

Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins (activity 3.2)

Seppo Rekolainen,
Chair of the Task Force on the Water-Food-
Energy-Ecosystems Nexus
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland

Annukka Lipponen
Secretariat of the Water Convention



Progress achieved applying the TBNA Methodology in transboundary basins: the Drina and Drin River Basins

- Project (funded by ADA, implemented by GWP-Med and UNECE) in the Drin and Drina RB (on-going): quantitative analysis, stakeholder process, priority interventions' ("nexus solutions") identification to be followed by project fiches and exploring potential financing, Nexus Roadmap/Strategy by basin.
- **Drina River Basin** (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia) nexus assessment (follow-up): National consultations held. On-going: Study of formalization options for agreeing about selected aspects of flow (including e-flows); Energy-water modelling on renewable energy potential & implications for hydro.
- **Drin River Basin** (Albania, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro) nexus assessment: Thematic Report on the WFEE Nexus (part of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis) published, to reinforce SAP & its implementation. On-going: Energy-water modelling on co-optimizing flood protection & hydro generation; Study on biomass and forestry links and benefits for water and environment.

Publications, information on all assessments at: <http://www.unece.org/env/water/nexus>



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Development of a synthesis document on nexus solutions and investments: the process



The 8th meeting of the Parties (2018, Nursultan) requested the secretariat to undertake the preparation of a synthesis document to fill gaps related to the experience of nexus solutions.

- Stocktaking of experiences around the world, developed by UNECE in cooperation with IUCN. An analytical framework developed, linking nexus solutions (categories) to most common problems in transboundary basins (GEF:IW projects). Questionnaire survey distributed on-line and responses collected.
- Preliminary conclusions were discussed (analytical framework, results from questionnaire) at the 6th Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus (22-23 October 2020)
- Experience from consultations with experts and nexus dialogues in different regions of the world. Follow up about the cases & complementing the information. Devoted on-line meeting on Latin America and the Caribbean held with ECLAC and IDB on 22 February 2021, one on the Balkans anticipated in May.
- Draft synthesis document & preliminary findings available for the present joint session of the Working Group on IWRM and Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (Geneva, 26-28 April 2021). Commenting expected. Gaps to be filled.
- Synthesis of Nexus Solutions and Investments to be presented to the next Meeting of the Parties (30 September-1 October 2021).

Synthesis document on nexus solutions and investments: selected findings

The stocktaking aimed to demonstrate how the nexus approach translates into “**nexus solutions and investments**” that directly or indirectly provide **transboundary benefit**; indicate factors of success; mapping financing opportunities; reflecting on regional differences.

The highest-ranking enabling factors: stronger transboundary cooperation; shared data and information; increased awareness of options and benefits for cross-sector, transboundary trade-offs, compromise and synergies; and innovative infrastructure operating rules

Observations regarding **financing nexus solutions:** Transboundary cross-sectoral investments are heavily oriented towards institutions; while infrastructure investments are also urgent. All the investments are dominated by Public finance, development finance or combination of both; mostly very traditional delivery pathways. Some examples of Innovative financing. There are opportunities: leverage private investments , coherent planning & joint prioritization → de-risking investments through developing and reinforcing cooperation

Depending on mandate, **River Basin Organizations** can play a key role in facilitating cross-sectoral dialogue that is needed to develop water **investments** and to develop “nexus proofed” master plans, e.g. by coordinating with economic & sectoral regional organizations

3.2 Supporting intersectoral dialogues and assessments through the application of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus approach



Lead Party: Finland

Proposed activities:

- Methodology for assessing the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins to be promoted, inviting partners to apply and add their tools. Application can be supported by focused material such as a leaflet.
- Support the operationalization of nexus (intersectoral) solutions (especially facilitating identification of projects and of financing options) up to 4 regions/basins
- Development and operationalization of cross-sectoral regional strategies with a transb. character
- Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus to continue to function as the platform for experience sharing on addressing intersectoral issues at the transboundary level (2 meetings).
- Dissemination & promotion of the toolkit publication *Towards sustainable renewable energy investment and deployment: Trade-offs and opportunities with water resources and the environment* (with UNECE Sustainable Energy Division).

Anticipated funding needs: 1,221,000 USD