



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

Session 5: How the Conventions promote implementation and cooperation on the ground?

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# 1. Relevant obligations under the Conventions

- The Water Convention is a global legal framework which requires Parties to **prevent, control and reduce trans-boundary impacts** and to use trans-boundary waters in **a reasonable and equitable way** and **ensure their sustainable management**;
- The Convention, through its institutional framework, provides a permanent intergovernmental forum to **discuss cooperation, share experience** and **identify best practices in many areas**

# Objective of the tool and target audience

1. The Tool was developed from 2012-2015 through a consultative process;
2. Its objectives are:
  - To support the reflection of countries on the benefits that cooperation, the main obligation under the Water Convention, can bring;
  - To support Policy Makers or Governments (and other actors) in undertaking benefit assessment (of a trans-boundary basin) in a participatory manner;
    - Senior officials in ministries responsible for foreign affairs, finance, economic development, environment or water, as well as joint bodies for trans-boundary water mgt
3. By so doing promotes trans-boundary water cooperation

# Key messages from the tool (1)

- Moving away from volumetric water sharing to “sharing the benefits of water” among the cooperating countries;
- Such benefits includes:
  1. Economic benefits;
  2. Social and environmental benefits;
  3. Regional economic cooperation benefits; and
  4. Peace and security benefits
- The tool provides compelling reasons to undertake a benefit assessment exercise:
  - It can provide fact-based arguments for starting up cooperation or developing stronger cooperation;
  - It can facilitate broadening the scope of cooperation by defining a “benefit cluster”; and
  - It can help to attract financial resources to implement trans-boundary water cooperation solutions.

# Key messages from the tool (2)

A broad range of benefits of TB cooperation – typology

<i>Origin of benefits</i>	<i>Benefits for economic activities</i>	<i>Benefits beyond economic activities</i>
<b>Improved water management</b>	<p><b>Economic benefits</b></p> <p>Expanded activity and productivity in economic sectors (aquaculture, irrigated agriculture, mining, energy generation, industrial production, nature-based tourism)</p> <p>Reduced cost of carrying out productive activities</p> <p>Reduced economic impacts of water-related hazards (floods, droughts)</p> <p>Increased value of property</p>	<p><b>Social and environmental benefits</b></p> <p>Health impacts from improved water quality and reduced risk of water-related disasters.</p> <p>Employment and reduced poverty impacts of the economic benefits</p> <p>Improved access to services (such as electricity and water supply)</p> <p>Improved satisfaction due to preservation of cultural resources or access to recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Increased ecological integrity and reduced habitat degradation and biodiversity loss</p> <p>Strengthened scientific knowledge on water status</p>
<b>Enhanced trust</b>	<p><b>Regional economic cooperation benefits</b></p> <p>Development of regional markets for goods, services and labour</p> <p>Increase in cross-border investments</p> <p>Development of transnational infrastructure networks</p>	<p><b>Peace and security benefits</b></p> <p>Strengthening of international law</p> <p>Increased geopolitical stability and strengthened diplomatic relations</p> <p>New opportunities from increased trust (joint initiatives and investments)</p> <p>Reduced risk and avoided cost of conflict and savings from reduced military spending</p> <p>Creation of a shared basin identity</p>

# Key messages from the tool (3)

Benefit assessment exercise can help at different stages of cooperation

<i>Stage of development of the transboundary water cooperation policy process</i>	<i>Needs of the transboundary water cooperation policy process</i>	<i>Focus of the benefit assessment exercise</i>	<i>Main focus of the assessment phase</i>
Pre-initial stage (e.g. basins characterized by political conflict)	Establish the conditions for launching a cooperation process	Identification of mutually beneficial opportunities from shared water resources	Rapid qualitative assessment of key benefits
Initial stage (e.g. basins without international agreement or transboundary coordination body)	Launch of the cooperation process, supported by awareness raising on the need to cooperate	Identification of the full range of the benefits of cooperation	Rapid qualitative assessment of all identified benefits
Medium stage (e.g. negotiations on an agreement ongoing or basins with international agreement, but without coordination body)	Consolidation of the cooperation process through negotiations, strategic planning and the implementation of basic cooperation initiatives (e.g. information sharing)	Broad assessment of the range of benefits of cooperation (including cost of non-cooperation)	In-depth qualitative assessment of all identified benefits Include easily available quantitative and monetary estimates
Advanced stage (e.g. basins with international agreement and coordination body)	Realisation of the potential benefits of cooperation through the implementation of advanced cooperation initiatives (e.g. infrastructure projects, coordinated management instruments)	Assessment of the benefits of independent national projects, joint projects, or a basin programme of measures	Carry out quantitative and monetary valuation, when justified given available resources

# Methodology of the tool

Benefit assessment needs to be matched to the policy processes, so that there is ownership and implementation of the agreed investment options:

1. Start with the identification of the full range of benefits and beneficiaries;
2. Prioritize the benefits to be assessed;
3. Assess the benefits – qualitative, quantitative and/or monetary value as well cost on non action;
4. Communicate and integrate assessment results into TWC policy process



# Usefulness of the tool in my region and relation to my work in this area

- IUCN, UNECE and IGAD Secretariat in partnership with OES US State Department is in the process implementing a benefit sharing project in the IGAD region;
- Why should IGAD Member States be interested in assessing the benefits opportunities from cooperation in water mgt:
  - The IGAD region has a number of trans-boundary rivers and lake basins and supporting IGAD in the development of improved governance and cooperation frameworks around the use, management and allocation of shared waters is a key building block of the region's peace and stability;
  - Over 60% of the region is made up of arid or semi-arid lands that are among the most vulnerable areas to climate variability and drought in Africa; Frequent droughts in these areas often lead to catastrophic famines and exacerbate competition and conflict for limited water resources;
  - The Regional Water Resources Policy was adopted in 2015 and there is an ongoing process of negotiating the IGAD Regional Water Protocol