

Thematic assessment on the Water-Food-Energy- Ecosystems Nexus under the UNECE Water Convention



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



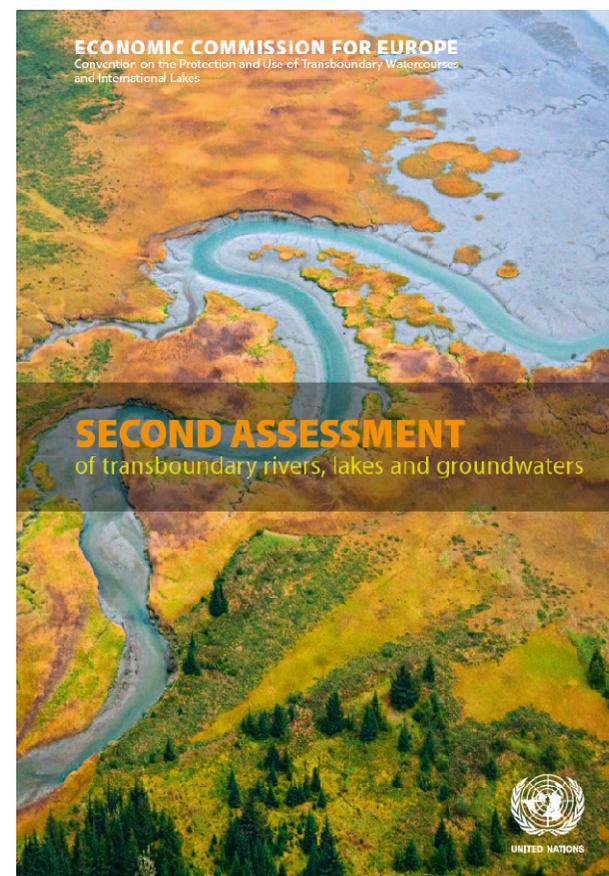
Background to assessment under the Convention and the nexus



- Among the obligations under the Water Convention:
 - Protection of transboundary waters by preventing, controlling and reducing transboundary impacts
 - Carry out at regular intervals joint or coordinated assessments of the conditions of transboundary waters and the effectiveness of measures taken
- In 2003 the Parties to the Water Convention decided to regularly carry out regional assessments; First Assessment in 2007, Second Assessment in 2011

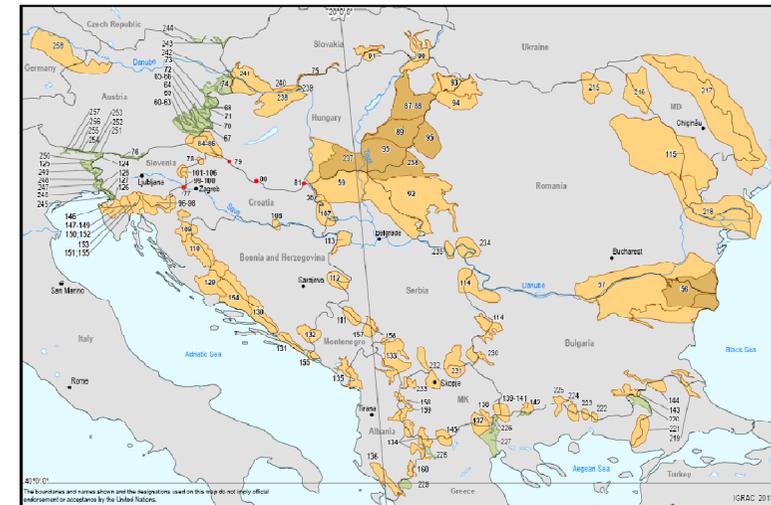
Common issues in the pan-European region from the Second Assessment and the follow up

- Frictions between sectors about water use in many basins
- Policy integration and coherence remains weak across the region; difficult to put into practice, painful trade offs. Stronger governance needed!
- Uneven level of transboundary cooperation and related deficiencies
- High demand in the countries for effective, practical solutions for alleviating negative impacts between sectors
- Little done about the nexus at transboundary level



Why is a nexus approach in transboundary basins of South-Eastern Europe important?

- Transboundary basins cover ~90%
- Pressures related to agriculture, water quality (wastewaters, mining)
- Economic development (hydropower and tourism) — opportunities to do it “right”, better, with less impacts
- Pressures on climate change impacts: one of the most affected regions — growing water scarcity calls for reconciling different uses
- Development in the legal framework, but uneven level of advancement; deficiencies in implementation and enforcements



Assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus under the Water Convention in selected basins

- Part of the Work Programme 2013-2015
- Work overseen and guided by the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus
- Some 6-8 basins to be assessed – pan-Europe, Africa, Asia; different nexus settings, climate, resource scarcity etc.
- Key partners: Finland (lead)/Finnish Environment Institute SYKE, Royal Institute of Technology (Stockholm), FAO
- Methodology developed & piloted 25-27 November 2013 on the Alazani/Ganyh; adapted to the different basins
- Basin assessments January 2014 - April 2015; report August 2015

What does the nexus entail in the transboundary context?

- Finding a balance between various uses and protection of the resource: address the trade offs and increase synergies
- Necessary to coordinate plans & management measures between the riparian countries — nexus further complicated!
- Needed:
 - Increased understanding, dialogue and participation
 - Effective institutions and legal frameworks
 - Decision-support tools (monitoring, impact assessment etc.)
 - Regulations, economic tools
 - Sharing / solidarity/political willingness
- To be explored: What the countries plan? Are the plans of the different sectors compatible? What do changing drivers & the climate outlook mean for the nexus? Institutional arrangements at transboundary level conducive to intersectoral coordination?

Benefits of the assessment under the Convention

- **Improved knowledge base** about linkages between sectors to **support decision-making** at national, basin & transboundary levels, analysis/quantification of selected aspects; gaps
- **Joint identification of opportunities** for benefits and of solutions for capitalizing on the synergies, addressing trade-offs and reconciling different resource uses;
- **Promotion of dialogue between the different sectors** from the riparian countries at the basin level; bring together authorities, private sector, civil society
- **Exchange** of good practices
- **Capacity building**: workshops, exchanges, self-assessment, knowledge mobilization in the process
- Serves to inform /**increase awareness**, guide & stimulate further action

Basin workshop for the nexus assessment in the Sava Basin: objectives/tasks

- The approach presented
- Needs and expectations of the countries
- Learn about the plans of the sectors and the future outlook for the Danube macro-region and the Sava Basin
- Joint identification of the key inter-sectoral issues
- Exploring relevant information (reports, sector strategies etc.) for substantiating the assessment
- Engagement of the administrations concerned and other stakeholders
- Discuss synergies with parallel initiatives (e.g. JRC Danube Water Nexus work, GWP work)
- Agree on the different steps in the process