

Project Title: *Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the use of Nexus approach.*

Beneficiary Countries: *Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro and Serbia*

The Water-Energy-Food-Ecosystems Nexus (Nexus) approach has been introduced in the natural resources management agenda to facilitate the enhancement of water, energy and food security, while preserving ecosystems and their functions, and increasing climate resilience, by reducing trade-offs, shifting towards more sustainable consumption patterns and improving demand management, building synergies and improving governance across sectors. A Nexus approach supports the transition to a Green Economy, which aims, among others, at resource use efficiency, greater policy coherence including towards GHG emission reductions and adaptation resilience.

Advancing the Nexus approach in Southeastern Europe is one of the *key strategic actions* of the dimension Environment of the regional growth strategy entitled “SEE 2020 – Jobs and Prosperity in European Perspective”¹ (SEE2020) developed under the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC): *“to identify steps and measures necessary for advancing the Water, Energy and Food nexus approach at national and trans-boundary levels and investigate opportunities of launching a political process under the RCC for the enhancement of cooperation in the SEE in the field of TWRM”*.

Serving the SEE2020, the Project’s **purpose** is to introduce the Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems Nexus approach and catalyse action for its adoption and implementation in the SEE2020 area, at the national and transboundary basin levels. Doing so, the Project will also enable the identification of nexus related issues to be addressed with priority in the geographical areas that its activities will focus on, and create the conditions for financing actions to address four of these issues.

Further, the Project is designed to foster the achievement of the following Nexus and Transboundary Water Management (TWM) objectives under the Dimension “Environment” of the SEE 2020:

- Advance Water, Energy and Food Nexus approach at national and transboundary levels and investigate opportunities of launching a political process under the RCC for the enhancement of cooperation in the SEE in the field of TWM;
- Commencement of the Regional Integral Water Management Framework Agreement.

¹ <http://www.rcc.int/files/user/docs/reports/SEE2020-Strategy.pdf>. Participating countries are Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo (this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence), Montenegro and Serbia (SEE2020 Strategy economies). The SEE2020 comprises of 5 main growth pillars: integrated, smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, underpinned by good governance. The Strategy “reflects the determination of all the governments in South East Europe to embrace the bold policy approaches required to attain the levels of socioeconomic growth necessary to improve the prosperity of all its citizens and to facilitate eventual integration with the European Union” and it “demonstrates recognition on the part of governments in the region that close cooperation in selected areas can overcome some of these challenges and accelerate the attainment of goals in key sectors. (...) The Strategy pursues a holistic pattern of development for the region and seeks to stimulate the key long-term drivers of growth (...)”.

In addition to the above it will assist in the implementation of the (i) the Programme of Work of the UNECE Water Convention for the period 2016-2018; (ii) EU *acquis communautaire* in the fields of water, land, energy and environment that encompasses framework legal instruments demanding cross-cutting (across sectors) actions.

The **overall objective** is to enhance integrated natural resources management and transboundary cooperation in this regard, as means towards sustainable development in the SEE2020 area.

The **results** expected to be achieved are the following:

1. Enhanced capacities and raised awareness of institutions and stakeholders, through knowledge exchange and cross-fertilisation regarding:
 - a. the Nexus approach.
 - b. tools and approaches for improved management of transboundary basins/aquifers.
2. The level of integration among Nexus sectors' -Water, Energy, Food and Environment- strategic documents in each country is identified, described, feed in and benefit the discussions among SEE2020 countries regarding the SEE2020 Strategy/Roadmap (see result 3 below).
3. SEE2020 countries discuss and decide on (this result is subject to successful negotiations among the SEE2020 countries): SEE2020 Strategy/Roadmap describing orientations, partners, capacities and steps for the introduction of Nexus approach considerations in the basin/aquifer management frameworks.
4. SEE2020 countries discuss and decide on: (i) steps and actions for the possible commencement of the discussion for a Regional Integral Water Management Framework Agreement; (ii) political issues of regional nature related to the management of resources as well as others issues that emerge through the Regional Roundtables.
5. SEE2020 countries that the project activities focus on take ownership of and guide the Nexus Dialogues.
6. Inclusive stakeholders' participation in the Dialogues lead to (i) their providing input and feedback to the Events and Nexus Assessments and (ii) ownership from their side of the Nexus Dialogues and their results.
7. Enhanced capacities and raised awareness of institutions and stakeholders through knowledge exchange and cross-fertilisation regarding the Nexus approach; this is expected to facilitate in the medium term coordination of Nexus sectors towards the integration of the respective national policies.
8. Sectoral characteristics, key inter-sectoral / transboundary linkages/benefits/trade-offs and related priority issues are identified in the country that the project will focus on, and concrete suggestions for synergic action in the field of policy making, and management frameworks and instruments are developed.
9. Sectoral linkages/benefits/trade-offs and priority issues are precisely mapped, quantified and prioritised -in terms of urgency to act- in transboundary basins that the project focuses on;
10. Concrete steps and actions for the incorporation of the Nexus approach in national policy formulation and decision making for natural resources management are identified and agreed (should the country of focus decides to adopt related Strategy/Roadmap and Action Plan).
11. Four priority nexus related interventions and/or capital investments are identified and their financing by development partners and/or financing institutions is facilitated.
12. Cooperation among riparian countries for the management of natural resources in transboundary basins is enhanced (should related countries decide to adopt transboundary Strategies/Roadmaps and possibly Action Plans).

13. Awareness on nexus and SEE2020 Strategy related issues among stakeholders, including private sector and decision makers, is raised and their enhanced participation is enabled through appropriately formed information reaching them.
14. Stakeholders are informed about the project and its results.
15. Equality between genders regarding Project's implementation and access to its outcomes, is enabled.

The **activities** to achieve the above are structured in three components.

Component 1. SEE2020 Nexus Policy Dialogue

- 1.1 Organization of three annual Regional Roundtables on the Nexus
- 1.2 Organization of three SEE Nexus Group Meetings
- 1.3 Development of a Regional Nexus mapping study and a SEE2020 Strategy/Roadmap

Component 2. Structured national and transboundary Nexus Policy Dialogues

- 2.1. Nexus Policy Dialogues at national level (in one country)
 - 2.1.1. Development of Nexus assessment Phase 1
 - 2.1.2. Development of Stakeholders Analysis
 - 2.1.3. Participatory process (organization of two national consultation meetings)
 - 2.1.4. Organization of Steering committee meetings (two)
 - 2.1.5. Development of a Strategy/Roadmap
- 2.2. Nexus Policy Dialogues at transboundary basin level (in two transboundary basins)
 - 2.2.1. Development of Nexus assessment Phase 1 and Phase 2 (in two transboundary basins)
 - 2.2.2. Development of Stakeholders Analysis
 - 2.2.3. Participatory process (organization of one national and two regional meetings per dialogue)
 - 2.2.4. Organization of meetings of the Steering Committees
 - 2.2.5. Development of two Roadmaps/Strategies (one for each dialogue)
 - 2.2.6. Organization of two Capacity Building workshops
- 2.3. Development of Concept Notes and Project Documents for Priority Interventions

Component 3. Cross-cutting issues: Participation, Communication and Outreach, Gender

- 3.1. Development and implementation of Information, Communication and Outreach Strategy
- 3.2. Development of publications (nexus reports) and project brochure
- 3.3. Development of Press Releases on the occasion of projects milestones
- 3.4. Development of informative emails and web articles with content tailored made to specific stakeholders groups;
- 3.5. Development of four Publicly accessible summaries of Technical Reports and four Fact sheets (one pagers)
- 3.6. Development of Gender mainstreaming Strategy
- 3.7. Organization of two (2) regional capacity building workshops on gender issues

The **strategy** of the Project to achieve the expected results is to introduce the Nexus approach to the ministries responsible for and the stakeholders related to the nexus sectors, facilitate action for its adoption and identify those interventions that will enable water, food, and

energy security without jeopardising the well-being of the ecosystems. In this regard, activities (see above) at three levels -regional, transboundary and national- will be implemented to (stages):

- i. Introduce the Nexus approach.
- ii. Explain the available Nexus approach tools and their usage.
- iii. Identify the interlinkages among the Nexus sectors, the related trade-offs and benefits as well as the associated issues, making sure that the views and knowledge of all stakeholder groups, including those that may be marginalized due to social and economic reasons, are fully taken into consideration.
- iv. Highlight the cost due to, and the opportunities arising from, the lack of integrated action.
- v. Facilitate the identification of necessary actions to address issues.
- vi. Facilitate the planning and, as appropriate and possible, the financing of necessary actions.

The Policy Dialogues at the Regional level (SEE2020 Nexus Policy Dialogues) will: introduce integration and Nexus related knowledge; enable peer cross-fertilization regarding the interlinkages among the Nexus sectors, the related trade-offs and benefits and the associated issues as well as regarding the related solutions. The activities will enable all six stages presented above being implemented at the Regional level. The outcomes of the national and transboundary Nexus Policy Dialogues (see below) will provide input for the discussions.

The Structured National and Transboundary Nexus Policy Dialogues will facilitate the implementation of stages i - iv leading to stages v. and vi.

Accountability is ensured through the existence of the Steering Committees for the Project and each of the Dialogues; the responsible ministries and ADA are represented in this.

Sustainability of outcomes will be facilitated through the implementation of cross-cutting activities such as these related to capacity development, inclusive stakeholders' participation, communication and outreach, and gender mainstreaming activities.

Institutions responsible for the management of resources related to the Nexus approach i.e. water, land, energy and ecosystems in the SEE2020 area comprise the **direct target group** hence the direct beneficiaries. These will be benefited as their everyday work will be facilitated through the outputs and outcomes of the project; in addition, their capacities in the sphere of integrated management of water, energy, land and ecosystems will be improved. The same is true regarding other nexus stakeholders that will participate in the activities of the project. In total about **350 stakeholders** and **860 individuals** are direct beneficiaries (see [2.4 Target group, beneficiaries and local potentials](#)).

The policy dialogues are to be inclusive enabling the participation of stakeholders that are not sitting close to the decision making processes, such as underprivileged groups or -in some cases- minorities. Gender balance is an issue to be given a special attention during the implementation of related activities.

Ultimately, the total of the population of the country where the National Dialogue will be implemented and the total of the population of the two transboundary basins where the two Transboundary Dialogues will be implemented -especially the poor part of the population- will be **indirectly benefited** by improved Nexus related resources management planning. The number of people below national poverty line in each of the SEE2020 economies is given in the following table.

Country	Population living under national poverty line (<i>millions of people</i>)	Year
Albania	0,41	2012
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0,69	2011
Kosovo	0,53	2011
FYR Macedonia	0,50	2013
Montenegro	0,05	2013
Serbia	2,00	2013

Source: *Poverty & Equity Database, The World Bank*
(<http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/home/>)

A more precise number regarding the benefited populations and under-privileged people, can be identified after the selection of the country and transboundary basins that the project will focus on.

The project promotes Gender Equality by enhancing women participation and contribution in the project activities and by empowering women in the field of Nexus approach.

The implementation of the Project will be done by a group of officers that are either staff of the Project Partners or will be hired. The levels of responsibility and the accountability line is given in [Section 4.5 Organizational Structure and Processes](#).

The **Global Water Partnership-Mediterranean (GWP-Med)** will be responsible for the overall coordination and management of the Project; it has considerable experience in the Project area regarding integrated basin management hence, management of the Nexus approach related resources and sectors.

GWP-Med is one of the regional partnerships of the *Global Water Partnership (GWP)*² that is an international organisation committed to supporting countries with the sustainable and integrated water resources management (IWRM) towards a water secure future. GWP was founded in 1996 and since 2000 holds inter-governmental status; the not-for-profit action network of GWP comprises 13 Regional Water Partnerships (WPs), 84 Country WPs and 2,904 Partner organisations in 172 countries. A Secretariat, based in Stockholm, Sweden, provides overall support and coordination to the network, while the Regional WPs operate in an autonomous and self-governing manner.

GWP-Med -set up in 2002- is a multi-stakeholder regional platform that brings together ten (10) major regional networks of different disciplines (government, river basins, local authorities, professionals, NGOs, research institutes, irrigators, etc.) and over eighty (80) other institutions and organisations. In addition to the Head Office in Athens, Greece, the GWP-Med Secretariat extends its human resources (total of 22 persons) with staff in Beirut, Ohrid, Podgorica, Pristina, Tirana, Tunis.

GWP-Med facilitates policy dialogues and implements demonstration actions on IWRM planning, integrated basin management, transboundary water management, water governance, water and climate change, joint (IWRM /Integrated Coastal Zone Management

² <http://www.gwp.org/en/>

planning, private sector participation in water and sanitation, water/food/energy/environment, nexus, non-conventional water resources management including at urban level, integrated groundwater management, education and capacity building and networking of targeted groups including decision makers, parliamentarians and the media.

The Project will be implemented in cooperation with the Regional Environment Center (REC) and UNECE³.

³ The UNECE Water Convention team