



Nexus Solutions and Investments in the Western Balkans

Virtual event via Zoom

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYkduyspjwoG9V_GYThqkaHel1KxF3OZPz

26 May 2021 – 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm CET

Expert meeting to discuss regional experiences of transboundary relevance.

The meeting, co-hosted by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Global Water Partnership Mediterranean (GWP-Med), and the European Investment Bank (EIB), is open to experts and project managers from financing institutions, multi-lateral organizations, regional commissions, governmental and non-governmental institutions, and academia who are involved in water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus policy dialogues or projects of transboundary relevance in the Western Balkans.

Background:

Cross-sectoral policies, projects, programs, and related investments are key to reach strategic objectives like those set out in the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and climate commitments. As natural resources become scarcer, increasingly demanded, or difficult to access, and with limited financial resources available, finding workable and bankable solutions requires stronger cooperation across sectors and countries. Resources should be allocated in the most efficient way, to provide multiple benefits and to reduce possible trade-offs.

The aim of the meeting is to have a dialogue on the experience of implementing cross-sectoral (nexus) solutions and investments of transboundary value in the region and to discuss the opportunities available for their operationalization. This expert consultation is a regional follow-up to the [6th meeting of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus](#) (Geneva, 22-23 October 2020) under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), the secretariat of which is hosted by UNECE.

The first part of the meeting will be devoted to a discussion on the challenges and opportunities in the implementation of nexus solutions in the Western Balkans, starting from the preliminary findings from UNECE's analysis; the second part is dedicated more specifically to financing nexus investments and the enabling environment they require. Finally, the last part of the discussion will aim to collect ideas for nexus solutions in the Drin and Drina River Basins, as part of UNECE and GWP-Med's project "Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the use of the Nexus approach", funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA). The project can support development of project fiches on selected solutions ("priority interventions").

The outcomes of this consultation will be reflected in the [publication](#) that UNECE will produce "Stocktaking of Nexus Solutions and Investments in Transboundary Basins".

See also:

Nexus Solutions in Transboundary Basins:

- [Solutions and investments in the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus: a synthesis of experiences in transboundary basins \(2021\)](#)
- [Solutions and investments in the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus: preliminary findings from a synthesis of experiences in transboundary basins \(2021\)](#)

Drin Nexus:

- [Nexus Thematic Report to the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis \(Nexus Assessment Phase I\)](#)
- [Nexus Assessment Phase II \(under development\)](#)

Drina Nexus:

- [Nexus Assessment and Benefits of Cooperation Report \(2017\)](#)
- [Multi-stakeholder dialogues on renewable energy \(Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia\) \(UNECE Nexus Follow-up Project 2018-2019\)](#)
- [High-level workshop “Action across sectors and borders for sustainable future of the Drina River Basin” \(Belgrade, 29 October 2019\)](#)
- [Nexus Assessment Phase II \(under development\)](#)

Nexus approach under the Water Convention: [all publications and case studies](#), [Transboundary Basin Nexus Approach methodology](#), [renewable energy toolkit](#), [6th Meeting of the Nexus Task Force](#).

Agenda:

The time of the meeting is indicated for the CET time zone.

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm– Introduction

Welcoming remarks:

- **Ms. Michaela Flenner**, Program Manager South Eastern Europe (ADA)
- **Mr. Dimitris Faloutsos**, Deputy Regional coordinator (GWP-Med)

Presentation by **Ms. Annukka Lipponen** (UNECE) “Stocktaking of Nexus Solutions and Investments in Transboundary Basins”. Preliminary findings of the stocktaking exercise and the questionnaire.

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm– Nexus Solutions: design and implementation.

Discussion, with interventions, facilitated by **Ms. Lucia de Strasser** (Consultant), around the following questions:

1. To what extent are cross-sectoral solutions being implemented in the Western Balkans?
2. Do transboundary cooperation frameworks/programs/projects support the implementation of nexus solutions?
3. What bottlenecks from design to implementation of nexus solutions have been identified and what could be done to overcome them?

1:30 pm – 2:00 pm - *Short interventions from invited speakers (each have 5 minutes to speak):*

Mr. Momčilo Blagojević, General Director of Directorate for Water Management, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Montenegro

Mr. Arduen Karagjozi, Director of Strategic Management, Water Resources Management Agency (AMBU), Albania

Ms. Marina Babić Mladenović, Advisor, Jaroslav Cerni Institute, Serbia

Mr. Adam Kovacs, Technical Expert - Pollution Control, International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), Austria

Mr. Samo Grošelj, Deputy Secretary for Protection of Waters and Aquatic Eco-system, International Sava River Basin Commission

2:00 pm – 2:30 pm Open discussion with all participants.

2:30 pm – 2:40 pm CET - Break

2:40 pm – 4:00 pm CET– Nexus Investments: financing and the enabling environment.

Session facilitated by **Mr. Alessandro Bragonzi** (EIB), Head of EIB regional representation for Western Balkans.

2:40 pm- 2:50 pm CET – Presentation by Mr. Igor Palandzic, Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist, World Bank: “Financing cross-sectoral Investments in the Western Balkans: Sava-Drina Corridor Program”

2:50 pm- 3:30 pm CET Discussion, with invited interventions, facilitated by Mr Alessandro Bragonzi (EIB), around the following questions:

1. What is the role of Public authorities/funds, the Private sector, International donors, International Finance Institutions, in advancing nexus solutions and what steps are required to mobilise funding?
2. From the perspective of investors, what is needed at the level of national policy and governance to make nexus projects (of transboundary value) bankable and implementable? And in particular:
3. How can transboundary cooperation frameworks/programs/projects assist in unlocking cross-sectoral investments in the Western Balkans?

Short interventions from invited speakers (each have 5 minutes to speak):

Mr. Radovan Nikčević, Expert on Connectivity, Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat (RCC)

Mr. Almotaz Abadi, Managing Director of the Water Division, Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)

Ms. Danijela Bozanić, Technical Advisor on the Green Climate Fund financed National Adaptation Plan project of Serbia

Mr. Robert Lichtner, Coordinator Danube Strategy Point (DSP), EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR)

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm Open discussion with all participants

4:00 - 4:50 pm CET – Proposals for nexus solutions and investments in the Drin and Drina River Basins

Session facilitated by **Mr. Tassos Krommydas** (GWP-Med), with an introductory presentation “The ADA-funded SEE Nexus Project: Preparation of Project Documents for three Nexus priority interventions in the Drin and Drina basins”. Open discussion with all participants sharing insights on challenges of cross-sectoral

and transboundary relevance, and suggestions for concrete solutions and investments to address them, for which Project Documents will be developed. Partners' and IFIs' expertise and support are welcomed for the next steps.

The Drin Strategic Action Programme -endorsed by the riparians' authorities in 2020- and the Drina Strategic Action Programme - endorsement by the riparians anticipated – are among the frameworks to which the identification of solutions can link.

4:50 – 5:00 pm CET – Closing remarks by UNECE