

# Identifying, assessing and communicating benefits of transboundary water cooperation– the approach under the Water Convention

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# Lessons learned from the work under the Convention as a basis for the work on the benefits of cooperation

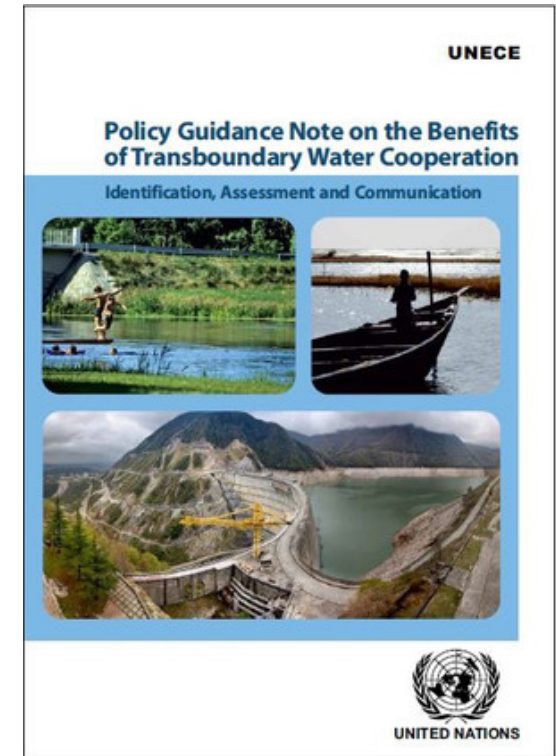


- As cooperation is one of the main obligations of Water Convention, countries preparing for accession to or implementing the Convention naturally reflect on what benefits such cooperation can bring.
- A constructive dialogue and identification of common interest among riparians and with partners is necessary
- Sharing / solidarity/political willingness essential for progress, and identification of windows of opportunity!
- A benefit assessment exercise can help countries to fully realize the potential benefits of cooperation.



# The Policy Guidance Note

- ▶ **Aim:** to support governments and other actors in realising the potential benefits of transboundary water cooperation
- ▶ **Scope:** global, both surface and underground waters
- ▶ **Development:** 3 workshops, case studies from 15 basins
- ▶ **Product:** official UNECE publication



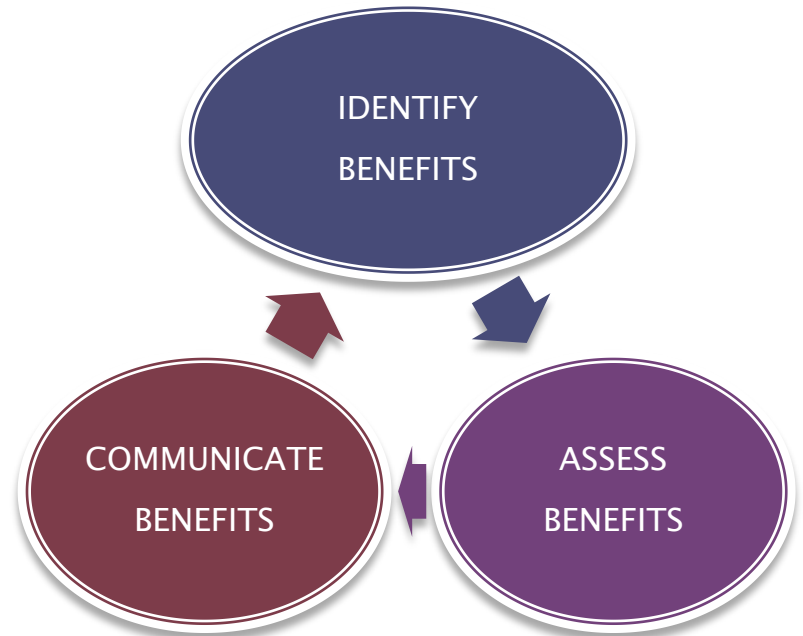
# The process of preparation

- ▶ 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



# Why to carry out a benefit assessment exercise?

- 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



A benefit assessment exercise needs:

- to be tailored to the characteristics of the basin as well as to the needs and level of maturity of the TWC process
- combines qualitative, quantitative and monetary assessments
- to involve stakeholders throughout

# Key messages of the Policy Guidance Note

- ▶ 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

# The range of potential benefits

<i>Origin of benefits</i>	<i>Benefits for economic activities</i>	<i>Benefits beyond economic activities</i>
<i>Improved water management</i>	<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>
<i>Enhanced trust</i>	<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>

# How a 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



# Identifying and assessing benefits: the process



1. Prepare for an extended process
2. Match level of ambition of BAE to needs of TWC process
3. Focus on the final outcomes of TWC
4. Select the right geographical and time scales
5. Involve a wide variety of stakeholders and experts
6. Favour integrated assessments and consider different scenarios
7. Do not expect all types of benefits to be relevant in your basin
8. Identify the beneficiaries also, not just the benefits
9. Complement it with the identification of costs and risks
10. Identify in parallel the possible negative impact of inaction
11. Do not expect to generate monetary values for all the benefits
12. Accept that benefit assessment will be imperfect and be ready to accept uncertainty

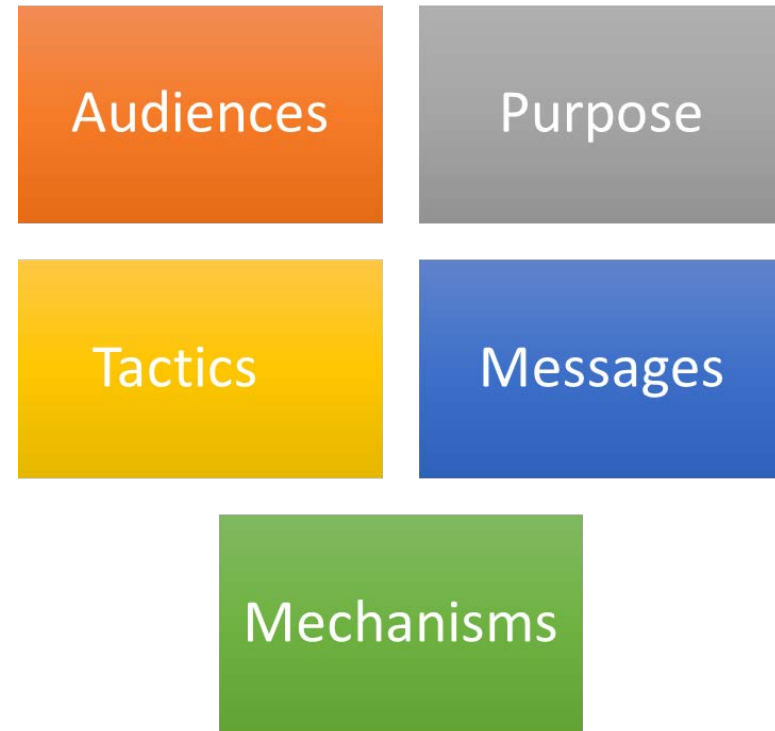
# Identifying of beneficiaries of an economically and environmentally sustainable Lake Peipsi area,

[http://www.estlatrus.eu/uploaded\\_files/project\\_files/RESULTS\\_LSP-003.pdf](http://www.estlatrus.eu/uploaded_files/project_files/RESULTS_LSP-003.pdf)

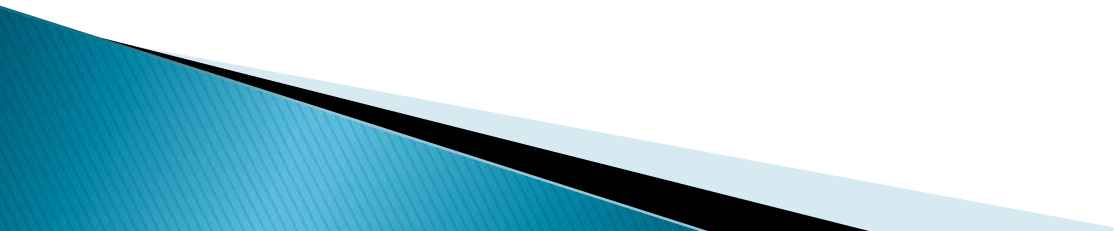
- ▶ Beneficiaries as local populations, summer residents, tourists:
  - ▶ –9 local municipalities, 4 in Estonia , 5 in Russia,
  - ▶ –approx 10 000 watercraft users, sailers, fisherman, residents,
  - ▶ –more than 1000 entrepreneurs and enterprises, companies.
- ▶ Benefits:
  - ▶ Improvements in 3 harbours infrastructures, 104 mooring places,
  - ▶ arranged reception of cargo residues and ship generated waste in 4 harbours, also facilities for ship reparation and maintenance work.
  - ▶ Improved sanitary conditions in 4 smaller towns and villages in Russia, assessed water infrastructures to reconstruct several wastewater treatment plants in Pskov region in Russian part of basin

# 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



# Current work in this area

- ▶ Policy Guidance Note is being translated and printed in French, Russian, Chinese, maybe Spanish
  - ▶ Policy Guidance Note is promoted and used in pilot basins and countries interested in applying it, in cooperation with/led by partners, such as Okavango, Drina, basin in IGAD region – all are welcome to use it and share their experience
  - ▶ Experience between pilot exercises and other similar activities worldwide will be shared during one workshop in July 2017 (dates tbc)
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# A possible benefit assessment exercise between Tunisia and Algeria?

- ▶ How could it help cooperation?
  - ▶ What would be the focus and objectives?
  - ▶ Would Tunisia want to embark in it?
  - ▶ How to involve Algeria?
  - ▶ What should be the next steps?
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