

The UN Watercourses Convention: Legacy, Prospects and Value for the Realization of International Policy Goals

Convenors: Green Cross International, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research, United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

Seminar text: In 1997, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, with approving votes from more than one hundred nations. Since then, population growth, increases in water demand, growing levels of pollution, and climate change, coupled with inadequate or inexistent cooperation frameworks between co-watercourse states, have aggravated the problems that motivated the convention's adoption. With sixteen contracting states at this time, the convention requires 35 parties to become effective. The seminar aims to inform the process for entry into force and future implementation of the UN Watercourses Convention. It will look at the convention's potential role in contributing to the achievement of international policy goals, in particular for preventing interstate conflict in the context of a changing climate, for better enabling the implementation of development cooperation programs, for contributing to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in international watercourses, and for complimenting existing water governance frameworks in Africa. A second session will examine the possible reasons slowing down the ratification process and show how the convention has supported interstate cooperation since its adoption. This session will also explore the added value from entry into force of the convention and assess the flipside of non-entry into force, with a view to evaluating how each scenario could affect the convention's ability to support policy goals and contribute to improving cooperation between basin states.

Programme: Tuesday, 19 August 2008

INTRODUCTION

- 08:30 Welcome by Chair: *Anders Jägerskog*, Project Director, SIWI Projects, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Sweden
- 08:35 Introduction: *Mr. James P. Leape*, Director General, WWF International, Switzerland
- 08:45 Advancing the MDGs: The UN Watercourses Convention in the Hashimoto Action Plan?: *HRH the Prince of Orange*, Chair, UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation (UNSGAB), The Netherlands (tbc)
- 08:50 The UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses: An Overview: *Mr. Attila Tanzi*, Professor, University of Bologna, Italy
- 09:05 Questions

ASSESSING THE RELEVANCE OF THE UN WATERCOURSES CONVENTION FOR ADVANCING INTERNATIONAL POLICY OBJECTIVES ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

- 09:15 Moderator: *Dr. Bertrand Charrier*, Vice-President, Green Cross International, France
- Water-Related International Development Cooperation: *Guy Howard*, Water and Environment Advisor, Department for International Development (DFID), United Kingdom
- Conserving Inland Water Biodiversity in Transboundary Watersheds: *David Coates*, Programme Officer, Secretariat, Convention on Biological Diversity, Canada
- The UN Watercourses Convention as a Compliment to Existing Water Governance Frameworks in Africa—a regional perspective: *Anton Earle*, Project Director, Capacity Building, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Sweden
- Preventing Disputes and Supporting Interstate Cooperation on Adaptation to Climate Change in Transboundary Watersheds: *Dr. Ashok Swain*, Director, The Swedish Network of Peace, Conflict and Development Research, Sweden
- 10:00 Moderated Debate & Questions/Link to next session

10:15 Coffee Break

THE STATUS OF THE UN WATERCOURSES CONVENTION AND THE CASE FOR ENTRY INTO FORCE: GLOBAL RELEVANCE AND REGIONAL APPLICABILITY

10:45 Moderator: *Flavia Rocha Loures*, Freshwater Programme Officer, International Law & Policy, WWF International

Possible Reasons Slowing Down the Ratification Process: *Mr. Attila Tanzi*, Professor, University of Bologna, Italy

The Legacy of the UN Watercourses Convention since its Adoption: *Dr. Alexander Lopez Ramirez*, Director, Centro Mesoamericano de Desarrollo Sostenible del Trópico Seco (CEMEDE), Professor of International Relations at the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA)

Value Added by Entry into Force and Widespread Acceptance: *Dr. Patricia Wouters*, Director, UNESCO Centre for Water Law, Policy and Science, University of Dundee, Scotland

Potential Effects from Non-Entry into Force: *Mr. Johan Lammers*, Professor of International Environmental Law, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands

11:30 Moderated Debate & Questions

CONCLUSIONS

11:50 Closing remarks by Chair: *Anders Jägerskog*, Project Director, SIWI Projects, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Sweden