



International Conference

Sustainability in the Water-Energy-Food Nexus

19 -20 May 2014 in Bonn, Germany

What policy-makers and scientists can do for Water, Energy and Food

International Conference in Bonn aims to identify research and funding gaps to influence Nexus policy-making and research on a global level

The international Conference “Sustainability in the Water-Energy-Food Nexus” on 19/20 May in Bonn, Germany, will bring together policy makers, scientists and other stakeholders to discuss the linkages across three key resource sectors – water, energy and food. Participants will address the sustainability of the Water-Energy-Food Nexus as a key research-for-action initiative and aim to develop ideas, ways and solutions to inform, influence, and catalyse necessary action by key stakeholder groups such as policymakers, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, educators, researchers and others.

“Today we are more than convinced that strong interconnectedness of global food, energy and water security and environmental sustainability exists”, says Anik Bhaduri, Executive Officer of the Global Water System Project GWSP and main organizer of the Conference. “This situation calls for joint global responsibility and cooperation among scientists and policy makers to mediate trade-offs and explore synergies – and our Conference aims to facilitate such cooperation and contribute to defining a more focused global research agenda for interdependent water, energy and food challenges.”

Yet another Nexus Conference?

Is the Water-Energy-Food Nexus really new? What does it mean to securitise water, food, energy and the climate? To which extent are climate change, soil, sanitation and other important global challenges part of the Nexus debate?

The Conference on 19/20 May in Bonn recognises that all these – and many other – questions need to be considered; numerous national, regional and global events addressing similar Nexus challenges have already and continue to take place. The organisers of the Bonn Conference have considered the key outcomes of earlier such Conferences and other high-level policy events and positioned the Conference as one further element in a global dynamic towards more integrated thinking, policy-making and research.

A more integrated Nexus perspective and policy-making are science and knowledge intensive; the Conference will aim to bring science strongly back into the Nexus debate by contributing to the development of a cross-sectoral nexus research agenda to inform policies and research funding as well as guide and accompany policy-making and evidence based action.



What do participants expect from the Conference?

“This Conference will provide an opportunity for those concerned about measurements, monitoring, predictions and scenarios to dialogue with those who deal with governance, policy, and management - and who must be concerned with the interconnectedness of issues, the challenges of sustainability, and the role of governance, including new governance paradigms, in meeting these challenges” says Richard Lawford, Senior Researcher at the Morgan State University and GWSP Board Member.

Just in time for the Conference, the GWSP will publish a special Newsletter on the Water-Energy-Food Nexus with a series of interviews; one question to all interviewees was what they expect from the Conference. Imme Scholz, Deputy Director of the German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), said this: *“In this Conference we need to gain more knowledge about what is needed to make integrated concepts work. We have to understand that some problems are complex and that we will not solve them if we decide to ignore this complexity.”*

Focus on four main topics – large variety of Nexus questions to be addressed

More than 200 participants are expected to attend the Conference on 19/20 May; they will debate four main Conference topics around water, energy and food and their interdependencies:

1. Identifying Tools for Sustainable Implementation of the Nexus Approach
2. Governance and Management of the Nexus
3. Environment and Wellbeing
4. Implementing the Nexus at Various Scales

Under these four main topics, participants will aim to identify research needs and debate a broad number of science-for-policy-making questions among which:

- What governance structures are conducive to make the Nexus a reality?
- How can the linkages across key natural resource sectors best be addressed so that jointly improving their efficiency is considered a win-win-win strategy for human development and environmental sustainability?
- What mechanisms are there or should be created to raise policymakers’ awareness of interdependent issues and promote greater collaboration among ministries and other stakeholders?
- How can we accelerate the development of an enabling environment for integrated water, energy, and food planning? What institutional arrangements have to be formed at different levels to create that enabling environment?



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- Which concepts, methods and tools for Nexus decision making and policy implementation do already exist? Which tools do already address synergies and trade-offs, including mitigation and adaptation measures?
- What governance mechanisms need to be considered at the local and national level and could help address nexus trade-offs? How should trade, climate and energy policy and other important policy arenas be considered at the regional and global levels?
- How can more and better information exchange support Nexus actions? How can the tendency to restrict the flow of information in between sectors as a means of retaining control be overcome to support better planning?
- What does this mean for the on-going development of the Sustainable Development Goals? How can the Nexus approach best be applied to explore different approaches to SDG development in order to promote consistency among goals and cross-sectoral collaboration?

The Supporting and Sponsoring Organizations of the Conference are:

Global Water System Project (GWSP), German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Zentrum für Entwicklungsforschung / Center for Development Research (ZEF), CGIAR Research Program on Water, Land and Ecosystems (WLE), Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung / Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)

The Special Session Conveners of the Conference are:

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), Korean Environmental Institute (KEI), Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), Texas A&M University (TAMU), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC), United Nations University - Institute for Integrated Management of Material Fluxes and of Resources (UNU-Flores), World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

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For more information about the Conference please see <http://wef-conference.gwsp.org> or contact:

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Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



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RESEARCH
PROGRAM ON
Water, Land and
Ecosystems