



# The UNECE Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change

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## Background of the Guidance

- Climate change impacts on water resources are visible and first adaptation efforts are starting
- Few countries have developed adaptation strategies, none at the transboundary level
- The UNECE Water Convention represents an important framework for cooperation on adaptation
- => Decision by Meeting of the Parties in 2006 to develop a Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change
- Developed 2007-2009 by a drafting group, building on a survey on adaptation measures and needs, several consultations, workshops and expert review
- Adopted at fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties in Geneva in November 2009 and launched at COP15

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## Target group for the Guidance

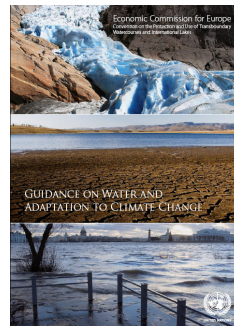


- Decision makers and water managers
- Officials, managers and stakeholders of other relevant sectors
- Focus on UNECE region and on countries with economies in transition, but also relevant for other regions

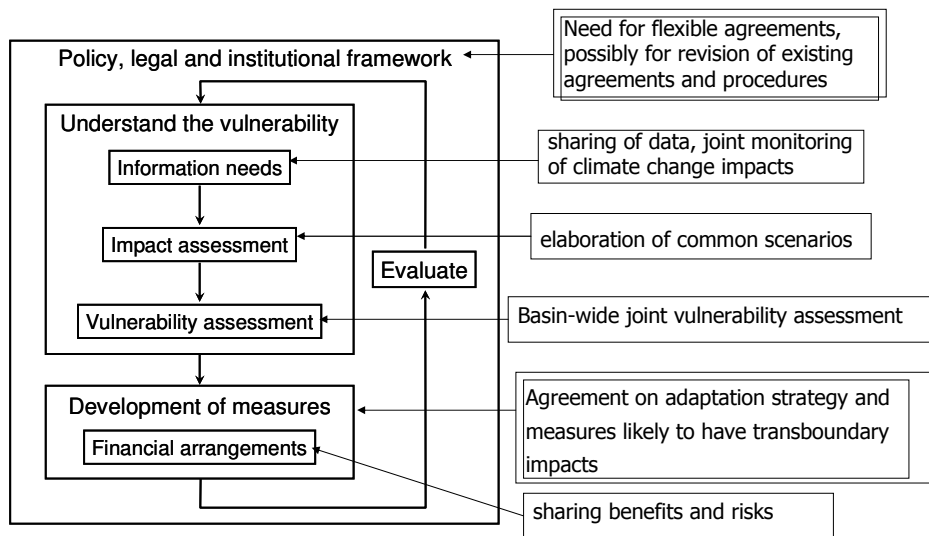
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## Objectives of the Guidance

- General roadmap towards adaptation of water management to climate change
- needs to be tailored to specific local situations
- Step-wise approach
  - Assess impacts of climate change
  - Develop policy, strategic and operational responses
- Transboundary and health focus



## Cooperation needs in every step of developing an adaptation strategy



## Some key recommendations (1)

- Consider climate change in the context of other pressures on water resources
- Legal aspects: ensure flexibility of agreements
  - Institutional aspects: entrust joint bodies with adaptation
  - Information: exchange, joint adaptive monitoring systems, joints models and scenarios

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## Some key recommendations (2)

- Vulnerability assessment: for the whole basin, for all water uses in the basin
- Measures:
  - planned at the basin level,
  - no/low-regrets,
  - cross-sectoral/cross boundaries,
  - flexible
- Effective adaptation strategies are a mix of
  - structural and non-structural
  - regulatory and economic instruments
  - education and awareness-raising measures

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## Not only the product....

- First comprehensive Guidance document for water and climate change which describes how to adapt especially in transboundary basins
- More than 80 experts from numerous countries and disciplines contributed
- It contains almost 40 case studies
- It is implemented through pilot projects and platform for sharing experience

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## Implementation of the Guidance

- Programme of pilot projects on adaptation in transboundary basins
  - Eastern Europe: Dniester basin (Ukraine, Moldova) => flood risk management  
Neman (Belarus, Lithuania, Russian Federation) => IWRM and adaptation
  - Central Asia: Chu Talas Basin (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) => water scarcity
  - South-Eastern Europe: Sava River basin (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia) => flood risk management
  - Asia: Amur River Basin – Dauria Biosphere (Russia – China - Mongolia) => ecosystems and environmental flows
- Platform for exchanging experiences

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## The Guidance is available at:

[www.unece.org/env/water/  
publications/pub74.htm](http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/pub74.htm)

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