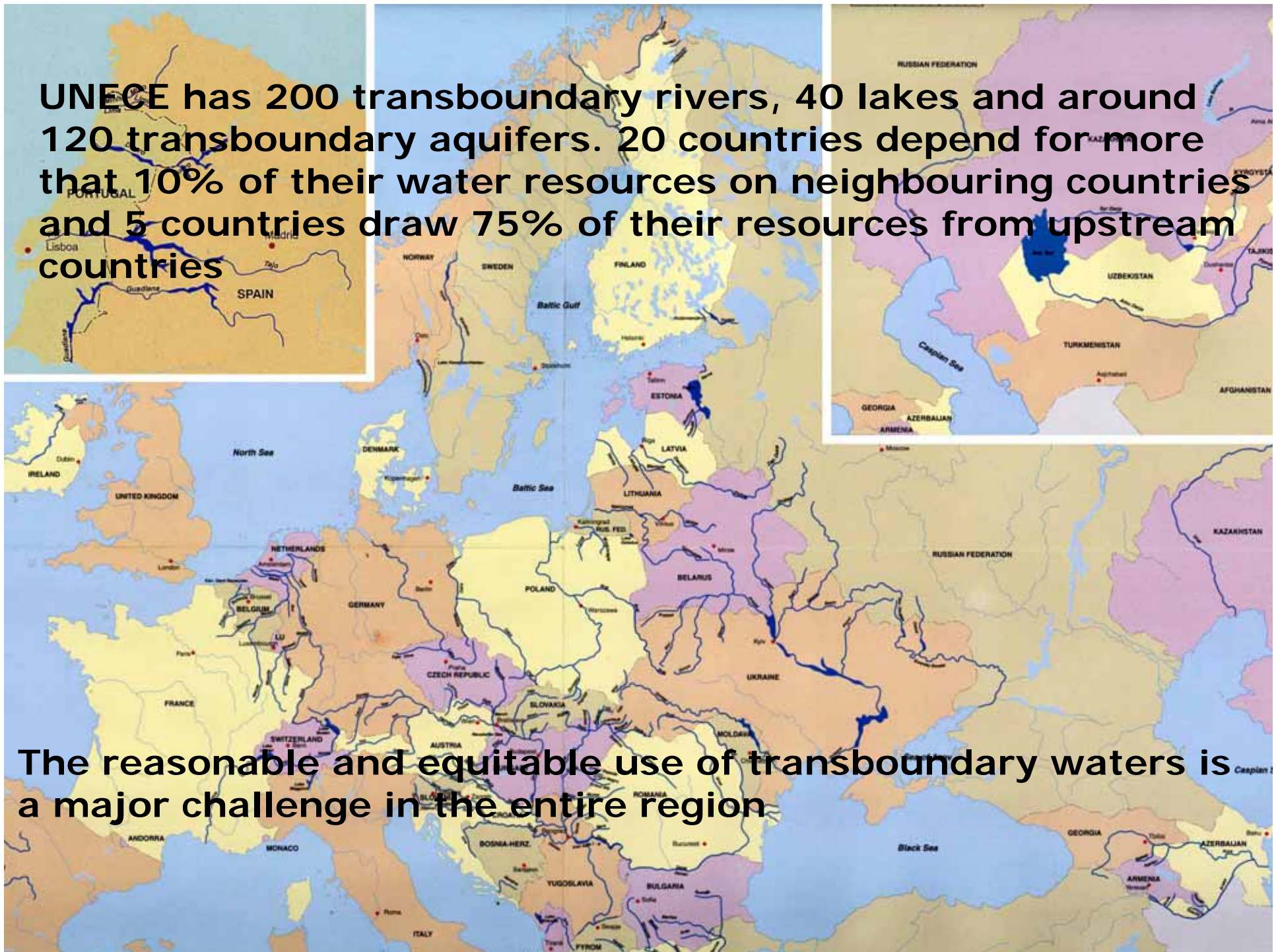


An aerial photograph of a winding river flowing through a lush green landscape. The river meanders through fields and forests, creating a series of loops and curves. The water is a light, silty color, contrasting with the vibrant green of the surrounding land. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting a bright but slightly overcast day. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

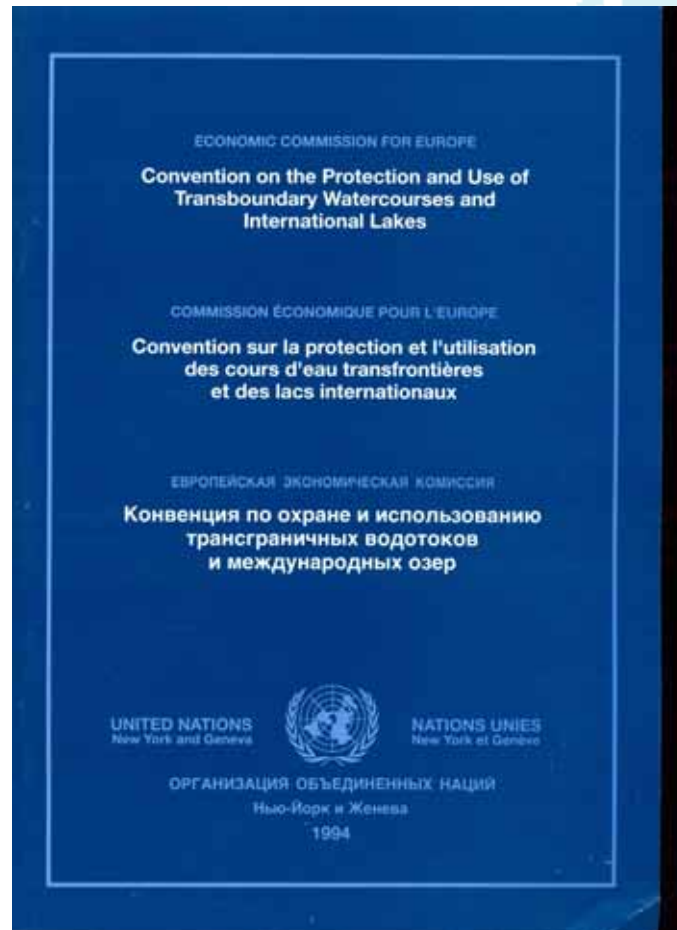
**A unique framework for improved
management of shared waters**

UNECE has 200 transboundary rivers, 40 lakes and around 120 transboundary aquifers. 20 countries depend for more than 10% of their water resources on neighbouring countries and 5 countries draw 75% of their resources from upstream countries



The reasonable and equitable use of transboundary waters is a major challenge in the entire region

The Water Convention

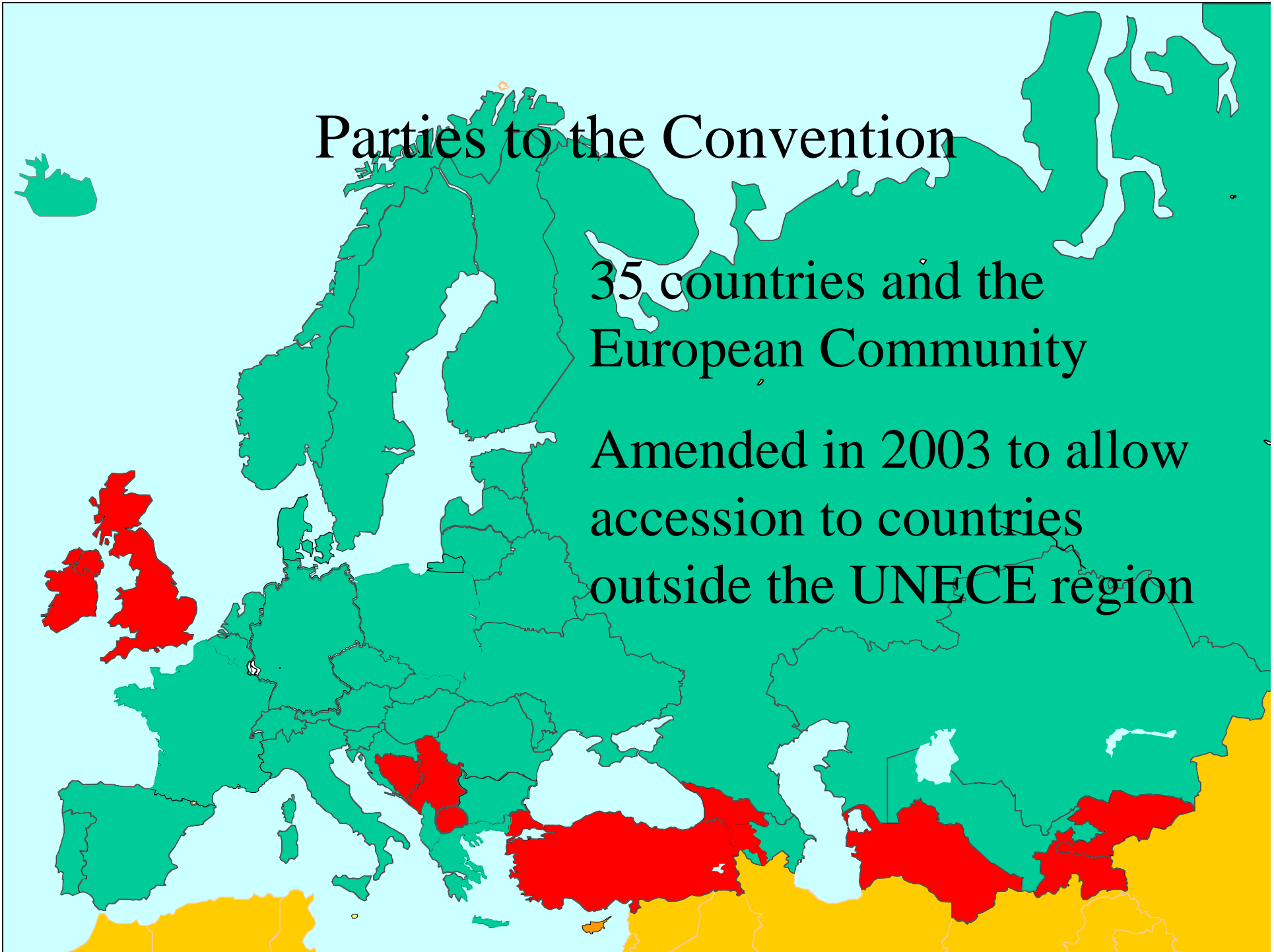


- Signed on 17 March 1992
- Entered into force on 6 October 1996

Parties to the Convention

35 countries and the
European Community

Amended in 2003 to allow
accession to countries
outside the UNECE region



Aims of the Convention



- Protection of transboundary waters by preventing, controlling and reducing transboundary impacts
- Ecologically sound and rational management of transboundary waters
- Reasonable and equitable use of transboundary waters \Rightarrow Conflict prevention
- Conservation and restoration of ecosystems



Main provision – Art. 2

Parties shall take all appropriate measures **to prevent, control and reduce any transboundary impact.**

Main provision – Art. 2

Transboundary impacts are adverse effects on the environment caused by a human activity, including effects on **human health and safety, flora, fauna, soil, air, water, climate, landscape and historical monuments or other physical structures** or the interaction among these factors.

Transboundary waters include **surface and groundwaters**

Provisions relating to Riparian Parties

Parties bordering the same transboundary waters are obliged to conclude **specific bilateral or multilateral agreements** providing for the establishment of **joint bodies**

Examples: 1994 Danube River Protection Convention, the 2000 EU Water Framework Directive, Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin.

Tasks of joint bodies

- Identify, draw up inventory and exchange information on the pollution sources;
- Elaborate joint monitoring programmes;
- Set emission limits and elaborate joint water quality objectives;
- Develop concerted action plans;
- Establish warning and alarm procedures;
- Represent a forum for the exchange of information

More information

including guidelines, publications and information on activities under the Convention can be found at

<http://unece.org/env/water>

water.convention@unece.org