



Climate change adaptation in transboundary basins

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Bratislava, 5 October 2012





Over 45 % of the Earth's land surface is covered by river basins that are shared by more than one country



Bridging boundaries

Why transboundary cooperation in adaptation?

- Prevent negative impacts of unilateral adaptation measures in riparian countries, thereby preventing potential conflict
- Enable more effective and efficient adaptation through:
 - Wider knowledge base
 - Larger planning space: take measures in the basin where they have optimum effect
 - Possibility to share costs and benefits

Transboundary cooperation reduces uncertainty and costs!





The UNECE Water Convention and climate change

The Water Convention aims to protect and ensure the quantity, quality and sustainable use of transboundary water resources by facilitating and promoting cooperation.

Provisions relevant for climate change:

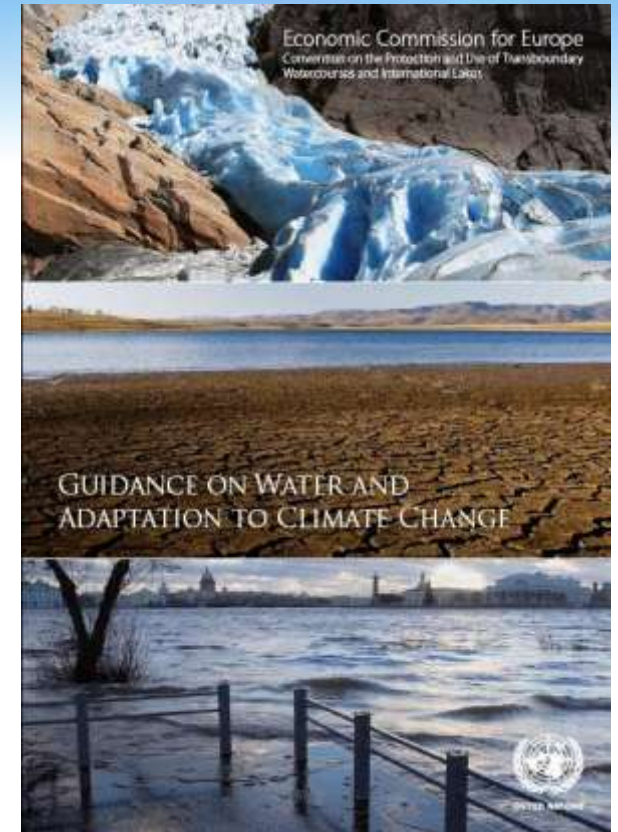
- Prevent, control and reduce transboundary impacts including those related to adaptation to or mitigation measures
- Use waters in a reasonable and equitable way
- Cooperate on the basis of equality and reciprocity
- Set joint water quality objectives, use best available technology, exchange information, follow the precautionary principle, develop joint monitoring and common research, assist each other...





Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change

- Developed in 2007-2009 by Task Force led by Netherlands and Germany
- General roadmap towards adaptation of water management to climate change
- Step-wise approach
 - Assess impacts of climate change
 - Develop policy, strategic and operational responses
 - Transboundary and health focus
- Guidance adopted in 2009 at the Meeting of the Parties
- Used worldwide





Chu-Talas Commission (KZ-KG) established

The new Franco-Swiss Genevese aquifer agreement is signed

Iran-Turkmenistan and Croatia-Montenegro agreements

EU Floods Directive



Amendment of the Albufeira Convention (ES-PT) to address climate variability

China-Russian Federation agreement

New Finland-Sweden, Republic of Moldova-Romania and Samur (AZ-RU) agreements

Protocol on Flood Protection to the Framework Agreement on the Sava River basin

Agreement on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Prespa Park Area (AL, GR, MK)

The International Commission for the Protection of Lake Geneva adopts its action plan for 2011-2020

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

Agreements on Payments for Ecosystem Services in Integrated Water Resources Management adopted

Agreement on Monitoring and Assessment adopted

Agreements on Transboundary Management adopted

Guidelines and Good Practices for Tailing Management Facilities, developed jointly with the Industrial Accidents Convention

Project starts in Central Asia

National Policy Dialogues on IWRM under the EU Water Directive in Armenia, the Republic of Georgia and Ukraine



First Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters presented at the 6th "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference

Start of the activities on climate change adaptation

Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Tailing Management Facilities developed jointly with the Industrial Accidents Convention

NPD on IWRM initiated in Kyrgyzstan

Creation of the UN-Water Task Force on transboundary waters, co-chaired by UNECE and UNESCO

Water quality project starts in Central Asia

IWAC transferred to Slovakia

Guide to Implementing the Water Convention adopted

Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change adopted

Non-UNECE countries start to get involved in Water Convention activities

NPDs on IWRM initiated in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan

Start of the Kura Project to facilitate cooperation between Georgia and Azerbaijan

Start of the pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins and on payment for ecosystem services



Adoption of the Action Plan

International cooperation between Europe-Asia countries in joint interest expressed by countries in joint action

Start of a project in Tajikistan and Azerbaijan



Promoting cooperation on the ground
as well as exchange of experience



Programme of pilot projects on adaptation in transboundary basins in
EECCA and SEE

- Focus mainly on developing a joint adaptation strategy
- Specific focus defined by countries; some focus on water scarcity, others on floods



Platform for exchanging experiences

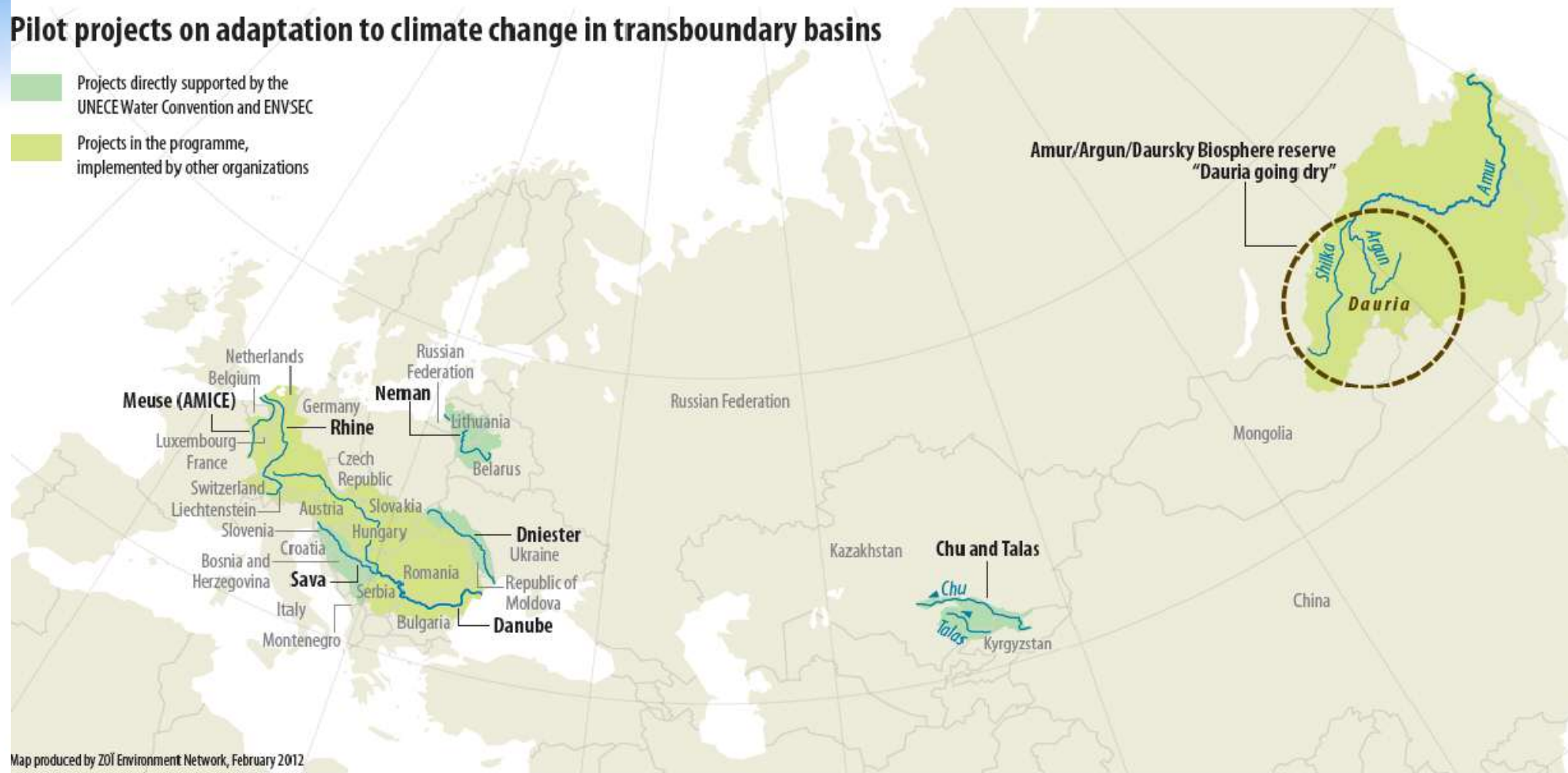
- Regular workshops, meetings of the Task Force and Core Group of pilots
- Internet platform



The pilot projects

Pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins

-  Projects directly supported by the UNECE Water Convention and ENVSEC
-  Projects in the programme, implemented by other organizations





The pilot projects

Objectives of the pilot project programme:

- Assist UNECE countries in implementing the Water Convention and the EU WFD under conditions of a changing climate;
- Support countries and especially those in transition in developing adaptation strategies and measures;
- Create positive examples showing benefits of and mechanisms for transboundary cooperation in adaptation;
- Support dialogue and cooperation on the design of an adaptation strategy in the transboundary context.
- Implement and test the Guidance





Example: Pilot project on reducing vulnerability to extreme floods and climate change in the Dniester

Aims of the project:

- reduce risks from climate change - and specifically flooding - by improving adaptive capacity of both countries

Activities :

- Joint scenario- and modelling-based study of climate change impacts
- Basin-wide Vulnerability assessment
- Production of flood hazard and risk/ vulnerability maps
- Improved / new automated flow monitoring stations and data exchange infrastructure
- Enhanced capacities and plans for flood risk communication on the sub-basin / local level
- Agreement and planning of further measures for flood risk reduction





Example: Dniester pilot project: lessons learned

- Many activities and data regarding climate change exist, thus Baseline studies are very important
- Importance of link between political and experts' level, e.g. through creation of a working group and regular meetings
- Importance of concrete activities and involving population
- Crucial to promote the project broadly at the national and transboundary level
- Important to secure enough time for data preparation and subsequent calculations, permission for data collection





Lessons learned on water scarcity

- Many basins face both problems of flood and drought
- Transboundary cooperation needed on drought management, but little experience so far – experiences from Chu Talas and other pilot projects will help
- Transboundary agreements should be flexible to deal with water quantity fluctuations – might need revision
- Sustainable groundwater use is crucial to address water scarcity
- Establishing priorities for water use is needed





Future Work on Climate Change under the Water Convention

- Transformation of pilot projects programme into global network of basins working on water and climate
- Collection of good practices and lessons learnt
- Continuation of platform for exchanging experience, next Water and Climate Change workshop on 25-27 June 2013
- Partners crucial and welcome to join- looking forward to cooperation with IDMP





Thank you!

Water and Climate Change website:

http://www.unece.org/env/water/water_climate_activ.html

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