



Convention of the Protection and Use of
Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes
Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus
Fourth meeting

Geneva, Switzerland, 8 December 2016

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH MEETING

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
starting on Thursday, 8 December 2016 at 9.30 a.m.

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening and election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Review the status of on-going nexus assessments carried out under the Convention
4. Follow up activities to the completed nexus assessments
5. Sustainable Development Goals and the nexus approach
6. Strategic directions for future work on the nexus and cooperation with partners
7. Next steps under the Water Convention
8. Other business
9. Closing

II. BACKGROUND AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Background

The Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) is jointly with the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management responsible for activities related to the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus. In accordance with the programme of work for 2016-2018 of the Water Convention (programme area 3), this work has the objective of supporting transboundary cooperation by:

- (a) Identifying intersectoral synergies that could be further explored and utilized in the different basins;
- (b) Determining policy measures and actions that could alleviate negative consequences of the nexus and help to optimize the use of available resources;
- (c) Helping to move towards increased efficiency in resource use, greater policy coherence and intersectoral co-management;
- (d) Developing capacity in addressing intersectoral impacts.

The fourth meeting of the Task Force on Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus aims to discuss, plan and provide guidance to the implementation of the activities on the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus under the programme of work for 2016-2018 of the Water Convention.

In particular, the status of the on-going basin assessments will be reviewed and possible follow up actions to assessments already carried out discussed. The value of a nexus approach and the importance of transboundary cooperation in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be reflected on. Gaps in knowledge and possible strategic directions for future nexus work under the Water Convention with partners will be reflected on with insights from partners.

Practical information

The fourth meeting of the Task Force will start at 9.30 a.m. and end at 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 8 December 2016. It will be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva. The Task Force meeting will be preceded by the global stock-taking workshop “Assessments of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus and response measures in transboundary basins”, which will be held on 6-7 December 2016 in Geneva. The working languages will be English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The meeting is open to officials and experts representing governmental authorities, the private sector, non-governmental and international organizations as well as academia. Focal points are requested to disseminate information on the meeting and to facilitate the nomination of relevant representatives of their respective countries.

Eligible participants from countries with economies in transition and developing countries may apply for financial support to facilitate their participation in the meeting using the financial support request form available on the meeting website. Requests for financial support should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat (water.convention@unece.org) as soon as possible, but no later than **Friday, 21 October 2016**. No application will be accepted after this deadline.

Participants requiring entry visas should inform the UNECE secretariat as soon as possible. Since Switzerland is part of the Schengen Zone, obtaining a visa might take up to 5 weeks. Participants needing a visa are therefore requested to submit their application as soon as possible and initiate visa procedures at least four weeks before the meeting.

Delegates attending the meeting are requested to register by **22 November 2016** using the following link: <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=A6KTIR>. In case of difficulties please contact the secretariat by e-mail (water.convention@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, participants should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section located at the Pregny Gate, 14 Avenue de la Paix (see map on the UNECE website). Please allow enough time for this.

Practical information on the Palais des Nations, as well as on transport and accommodation in Geneva, is available online at: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>

Further information and relevant material will be made available on the following website in due course: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41738#/>
For the workshop: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41736#/>

III. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1: Opening and election of officers (9.30 a.m. - 9.35 a.m.)

1. The Chair will open the meeting. Task Force will be asked to elect its officers for 2016-2018.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda (9.35 a.m. - 9.40 a.m.)

2. The Task Force is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 3: Review the status of on-going nexus assessments carried out under the Convention (9.40 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.)

Background document: “Programme of work for 2016–2018” (ECE/MP.WAT/49/Add.1)¹

Background publication: *Policy Guidance on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation: Identification, Assessment and Communication*

3. Representatives of the riparian countries and partners which are carrying out or about to start carrying out nexus assessments will inform about the status of the assessments, challenges and lessons learned.
4. At present the following assessments are ongoing or about to start:
 - An assessment of the Drina River Basin, a tributary of the Sava River, is on-going. This project integrates a focused nexus assessment and subsequent identification of the benefits from the identified nexus solutions through the application of the *Policy Guidance on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation: Identification, Assessment and Communication*.
 - Quantification of the selected solutions identified in the Syr Darya assessment is being completed being the end of 2016.
 - Initial preparatory activities are expected to proceed to the assessment of the nexus in the North-West Sahara Aquifer System in a framework of a Global Water Partnership led project in late 2016.
 - In addition, the UNECE secretariat is contributing to a Global Water Partnership led project on the extended Drin Basin to prepare a desk study of the nexus.
 - Possible support to a nexus dialogue on the Niger River Basin is being explored with partners, to respond the Niger Basin Authority’s support request.

Other assessment work is at negotiation or exploratory stages.

5. The Task Force will provide comments and discuss next steps in the assessments.

Item 4: Follow up activities to the completed nexus assessments (11.00 a.m. - 12.00 a.m.)

Background publication: *Reconciling resource uses in transboundary basins: assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus*²

¹ <http://www.unece.org/env/water/mop7/documents.html#/>

² Available at <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41427>

6. Nexus assessments in the following basins were worked on from 2013 to 2015: the Alazani/Ganykh (shared by Azerbaijan, Georgia), Sava (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia), Syr Darya (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan) and the Isonzo/Soča (Italy, Slovenia). Each of the basin assessments concluded led to identification of a set of conclusions and recommendations.

7. Representatives of the riparian countries sharing the basins will be invited to report on any follow up discussions, promotion of findings from the assessments or specific actions undertaken in response to the conclusions and recommendations. The Task Force will discuss challenges in fostering response actions, related opportunities, and promotion of follow up work.

8. The UNECE secretariat will report on the 20th session of the Thematic Working Group on Water, Energy and Environment (TWG) of United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). The TWG is expected to discuss from 20 to 21 October 2016 in Baku implementation of SDGs related to its thematic areas on the national and sub-regional/transboundary levels in Central Asia. This discussion is foreseen to be informed by the work on the nexus in the Syr Darya Basin.

Item 5: Sustainable Development Goals and the nexus approach (12.00 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.; 2.30 p.m. - 3.15 p.m.)

Background document: Good practices and policies for intersectoral synergies to deploy renewable energy: the water-energy-food-ecosystems nexus approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/ENERGY/GE.7/2016/6)³

Background publication: *Analytical Brief on Water and Sanitation Interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*⁴

9. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cover a broad range of sectors and societal issues, and because of the interlinkages between the various Goals and targets, a nexus approach is needed to support dialogue about trade-offs related to progress towards the different Goals. At the same time, arrangements at the national level for monitoring and coordinating implementation of the SDGs may have potential to contribute to intersectoral coordination of the kind that the nexus assessments call for. The focus in the session will be on what happens in the transboundary context.

10. A UN Water representative will present the recently published UN-Water *Analytical Brief on Water and Sanitation Interlinkages across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.

11. The Task Force will discuss the how the transboundary dimension is taken into account in the SDGs implementation. In this respect, a representative of the UNECE secretariat will inform about the monitoring the transboundary dimension in target 6.5.

12. The Task Force will discuss links and synergies with other (sectoral) areas of work in UNECE. A representative of the UNECE Sustainable Energy Division will report on cooperation with the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy (GERE). The nexus and experience from the assessments under the Water Convention are expected to be discussed in the third meeting of the

³ Available at:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/energy/se/pdfs/gere/GERE_October_2016/6._ECE_ENERGY_GE7_2016_6_Nexus_Final.pdf

⁴ Available at: <http://www.unwater.org/publications/publications-detail/en/c/429651/>

GERE (Baku, Azerbaijan; 20-21 October 2016) where GERE is expected to consider recommending integration of nexus considerations into energy policies to be looked into.

Item 6: Strategic directions for future work on the nexus and cooperation with partners (3.15 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.)

13. On the basis of the discussions in the preceding workshop on assessments of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus and response measures in transboundary basins (6-7 December 2016), the Task Force will discuss current gaps in knowledge and strategic issues that would merit more attention in future work in relation to the nexus. Partners – such as Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the European Commission, the Global Environment Facility and its IW:LEARN 4 project, the Global Water Partnership (GWP), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) and others – will be invited to present how their current and planned activities address these gaps and challenged and their suggestion for future cooperation on the nexus work under the Convention.

Item 7: Next steps under the Water Convention (4.30 p.m. - 4.45 p.m.)

Background document: Programme of work for 2016–2018 under the Water Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/49/Add.1)

14. The Task Force will discuss next steps in the work on the nexus under the programme of work for 2016–2018 of the Water Convention, taking into account the status of assessments, opportunities for follow up activities and cooperation proposals by partners.

Item 8: Other business (4.45 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.)

15. At the time of writing, the secretariat had no points to propose under this item. Delegates wishing to propose points under this item should inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

Item 9: Closing

16. The Chair will close the meeting at 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 8 December 2016.
