

FairWater Stewardship Workshop Report

- FINAL SUMMARY -

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This report has been prepared by the WBCSD to provide meeting participants, and broader networks with a common record of the workshop. A first draft was circulated on 11 July 2008 inviting feedback and comments.

This final version (28 July 2008) is for all participants to reference, share amongst their own networks and publish online.

The meeting took place under the Chatham House Rule (participants are free to share what was discussed, but not to attribute positions or information to particular individuals or institutions). Throughout the text participants' own words from their discussions, posters and flipcharts are quoted (in green).

The formal panel presentations by Jack Moss, Michael Spencer, Derk Kuiper and Michael Deane are 'on the record' and are summarized here, and in the associated PowerPoint slides, which are also downloadable from <http://www.wbcds.org/web/projects/water/fairwater.zip>

Summary

- On June 17th-18th, 2008 representatives from businesses, NGOs, universities, multi-sector alliances and government met to investigate the possibility of beginning a broader process of collaboration to create common understanding around sustainable water management and water stewardship.
- Participants welcomed WBCSD's efforts in convening this meeting and affirmed a common diagnosis of numerous concepts and approaches, and *paralyzing complexity* as a key obstacle to progress towards sustainable water management.
- Participants confirmed their appetite for collaboration to overcome this problem, but had diverse views about the scale of ambition and form this collaboration might take. The WBCSD made clear that their role going forward would be as a participant, partner and facilitator not as an initiative owner.
- Participants learnt about the progress and activities of the WBCSD FairWater Initiative, Alliance for Water Stewardship, Water Footprint Working Group and US Environmental Protection Agency and agreed that an overall map of initiatives would be a useful tool to develop and share in order to help people navigate, understand and coordinate efforts.
- Participants discussed the initial mapping framework developed by WBCSD's FairWater Initiative based on three dimensions: *concepts & principles, methodologies of measurement and process of stewardship*. They felt it was a useful starting point, but were keen that its next iteration should be a co-created framework and publically shared analysis.
- Participants agreed that collaboration could add value to existing initiatives, by working towards the goals of greater coordination, common language and definitions, validation and alignment of measurement and metrics, engagement between practice and public policy and ultimately a shared vision for sustainable water management. However there were diverse visions as to the organization that this group should best take to support these goals.
- Participants committed to work together on three key short-term areas of collaborative focus:
 - Publically mapping the key initiatives in the area.
 - Sharing of terms and aligning definitions towards a common language.
 - Developing a plan for identifying and sharing of information on existing metrics/measurement tools with a view of piloting in the near term.
- The longer term role and form that the collaboration could take was left open for further discussion and development, following on from the progress and momentum generated by the initial work plan.
- The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 20 August (17:30 – 18:45) during the Stockholm World Water Week and will review progress, share learning, and make plans.

Introduction

On June 17th, 2008 a small group of experts from businesses, NGOs, government, universities and multi-sector alliances met together alongside the River Thames in London.

The meeting was convened by the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), with the aim of providing a space where people and institutions concerned with sustainable water management and water stewardship could come together to:

1. Seek common understanding of the concepts, language and issues related to sustainable water management and water stewardship.
2. Explore potential for collaborative actions based on commonalities, synergies, overlaps and gaps identified during the workshop, e.g. developing measuring and reporting tools to improve water management.
3. Draft a plan on a way forward bringing business, government and civil society together toward sustainable water management.

Although the meeting was initiated by WBCSD and hosted by Shell, the intention was not to create a WBCSD process, but a shared forum, in which the participants would jointly own and take forward any agreed outcomes.

A concept paper by WBCSD (<http://www.wbcd.org/web/projects/water/fairwater.zip>) set the scene for the meeting with five key messages:

1. **Sustainable water management is an urgent global problem.** It is increasingly recognized that water is a precious resource which must be managed sustainably. There is now an urgent need for clear principles and tools for achieving and demonstrating progress towards sustainable water management.
2. **Numerous approaches are emerging,** indicating growing pressure for such schemes. Business, government, NGOs and academics are all involved in developing and piloting tools and guidance for sustainable water management. WBCSD's initial research has already identified more than 15 initiatives, and this is unlikely to be an exhaustive list.
3. **Emerging initiatives are focused on different elements of fair water management.** Some are focused on laying down concepts and principles, some on developing methodologies for measurement and some on setting up water stewardship accountability processes. Each of these elements is necessary in an overall approach to sustainable water management.
4. **There is a danger that progress will be hampered by confusion, and duplication of effort.** Proliferation of concepts and lack of coordination may put at risk our ability to identify complementarities and ensure uptake of solutions that will deliver over the long term.
5. **There is an opportunity to accelerate learning and implementation by working together.** Dialogue, collaboration and shared learning offer the chance to synchronize and strengthen all our efforts and to provide clear signposts for others seeking to implement or make judgments about sustainable water management processes.

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The meeting engaged participants in a process of structured discussion and action planning, which asked:

- **Where we are today?**
What are the threats and opportunities?
- **What can we learn from each other?**
What can we learn from initiatives already taking place?
- **Where we want to be tomorrow?**
Can we develop a shared statement of opportunity?
- **How we are going to get there?**
Can we develop a viable plan of collaborative action to reach our common goals?

Where are we today?

Summary of proceedings

Participants affirmed a common diagnosis of a key obstacle to progress towards sustainable water management as *paralyzing complexity*.

Participants confirmed their appetite for collaboration to overcome this problem, but had diverse views about the scale of ambition and form this collaboration might take.

Participants affirmed the diagnosis of *paralyzing complexity* outlined in WBCSD's concept paper. Within this, they recognized a number of common challenges, which beset businesses, NGOs, governments and water initiatives in to their own efforts towards water sustainability:

- **Natural complexity.** Water is a global necessity for any kind of life, but issues of water quantity, quality and access both for human and natural use have to be dealt with at the local level. Natural and manmade cycles carry water across property and political boundaries, making accountabilities difficult to define and enforce. *“Water quality and quantity are ecosystem services delivered by interconnected natural systems including climate, river systems, wetlands, watershed, forests, aquatic life and mountains, how can sustainable water management models deal with this?”*
- **No common language.** Many participants stressed the need for a common and accessible language in which to discuss and measure water footprints and the impacts of human water use on ecosystems and resources. *“What do all the different concepts mean? We need to create a common understanding and language as a first step in order to facilitate a convergence on principles. We have to make the concept of sustainable water management more accessible and easy to understand, both for the layperson, and for CEOs.”*
- **Lack of data.** Poor data was cited as a serious problem, both in terms of lack of commonly agreed metrics for organizational water footprints, impacts and performance, but also in terms of the lack of reliable historic and baseline on the state of water catchments. *“It is impossible to judge water sustainability unless we understand what is happening at the level of individual water catchments. There is no basic monitoring, for example, of the water flows from the Himalayan glaciers. Globally we have no water history, no consistent monitoring. So aquifers are already becoming severely stressed before any measures are taken. ”*
- **The need for practical and appropriate tools guidance.** With so many concepts and initiatives it is difficult for individual businesses to know how concepts fit together, where to start, what commitments to make and how to deliver on those commitments. Participants discussed the need for concepts and tools that could be applied at the appropriate level (for example global, corporate, national or at the level of the water catchment), by companies at different stages in their journey towards sustainable water management, by different kinds of decision makers, and in both developed and developing country contexts. *“Some are further along road than others, they have a good idea of their water footprint and want to focus on next steps, such as how the footprint relates to impacts, the need to minimize and the possibility of offsetting water impacts. Individual*

companies may not have the same priorities or road map. Tools should be flexible, scalable and modular in order to meet multiple objectives.”

- **The governance challenge of valuing water.** Many participants reflected that water can not be managed as a valuable resource unless its human and ecological value can be agreed, measured, communicated and compensated. They agreed that this was a difficult question which could not be answered just with technical tools, but through societal governance. *“We can develop better ways to measure water flows and impacts, but sustainability also depends on perspective: who judges what is sustainable? Who decides what the most valued use of water is? Will governments and stakeholders be willing to pay for sustainable water use? Can we set a true value on water? We need a clear understanding of everyone’s roles and responsibilities including business, government, and individuals.”*

- **Enabling new solutions while avoiding confusion.** Many looked forward to the meeting, and to further collaborative mapping, as a valuable opportunity to begin to share information on initiatives in the area. They spoke about the opportunity to build upon the learning, and avoid the mistakes made in the proliferation of competing and conflicting tools, claims and initiatives around greenhouse gas emissions. *“We need to learn from carbon, but also unlearn from carbon. Decide what to borrow from previous initiatives and what to avoid. Individual initiatives and experiments to find solutions should be encouraged, but we need to find the synergies between them.”*

While the discussion confirmed the appetite of participants to engage in some form of collaboration, starting points about what this might entail ranged in ambition and scope.

Some welcomed the meeting as an opportunity for informal learning and networking while some hoped to create a platform for pooling concepts and expertise. Some were keen to establish a firm basis for ongoing collaboration: establishing business needs and societal expectations, and agreeing to coordinate initiatives and develop common tools and standards in order to deliver on these goals, while others thought initial collaboration to learn by doing should come before any attempt to tie down agreements on visions and concepts.

Participants also noted that while there were many different initiatives and sectors represented at the meeting, many others were not here. In particular local government was under represented, and there were few representatives from developing countries.

Participants' expectations

(extracts from individual posters)

- *“Learn what business, NGOs and governments are doing on water sustainability issues.”*
- *“Share ideas and approaches, opportunity to meet, discuss and debate with others working in the same arena, ideas of where various people, organizations and initiatives are moving forward over the coming year. “*
- *“Make contacts and build relationships with key people in the same field.”*
- *“Common view on which initiatives are truly important. Share and learn.”*
- *“Agreement on terminology, shared roles and responsibilities.”*
- *“Gain a fuller picture of various models of water management, and where stakeholders are heading. “*
- *“Understand how different concepts fit together. Find a common practical framework approach to water stewardship.”*
- *“Understand current initiatives. Identify how cooperation can help accelerate awareness and action through transparency.”*
- *“Common definitions, coordination of complimentary efforts in support of water stewardship.”*
- *“Deeper understanding, future collaboration to accelerate better water management practices.”*
- *“Strong networking to further sustainable water management.”*
- *“Come up with a plan on how the many initiatives can be ‘synchronized’ in order to avoid too much confusion.”*
- *“A joint commitment to develop the instruments for sustainable water management.”*
- *“Working towards common standards for sustainable water management.”*

What can we learn from each other?

Summary of proceedings

Jack Moss introduced the WBCSD's FairWater Initiative and its initial framework for mapping water initiatives in terms of their focus on concepts & principles, methodologies of measurement and processes of stewardship.

Michael Deane, Derk Kuiper and Michael Spencer each gave short presentations on the approaches being taken by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Water Footprint Working Group and Water Stewardship Initiative, respectively focusing on one of the three dimensions in the WBCSD Framework.

Participants affirmed that an overall map of initiatives to help people navigate, understand and coordinate efforts would be a useful tool to develop and share. They considered the WBCSD framework a useful starting point, but were keen that its next iteration should be co-created based on a shared analysis.

Throughout the discussions many participants stressed the need for common definitions and guidance about the appropriate application of concepts. Some of the terms mentioned included:

- *Sustainable water management*
- *Water availability*
- *Water stress*
- *Water footprint*
- *Green, blue and grey water*
- *Virtual water*
- *Ecosystem services*
- *Water efficiency*
- *Environmental flow*
- *Water offsets*
- *Water stewardship*
- *Water neutral*
- *Water positive*
- *Water rights*
- *Water trading*
- *Water allocation*
- *Waterwash*

While some confusions over language are just that (such as the fact that North Americans say 'watershed' while other English speakers say 'catchment') many reflect underlying concepts which are still being debated. As one participant remarked "*there is an ongoing dialogue, we cannot yet write down the accepted 'truth' about sustainable water management*". Indeed, participants stressed that not only do they need a clearer understanding of what is meant by each of these terms, but indications of which are broadly supported and which were still emerging.

Nevertheless, participants' personal definitions of sustainable water management showed more commonalities than differences in participants' overall view of the challenge of sustainable water management.

Definitions of sustainable water management

(extracts from individual posters)

- “Way of utilizing water resources without jeopardizing the resource base for future users. “
- “Organizing multiple uses in a way that maximizes the value and security of a scarce resource, now and for the future. “
- “Ensuring that water is available to human use while sustaining ecosystems now and in the future. “
- “An environment in which stakeholders work together to deliver sustainable solutions and options for managing all aspects of water – access, quality, management etc..”
- “Security of universal supply for foreseeable future, underpinned by financially viable services. “
- “Meeting human and ecosystem needs indefinitely.”
- “Listen (to stakeholders, measure footprint) Lessen (water use and pollution) Lead (sharing technology, best practices)”

The difficulty, as many reflected, is in dropping down from these high level definitions to practical application. Representatives from WBCSD’s FairWater Initiative, The Alliance for Water Stewardship, Water Footprint Working Group and US EPA each gave a presentation on their own experience and approach to getting down to the details of implementing sustainable water commitments.

Summary of presentations

WBCSD’s FairWater Initiative: Jack Moss, Aquafed/WBCSD

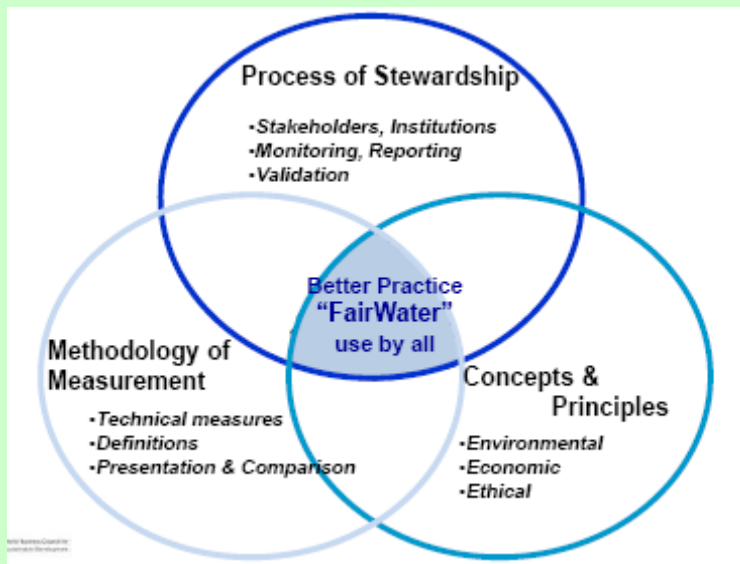
The WBCSD has been working on issues related to water and sustainable development for 10 years. Over that time it has seen water security moving from a low profile issue to becoming a critical one. In 2007 WBCSD initiated the FairWater initiative, in response to the increasing focus on water by business and stakeholders. It aims to reduce duplication and enable business to understand and gain insights from the wide range of initiatives emerging, and to enable them to engage with stakeholders and take a leadership role on this issue. Key questions it seeks to answer are:

- What is “sustainable water management”?
- What does it mean in practice?
- Who decides?
- How do you know you are (or are not) achieving it?
- How do you demonstrate it?
- What are the consequences if you can or cannot?

As a first step the WBCSD conducted desk research to map and analyze the initiatives already underway. This research although far from exhaustive revealed the many emerging initiatives, growing pressure for such schemes, lack of definitions and common language and work still needing to be done to operationalize many concepts.

Three key dimensions were used as a way to understand how different initiatives relate, overlap and meet need for clarity over concepts & principles, measurement and stewardship/governance.

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[<http://www.wbcsd.org/web/projects/water/fairwater.zip>]

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The Water Footprint Working Group, Derk Kuiper, Good Stuff International

The water footprint concept was developed in 2002 by Arjen Hoekstra of the University of Twente. During the past few years it has started to receive recognition within governments, NGOs, businesses and media as a useful indicator of water use. Since September 2007 an informal group has been working individually and collaboratively, to develop and pilot the concept of water footprints. Participants include researchers and environmental managers from the University of Twente, WWF, WBCSD, UNESCO-IHE, Emvelo Group, The Coca Cola Company, Nestlé and Suez.

Derk Kuiper presented the key developments and learnings from the working group to date. The members of the Working Group are seeking to develop the Water Footprint metric as a meaningful, rigorous and practical accounting and policy tool in order to promote good water governance. He showed how the concept can be applied to individual products, businesses, individuals and communities and can be used as a building block towards water impact analysis, reduction and offsetting, responsible water management and communication on performance.

A key point he stressed is that the water footprint is a volumetric measure of water use that is geographically defined and specifies the type of water use (green, blue, gray), reflecting both direct (operational) and indirect water use (supply chain), but not reflecting the impact the volume has on ecosystems or other water users.

The impact of this water use depends on the local effects at the point where that water is used, which is related to the level of water stress in that area. Therefore not only is a rigorous measure of water footprint needed but also a measure of the water withdrawal levels compared to renewable water resources at level of the local hydrological unit.

He commented that connection between the global aggregate water footprint of an entity and the local water footprint impact it exerts is the main challenge that needs to be addressed in progressing towards a standard for water footprint measures and claims. While this requires advanced theory and data analysis, the water footprint working group (WFWG) is also aware of the urgent demand for practical, user-friendly decision making

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tools which can be widely used. The WFWG's approach therefore is to support a parallel tracks approach, combining and iterating between the development of academic knowledge and research and real life practical application of water footprint accounting, impact assessment and offsetting.

[<http://www.wbcd.org/web/projects/water/fairwater.zip>]

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The Alliance for Water Stewardship, Michael Spencer, The Water Stewardship Initiative

The Alliance for Water Stewardship is made up of the Water Stewardship Initiative (Australia), The Nature Conservancy – an international NGO with its own 'Bluewater Certification Program', and the Pacific Institute. Michael Spencer presented the work of the Alliance, and his own experience in the development of the Water Stewardship Initiative.

The Alliance for Water Stewardship is working together with the aim of establishing a global water certification business that will recognize and reward responsible water managers and users, by creating opportunities for enhanced community standing and competitive advantage.

The Alliance's approach builds on multi-sector standard setting, governance and branding process developed by the Forest Stewardship Council and other social and environmental labeling initiatives within the ISEAL alliance. Following this model it will establish a voluntary certification program for water managers and users developed through an equitable, transparent, science-based, multi-stakeholder process and with a program of verification, branding, training and verification.

Key success factors they have identified include building stakeholder consensus around principles, criteria and verification process, developing an appropriate governance model, and reconciling simplicity with integrity. Michael Spencer stressed two key tests for success of the stewardship model – the approach has to create incentives that make it worthwhile for participants to use it, and it has to achieve its own financial self-sufficiency.

[<http://www.wbcd.org/web/projects/water/fairwater.zip>]

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Concepts and Principles for Sustainable Water Management: A view from the US EPA, Michael Deane

Michael Deane of the US EPA discussed the challenge of developing concepts and principles to govern sustainable water management. He said that this is the most challenging and least explored of the three dimensions to date.

He cautioned whether concepts emerging from other experiences such as carbon could be applied in the case of water, and noted that complicating factors make sustainable water management particularly difficult. Water management is tied up with a burden of legacy systems, both in terms of old technology and incentive systems, but also anachronistic regulations and water rights. For example in the US he said 98% of water treated to increasingly stringent drinking water standards is used to wash clothes, water lawns, fill pools and hose down cars. Water flows and water use is further complicated by seasonality

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and the importance of local impacts and water cycles.

He commented that setting high level principals about water sustainability is easy – most people would recognize principles such as efficiency and right to water. But putting these high level principles into practice was the real difficulty.

He suggested looking at the pragmatic lessons that from experience. Such principles might include:

- Transparency
- Acknowledge uncertainty and risk
- Need to consider water quality as fitness for purpose
- Consumer/polluter pays
- Avoid moral hazard of government unloading fundamental responsibilities on other sectors
- Scale matters

More high level and difficult concepts and principles need to be negotiated and developed amongst a wide and inclusive group of stakeholders. This is something that the EPA has found in its local watershed initiatives, which involve state and federal programs, local and tribal organizations, environmental groups and agricultural interests determining the basis for sustainable water management at the watershed level. In the US alone he noted there are more than 2000 watersheds.

[<http://www.wbcd.org/web/projects/water/fairwater.zip>]

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Participants welcomed the opportunity to learn more about some of the key initiatives in sustainable water management. There was a break out session where participants were able to discuss the approaches with the three speakers. Each group discussed major challenges for sustainable water tools and approaches, and although there were many more questions than answers, a number of common themes emerged from the groups' discussions:

- **Measurement challenges:** What data is needed to inform decision making, and by whom? Are there risks if a company shares data? How are the footprint family (e.g. carbon, water, ecosystems, social impacts) interlinked? How are future risks and stresses incorporated into data for decision making? How to incorporate efficiency measures?
- **Roles and responsibilities:** How do you ensure that all players accept their responsibility and act on it? Which part of the value chain is a business responsible for? How to get local and national governments to think and discuss watershed management across borders?
- **Drivers of change:** What are the motivations and levers for change of different stakeholder groups? How do different approaches address these? Is understanding and managing our direct water footprint useful as a total/aggregate? Will it lead to action? Is water labeling/consumer choice an appropriate model? Will it be a challenge for many companies to operationalize in absence of major cost driver? How to create consumer awareness?
- **Determining what is fair and what is valued.** How are the needs of the unserved and the poor addressed in sustainable water management approaches? Need to include

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social acceptability of solutions. How to reflect value of use of water? Fair to who? How to establish a fair price for water?

- **Collaborative pathways.** How to get beyond the issue of competitive advantage to collaborative advantage (for NGOs as well as business)? Can we agree on a pathway to global standards and methodologies? Is commonality important? Is relevant water metrics agreed on amongst local stakeholders enough? Who is setting the standards and principles and who is making sure they are being respected? Guidance is not a useful term: who has the authority to give it?

Participants discussed WBCSD's initial mapping framework, and affirmed that an overall map, to help people understand the broad range of initiatives, would be a useful tool to develop and share. They considered the WBCSD framework of three key dimensions as a useful starting point, but offered a number of modifications, suggestions and questions towards a strengthened framework of analysis:

- Any framework should be co-created by all the participants and initiatives involved, in order to ensure that it is validated and useful.
- Clarify that framework is for mapping the current state of developments, and not a process where companies and initiatives are expected to gravitate towards the center over time.
- Ensure that the framework is able to capture the way that different initiatives address ecosystems, action points, cultural considerations, evolution of thinking on the issue and uniqueness of water.
- Consider changing the goal from 'better practice' to 'integrated practice and continuous improvement'.
- The framework needs to be linked to a roadmap or process of steps describing how a company can achieve continuously improving water management and how different initiatives might be helpful.
- The framework and its core dimensions needs to be more intuitive and easy to communicate, including to management. It could be made more self-explanatory.
- The framework can provide a useful organizer or portal for information – helping people to find the methodologies, tools, case studies that will work for them. Transparency on initiatives and data.
- The term "FairWater" may be confusing and difficult to justify.

Where do we want to be tomorrow?

Summary of proceedings

Participants agreed that collaboration could add value to existing initiatives towards the goals of greater coordination, common language and definitions, validation and alignment of measurement and metrics, engagement between practice and public policy and ultimately a shared vision for sustainable water management. However there were diverse visions as to the organization that this group should best take to support these goals.

Day 1 saw the emergence of a common picture of the problems, obstacles and potential solutions for water sustainability. However, many discussions converged on a stubborn 'chicken and egg' problem. How can we define terms and metrics without first defining a common goal? How can we set a common goal when so many important stakeholders are not here? How can we bring a broader group of stakeholders together without a common language and metrics to talk about the problem?

On day 2 the group set out to determine whether, taking this meeting as a starting point, they could agree on a course of action to untie this knot. Could they find a pathway of individual action, shared learning, collaboration and broader engagement, which might incrementally take them towards the goal of common understanding and implementation of sustainable water management? As one participant put it **"We need to avoid five years of arguing about methodologies and impacts and TAKE ACTION early"**.

A statement of opportunities

Key areas where collaboration could add value to existing initiatives, and help to address the obstacles and barriers to sustainable water management were identified:

- **Working together**
 - Stimulating collaborative actions between initiatives
 - Expanding the number and scope of participants
 - Pilot testing and field studies
 - Creating trust
- **Learning together**
 - Closing communication gaps
 - Sharing research
 - Sharing best practice lessons
 - Validating metrics and tools
 - Making connections between practice and policy
 - Linking to other ecosystem services
- **Defining together**
 - Promoting development of common language and concepts
 - Mapping and signposting initiatives

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- Defining boundaries
- Communication and myth busting
- A common agenda for sustainable water

Participants were in broad agreement that each of these elements is a crucial step on the pathway towards global implementation of sustainable water management principles. However there was a debate about the sequencing of these steps, who would need to be involved and what institutions would have the legitimacy or authority to drive or convene different activities.

Participants were nevertheless keen to use this meeting as a springboard to create momentum for ongoing collaboration, building on WBCSD's business focus, as well as the needs, networks and expertise of the other stakeholders. At the same time they were extremely aware of the need to involve a greater range of stakeholders and to contribute to and leverage the credibility and experience of existing networks, tools and initiatives.

How we are going to get there?

Summary of proceedings

Participants agreed on three short-term areas of work which would be achievable, would create immediate useful outcomes and would help to develop a basis for potential further collaboration:

- publically mapping the key initiatives in the area,
- sharing of terms and aligning definitions towards a common language,
- developing a plan for identifying and sharing of information on existing metrics/measurement tools with a view of piloting in the near term.

Participants explored different visions for a broader and longer-term platform for collaborative action. Each approach had strengths and weaknesses, supporters and critics. The eventual form of any longer term collaborative platform was left open for further discussion and development, following on from the initial work plan.

ITT, the WBCSD Water Project Co-Chair, will host the next meeting in August at Stockholm Water Week to review progress, share learning and make plans.

Commitment to collaborate

As participants strove to translate their long-term vision of the pathway towards sustainable water management into a short term plan of action, a number of dilemmas and questions surfaced about the nature of the platform that would be most useful, viable and legitimate in facilitating collaborative action.

Nevertheless, participants were united in their desire to keep up momentum, create immediate useful outcomes and continue to explore how best to collaborate over the longer term. They therefore agreed on a short-term program of work, and to mandate a few groups to develop these areas.

“We need to walk out of here feeling we have a common, unifying vision and a rallying point for action”

“the point is not that by 5pm today we will know what sustainable water is, the point is can we set a pragmatic course of action amongst this group to help make sense of what is going on and to contribute to better decision making, not only by business, but by regulators, consumers and other decision makers.”

“We need to go beyond talking to delivering something tangible – our input to other conversations, research to start to bring together language and signpost initiatives.”

“If we start humbly, trying to meet the identified need to understand all the initiatives, how they fit together, why they are using different language, maybe at the end of that process we would be able to answer other questions about how we collaborate.”

Planned actions

Participants agreed to focus on a three key immediate collaborative actions:

- Developing WBCSD's initial mapping into a more extensive and inclusive directory and guide to initiatives (WBCSD with Jason Morrison of the Pacific Institute)

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- Planning for sharing of information on existing metrics/measurement tools and for pilot implementation (Water Foot Print Working Group)
- Mapping of terms and definitions towards a common language (WBCSD: will partly come from other two workstreams)

They committed to come back together (including both in- person and virtual participation) at World Water Week in Stockholm in August to review progress, share learning and make plans.

Deliverables, responsibilities and timelines

Activity	Deliverable	Responsibilities	Dates
Write up the outcomes of the meeting	Public report	WBCSD to draft. All participants to review by WBCSD to finalize and share.	11 July 18 July 28 July
Develop framework for mapping of initiatives	Information gathering/ analytical framework for initiatives	WBCSD with partner to be identified	Stalking horse draft by August 17
Develop plan to share information on existing metrics/measurement tools	Plan identifying existing metrics /measurement tools and designing a process to share information	Water Foot Print Working Group	Stalking horse draft by August 17
Mapping of terms	Initial matrix of terms and definitions	WBCSD	Initial draft by August 17
Meeting at World Water Week	Further meeting of this group	ITT to host in Stockholm	Wednesday 20 August (17:15 – 18:45)
Populate and publish framework for mapping of initiatives	Mapping all key initiatives, highlighting different approaches, strengths, weaknesses, key terms, overlaps and gaps etc....	WBCSD + working/advisory group to be agreed at next meeting.	To be agreed at next meeting.
Finalize information sharing and pilot implementation of measurement tools	Information sharing from water footprint and other metrics implementation pilots.	Water Foot Print Working Group and participating companies.	To be agreed at next meeting.
Agreement of common terms and definitions.	Common definitions of terms, highlighting areas of clarity and emerging/debated issues.	WBCSD + working/advisory group to be agreed at next meeting.	To be agreed at next meeting.
Future meetings	Continued dialogue and coordination of actions.	TNC have offered to host a future meeting.	To be agreed at next meeting.

Towards a broader collaborative platform

The eventual form of any longer term collaborative platform was left open for further discussion and development, following on from the initial work plan.

Key points of debate focused on whether it should be:

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- A formal 'organization' or informal network?
- A business voice or a multi-sectoral voice?
- Focused on short term deliverables or on long term change?
- A single group or a flexible constellation of projects and conversations?
- A new network or a commitment to work within existing platforms?

Each of these options had advocates and critics, as the quotes below illustrate:

What kind of platform?	
Formal	Informal
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The work needs to be done with a lot of transparency, openness and thought to legitimacy. They sound like vague words, but they are absolutely crucial”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“How can we reach out to others, to people in the South without a platform to do it from”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“ Informal networks are often limited to one-on-one information sharing, they don't offer a way in for others”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“The platform has already started, just by talking, thinking and building relationships together. It is a free network of ideas. It could be facilitated by a rotating series of different hosts. But we are hesitant to go into a more institutional direction”</i></p>
Business voice	Multi-stakeholder
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Don't try to do the whole world and his wife, but provide a coordinated business input into global discussion.”</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>“As a business community you cannot take the lead in providing a full forum on water governance”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“This project cannot be just the North talking to the North, so our level of ambition in terms of stakeholder engagement has to be very high”</i></p>
Short-term action	Long term engagement
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Don't think about creating an organization, just think about a project: a one-off piece of work– to provide a consolidated, validated overview of all existing initiatives, share current research etc. Then you come together discuss, share, network and then think about what to do next.”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“We should have a common agenda and a clear structure to activities, you need clear objectives, and to know what is the value for each participant”.</i></p>
Single collaborative focus	Flexible projects and conversations
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“We need to develop a strong voice from business on water sustainability, and a platform for engagement with other stakeholders.”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“Some of us are entrepreneurs, we need a process that we check in and check out of – what you take out and what you contribute helps you to continue your game.”</i></p>
New platform	Existing platform
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“You can not have your cake and eat it. If this platform is going to happen it needs to be coordinated. The platform today was WBCSD, but this is not seen as open, transparent and legitimate.”</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>“We should ask ourselves the fundamental question: is there somebody else out there who can or should do this?”</i></p>

Some participants made it very clear that they would not support a new initiative with all the questions related to cost, organization and decisions about who gets to join.

Despite these differences in participants' visions of how the final platform for collaborative action should best be designed, there was a good deal of consensus both on the critical success factors for any collaborative action, and on the key priorities on which it should focus its attention.

Critical success factors

Process

- Clear objectives, know what is the value for each participant
- Joint ownership, balance, genuine co-creation, co-hosting, co-convening
- Broad participation, clear terms of engagement but not restrictive membership requirements (open to all)
- Engagement across business – water users, not just water sector.
- Clear view of the landscape, and of stakeholders.
- Openness, transparency, inclusiveness.
- Flexibility – no one size fits all
- Use synergies with existing networks and events (but also be aware of the limitations of piggy-backed meetings, and the value of uninterrupted time and space to engage.)
- Understand roles and responsibilities, share universal principles to guide collaborative networking.
- Don't reinvent solutions and networks where appropriate ones exist, build on them.
- Collaborate to catalyze action – not just data and report development.
- Maximize sharing of information
- Secured commitment of resources for viability. What is it going to cost? Who will pay, contribute time, facilities?
- Over time build a broader stakeholder basis including local governments
- A name for the platform and clear contacts, information sharing and entry points.
- Clear deliverables and responsibilities for delivery.

Content

- Promote common language – clear, simple and accessible terms and concepts
- Share innovation, knowledge, experience, pool expertise
- Development and testing of metrics and tools for use at a local level where it is relevant.
- Link to other ecosystem agendas.
- Focused on real and significant impacts to water resources: science-based, full lifecycle analysis.

Conclusion

Although the eventual form of any longer term collaborative platform was left open for further discussion and development, participants agreed on three short-term areas of work. These would create immediate useful outcomes and would help to develop a basis for potential further collaboration:

- publically mapping the key initiatives in the area,
- sharing of terms and aligning definitions towards a common language,
- developing a plan for piloting and sharing of information on measurement tools..

Participants agreed to reconvene during the Stockholm World Water Week to further discuss what would be the most appropriate way to organize a collaborative work process across initiatives and institutions.

List of participants

Accenture, Sak Nayagam, Climate Change Practice Lead

Aquafed/WBCSD, Jack Moss, Senior Water Advisor

Borealis, Sylvain Lhôte, EU Affairs Director and Water for the World Program Manager

Borealis, Jonny Andersson, Group Environmental Expert

Carbon Disclosure Project, Nigel Topping, Head of Supply Chain

Consumers International, Robin Simpson, Policy Advisor

DuPont, Mireille Quirina, Vice President, Corporate Affairs EMEA

Envelo/Water Neutral, Pancho Ndebele, Founder

European Water Partnership, Agnes Biesiekierska, Project Manager

Good Stuff International, Derk Kuiper, Owner

Independent Communications & Publishing Consultant, Kate Mann

Independent Water Expert, Adrian Nelson, Former Vice President R&D Unilever

International Office for Water, Daniel Valensuela, Deputy Director

ITT, Bjoern von Euler, Director Corporate Communications

IUCN, Claire Warmenbol, Communications Officer, Global Water Program

International Water Association, Ase Johannessen, Development Programme Officer

Nestlé, Marianela Jimenez, Safety, Health and Environment Coordinator

PepsiCo UK & Ireland, Andrew Smith, Head of Corporate Responsibility

Petro-Canada, Scott Meakin, Leader Corporate Environment Services

SABMiller, David Grant, Group Sustainable Development Projects Manager

Shell, Joppe Cramwinckel, Senior Sustainable Development Advisor

Shell, Lauren Iannarone

Shell, Mark Killien, Issues and Crisis Management Advisor

The Coca Cola Company, Denise Knight, Manager – Global Water Partnerships

The Coca Cola Company, Ulrike Ebert

The Dow Chemical Company, Peter Paul Van De Wijs, Government Affairs and Public Policy Coordinator for Water

The Nature Conservancy, Jonathan Kaledin, Director, Blue Water Certification Program

The Pacific Institute, Jason Morrison, Globalization Program Director

Twente University, Arjen Y. Hoekstra Professor in Multidisciplinary Water Management

Unilever, Henry King, Science & Technology Leader: Sustainability

UN CEO Water Mandate, Oliver Johner, Communication on Progress Analyst

US Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Michael Deane, Associate Assistant Administrator

Water Stewardship Initiative, Michael Spencer Founding Director

World Resource Institute, Pankaj Bathia Director, GHG Protocol Initiative

World Water Council, Ger Bergkamp, General Director

WWF UK, Stuart Orr, Freshwater Policy Officer

WWF UK, Ashok K. Chapagain, Water Footprint Metrics Officer

WBCSD/Rio Tinto, Jürg Gerber, Managing Director

WBCSD, James Griffiths, Managing Director, Sustainable Forest Products Industry and Ecosystems Focus Area

WBCSD, Anne-Leonore Boffi, Water Program Officer

WBCSD, Eva Haden, Assistant Program Manager, Water and Ecosystem Focus Area

WBCSD, Virginie Bonnell, Regional Network Program Assistant

Maya Forstater, Writer on Business and Sustainable Development