

# Opportunities in transboundary governance to address the resource nexus

Dr. Annukka Lipponen  
Water Convention secretariat  
UNECE



Convention of the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes



# Value of transboundary cooperation? Beyond emergency response: the Sava

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a BBC News article. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-27459184>. The page title is "BBC News - Balkan floods: ...". The article's main headline is "Balkan floods: Fears of new surge on Serbia's River Sava". Below the headline is a video player showing a group of people, likely emergency workers, handling sandbags. The article text mentions that water levels on the River Sava are expected to peak later, threatening the area. To the right of the article, there is a "Top Stories" section with a link to "Putin orders Ukraine". At the bottom of the page, there is a "Related stories" section with a link to "10 slang words that perfectly sum up their era". The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the date and time as 14:46 on 19/05/2014.

18 May 2014 Last updated at 18:20 GMT

## Balkan floods: Fears of new surge on Serbia's River Sava

Guy Delauney hears from volunteers in Belgrade trying to stop a "flood wave"

Emergency workers in Serbia are preparing for a "flood wave" on one of the country's main rivers.

Water levels on the River Sava are expected to peak later, threatening the

Share

### Top Stories

Putin orders Ukraine

Related stories

10 slang words that perfectly sum up their era

Aerial video shows

- Preliminary flood risk assessment  
– **DONE**
- Hydrological and hydraulic models  
– **DEVELOPED**
- Measures in flood action plan  
– **IDENTIFIED**
- Flood hazard maps  
– **TO BE ELABORATED**

# What does the resource nexus entail in a transboundary context?

- the trade-offs and externalities may cause friction
- forming a holistic picture of the situation more complicated
- Finding a balance between various uses and protection of the resource: address the trade offs and increase synergies
- Necessary to coordinate plans & management measures between the riparian countries to avoid negative impacts from unilateral action
- more opportunity for benefits looking at the basin as a whole, only achievable through joint action



# Potentially behind the short-comings in addressing intersectoral issues

- Missing agreements/institutions
- Limited mandate of existing institutions
- Composition of institutions and
- decision-making processes
- Weak enforcement capacity etc.



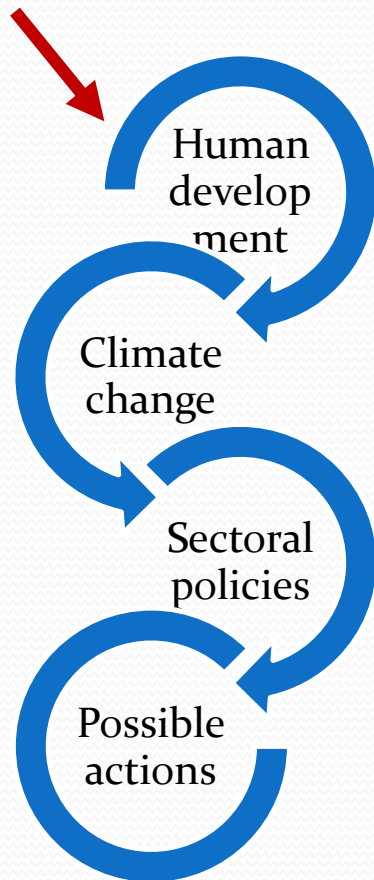
# Relevance of legal frameworks as part of the governance

- Availability of legal frameworks in a transboundary basin including both framework conventions and specific agreements: emphasis on complementarity and coherence!
- Joint institutions for transboundary cooperation around the world demonstrate (with differing success) fostering dialogue between different interests, supporting harmonization etc.
- New insights emerging: A methodology developed under the Convention to assess the water-food-energy-ecosystems — including its institutional basis — and is to be applied in 6 to 8 basins from 2014 to 2015



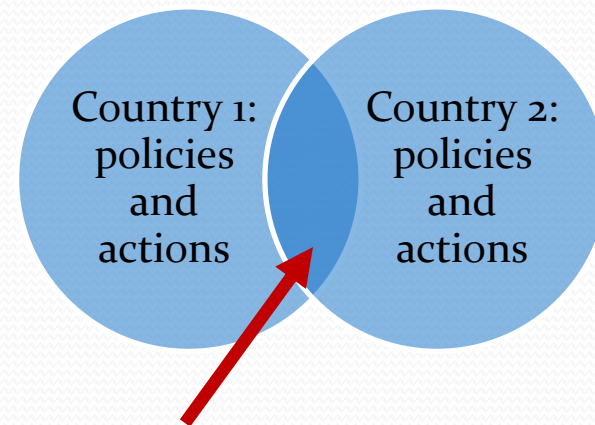
# Insights from assessing the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus in transboundary river basins

## *Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus*



Need to integrate/coordinate:

1. A better understanding of inter-sector and inter-resources dynamics allows accounting for impacts & more effective resource management
2. To make policies and actions more coherent across sectors and countries



*Communication, collaboration and joint action!*

# Participatory process in inter-sectoral basin workshops: identification of issues, compatibility of plans and potential solutions

## 1. Nexus issues specific to the basin highlighted

What the countries plan? Are the plans of the different sectors compatible? What do changing drivers & the climate outlook mean for the nexus? How to better reconcile the different uses?



## 2. Sectoral and national plans shared

What opportunities there are to reduce negative intersectoral impacts and enhance synergy? Institutional arrangements at transboundary level conducive to intersectoral coordination?

## 3. Potential solutions identified

Changes to policies, new policies, management and measures practices, institutional arrangements, ways the infrastructure is operated

# Steps in the institutional assessment

1. Identification of the main sectors of activity involved in the management of the resources concerned
2. Analysis of the main regulations at the sectoral and intersectoral levels
3. Configuration of the actors involved, analysis of
  - what kind of actors are involved
  - nature of links between these identified actors
4. Identification of specific hot spots (main rivalries) at different institutional levels (local, regional, national, transboundary).





# Basins in the nexus assessment: the Sava

## Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin as basis for intersectoral coordination

- Parties Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia (Montenegro cooperates on a technical level in some fields of work)
- Coordination of:
  - Development of joint / integrated plans for the basin
  - Establishment of integrated systems for the basin
  - Development of economic activities (navigation, tourism)
  - Harmonization of regulation (national => EU)
  - Creation of additional protocols to the FASRB (scope evolved with Protocols on Navigation Regime (2002) Water Pollution caused by Navigation (2009) and on Flood Protection (2010))
- Stakeholder involvement and public participation

# International Sava River Basin Commission and Inter-sectoral coordination

- Integrated planning approach applied, based on the Joint Statement on Inland Navigation & Environment (ICPDR, Danube Commission; ISRBC)
- ISRBC participated in the development of Guiding Principles on Sustainable Hydropower Development in the Danube Basin under ICPDR

Activity / Field of work	W	F	N	H	A	T	C
River Basin Management Plan (EU WFD)	+	+	+	+	+		+
Water and Climate Adaptation Plan		+	+	+	+		+
Integrated Information System (INSPIRE Dir.)	+	+	+	+	+		
Navigation	+		+	+		+	
Tourism	+	+	+	+		+	

A – Agriculture

F – Flood management

W – Water and aquatic  
ecosystem protection

N – Navigation  
H – Hydropower

T – Tourism  
C – Climate change

# Joint bodies for transboundary cooperation: sharing experience

- 2 workshops organised, under leadership of Germany and Finland
- 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop in April 2014: over 120 participants, from 55 countries
- A devoted session on coordinating different uses and accommodating them better
- A diversity of bases for tackling intersectoral issues and for sharing benefits — from multi-sectoral bilateral commissions to basin organisations with an extensive development mandate
- Discussed & to be presented to MoP for adoption: **Principles** of organization and activities that increase the efficiency of joint bodies and contribute to reaching a mature level of cooperation — many directly relevant to the nexus
- The supporting partnership:



# Principles : some points concerning establishment, structure and functions

- Sufficiently broad competence of a joint body
- Sufficiently broad, through workable representation of national authorities (beyond the water management )
- An organizational structure that allows for developing and adopting decisions as well as implementing them.
- Certain flexibility of the agreement, allowing to progressively develop cooperation, in terms of scope, mandate and riparian States involved.
- Regular exchange of information and consultation mechanisms
- Good information basis to support the activities, including a joint study of the basin



## Principles (...): Features related to operation

- Mandate to identify and assess accurately the potential benefits of transboundary water cooperation —economic, social, environmental and geopolitical aspects
- Facilitate the assessment of impacts (transboundary and inter-sectoral) from developments, and of looking for an agreement about them between the riparians. Providing a framework for monitoring the long-term impacts (e.g. infrastructure)
- Mechanisms for public participation and stakeholder involvement



# Conclusions

Some means to alleviate the negative in the resource nexus at transboundary level

- Appropriately broad representation of sectors in joint bodies
- Broadening the mandate gradually reflecting uses & pressures
- Guidelines and their observance/application
- Knowledge base, assessments (e.g. EIA), monitoring
- Communication and coordination arrangements
- Mechanisms for participation

