



International Hydrological Programme

UNESCO-IHP ISARM project and the cooperation with the UN ILC

UNESCO-IHP Transboundary aquifers

Hydrogeology and International Law

29-30 May 2007

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I. The ISARM project

II. The cooperation with the UN ILC

IHP ISARM project

Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management

At its 14th session, the intergovernmental Council of UNESCO's IHP, representing 160 Member States :

- ☐ **recognized that transboundary aquifer systems are important sources of fresh water in some regions of the world,**
- ☐ **decided to adopt a resolution to promote studies in regard to internationally shared aquifers**

Resolution XIV-12, June 2000



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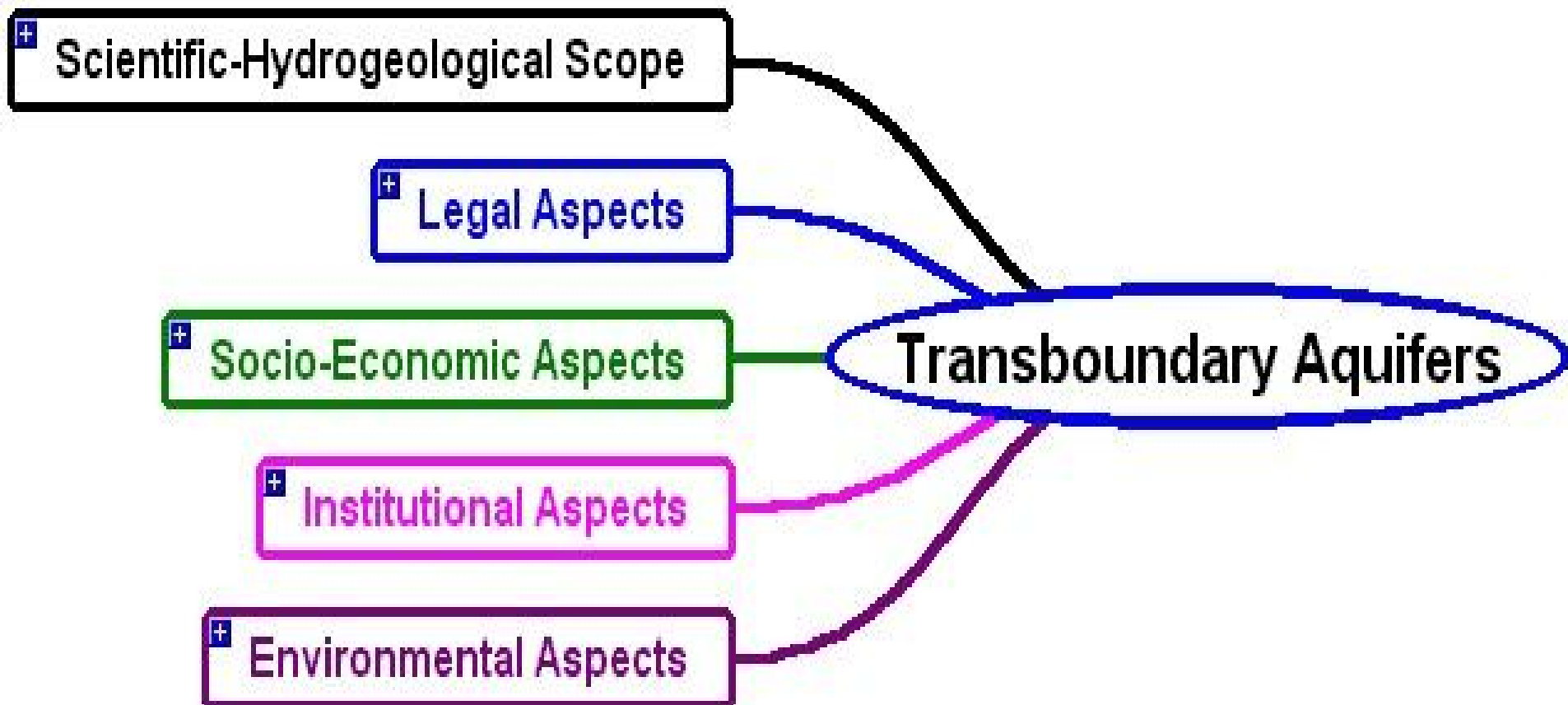
Objectives:

- To improve the existing scientific knowledge on transboundary aquifers
- To compile an international inventory of transboundary aquifers
- On the long term, to develop a toolkit for a management approach of transboundary aquifers



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The ISARM Initiative: five focal areas





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The ISARM Project- Launch of Regional Inventories

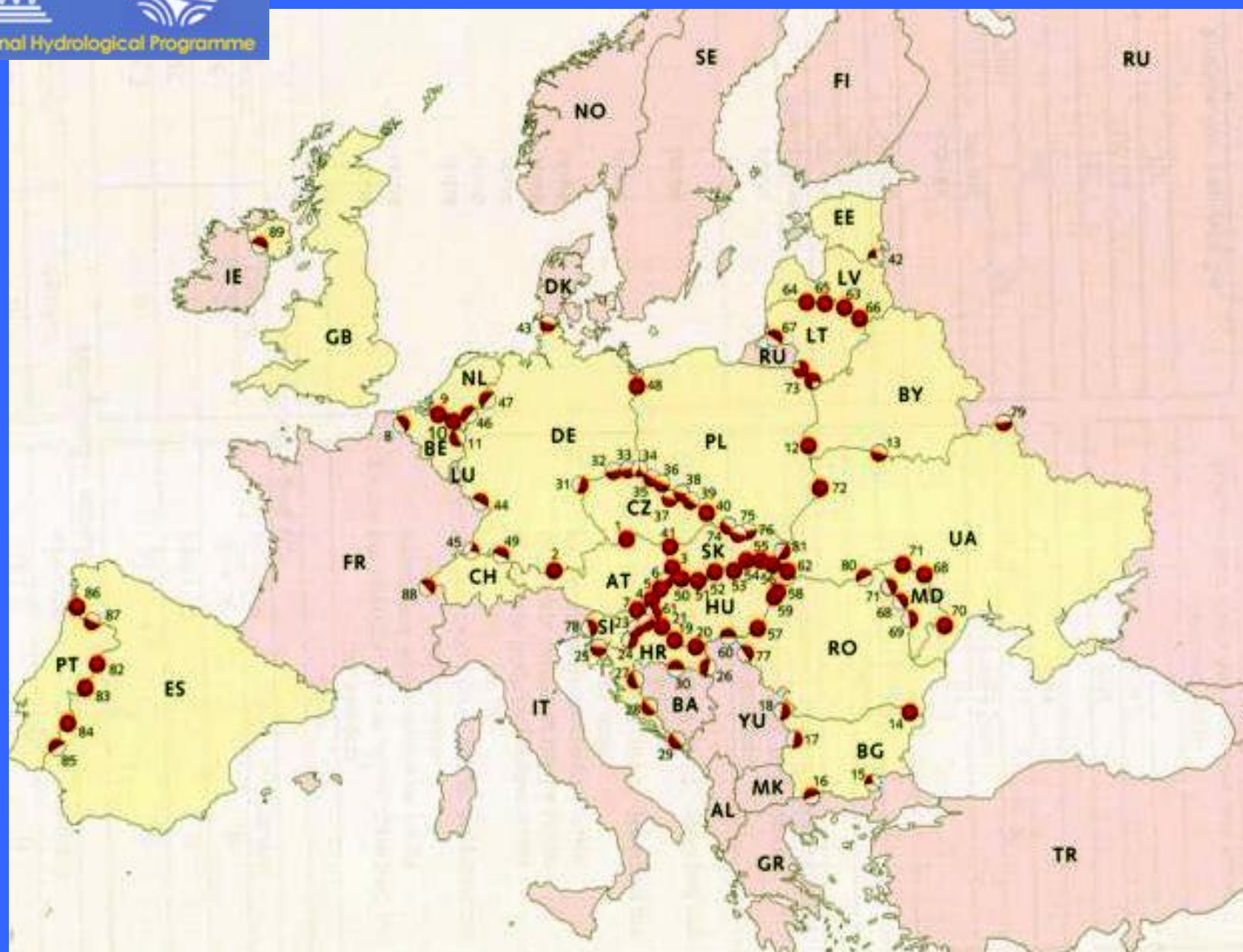
EUROPE

**Links & synergies with parallel activities
established e.g. UN ECE :**

**Under the UN ECE Water Convention 1992
Inventory of transboundary aquifers in
Europe**



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The ISARM Project- Launch of Regional Inventories

AFRICA

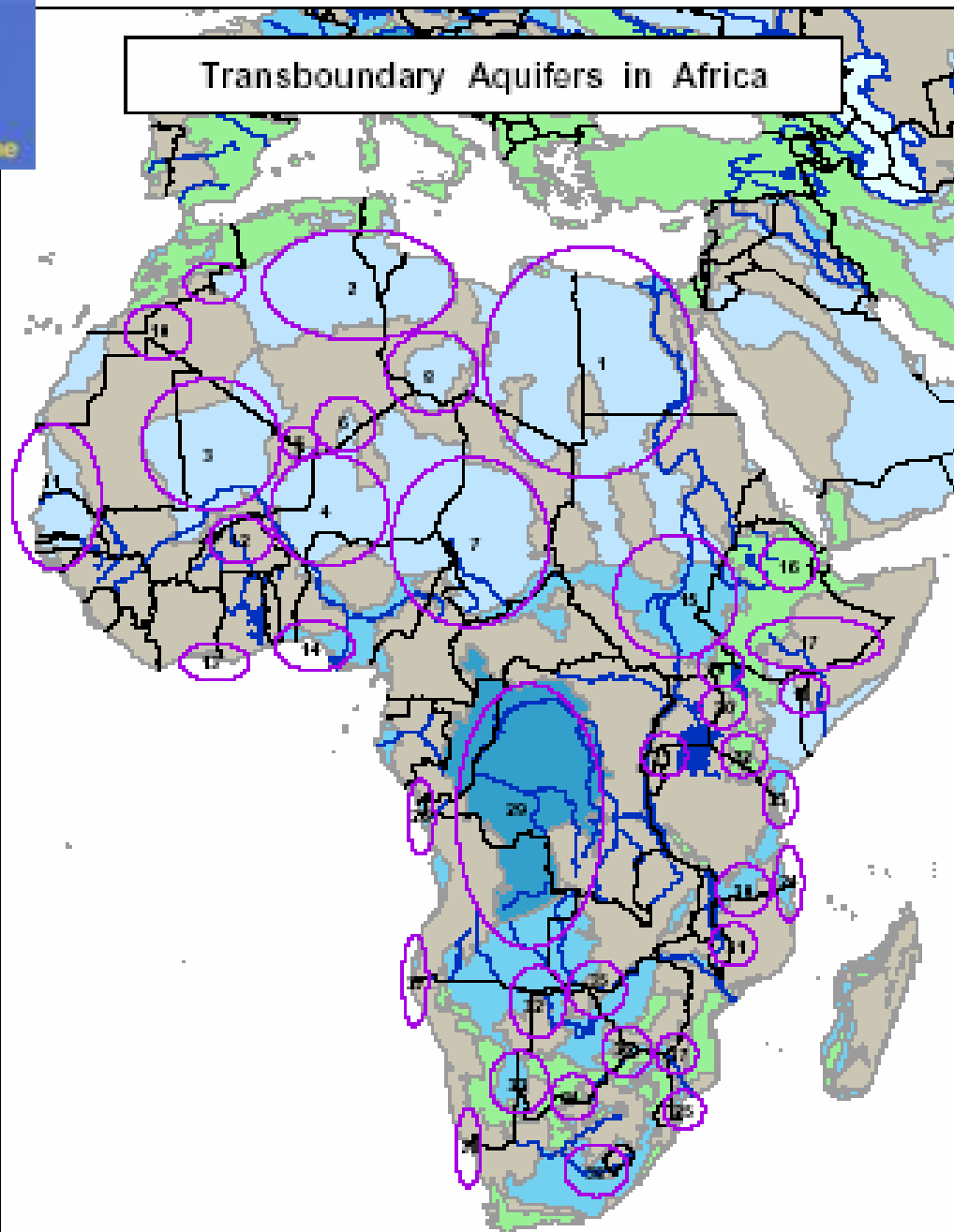
**International workshop “Managing
shared aquifer resources in Africa”,
Tripoli, June 2002**

**recommends, inter alia
the inventory and the assessment of
shared aquifer resources in Africa**



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Transboundary Aquifers in Africa





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The ISARM Project- Launch of Regional Inventories

- **Americas**

ISARM launched in the Americas in
2002

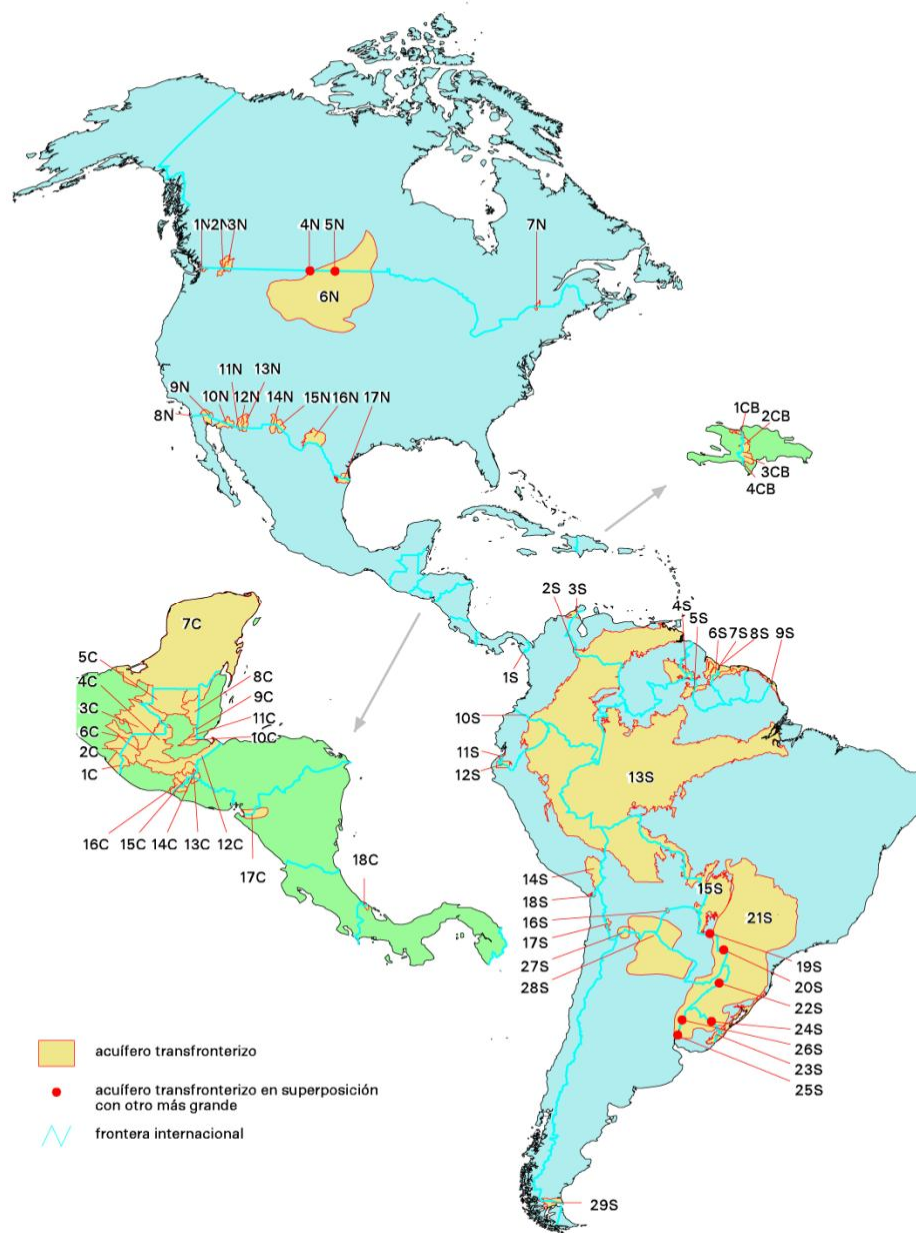
UNESCO/OAS Partnership

UNESCO - OAS

ISARM of the AMERICAS

60 transboundary aquifers inventoried

Acuíferos Transfronterizos de las Américas



ISARM-Americas (*UNESCO-IHP/OAS*)

1st phase: inventory of TB aquifers in the Americas, and identification of case studies

2nd phase: study of the legal and institutional aspects

UNESCO ISARM in the BALKANS

47 transboundary aquifers inventoried



UNESCO Chair/International Network of Water-Environment Centres for the Balkans (INWEB), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki, Greece.

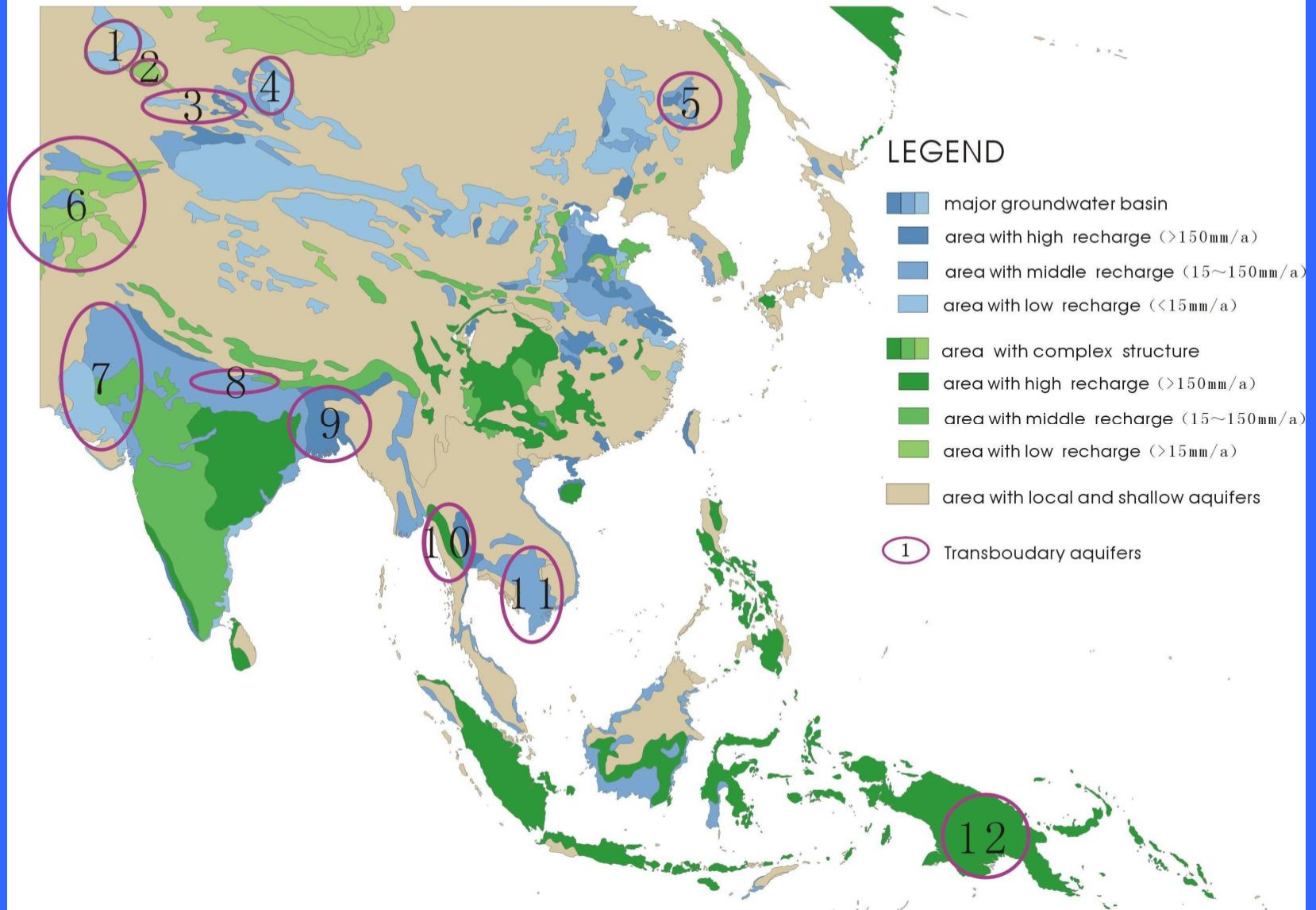
UNESCO ISARM in Asia



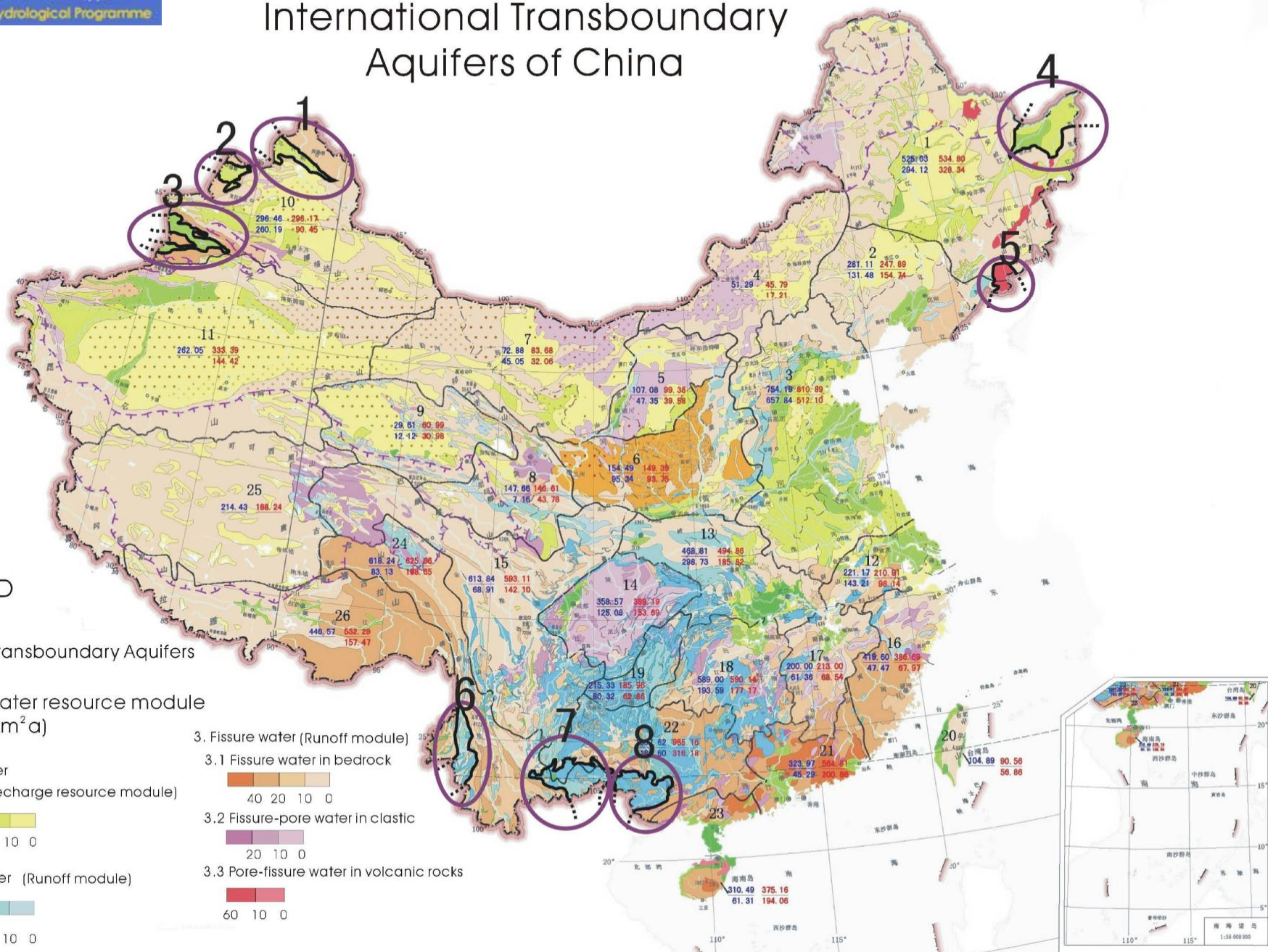
UNESCO ISARM in Asia

12 transboundary aquifers inventoried so far

The occurrence of transboundary aquifers in Asia



International Transboundary Aquifers of China



II. The cooperation with the UN ILC

2002 : the ILC includes in its programme of work the topic of “Shared Natural Resources”

- transboundary groundwaters
- Oil
- Natural gas

UNESCO-IHP and the United Nations International Law Commission (UNILC)

Within the framework of the ISARM project, since 2003 a multidisciplinary ad-hoc task force of experts has been established by UNESCO to assist the Special Rapporteur of the UNILC on the preparation of a new International legal instrument on Transboundary Aquifers

IHP/ISARM scientific assistance to the Special Rapporteur

- Experts groups meeting in Paris and in Tokyo
- Preparation of documents and technical notes
- Meetings/working group sessions with the ILC members in Geneva, and at the UN GA 6th Committee in NYC

Regional IHP meetings on transboundary aquifers and international law

- **June 2004 : meeting with experts
from the Arab world**
- **March 2005 : meeting with experts
from the Americas**

Regional meetings

Transboundary aquifers and international law

- Objectives :

Identifying

- regional groundwater characteristics
- State practices (domestic and transboundary)

Creating a common language between hydrogeologists and lawyers



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Thank you