



WWF

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Ceres

Overview



What is the AgWater Challenge?

The Challenge is an opportunity for companies to refine their thinking on water stewardship and sustainable sourcing in collaboration with partners, as well as through events and webinars sponsored by Ceres and WWF.

The Ceres-WWF AgWater Challenge

Commitment Platform for Sustainable Sourcing and Water Risk

Today, a third of the world's agricultural production is grown in areas of high water stress or competition. More frequent and intense droughts and floods are devastating harvests, while more stringent water regulations are being imposed in growing regions. Furthermore, investors and consumers are increasingly calling on global food and beverage companies to step up their water risk management to help address insecurities in our global food and water supplies.

To assist companies in reducing their water risks and impacts on local watersheds, Ceres and World Wildlife Fund (WWF) have launched the AgWater Challenge – an initiative that builds off the work of both organizations. The Challenge aims to highlight leadership, as well as new, improved commitments on water stewardship, specifically stronger, more transparent targets around agricultural supply chains. Leveraging World Food Day on October 16, 2016, the initiative will highlight actions taken by companies and will raise awareness of the important role the private sector can play in addressing food and water security.

Driving the Right Actions in the Right Places

The AgWater Challenge will assist companies in strengthening their approach to water stewardship and encourage stronger targets and commitments to reduce water risks in supply chains by focusing action in the following areas:

- ▶ Assessing water risks facing key agricultural inputs/sourcing regions and manufacturing suppliers
- ▶ Developing policies that promote sustainable agriculture actions that begin to address water risks
- ▶ Setting time-bound goals to:
 - Reduce the water impacts associated with key agricultural commodities/inputs
 - Implement locally-relevant watershed activities or strategies for high water risk agricultural sourcing areas
 - Support and incentivize agricultural producers through programs to strengthen water stewardship practices

The productivity of the world's 10 most populous river basins will double by 2050—but only if water issues are addressed.

--Frontier Economics, 2012.

How Does Your Company Benefit?

In 2014, 68% of businesses responding to CDP communicated that exposure to water risk could generate a substantive change in their business, operations or revenue (CDP 2014). The following year, the World Economic Forum cited water as the number one risk in terms of impact in their global risk report (World Economic Forum 2015). Yet, while companies believe water challenges will significantly worsen in the next five years, an alarming majority do not appear to be planning corollary increases in the breadth and scale of their water risk management practices. The AgWater Challenge offers participating companies the ability to:

- ▶ Assess company efforts to address water risk in agriculture supply chains against Challenge Checklist criteria, and identify areas that are ripe for improvement and action
- ▶ Receive technical assistance from leading NGOs with expertise on water risk assessment and water management strategies.
- ▶ Participate in peer-to-peer learning on best practices for managing water risks
- ▶ Be publicly recognized as an AgWater Steward for demonstrating leadership, and/or making significant new/improved commitments on supply chain water stewardship
- ▶ Share your journey through stories that showcase how your work is making an impact in watersheds around the world, the challenges you've faced and learnings along the way
- ▶ Though new actions and commitments, improve your standing in Ceres' next report benchmarking food and beverage companies on water risks, to be completed in 2017.

Getting Involved

Challenge participants will be invited to a kick-off webinar in April followed by an initial assessment of company work on supply chains and water. With new insights, participating companies will receive monthly updates and resources based on areas where assistance can be most helpful. Ceres and WWF will also host an in-person workshop in July to encourage learning exchange, highlight new advances and approaches, and drive brainstorming around key barriers.

To learn more about the AgWater Challenge and how you can engage, contact: Lindsay Bass, Lindsay.Bass@wwfus.org or Brooke Barton, barton@ceres.org