



**A MODERN APPROACH TO WATER
MANAGEMENT:
THE UNECE PROTOCOL ON WATER
AND HEALTH**

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The UNECE

- It's a regional Commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council
- It's primary goal is to promote cooperation among its member States
- It focuses on economic cooperation and integration, environment, housing and land management, population, statistics, energy, trade, timber and transport
- It has 56 member States, from Europe, but also North America (Canada and United States), Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) and Western Asia (Israel).

Water problems in UNECE

- 140 million (16%) do not have a household connection to a drinking-water supply
- 85 million (10%) do not have improved sanitation;
- Over 41 million (5%) do not have access to a safe drinking-water
- 13,500 deaths a year of children under 14 years of age are due to poor water conditions
- Emerging threats: protozoan infestations of drinking-water supply systems, proliferation of *Legionella*, and potential health problems related to the increasingly complex chemical environment.

Protocol on Water and Health

- Adopted in 1999 by 36 countries
- Entered into force in 2005
- Ratified by 21 countries



Objective of the Protocol



Protect human health and well being by better water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and by preventing, controlling and reducing water-related diseases

Scope

Surface freshwater, groundwater, estuaries, coastal waters which are used for recreation, for the production of fish by aquaculture or for the production or harvesting of shellfish, enclosed waters generally available for bathing, water in the course of abstraction, transport, treatment or supply, and waste water throughout the course of collection, transport, treatment and discharge or reuse

General provisions

- Prevention, control and reduction of water-related disease
- Provision of adequate supplies of wholesome drinking water
- Effective protection of water resources
- Sufficient safeguards for human health against water-related disease
- Systems for monitoring and responding to outbreaks or incidents of water-related disease

Basic principles

- The precautionary principle
- The polluter-pays principle
- State sovereignty to exploit resources and responsibility to not cause damage to other States
- Principle of sustainable water management
- Preventive action to avoid outbreaks
- Action at the lowest appropriate level
- Water has social, economic and environmental values
- Efficient use of water
- Access to information and public participation and access to judicial and administrative review
- Integrated management of water resources
- Protection of vulnerable people
- Equitable access to water
- Persons and institutions should contribute to the protection and conservation of water
- Local problems, needs and knowledge.

Objectives

- (a) Access to drinking water for everyone and
- (b) Provision of sanitation for everyone

= > beyond MDG 7, target 10

= > framework for implementing the human right to water

Targets and target dates

- **Water supply and sanitation** (quality, improved access, performance of systems of water supply and sanitation, application of good practices, reduction of discharges of untreated waste water, quality of discharges of waste water, disposal and reuse of sludge and waste water, publication of information on water quality)
- **Water management** (quality of water used as source of drinking water, bathing and aquaculture, management of enclosed water used for bathing, remediation of contaminated sites, effectiveness of management and good practices)
- **Health protection** (reduction of outbreaks)

Review and assessment of progress

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Parties shall

- Collect and evaluate data on their progress towards the targets and on indicators that are designed to show how far that progress has contributed towards preventing, controlling or reducing water-related disease.
- Publish every three years the results of collection and evaluation of data
- Review the progress made in achieving the targets set and publish an assessment of that progress. Such reviews include a review of the targets set.
- Provide to the secretariat, for circulation to the other Parties, a summary report of the data collected and evaluated and the assessment of the progress achieved.

Review of compliance

Article 15 of the Protocol requests Parties to review their compliance with the provisions of the Protocol on the basis of the reviews and assessments => a multilateral arrangement of a non-confrontational, non-judicial and consultative nature for reviewing compliance.

Compliance Committee:

- Composition
- Trigger mechanisms
- Measures

International cooperation and international support

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Provisions on:

International cooperation (Article 11),

Joint and coordinated international action (Article 12),

Cooperation in relation to transboundary waters (Article 13) and

International support for national action (Article 14)

= > Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism

Other provisions

Provisions on:

Response systems to outbreaks, incidents and risks of water related diseases (Article 8)

Public awareness, education, training, research and development and information (Article 9) and

Public information (Article 10).

More information

including guidelines, publications and information on activities under the Convention can be found at

<http://unece.org/env/water>