

THESSALONIKI STATEMENT

AT THE IV INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON TRANSBOUNDARY WATERS MANAGEMENT, HELD IN THESSALONIKI, GREECE, FROM 15-18 OCTOBER 2008, WE THE PARTICIPANTS FROM 42 COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS, HAVING

- reviewed the current situation of different transboundary surface and groundwater bodies;
- realised the common obstacles that in many cases detract from the best uses of those resources;
- recognised that the quantity and quality of those resources are affected by various human activities;
- considered that water resources are subject to the increasing influence of global and climate changes;
- considered the scientific, technical, economic, financial, policy and legal aspects involved in the management of transboundary water resources;
- recognised that it would be beneficial to broaden the scope of cooperation among states sharing water resources by involving the various stakeholders;
- recognised that transboundary water resources should be regarded as a common resource for satisfying the basic human as well as ecosystem needs and enhance sustainable socio-economic development of the basin populations;
- recognised that, in order to implement international legal obligations, it is necessary for states to take action within their domestic contexts

ARE OF THE VIEW THAT IN ORDER TO FACE THE ABOVE CHALLENGES AND MAXIMISE THE ADVANTAGES FROM COOPERATION AMONG COUNTRIES

1. The states sharing transboundary water resources should:
 - a. enter into agreements and understandings for cooperation in the management of these resources, consistent with principles of international law on water resources;
 - b. put in place sustainable institutional arrangements at the transboundary river basin or aquifer level;
 - c. put in place monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to continuously assess the transboundary river basins and aquifers;
 - d. enhance the knowledge base relating to these resources in order to develop effective water resources protection and management mechanisms;
 - e. explore alternative institutional approaches for the governance of transboundary water resources at the local users' level.
2. In order to implement international and regional legal obligations within their national contexts, states should put in place adequate national water management policies, legislation and institutions.
3. Arrangements should be made in order to build the capacity of states' multilateral, bilateral and national administrations to implement the provisions of the agreements entered into, and also to promote water education and organise multidisciplinary training programmes.
4. Sustainable financing mechanisms should be established for transboundary water management.

THEREFORE:

We the participants appeal to international institutions, as well as countries and regional and local authorities, in partnership with the private sector, for assistance, technical support and financing in these endeavours.