

**Protection and Sustainable Use of Transboundary Waters
in Southeastern Europe**

***International Roundtable on Water and Energy Nexus
in transboundary basins in Southeastern Europe***

**Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
6-8 November 2013**

Information Note

Organized jointly by:

**German Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
Regional Cooperation Council
GEF IWLEARN
Global Water Partnership - Mediterranean**

In the framework of:

**Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process
Mediterranean Component of the European Union Water Initiative**

The 'Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process'

Sustaining a Regional Dialogue on Transboundary Water Resources Management (TWRM) in the Southeastern Europe (SEE) since 2005

The 'Petersberg Process' was initiated in 1998 and its on-going Phase II aims to provide support for translating into action the current developments and opportunities for future cooperation on transboundary river, lake and groundwater management in the Southeastern Europe (SEE). It is supported by the German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the World Bank.

The 'Athens Declaration' Process concerning *Shared Water, Shared Future and Shared Knowledge* was launched in 2003 at the Vouliagmeni International Conference (as part of the activities of the Greek Presidency of the European Union) with the primary aim to assist development of Integrated Water Resources Management Plans and related actions in SEE; it is jointly supported by the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Bank.

The 'Petersberg Phase II Process' works in synergy since 2005 with the 'Athens Declaration Process' under the joint Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process (Process) to facilitate the enhancement of cooperation in transboundary basins in the SEE region.

The Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) provides administrative support and is the technical facilitator of related activities under the Process.

The Process is strategically linked to the Global Environment Facility International Waters: Learning Exchange and Resources Network (IWLEARN) on capacity building and sharing of experiences.

The GEF IWLEARN

The GEF supported IWLEARN programme (2005 -) represents a cooperative effort of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and UN Environment Programme (UNEP), with the involvement of all GEF Agencies.

The IWLEARN activities in Southeastern Europe aim to demonstrate innovative and feasible approaches to transboundary water resources management, by deepening multi-stakeholder dialogue and experience-sharing.

Activities since 2005

Since 2005 a variety of activities including regional roundtables, multi-stakeholders dialogues, targeted capacity building workshops and study visits, preparation of assessments, surveys and policy documents (on issues such as shared lakes basin management; multipurpose water management; shared groundwater management; climate change; stakeholders involvement; etc), have been implemented aiming at enhancing cooperation among SEE countries and stakeholders for the management of transboundary water resources. More than 150 stakeholder organizations, governments and other entities have been engaged in these activities.

Overall, the Process has been catalytic in facilitating coordination among key international and national players in the areas of focus and has attracted the interest of beneficiary countries and donors.

International Roundtable on Protection and Sustainable Use of Transboundary Waters in Southeastern Europe (Zagreb, 15-16 December 2011)

The international roundtable was organized in the framework of the Process by the German Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety in cooperation with the Croatian Ministry of Regional Development Forestry and Water Management, GEF IWLEARN, World Bank and GWP-Med in Zagreb, 15-16 December 2011.

Fifty (50) participants, high level staff of competent water authorities of the SEE countries as well as key regional stakeholders and international stakeholders attended the event. These included targeted representatives of GEF projects, joint bodies of shared basins, regional associations and networks of civil society organizations, key actors supporting the political processes and regional initiatives, academia, donor countries and international institutions and organizations etc.

The international roundtable indicated **sustainable hydropower production as an issue for a future event under the Process to focus on**. In SEE, shared water resources are among the major contributors to the energy sector through hydropower generation while overall, the same water resources are used for agriculture production, industry, to sustain ecosystems etc.

The Regional Cooperation Council

The Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) was officially launched at the meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the South-East European Cooperation Process (SEECP) in Sofia, on 27 February 2008, as the successor of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. Through a regionally owned and led framework, the RCC focuses on promotion and enhancement of regional cooperation in South East Europe (SEE) and supports European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the aspiring countries. The RCC provides operational capacities to and works under the political guidance of the SEECP.

In line with its Statute and guided by the principles of all-inclusiveness, the main tasks of the RCC are to represent the region, assist the SEECP, monitor regional activities, exert leadership in regional cooperation, provide a regional perspective in donor assistance – notably the EU's Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) programme – and support increased involvement of civil society in regional activities. The RCC functions as a focal point for regional cooperation in SEE and its key role is to generate and coordinate developmental projects of a wider, regional character, to the benefit of each individual participant, and create an appropriate political climate susceptible to their implementation.

Sustainable hydropower production in a transboundary context

Sustainability of hydropower production is closely linked to achieving efficient energy production through a renewable source without compromising availability of water for the society and communities and the environmental status of the systems that the water resources support. An extensive dialogue globally has focused on sustainable hydropower, what it entails, the factors to be taken into consideration and protocols to be designed and followed.

Among the main challenges is to address both issues of sustainable use of water with regard to environmental protection and use of water to produce energy.

Hydropower production, including the development of related infrastructure (that may serve additional uses, such as agriculture), has frequently served as one of the drivers for water resources management at basin level, both at national and transboundary levels. Its significance becomes bigger as it is considered to have exacerbated or to contribute in the mitigation or effects of climate change in different basins.

With regard to the transboundary basins, hydropower production could become a positive or negative driver regarding cooperation among states depending among others on whether related benefits are shared.

On the other hand, transboundary cooperation increasingly affects hydropower production. This is mainly due to the tradeoffs between hydropower and other water uses lying across the borders and the impact that these tradeoffs have on the political and economic environment under which the hydropower schemes are being developed.

These interactions are of special importance in SEE as 90% of the area is falling within shared basins. More than 50% of these basins are shared by three or more riparian countries. In addition, more than 50 transboundary aquifers exist and many of them are interlinked with surface water bodies and hydropower generation potentials.

The Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus

The Water, Energy and Food Security Nexus (Nexus) approach has become widely accepted at the International Conference “The Water Energy and Food Security Nexus – Solutions for the Green Economy” (16-18 November 2011, Bonn) organized by the German Federal Government as a contribution to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development “Rio + 20” (<http://www.water-energy-food.org/>).

The Nexus perspective was introduced to facilitate a better integration of management and governance across sectors and scales and the transition to a greener economy.

There are interdependencies between water, energy and food security at all levels, global, regional, national and local. Failing to identify and efficiently address potential consequences of one sector on another during decision making, has undermined efforts to achieve sustainability. The Nexus aims at addressing this gap by calling for a

transectoral/transdisciplinary approach in water resources management in order to enhance sectoral coordination and facilitate, to some extent, international cooperation.

There are inherent challenges regarding TWRM, linked among others with sovereignty issues, the identification and management of drivers of cooperation or unilateral action, the mandate and nature of joint institutions once these are set up as well as coherence of water governance between national and transboundary level.

In line with IWRM, the Nexus approach could assist in enabling enhanced TWRM by facilitating transdisciplinary approach within the basin (at national and transboundary levels) as well beyond, outside the basin (at national and regional levels).

International Roundtable on Water and Energy Nexus in transboundary basins in SEE (Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 6-8 November 2013)

The International Roundtable will be organized in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, from 6 to 8 November 2013 by the German Ministry of Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Regional Cooperation Council, Global Environment Fund (GEF) IWLEARN and the Global Water Partnership Mediterranean.

The Roundtable will bring together 50 to 70 participants from Southeastern Europe as well as the major international organizations active in the area. High level staff of authorities and representatives from the private sector active in the fields of water resources management and hydropower production as well as key regional and international stakeholders will be invited to participate.

The roundtable will:

- Bring together practitioners and decision makers in SEE in fields related to water resources management –representing the main water uses and users- on the one hand and hydropower production on the other with the aim of identifying areas of cooperation and coordination between these two “communities”;
- Discuss hydropower production in transboundary basins with the aim of identifying (i) related challenges and priority issues; (ii) means to address these issues; (iii) possible follow up activities including interventions in the framework of the Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process and the RCC; (iv) replicable knowledge and techniques generated that could be disseminated;
- Contribute in initiating a wider dialogue on Water, Energy and Food Nexus in SEE with a view of introducing related considerations in the river basin management frameworks.