



16TH SESSION OF THE CSD
**GPPN Side Event: “Findings from
Stakeholder Inputs to the CSD-16
Water Review”** (New York, 8 May 2008)

**The UN Watercourses Convention:
Why Should CSD Promote its Entry
into Force and Implementation?**

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Summary

- **Background** on CSD and water governance
- International governance of transboundary waters: **current & desired status**
- The **Role** of the UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of international Watercourses (**UN Watercourses Convention**)
- **Effects** from Entry into Force & non-Entry into Force
- **Concluding** remarks

Background: CSD-13

“**Efforts by Governments** to achieve the agreed goals and targets on water, sanitation and human settlements should be **supported by** the international community through a conducive international policy environment, including **good governance at the international level...**”

Background: CSD-16 & GPPN Paper

EMERGING ISSUE: **Transboundary waters**

Significance: 263 transboundary river basins + ½ the Earth's surface + 145 countries + 40% of the world's population + 60% of global freshwater flow

Obstacles: **poor governance** → **conflict**



“**A recommendation** urging states to become parties to/implement the **UN Watercourses Convention** should be **included in the outcome document of CSD-16.**”

Current Status of International Water Governance

- 60% of transboundary basins **without agreements**
- 80% of existing agreements **don't involve all basin states**
- Many agreements **don't**
 - ❖ Provide for **regular data-sharing**
 - ❖ Establish **water allocation criteria/process**
 - ❖ Incorporate **dispute settlement** mechanisms
 - ❖ Apply to **entire river system**, etc.

Desired International Water Governance Structure



COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS ENABLING INTERVENTIONS AT ALL LEVELS:

- Global:** UN Watercourses Convention
- Regional:** SADC Protocol
- Basin:** Amazon
- Sub-basin:** Lake Victoria, Mekong



The Role of the UN Watercourses Convention: Objectives & Goal

Legal Objective: *Successful codification* and *progressive development* of rules of international water law



Policy Objective: Promote international *peace/security*
+ Address water *mismanagement/overuse*



Goal: Enable *a)* the *use, development, conservation, management, protection* of international watercourses
+ *b)* the promotion of their *optimal/sustainable utilization* = to the benefit of *present and future generations*

The Role of the UN Watercourses Convention: Functions

Inspires future agreements	New Revised	Parties & non-parties
Supports existing agreements	Interpretation Application (ambiguous / old provisions)	Parties & non-parties
Governs int'l watercourses in the absence of agreements	No Agreement Partial Agreement Issues not covered	Binding on parties Guidance for non-parties

Effects from entry into force & non-entry into force

Effects on the **objective** of **law codification** & **progressive development**



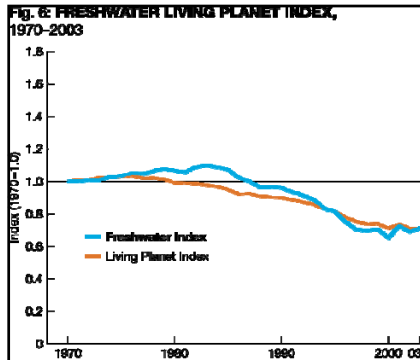
Effects on the convention's **functions** to

- **Inspire** future agreements
- **Support** existing agreements, and
- **Govern** interstate relations in the absence of applicable agreements

A GLIMPSE INTO THE FUTURE

Authoritative Instrument
Evidentiary of the Law of the
Non-Navigational Uses of
International Watercourses

COULD THIS CHANGE???



The freshwater biome is facing greater species loss than any other.

Annual economic losses in developing world due to lack of water & sanitation: \$170 billion

Global warming: environmental degradation; more frequent, widespread & intense extreme events

By 2020, 75-250 million people exposed to water stress.

1.1 billion people without access to safe drinking water

2.4 billion people without access to adequate sanitation



THANK YOU!

For more info, please visit
www.panda.org/freshwater/unconventions

GWP in West Africa/Central America

The Netherlands +
 Representatives from
 10 WA States

Green Cross &
 Conservation International

UNDP + COP CBD

UN Secretary-General
 +

UNSG Adv. Board on
 Water/Sanitation

UNESCO Centre in Dundee