

Cooperation in transboundary basins

What are the benefits?

Timing: Tuesday, 17 November, 13:30 - 14:45
Location: Room Bartok
Languages: English, French and Russian with simultaneous interpretation

Background

Transboundary water cooperation has the potential to generate many significant benefits for cooperating countries, such as accelerated economic growth, improved human well-being, enhanced environmental sustainability and increased political stability. Nevertheless, many challenges can prevent countries from embracing effective joint management of transboundary waters or delay the process. Realizing the potential benefits of cooperation, including by uncovering previously overlooked benefits and identifying opportunities arising from increased cooperation, can provide arguments and compelling evidence for cooperating.

The presentation of lessons learnt from experiences of cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe will initiate a discussion with participants on the broad range of possible benefits of cooperation in transboundary basins. A panel of experts will then discuss with the audience how a benefit assessment, possibly using the UNECE *Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation*, can support a transboundary water cooperation process.

Programme

Chair: Nathalie Rizzotti, Swiss Development Cooperation Agency, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs

- *What is a benefit assessment? Key messages of the Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation*, Roberto Martin Hurtado, consultant to UNECE
- *Benefits of transboundary water cooperation: lessons learnt from cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe*

Benefits of transboundary cooperation in Neman and Pregolya River Basins, Bernardas Paukstys, Global Water Partnership Central and Eastern Europe

Q&As around guiding questions: Which benefits have been achieved by cooperating with your neighbours for the management of transboundary waters? Could stronger cooperation generate additional benefits?

- *Panel discussion: How can a benefit assessment support a transboundary water cooperation process?*
 - Astrid Hiller, The Global Environment Facility (GEF)
 - Therese Sjömander-Magnusson, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)
 - Fred Mwangi, Inter Governmental Agency for Development (IGAD)
 - Zhou Gangyan, Ministry of Water Resources, China

Q&As around guiding question: Establishing or accelerating successful transboundary water cooperation: can a comprehensive assessment of benefits help?

- *Conclusions*
Harry Liiv, Ministry of the Environment of Estonia