5. Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

Helsinki, 17 March 1992

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 6 October 1996, in accordance with article 26(1).


STATUS: Signatories: 26. Parties: 46.¹


Note: The Convention was adopted by the Senior Advisers to the Economic Commission for Europe Governments on Environmental and Water Problems at their Resumed Fifth Session held at Helsinki from 17 to 18 March 1992. The Convention was opened for signature at Helsinki from 17 to 18 March 1992 and was open for signature at United Nations Headquarters in New York until 18 September 1992.

Amendments to Articles 25 and 26 of the Convention entered into force on 6 February 2013.

See the status page for the amendments.
Declarations and Reservations
(Unless otherwise indicated, the declarations and reservations were made
upon ratification, accession, acceptance or approval.)

AUSTRIA
"The Republic of Austria declares in accordance with
article 22 paragraph 2 of the Convention, that it accepts
both of the means of dispute settlement mentioned in this
paragraph as compulsory in relation to any Party
accepting an obligation concerning one or both these
means of dispute settlement."

FRANCE
The Government of the French Republic, in approving
the Convention on the Protection and Use of
Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes,
declares that reference to the concept of reasonable and
equitable use of transboundary waters does not constitute
recognition of a principle of customary law, but illustrates
a principle of cooperation between Parties to the
Convention; the scope of such cooperation is specified in
agreements, to which the Convention between States
bordering the same transboundary waters - such
agreements being concluded on the basis of equality and
reciprocity.

GERMANY
"The Federal Republic of Germany, in order to protect
information related to personal data according to its
national law, reserves the right to supply personal data
only under the condition that the part receiving such
protected information shall respect the confidentiality of
the information received and the conditions under which
it is supplied, and shall only use that information for the
purposes for which it was supplied"

LIECHTENSTEIN
[Same declaration, identical in essence , mutatis
mutandis, as the one made under Austria.]

LITHUANIA
"The Republic of Lithuania declares that, for a dispute
not resolved in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 22
it accepts the means of dispute settlement provided in
paragraph 2 (b) of Article 22 of the said Convention."

NETHERLANDS
"The Kingdom of the Netherlands accepts for a
dispute not resolved in accordance with paragraph 1 of
article 22 of the Convention both the following means of
dispute settlement as compulsory in relation to any Party
accepting the same obligation:
(a) Submission of the dispute to the International
Court of Justice;
(b) Arbitration in accordance with the procedure set
out in annex IV."

SERBIA
"In accordance with Article 22 paragraph 2 of the
Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary
Watercourses and International Lakes, the Republic of
Serbia declares that, for a dispute not resolved in
accordance with paragraph 1 of the Article 22, it accepts
both means of dispute settlement in the manner and under
the conditions referred to in Article 22 paragraphs 2 and
3."

SPAIN
In relation to article 3, paragraph 1 (c), the Spanish
State takes it that the limits for waste-water discharges
stated in permits shall guarantee, in any case, respect for
the water-quality criteria of the receiving environment,
based on the best available technologies and the technical
features of the affected installation, its geographical site
and local environmental conditions.

Notes:

1 For the purpose of entry into force of the
[Convention/Protocol] , any instrument of ratification,
acceptance, approval or accession deposited by a regional
economic integration organization shall not be counted as
additional to those deposited by member States of that
Organization.

2 With reservation of application to the Faroe Islands and
Greenland.

3 On 14 August 1998, the Government of France made a
declaration with respect to the above Convention. The said
declaration was communicated to all Contracting States by a
depository notification. Within a period of 90 days from the date
of the depositary notification (i.e. 5 October 1998), none of the
Contracting States to the Convention notified the Secretary-
General of an objection. Consequently, the declaration is
deemed to have been accepted for deposit on 3 January 1999.

4 For the Kingdom in Europe.

5 On 28 June 1999, the Government of Portugal informed
the Secretary-General the the Convention would also apply to
Macau. See note 1 under "Portugal" in the "Historical
Information" section in the front matter of this volume.