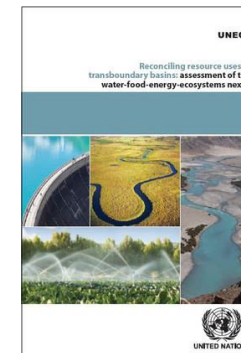
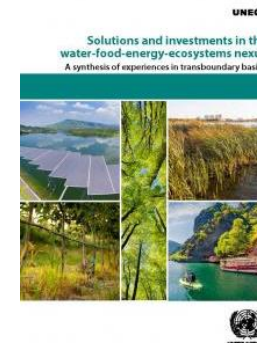
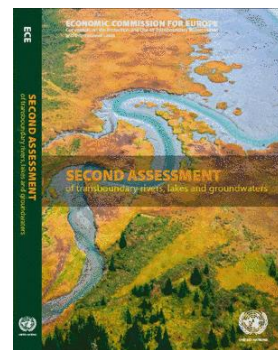
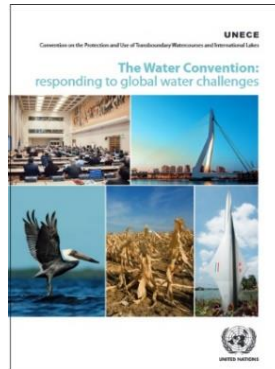
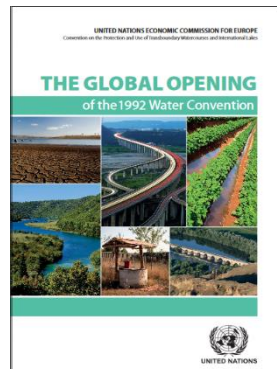
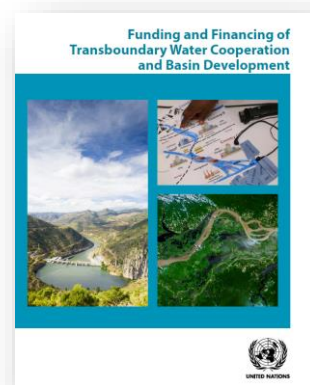
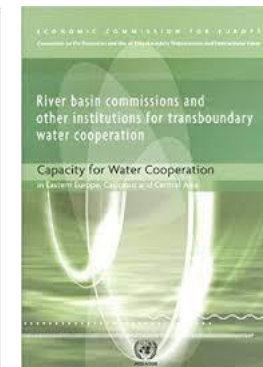
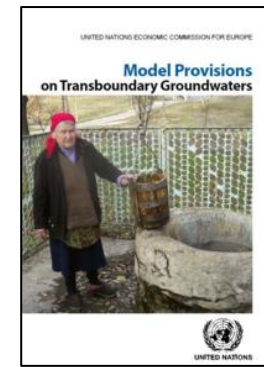
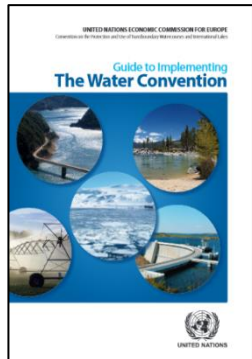


6: Reporting on SDG indicator 6.5.2 and under the Convention



7: Partnerships, communication and knowledge management

Numerous tools and guidance documents have been developed under the Water Convention



Many direct & indirect benefits of accession

“Joining the Water Convention has led us to strengthen the ecosystem approach to water management, pollution prevention and control, monitoring and assessment of rivers and groundwater, sustainable flood prevention and public participation.”

Serigne Mbaye Thiam, Minister for Water and Sanitation of Senegal



Why is the Water Convention relevance for Africa

- ✓ Sound legal framework coupled with action to support implementation
- ✓ Catalyst for cooperation, balanced approach for upstream and downstream countries
- ✓ Continuously evolves and addresses emerging issues with conflict potential
- ✓ Supports countries in achieving the SDGs
- ✓ More and more African countries accede to the Convention
- ✓ Cooperation with partners such as ECA, AMCOW, NBI, ZAMCOM, LVBC
- ✓ Opportunities for twinning initiatives between established Parties and incoming / new Parties
- ✓ You are invited to take part in upcoming meetings:
 - Train the trainer on the Convention and international water law (3-4 July, Geneva)
 - 18th Working Group on IWRM (19-21 June, Geneva)
 - Global workshop on conjunctive management of transboundary surface water and groundwater (16 October, Geneva)
 - Global workshop on financing transboundary water cooperation (5-6 December, Geneva)



Recent / Upcoming Accession Workshops and Events

Recent national / regional accession workshops

- Nigeria (27-29 July 2022, Abuja)
- Dominican Republic (31 Oct 2022, Santo Domingo)
- Tanzania (1-2 Dec 2022, Dar Es Salaam)
- Regional Symposium on transboundary waters in Latin America (1-3 Dec 2022, La Paz, Bolivia)
- Panama (6-7 Dec 2022, Panama City)

Upcoming regional technical workshops (2023)

- Pan-African Training on International Water Law and Governance (September 2023, Entebbe, TBC)
- Pan-African Workshop on Water Cooperation (Dec 2023 TBC)

Planned accession workshops in 2023 (dates TBC)

- Paraguay (Feb 2023)
- Niger (Feb 2023)
- Ecuador (May 2023)
- Republic of Congo
- Botswana
- Burkina Faso
- South Sudan
- Vietnam

What can African Journalists do?

- **News coverage to raise awareness about the importance of transboundary water cooperation** for peace, sustainable development and regional integration in Africa.
- If the country / countries in the region where you work is considering accession to the Water Convention, **seek to engage and raise public awareness of, and understand benefits from, accession to the Convention**
- **Encourage fellow journalists to cover relevant events**, workshops and activities of the Water Convention



QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

The UN 2023 Water Conference: 22-24 March 2023, New York

The Netherlands and Tajikistan, as co-hosts, and UNDESA with the support of UN-Water as Secretariat of the Conference will strive to make the Conference a watershed moment for the world.

Six Plenaries

Member States to announce commitments, plans, actions, and best practices

Five interactive dialogues to be held in parallel with the plenary meetings

4. Water for Cooperation

Special Events

The co-hosts decided to strive to organize 3-5 Special Events, scope: 50-200 people

Side Events

Member States and other stakeholders will organize many side events that are cross-cutting and aim for action

“Once in a generation” Water Conference: first UN Conference on Water since 1977 in Mar del Plata, Argentina



What will the Conference deliver?

The Conference will help set the agenda until 2030, and thereafter, in the following ways:

1. **Deliver a summary** of the Conference proceedings
2. **Present a set of voluntary commitments** to get the world back on track- **Water Action Agenda**
 - **Scale up and replicate** what works
 - **Discontinue or change** what does not work
 - **Innovate** what needs to be improved
 - **Fund** what merits funding

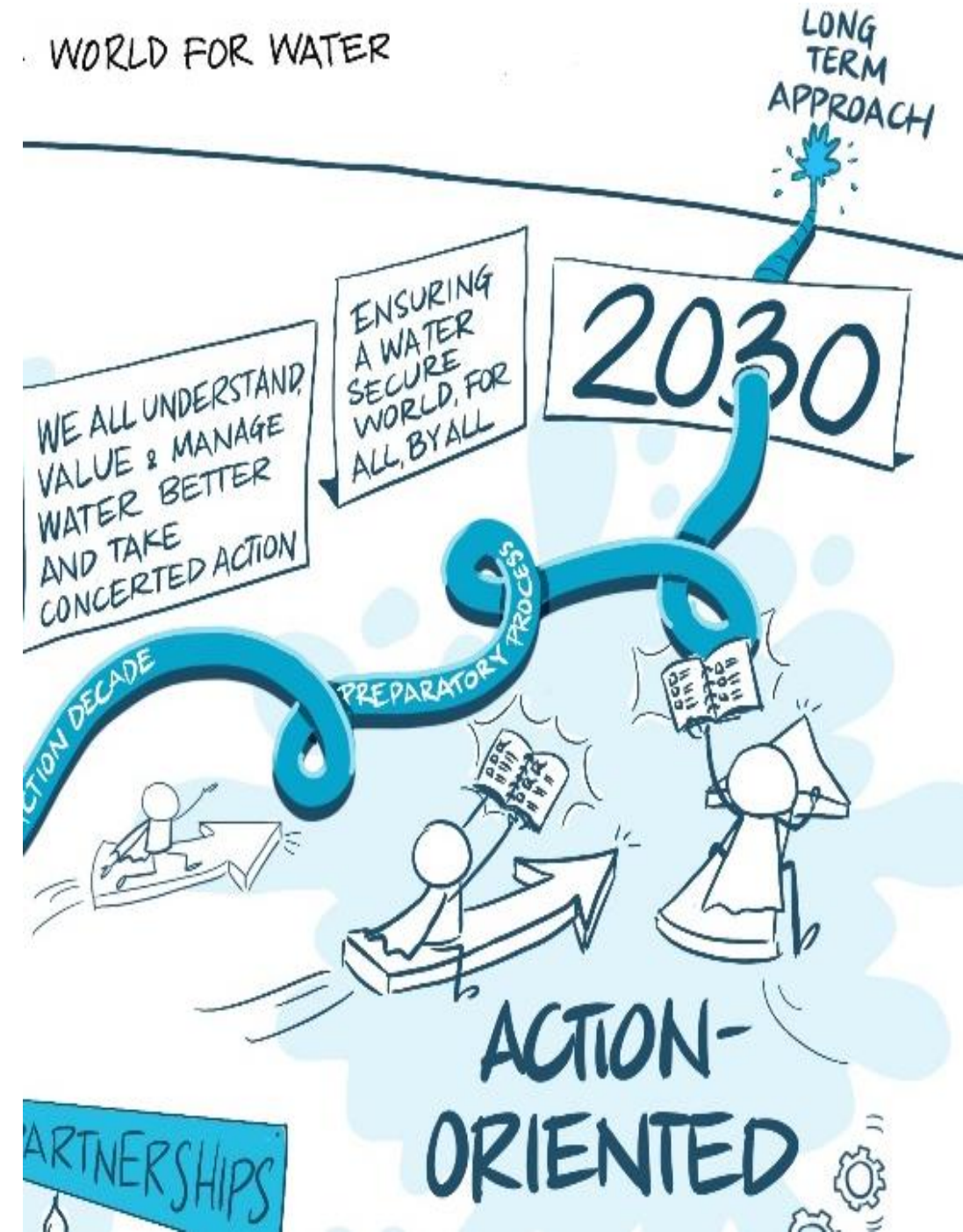
3. Roadmap towards 2028 (Decade), 2030 (SDGs) and Agenda post 2030

Next steps:

- 7-8 December: UN Groundwater summit, UNESCO, Paris
- 7-9 February 2023, Geneva: financing roundtable, organized by OECD and UN-Water
- 22-24 March 2023: UN Water conference
- July 2023: High-Level Political Forum in New York will review the water goal SDG6

What next? 2030 & Beyond

- Mobilise and raise awareness among responsible ministries to ensure your country participates in the next rounds of SDG Monitoring Reporting –
 - DATA = CRUCIAL FOR PROGRESS!
- Build political will for financial and capacity investment in water as an enabler for achieving SDG6 and all other SDGs
- Participate in relevant UN meetings to bring your challenges, concerns, achievements and lessons learned to exchange and share ideas, identify opportunities for synergies and coordination and commit to concrete actions



What can African Journalists do?

- **Strong coverage of African countries participating in the Conference**, and highlight the importance of transboundary cooperation for Africa and globally
- **Report on commitments made by African countries, RECs and other regional bodies on accelerating progress to achieving SDG6**, including accession to the Water Convention, its implementation, and development of transboundary agreements, data exchange platforms etc. This increases accountability and motivates leaders!



QUESTIONS & COMMENTS