Topical Round Table: Participation of the economic sectors and citizens

What instruments and tools facilitate participation of different interests at transboundary (basin) level?

Mr. Péter KOVÁCS, former State Secretary for Water of Hungary, Chair of the Bureau to the UNECE Water Convention.
Reconciling different interests in transboundary basins: main points

• There are opportunities for reducing negative effects and for obtaining mutual benefits from improved coordination across economic sectors and from transboundary cooperation.

• Key to promoting coordination and participation in transboundary basins: availability of legal frameworks, including both framework conventions and specific agreements.

• Joint institutions for transboundary cooperation around the world demonstrate (with differing success) fostering dialogue between different interests, supporting harmonization etc.
Tools and instruments

• UNECE Water Convention
  – Convention’s scope: intersectoral, beyond water
  – Intersectoral (nexus) assessments – methodology to assess key links, effects and possible solutions
  – Principles of Effective Joint Bodies (adopted by the Parties in 2015): representation of authorities, stakeholder participation etc.

• Joint bodies for transboundary cooperation
  – Have specific mechanisms and processes for stakeholder participation
  – River Basin Management Plan; consultations
  – Guidelines, principles (e.g. ICPDR on sustainable hydropower)
Nexus assessment methodology

1. Socio-economic context
2. Key sectors, key actors
3. Analysis of key sectors
4. Intersectoral issues
5. Nexus dialogue
6. Solutions & benefits

• Adapts to the context and the issues specific to the basin
• Provides for identification of cooperative ways to tackle nexus challenges in a non-prescriptive, inclusive and indicative manner highlighting a broad range of potential opportunities.
• Application to 5 transboundary basins demonstrates value for engaging different sectors into a dialogue

Analysis of the basin (with indicators) → Active engagement (workshop & follow up meeting) → Limited quantification (with indicators)

- Factual questionnaire
- Key documentation
- Desk study: Sectors, resources and governance analysis
- Opinion based questionnaire
- Basin report: Nexus issues, solutions & benefits
- Adapts to the context and the issues specific to the basin
- Provides for identification of cooperative ways to tackle nexus challenges in a non-prescriptive, inclusive and indicative manner highlighting a broad range of potential opportunities.
- Application to 5 transboundary basins demonstrates value for engaging different sectors into a dialogue
Hydropower Guiding Principles
Main elements

- **Danube basin-wide level**
  - Guiding principles
    - General principles
    - Technical upgrading of existing hydropower plants and ecological restoration
    - Strategic planning approach for new hydropower development
    - Mitigation measures

- **Not legally binding but serving as guidance for national application**

**National application**

- **Common vision and understanding** on policy framework and requirements for sustainable hydropower
- Addressing issue **more holistically** (energy efficiency, other forms of RES, environmental objectives, ...)
- Main addressees: **Planning authorities for energy and environment**, hydropower sector, NGOs, interested public