

## Water Convention Bureau



The United Nations (UN) is an **international organization**. It is made up of almost 200 individual countries from all around the world who come together to solve global problems. Among other things, the UN tries to help countries cope with global **climate change**. This means balancing good jobs and high standards of living with preserving **natural habitats** for future generations. As an international organization, the UN has no money of its own. It gets funding from its member countries. Yeeland and Grusa give about \$10 million each to the UN every year.

The **Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes** (the **Water Convention**) is a legally binding international treaty (agreement) that any country belonging to the United Nations can join. Treaty members agree to three broad principles:

1		To use water in ways that as much as possible prevent, control, and reduce significant <b>transboundary</b> impact (the “do no harm” rule);
2		To use water in ways that are equitable and reasonable (the “reasonable use” rule); and
3		To cooperate with other nations to achieve goals (1) and (2).

The **Water Convention Bureau** is an international organization created under the treaty to make sure treaty members act in accordance with these three principles. It has a small budget for environmental grants. Grusa and Yeeland are both parties to the Water Convention. The United States is not a signatory of the Water Convention.

The Water Convention Bureau thinks each country has a reasonable goal, but their goals conflict with each other. If the issue were only that Yeeland needs to build a **hydroelectric power** plant and dam to provide more electricity to its growing population, the UN would support Yeeland. If the issue were only that Grusa wants to protect the economic benefits (e.g., jobs, money) it gets from the Lake Eco Wetlands Preserve and the water it needs for commercial agriculture, the Water Convention Bureau would support Grusa. The Water Convention Bureau’s priority today is to find an acceptable compromise under the treaty.

The Water Convention Bureau is familiar with SOAR. Even though SOAR is a non-governmental organization, the Water Bureau Convention knows that the group has international support and can generate a lot of negative publicity. The Water Convention Bureau invited SOAR to today’s meeting in the hopes that it will support whatever compromise is reached and not organize protests afterwards.

**Opening Position:** Jobs and electricity are important, but so is preserving the natural habitats, **endangered species**, and water resources for agriculture. The Water Convention Bureau believes Yeeland and Grusa should find a way to co-manage the water.

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