Assessing the benefits of transboundary water cooperation

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1. Background

- **Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of transboundary water cooperation: Identification, assessment and communication** (adopted by MOP7) to help countries realize full range of potential benefits of (strengthened) cooperation
- Support to cooperation processes in pilot transboundary basins through benefit assessment exercises ("benefit lens")
2. Main achievements

• Methodology for benefit assessment exercises was tailored to specific context, needs and dynamics of each basin
• Awareness raised on the broad range of benefits of transboundary water cooperation: economic, social and environmental benefits but also peace and security benefits and regional integration benefits
• Relevance of dialogue focusing on final outcome benefits of cooperation (benefits for the people and sectors...) and not only on process benefits (improved data exchange and monitoring...)
• “Basin perceptions” of the benefits of cooperation developed, through consultations with multiple stakeholders/ sectors / beneficiaries (support to decision-making process)
3. How was it achieved? Major milestones since 2016

- 3 benefits assessment exercises carried out, with support of partners
- Global workshop - Moving forward transboundary water cooperation: Building on its benefits (Geneva, 6 - 7 February 2018)
- Benefit identification exercises during workshops on the Water Convention
4. Lessons learnt and good practices

- Adopting a “benefit lens” helps find opportunities for significant improvement in cooperation
- No “blue print” to develop benefit assessment
- Work on benefits of cooperation should be linked to prioritizing and facilitating investments of mutual interest
- Quantitative assessment of benefits is a challenge: need for more robust methodologies to carry out qualitative assessment
- Communicating the benefits is key to ensuring support and financing of cooperation processes, but often left aside
- Complementarity with other activities under Convention (Nexus assessment, opening, support to implementation...
5. Suggested future work in this area

• **Programme area 1**: Increasing awareness of and accession to the Convention and application of its principles drawing on the benefits of cooperation
  • 1.2. Promoting and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation

→ Policy Guidance Note on Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation to be applied in interested pilot / demonstration basin(s)
→ Brief for policymakers on benefits of cooperation to be developed, building on analysis of case studies of successful cooperation
→ Activities on benefits of cooperation to be integrated into thematic activities (e.g. Activities on promoting accession to Convention, on development of agreements, on Nexus, on transboundary climate change adaptation strategies)