United Nations
Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

Country

By Annelie Anton

POSITION OF United Kingdom REGARDING WATER FLOW CRISES WORLDWIDE



General information

The UK's major rivers include the Severn, Thames and Trent, that support the water supply, transport, industry and ecosystems. The River Thames is a major source of drinking water for London and supports the transportation
The River Severn is important for water management, drainage, flood control and recreation(Activities such as swimming, boating or fishing).
The River Trent supports the drainage, power generation as well as the industry and wildlife.
The UK shares transboundary water systems with Ireland, including the Foyle and Erne river basins, that requires cross-border cooperation.
However, The UK is not involved in an international water dispute/conflict, but the UK faces several domestic water challenges that include pollution, sewage discharges, aging infrastructure and water scarcity.

Position on the matter

The UK recognizes the weaknesses in its current water governance and regulatory system, particularly in fields that regard the private water companies. The government's "*A New Vision for Water*" shows UK's position that the sector requires structural reform and stronger regulatory oversight. The UK supports earlier intervention by regulators and greater accountability for the privately owned water companies. However, the government rejects the full nationalisation of the water industry, but rather supports the continued private ownership with tighter regulation and more investments..

Proposed solutions

The UK supports expanding water infrastructure, including new reservoirs and regional water-transfer systems to address the occurring shortages (Major Water Infrastructure Programme, 2025–2040, with investments over £50 billion). It promotes wastewater recycling, desalination and groundwater replenishment to diversify the water supplies. The UK also advocates for replacing aging pipes, reducing leakage and introducing more smart monitoring technologies to detect water losses. It would support peatland restoration as a nature-based water-management measure. In October 2026, the government announced a £25 million Peatland Restoration Grant Scheme, which is run by Natural England from April 2027 to April 2029, to help regulate the water flows, reduce flood risks and store carbon. The UK also promotes stronger environmental regulations, transparent monitoring and greater accountability for water companies through "A New Vision for Water" (2026).

Potential Blocks

Both Germany and France would likely support the UK on stronger environmental standards, drought management and international cooperation because all three counties prioritise sustainable water management and resilient infrastructure.

China as well as Russia may resist the stricter international water regulations and binding monitoring frameworks because both nations place a strong emphasis on their national sovereignty and control over their water resources.

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