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Regional Political-Technical Forum on the Water-Energy-Food Nexus in Latin America and the Caribbean

(Celso Furtado Auditorium, ECLAC, Santiago, Chile, 14 - 15 May 2018)

Recommendations of the participants

Participants of the Regional Political-Technical Forum on the Water-Energy-Food (WEF) Nexus, including representatives of government agencies of 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries and 9 regional and international organizations, recognized the relevance of the WEF Nexus approach as a framework for inter-sectoral coordination and activities in support of the implementation and follow up of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement. They further emphasized the convenience for the countries to adopt this approach as a state policy. The challenge consists in generating greater political will and governmental commitment on the Nexus approach to be translated into concrete public policies with the objective of proceeding towards higher levels of water, energy and food security. In order to advance in this direction, participants formulated and agreed on the following recommendations to the ECLAC, the European Union (EU) and the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ):

- To continue research and technical advisory activities in cooperation with the countries of the region on the WEF Nexus; to facilitate the generation of the information necessary for these purposes; and to encourage regional bodies, international organizations and countries from other regions to join this process.
- To take advantage of best-practice examples and lessons learned from the results of the WEF Nexus approach implementation by ECLAC and GIZ, to foster mutual learning between different countries and regions, with the common objective to design, revise, restructure and elaborate integrated policies and sustainable implementation frameworks that incorporate the WEF Nexus approach.
- To support the development of institutional capacities, information systems and conceptual frameworks to bring forward the implementation of the WEF Nexus approach. Furthermore, to strengthen assessment methodologies and technical cooperation activities, with special attention to the different national needs and context.
- To organise regular meetings at regional, sub regional, national and local levels between the relevant actors of the public and private sectors to enhance the exchange of experiences and best practices in analysing and managing the interrelationships between the components of the WEF Nexus.
- To request bilateral, multilateral and regional technical cooperation organizations and financing agencies to support and collaborate in investigation and technical advisory activities in the WEF Nexus.



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Action plan for international and regional cooperation

The presentations by experts from international and regional organizations during Session 4 "Nexus: Regional and International Perspectives" coincided in the need to **formulate and implement a regional agenda for the water, energy and food Nexus**. This agenda should combine the needs and demands of the different countries as well as a common long-term vision. The different agencies expressed their strong interest in becoming actively involved and participate in this initiative. They equally recognized that in order to overcome the still predominant sectoral structures and approaches in the region, it is essential to continuously support member states to develop a **common vision for a systemic implementation of the Nexus approach and improved inter-sectoral coordination**. The importance of **working with clear axes of coordination among the regional and international agencies was emphasized**, in order to create a space where the WEF Nexus approach can be jointly discussed and incorporated within their agendas in a coherent way.

Consequently, a successful promotion of the Nexus approach requires a technical as well as a political agenda:

- As part of the **technical agenda**, the following points were highlighted: 1) preparation of guidelines, manuals and others; 2) tools for the assessment of interlinkages and synergies, management of natural resources, sustainability assessment, cost analysis and strategic environmental assessment; 3) mapping and identification of actors; 4) policy formulation and coordination with special attention to territorial planning; 5) generation and systematization of knowledge and information exchange; and 6) Nexus pilot projects.
- As part of the **political agenda**, the following items were identified: 1) commitment to international agreements relevant from the WEF Nexus perspective, such as the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement; 2) minimum thresholds (common principles) in national legislation, including the recognition of the hydrographic, hydrologic or hydrogeologic basins as the reference unit of water resource management, while at the same time recognizing that the Nexus approach has to be applied at various scales, according to the issues and components under analysis; and 3) acknowledgement of the usefulness of the three security concepts (water security, energy security and food security) as comprehensive approaches or criteria for integrated analysing, defining and monitoring of strategic goals, targets and objectives.

It was recommended that further regional political-technical dialogues on the WEF Nexus approach should be organized on a regular basis to ensure a sustainable manner for the exchange of experiences and knowledge generation, as well as providing a platform for strengthening regional integration.

Finally, the following topics were mentioned in the presentations that require further attention in the regional context in relation to the WEF Nexus: appropriate sectoral policy frameworks (governing bodies, economic-financial regime, evaluation of programmes and projects, access regimes, coordination systems and procedures, information systems and indicators, planning, among others), transboundary river basins and regional integration, sustainability of aquifers and groundwater management, human rights-based management approaches, energy efficiency and new sources of renewable energy, bio-economics, family farming, incorporating the gender perspective in the management processes, private sector involvement, and input from academia and universities.