



Assessing the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

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7th session of the Water Convention Meeting of the Parties
Budapest, 17-19 November 2015



1. Main achievements in this area of work

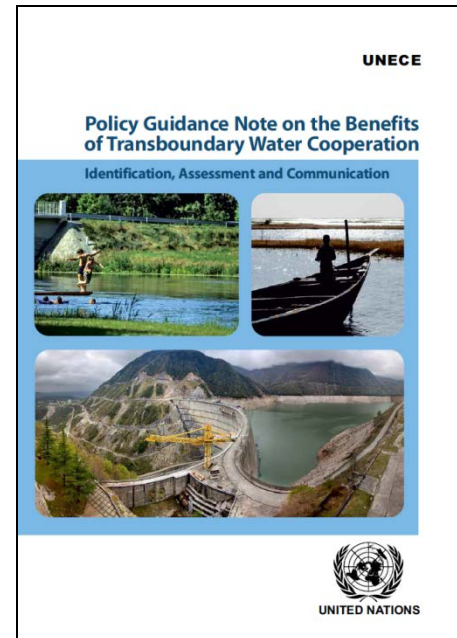
- ▶ Collection of cases and participatory process attracted great interest from around the world
- ▶ Responded to needs and interests of well-established river basin organizations
- ▶ Facilitated dialogue between the community of policymakers and academia on the needs and existing approaches and experiences of such assessments
- ▶ Highlighted need to bridge the gap between the water and foreign policy communities and to mainstream water diplomacy into foreign policy



2. How was it achieved?

Major milestones since 2013

- ▶ **Aim:** To support governments and other actors in realizing the potential benefits of transboundary water cooperation
- ▶ **Scope:** global, both surface and underground waters
- ▶ **Development:** 3 workshops, case studies from more than 20 basins, more than 100 experts involved



6/2013

- Scoping workshop on benefits of cooperation, Amsterdam

5/2014

- Workshop “Counting our Gains”: exchange of experiences, Geneva

1/2015

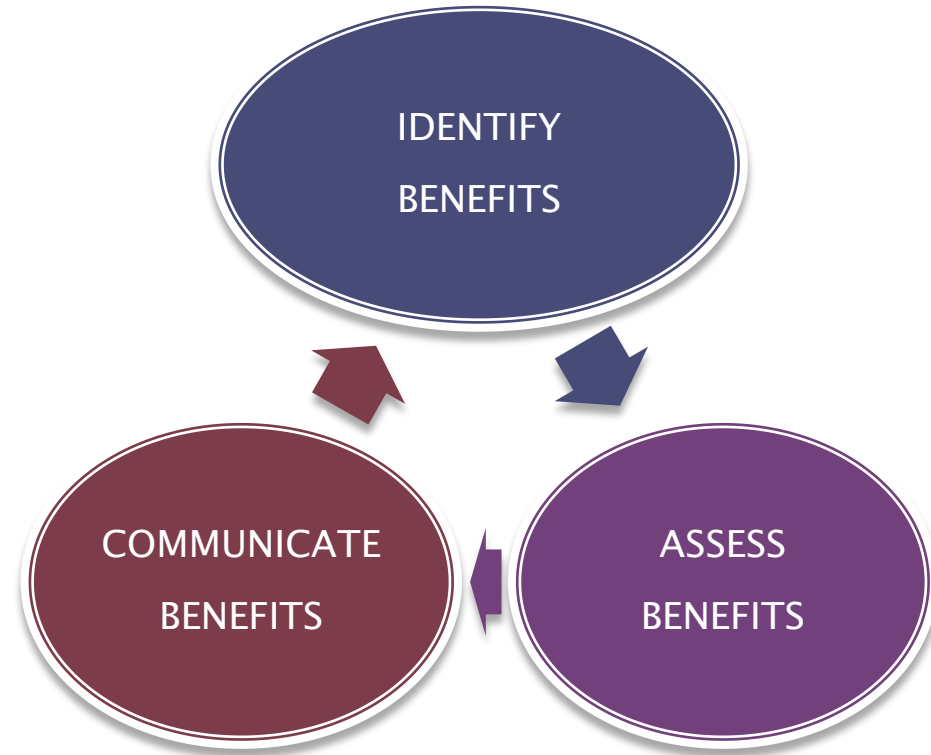
- Workshop «Geopolitical & regional integration benefits», Tallinn



3. Policy Guidance Note on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Benefit assessment exercises

- Provide fact-based argument for starting up cooperation or developing stronger cooperation
- Broaden the scope of cooperation by defining a “benefit cluster”
- Attract financial resources to implement water cooperation solutions





3. Policy Guidance Note on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Key messages

- ▶ TWC generates more benefits than generally thought
- ▶ A benefits assessment exercise (BAE) can help promote and broaden cooperation, and attract funding to implement cooperative solutions
- ▶ A BAE needs to be tailored to the characteristics of the basin as well as to the needs and level of maturity of the TWC process
- ▶ A BAE will combine qualitative, quantitative and monetary assessments
- ▶ A BAE should target decision-making drivers and focus on moving from perceptions to facts
- ▶ A BAE needs to involve stakeholders throughout



3. Policy Guidance Note on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Origin of benefits	Benefits for economic activities	Benefits beyond economic activities
Improved water management	Economic benefits	Social & environmental benefits
Enhanced trust	Regional economic cooperation benefits	Peace & security benefits

Identifying benefits

1. Prepare for an extended process
2. Involve a wide variety of stakeholders and experts
3. Do not expect all types of benefits to be relevant in your basin
4. Identify the beneficiaries also, not just the benefits
5. Complement it with the identification of costs and risks
6. Identify in parallel the possible negative impact of inaction
7. Be ready to accept uncertainty

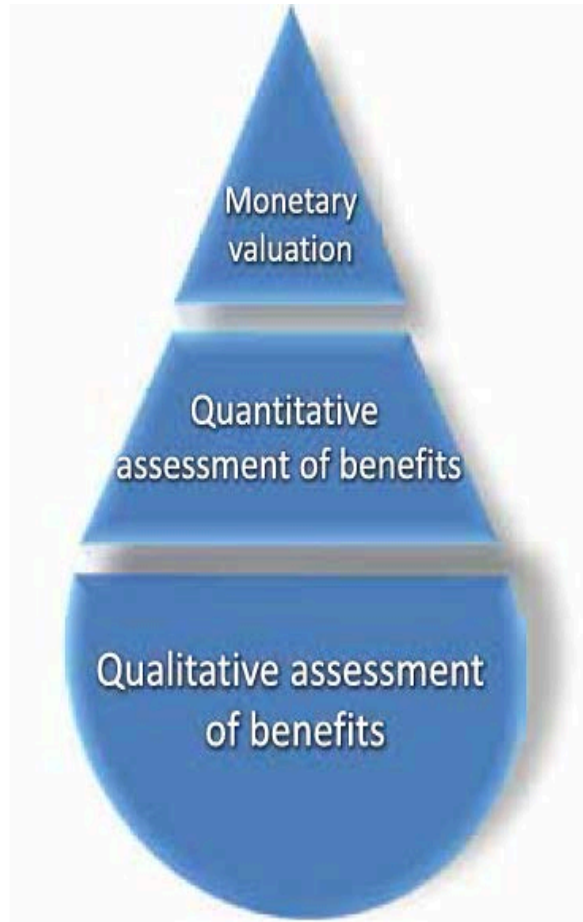




3. Policy Guidance Note on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Assessing benefits

1. Match level of ambition of BAE to needs of TWC process
2. Focus on the final outcomes of TWC
3. Select the right geographical and time scales
4. Adopt an adaptive approach
5. Conduct it jointly
6. Involve different stakeholders
7. Favour integrated assessments
8. Consider different scenarios
9. Do not expect to generate monetary values for all the benefits
10. Accept that benefit assessment will be imperfect





3. Policy Guidance Note on the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

Communicating benefits

1. Define how the BAE results can support the TWC process
2. Include the communication of benefits results in the overall TWC communications plan
3. Think of communication efforts as part of a communication cycle
4. Communicate the benefits of the overall programme of cooperation
5. Take into account that upstream and downstream audiences have different perspectives



4. Suggested future work in this area

- ▶ *Policy Guidance Note* to be promoted in pilot basins and countries interested in applying it, in cooperation with/led by partners
- ▶ Experience between pilot exercises and other similar activities worldwide to be shared during one workshop in 2017 or 2018



Benefits of transboundary cooperation assessed and facilitated by the Mekong River Commission

7th Meeting of Parties, Water Convention,
Budapest Nov 2015

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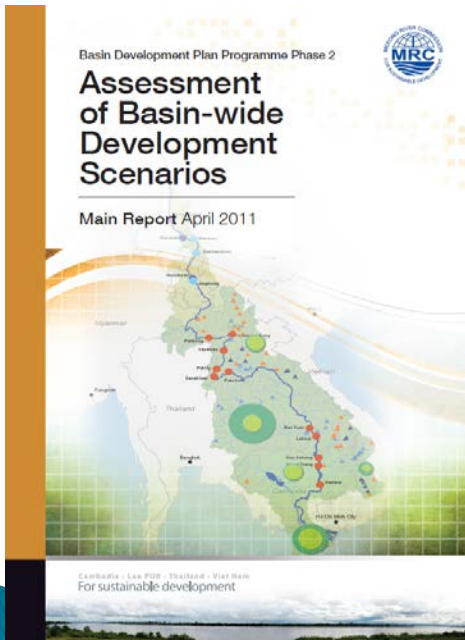




The mighty Mekong river



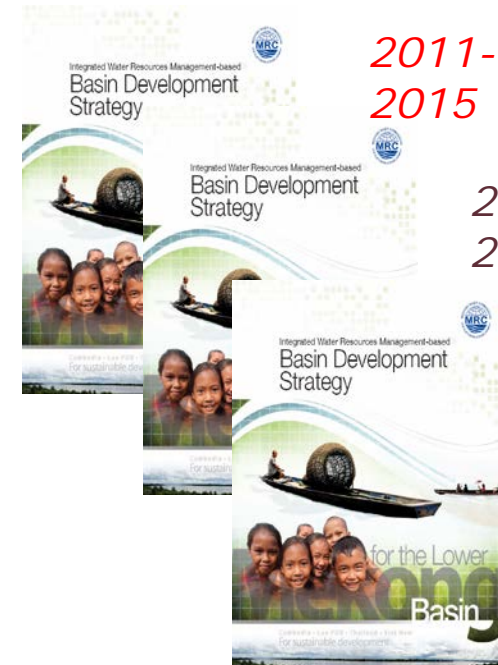
Mekong River Commission Governance Structure



*2008-2010 Basin-wide scenario assessments: **economic, social, environment** impacts (with/without climate change)*

Reviewed in 2014

Being updated 2015-2016, plus exploring more optimal & sustainable paths to development (2017-18)



2021-2025 with a new BDP