

Convention on the protection and use of trans-boundary watercourses and international lakes

1993/1186(CNS) - 24/07/1995 - Final act

- OBJECTIVE: to set a framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation which seeks to protect the aquatic environment and to control the pollution of transboundary watercourses and lakes. - COMMUNITY MEASURE: Council Decision 95/308/EC of 24.07.95 on the conclusion, on behalf of the Community, of a convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes. - SUBSTANCE: Signed at Helsinki on 18.03.1992, this Convention sets a framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation which is designed to prevent and to control the pollution of transboundary watercourses and to ensure the rational use of water resources in Member Countries of the Economic Commission for Europe (UN). The Convention includes provisions which seek to authorize the parties to adopt the relevant legal, administrative, economic, financial and technical measures designed to reduce the transboundary impact of pollution. The parties are further required to set up programmes to monitor the condition of transboundary watercourses. The Convention also provides for a series of measures which apply to those parties whose territory borders the said watercourses. These provisions relate to: . the setting-up of bilateral or multilateral cooperation, . consultations on issues of common interest, . joint monitoring and assessment of pollution levels, . joint research actions and the exchange of information, . the setting up of an alarm system to warn of critical environmental situations, with mutual aid to be provided if necessary, . ensuring that the public is kept informed. The Convention is accompanied by annexes which mainly include guidelines for the implementation of best environmental practices and for the laying down of objectives and criteria in respect of water quality. - ENTRY INTO FORCE: The Convention takes effect 90 days after the final submission of the Member States' instruments of ratification and approval. For the Community, the incumbent President of the Council (Mr P. SOLBES MIRA) will appoint a person or persons authorized to submit the EU's instrument of approval to the Secretary of the United Nations.