From nexus assessments to nexus solutions and investments

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Main achievements in this area of work

- Cross-sectoral dialogues and assessments in three basins during the triennial 2019-2021:
  - Drin and Drina in the Balkans
  - Northwestern Sahara Aquifer System

- Published synthesis report on Nexus Solutions and Investments in transboundary basins
  - Talks on financing aspects of nexus cooperation (expert consultations in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC and IADB); Western Balkans (GWP-Med and EIB)

- Increased cooperation between water and energy sectors:
  - “Toolkit” for energy policy makers to deploy renewable energy more sustainably in transboundary basins in cooperation with UNECE SED (UNECE, 2020 *Towards sustainable renewable energy investment and deployment: Trade-offs and opportunities with water resources and the environment*)

- Continued capacity building and experience sharing, increased understanding of financing aspects (WFEE Task Force meeting in 2020)
Report on Nexus Solutions and Investments in transboundary basins – main findings

• Report is based on a **stocktaking exercise** (survey and a literature review), a review of regional nexus dialogues, expert consultations – **transboundary focus**

• Nexus solutions (action across sectors) tackle a variety of **issues related to water quantity, water quality and environment** -> “anthropogenic changes in hydrology” main root cause of problems reported, “stronger transboundary cooperation” main enabling factor of nexus solutions

• Nexus investments with transboundary benefits may arise: evidence of **nexus investments** coming from private sources (energy and agriculture) still limited, while innovative financing solutions could play a major role in upscaling nexus solutions by leveraging multiple sources (incl. climate): **high-level political commitment needed** to coordinate and partner across sectors and borders

• Little understanding so far about **benefits of nexus solutions** for basins and riparians: more dialogue, cost/benefit needed

• Report: **Solutions and investments in the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus: A synthesis of experiences in transboundary basins | UNECE**
Drina and Drin

- 2 nexus assessments tailored to enhance previous and ongoing processes (both at stage of finalization):
  - Drina River Basin (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia): previous nexus activities in Sava and Drina, ongoing GEF project
  - Drin River Basin (Albania, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro): Strategic Action Programme (GEF project): nexus to support cross-sectoral implementation

- Project concepts for nexus interventions in the two basins, e.g. sediment management and erosion control across sectors, solar PV in reservoirs, etc. – linking to regional strategies e.g. Green Agenda for Western Balkans

Stakeholder activity/lead, involvement of energy and financing institutions, partnership, resource mobilization, impact


* UN Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)
North-Western Sahara Aquifer System (NWSAS)

- First nexus assessment of a shared aquifer (Algeria, Libya, Tunisia)
- Assessment report (2021)
- A package of solutions developed in an extensive cross-sectoral multi-stakeholder consultative process, best implemented in synergy, through coordinated action – to advance e.g. Sustainable Development, Climate mitigation + adaptation.
Lessons learnt for future work

• Lots of experience from assessments (even though we still see issues with data, tools, access to information across sectors); increasing focus on implementation/operationalization, “nexus proofing”

• Institutional arrangements and processes conducive to developing cross-sector designs and solutions commonly lacking (e.g. different planning cycles)

• More effective cross-sectoral “nexus” cooperation would improve the sustainable management of natural resources in transboundary basins
  -> need political commitment or a common motivation to work together (e.g. climate action)

• The nexus approach could catalyse co-financing for water and environment services from other sectors and private actors (notable energy and agriculture/forestry)

• To provide transboundary benefits Nexus solutions need to build on common understanding and mutual trust.

• Nexus solutions and investments can promote transboundary water cooperation and conflict prevention.
Suggested future work in this area

• The methodology for assessing the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus (i.e. intersectoral trade-offs, synergies and benefits) in transboundary basins will be promoted

• Support will be provided for the operationalization of nexus (intersectoral) solutions (in particular, facilitating identification of projects and of financing options) in up to four regions/basins

• Assistance will be provided in the development and operationalization of cross-sectoral regional strategies with a transboundary character as frameworks for action on nexus solutions and investments

• Nexus work in Central Asia will be supported by the project: Regional mechanisms for the low-carbon, climate-resilient transformation of the energy-water-land nexus (subject to confirmation of funding)

• Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus will meet twice

• Nexus approach to ensure coherence in climate action; increase opportunities for financing

• Proposed lead Party: Finland. Resource requirements for activity 3.2: $1,221,000.
Partners and donors
Thank you

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