

Regional Roundtable “Water, Food, Energy and Environment Nexus in Southeastern Europe”

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Drin Basin: Complexity that requires strong joint cooperation

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SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE THE EXTENDED DRIN RIVER BASIN



The Drin Basin comprises of the watersheds of the Prespa, Ohrid and Shkoder Lakes and Drin and Buna/Bojana Rivers, covering a geographical area that extends in Albania, R Macedonia, Greece, Kosovo and Montenegro.

The Drin River is the “connecting body” of this complex water system, linking the international lakes, wetlands, shared rivers and other aquatic habitats into a single ecosystem.

Complex situation

- Hydro energy is crucial to the economic development aspirations of countries, but it affects environment. This can be considered as a trade-off between industrial and agricultural growth sometimes at the expense the natural values of the water bodies.
- This complex situation requires strong cooperation among the Riparians that will ensure joint management. International experience suggests that usually this process is time consuming, and the end goal difficult to obtain.
NEXUS APPROACH is dedicate how to ensure food, water and energy security for an ever-growing population. This will require the work of individuals, businesses and government.

Water, environment, energy

- The significance of the Drin River and its main tributaries in terms of hydropower production is major, especially for Albania, where plants installed produce 85% of hydropower, and represent 70% of the total hydro and thermal installed capacity in the country.
- Two major dams, Globochica and Spilje, exist on the Black Drin in the Republic of Macedonia, with a main purpose of hydropower production.
- The alteration of the hydrological characteristics of the Drin, due to dam construction caused disturbances to the ecosystems supported. Biological corridors that facilitate migration have been interrupted, exerting major pressure on biodiversity.

SOUTH EASTERN EUROPE THE EXTENDED DRIN RIVER BASIN



Environment – Food

- Water used for irrigation
- Pollution from cultivation
- Fishing for food impacts environment

Memorandum of Understanding for the Management of the Extended Transboundary Drin Basin

- The Parties, commit to promote joint action for the coordinated integrated management of the shared water resources in the Drin Basin and to promote sustainable development across the Drin Basin.
- The MoU describes the Strategic Shared Vision for the management of the Drin and identifies key issues, along with short, medium and long term actions needed in close cooperation among the Riparians.

The Action Plan

- A set of actions are proposed to be implemented aiming to promote integrated water resources management at transboundary and national level
- The Action Plan defines activities, objectives, and institutions that will be responsible for the implementation of each activity, resources to be involved.
- **Nexus approach ???** It is seen as a way to enhance Integrated Water Resources Management assisting in the water sector policies, strategies and actions to harmonize with these of water-using sectors.

Cross- sector perspective

- Improving access to comprehensive data and adequate information to fully understand the current state of the environment and the water resources and the hydrologic system.
- Enhancement of cooperation in the field of flood risk preparedness, management and mutual support. This may be achieved through the preparation of different options for the establishment of cooperation at technical level and improving cross sectoral integration.
- The Nexus approach starts from a balanced cross-sectoral perspective considering the biophysical, economic and institutional dimensions of natural resource management

Mechanisms and solutions

- Achievement of a science based consensus, among the Drin Riparians on key transboundary priorities including climate change scenarios and also main drivers of change and indicators of sustainable development for the basin, based on the knowledge basis established

Establishment of the “Drin Water Partnership” as a mechanism that will facilitate ,awareness raising; information exchange; communication; capacity building; consultation

Nexus approach is to facilitate the enhancement of water, energy and food security, while preserving ecosystems and their functions, including under conditions of climate variability and change, by increasing efficiency and productivity of resources

GEF project objectives

- Consensus among countries on key transboundary concerns, including climate change and variability reached through joint fact finding
- Decisions for sustain joint Cooperation mechanisms and for undertaking priority reforms and investments.
- Transboundary cooperation will facilitate balancing of water uses and sustaining environmental quality throughout the extended Drin Basin.
- Political awareness at all levels and private sector participation strengthened through higher visibility of the project's developments and targeted outreach initiatives.