



# UNECE Water Convention

## Water-Forests links

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Convention of the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes



**UNECE**

# The UNECE Water Convention

**Signed in 1992, into force 1996, opened to all UN Member States 2016**

**Objective:** to protect and ensure the quantity, quality and sustainable use of transboundary water resources by facilitating cooperation

**The Convention is based on three main pillars:**

- Principle of prevention
- Principle of reasonable and equitable utilization
- Principle of cooperation

Support to transboundary water cooperation thanks to:



A sound legal framework

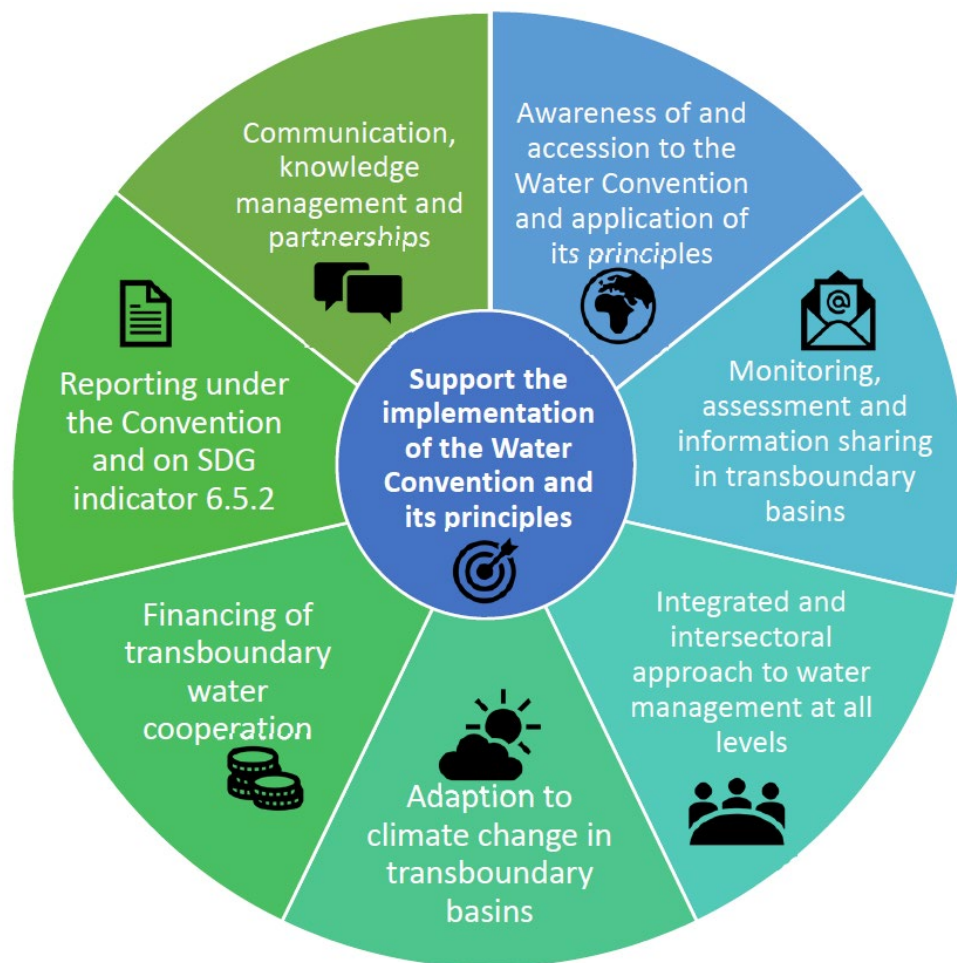


An active institutional framework



Activities and projects on the ground

# The Convention's programme of Work



New PoW (2022-2024)  
adopted by the  
9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties

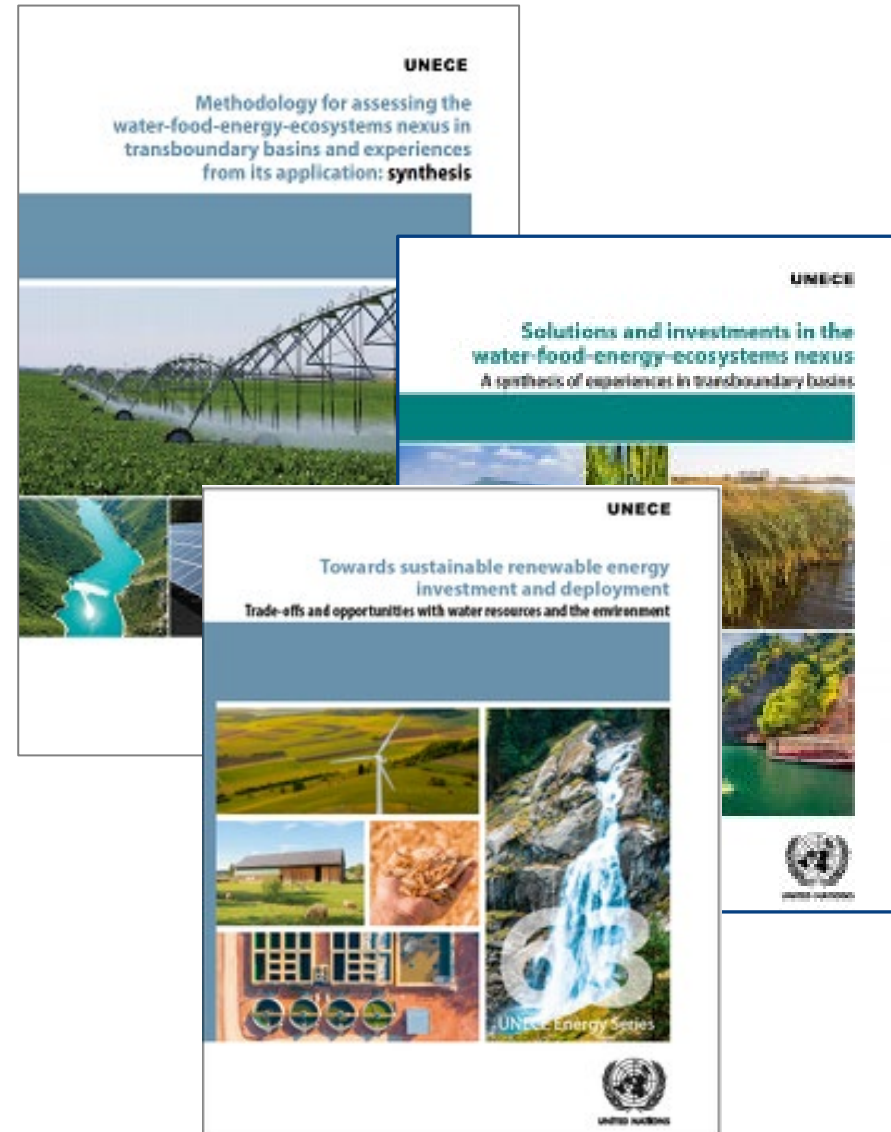
Also supports the  
implementation of the  
UN Strategic  
Plan for Forests 2017–2030

Areas linked to Forestry:

- water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus
- adaptation to climate change

# WEFE Nexus approach to TB cooperation

- Engaging different sectors, incl. forestry, into transboundary dialogue
- Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus
- Participatory assessment methodology – joint identification of issues and solutions
- Sustainable natural resources management Nexus Cluster of UNECE
- Relevant publications: Methodology 2018, RE&Nexus in transboundary context (incl. biomass) 2020, Nexus Solutions and Investments (2021)



## **Alazani/Ganykh River Basin** shared by **Azerbaijan** and **Georgia**

Issues in focus:

Rural/agricultural development, flash floods, hydropower, energy trade, erosion and sedimentation



## **Drin River Basin** shared by **Albania, Kosovo\***, **Montenegro**, and **North Macedonia**

\* (UN administered territory under Security Council resolution 1244, 1999)

Issues in focus:

Hydropower, floods, biomass for energy and sustainable forestry, rural/agricultural development



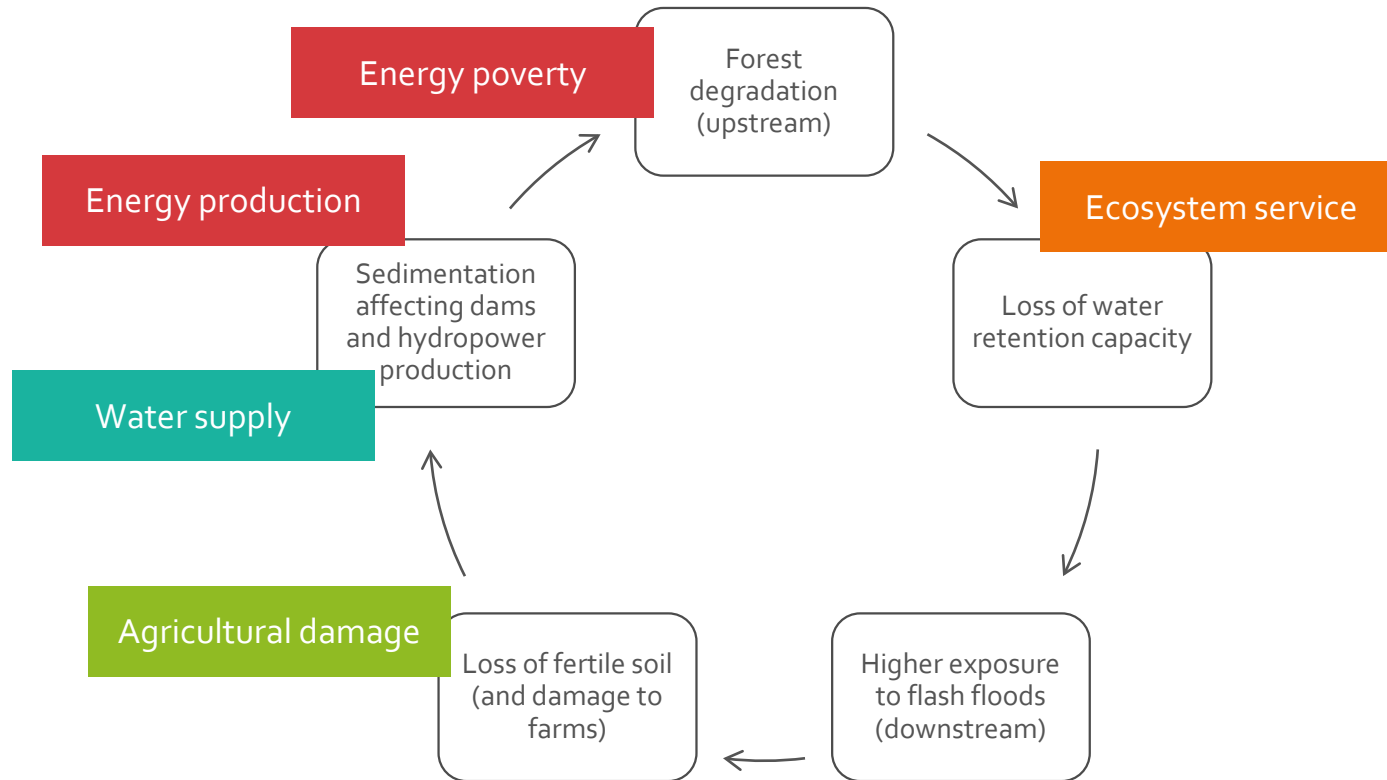
## **Drina River Basin** shared by **Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro**, and **Serbia**

Issues in focus:

Hydropower, renewable energy, rural/agricultural development, water quality, benefits of cooperation



# Why? Example: Alazani/Ganykh Basin



Policy action:  
 -Facilitate access to modern energy sources and energy trade  
 -Control illegal wood harvesting

*Benefits*  
 -> reduced erosion, to hydrological regime, to ecosystems  
 -> reduced impacts from flash floods

*Impact:* 50 000 new consumers in 178 villages across 8 municipalities of Kakheti (Georgia) have been connected to the gas network (UNECE, 2021)

# Western Balkans TB Nexus – Drin and Drina

- Threatened **environmental assets**
  - Forest degradation is widespread
  - Forests essential for both climate mitigation and adaptation
- A closer look to **sustainable bioenergy**?
  - Air pollution a major social issue, deeply linked to energy poverty
  - Biomass often neglected in RE plans; efficiency measures needed
- Need to framed it into **rural development** plans, with:
  - sustainable agriculture
  - eco-tourism
  - distributed REs (including bioenergy)
- Drin:
  - Study on Forestry and Biomass (part of the assessment) (CNVP - technical analysis, network of policy makers and experts, capacity building)
  - Project Document on sustainable forest management and modern biomass in the Drin River
  - Capacity building workshop on forest management and water resources (GWP-Med, CNVP)
- Drina
  - Renewable Energy “Hard Talks” with a nexus approach – incl. bioenergy (2018/9)
  - A Nexus Roadmap for the basin (in all sectors) just agreed upon by countries (May 2022)

# Enhancing adaptive capacity in the transboundary Dniester and Chu-Talas basins

## Inclusion of forests:

- part of the **strategic basin documents** on transboundary water management and adaptation to climate change (Chu-Talas TDA and SAP, Dniester Strategic Framework on Adaptation and Implementation Plan);
- Pilot reforestation measures to adapt to climate change (floods, droughts) in the Chu-Talas and Lower Dniester:
  - ecologically valuable and local species;
  - economic benefits for the local population;
  - complemented by awareness activities.





# Cooperation with UNECE/FAO Forestry



- Statistics, review of recommendations, contacts and experts

## Possibilities:

- UN level: strengthening partnership on transboundary management/cooperation on shared forest and water resources
- Promoting integrated water resources management in transboundary basins
  - *Up to four thematic sessions on different aspects of integrated water resources management will be organized on the margins of intergovernmental meetings of the Convention. These will focus, for example, on: public participation in transboundary basins; transboundary basin management plan development; **forests**, ecosystems, biodiversity and water;*
- More information: <http://www.unece.org/env/water/>