

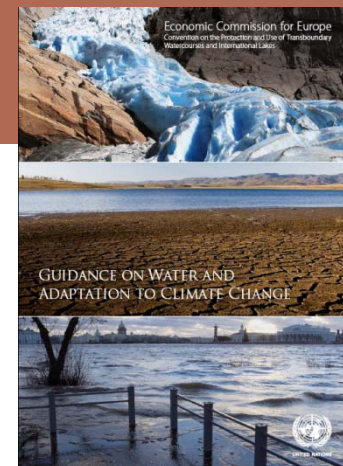
How to adapt in transboundary basins? The UNECE Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change



Laszlo Kothay

INBO General Assembly

Presenting by Attila LOVAS



Why transboundary cooperation in adaptation?

- Climate change impacts on water resources are visible and first adaptation efforts are starting

Transboundary cooperation is essential in order to:

- 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
- =>Cooperation reduces uncertainty and costs!



Background of the Guidance

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



Target group for the Guidance

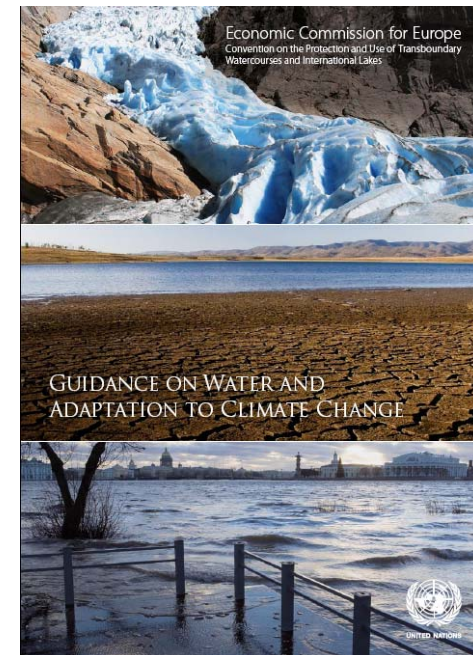


- Decision makers and water managers
- Officials, managers and stakeholders of other relevant sectors
- Focus on UNECE region and on countries with economies in transition, but also relevant for other regions



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



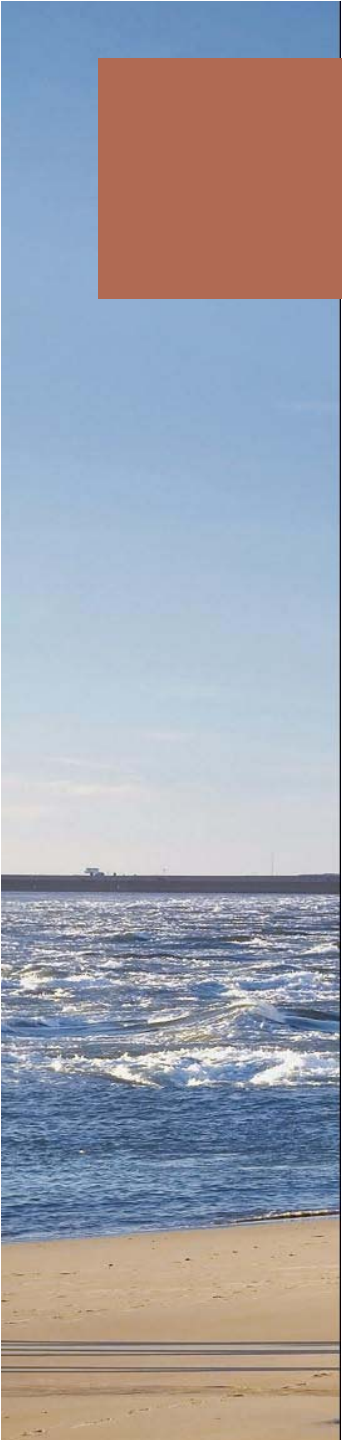
Some of the main messages of the Guidance

- Adaptation to climate change in water management is needed now
- Uncertainty should never be a reason not to act
- Consider climate change in the context of other pressures on water resources (population growth, migration, globalization, changing consumption patterns and agricultural and industrial developments)
- Sharing of information between countries and sectors, including early-warning systems, is essential
- Barriers to adaptation in the legal, institutional and policy frameworks should be removed
- Exchange of knowledge and experiences is crucial to enhance the capacity of countries to adapt and to cope with climate change



Development of measures

- Effective adaptation strategies are a mix of
 - structural and non-structural
 - regulatory and economic instruments
 - education and awareness-raising measures
- Adaptation measures should be cost-effective, environmentally sustainable, culturally compatible and socially acceptable
- Adaptation measures should allow for maximum flexibility
- Stakeholders participation is crucial for all steps of the development and implementation of adaptation strategies and measures
- The process of developing and implementing adaptation measures should build on learning-by-doing



Implementation of the Guidance

- Programme of pilot projects in transboundary basins
- Creation of a platform for sharing information on existing and new experience with adaptation in transboundary basins
- Kick-off workshop for pilot projects and next meeting of the Task Force on water and climate on 10-12 May 2010 in Geneva





The Guidance is available at:

http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/documents/Guidance_water_climate.pdf

For more information please contact:

Water.convention@unece.org