



## Phase-II Nexus activities in Albania to quantify benefits across sectors from multi-purpose use of irrigation reservoirs

Albania's economy is deeply tied to water and land resources. Rich in water resources, the country relies almost entirely on hydropower for electricity generation while agriculture is both a key employer and an important social buffer for the Albanian economy. The Nexus approach is evidently pertinent to Albania and its adoption could greatly assist in ensuring water- energy- and food-security and healthy ecosystems in the country.

Significant advancements, especially regarding institutional settings, have taken place in recent years regarding the sustainable management of natural resources. However, non-integrated and non-coordinated policies and practices remain a substantial challenge.

Albania is one of the priority areas of Child Project 2.2 of the GEF / UNEP-MAP MedProgramme. Activities in the country will build up on the qualitative findings of [Phase I Nexus Policy Dialogue in Albania](#), undertaken in the framework of the ADA-funded [SEE Nexus Project](#) .

**One of the key challenges with strong cross-sectoral implications and potential identified under Phase I is the pressing need to rehabilitate Albania's Irrigation and Drainage infrastructure** and in particular the many reservoirs scattered around the country. The Phase-II Nexus Assessment will explore in depth **the related cross-sectoral interlinkages**, define in detail specific options and related scenarios to capture synergies from a multi-purpose use of a selected reservoir, and quantify and assesses their costs and benefits vis-à-vis the Business as Usual (BAU) scenario.



## Phase-II Nexus Assessment in Albania under Child Project 2.2

In **Albania there are about 625 reservoirs used for irrigation purposes**. All of them were designed and built decades ago and many of them have been functioning for more than 50 years. Due to lack of maintenance, deforestation and (the subsequent) land erosion, significant deposition of sediment has led to a reduction of the reservoirs' storage capacity by around 50% on average, while safety concerns exist for many of the reservoirs. Additionally to sedimentation, reduced precipitation often leads to not enough water being available in the reservoirs in the summer season.

The objective of Phase-II Nexus Assessment, implemented under Child Project 2.2 is to provide:

- a detailed and quantified assessment of options for capturing synergies and benefits across different sectors (water resources, agriculture, energy, environmental protection, tourism) in the rehabilitation of specific irrigation reservoirs and related infrastructure
- a set of guidelines and related Action Plan for the replication and upscaling of such interventions in Albania.

The Assessment will quantify the benefits (and related costs) of options for the multi-purpose use of reservoirs. Such synergies and benefits include e.g. flood risk management, renewable energy production, aquaculture, touristic and recreational use. Measures, interventions and investments across sectors will be suggested and assessed (e.g. rehabilitation of infrastructure, monitoring systems, on-site renewable energy generation, enhancement of agricultural productivity) while also providing recommendations for capacity building of local stakeholders, institutional strengthening and coordination, management options. The work will also assess



replication potential and prepare guidelines and action plan for the replication of actions in other reservoirs in Albania.

The development of the Assessment will be guided and informed by a participatory consultation process.

A broad range of Nexus-related stakeholders including representatives of Ministries, Agencies, local and regional authorities, as well as Academia and civil society will participate in two Consultation Meetings. Their aim is to

- increase awareness on the Nexus approach and its benefits regarding the multi-purpose use of reservoirs
- harvest perspectives and priorities from the lens of each sector in the selected location, identifying key challenges, opportunities and suggested solutions
- facilitate gathering of available data from various institutions and agencies
- discuss concrete steps for enhancing cross-sectoral integration and cooperation at institutional, policy and management levels
- create conditions for ownership of the solutions by local stakeholders and for replicating them in further reservoirs in the country.

The development of the Assessment is expected to provide a valuable example of **how integrating considerations of different sectors, a more sustainable and resilient management of water and land resources can be achieved benefiting both the local community and the environment.**