



BUSINESS ALLIANCE FOR WATER AND CLIMATE CHANGE

In view of a 2015 international climate change agreement at COP21 in Paris

As part of the *Lima Paris Action Agenda*, **We**, representatives of the Business community are taking action and share our contributions and solutions to combat climate change. In view of the impacts of global warming on water resources, we have taken the initiative to put forward the *Business Alliance for Water and Climate Change*. Based on the 5th Assessment Report of the IPCC, we acknowledge that freshwater-related risks of climate change intensify significantly with increasing greenhouse gas emissions:

- For each degree of global warming, approximately 7% of the global population is projected to be exposed to a decrease of renewable water resources of at least 20%;
- The fraction of the world population exposed to a 20th century 100-year flood is projected to be, at the end of the 21st century, three times higher per year for the high emissions scenario than for the low emission scenario;

We know that climate change is expected to have direct negative impacts on the availability and quality of water resources such as:

- Reducing renewable surface water and groundwater resources significantly in most dry subtropical regions. This will induce competition for water among agriculture, ecosystems, settlements, industry and energy production, affecting regional water, energy and food security;
- Increasing the frequency of meteorological and agricultural droughts in presently dry regions by the end of this century;
- Affecting negatively freshwater ecosystems by changing streamflow and water quality;
- Reducing raw water quality, posing risks to drinking water quality even with conventional treatment.

The preservation of freshwater resources is not only an essential challenge for sustainable human development; without water, there will be no agriculture and thus no food security, no industry **and thus no economic development**. The first tangible consequences of climate change are already threatening the availability and quality of water resources, notably in emerging countries: sustainable management of water resources **should be a key priority of the development agenda**.

As much as **water stewardship** has a key role at city and river basin levels, **the recognition of the economic value at risk due to water stress** is a major parameter to be taken into account by the business community. The business community supports the



commitments that are being taken at city or river basin levels on water and adaptation to climate change and will take these proposals **into consideration with other stakeholder's expectations and concerns.**

Also, the business community acknowledges the importance of reducing the risks related to the quality and availability of water resources. Depending on its level of maturity, each signatory company **commits to join all or one of the three following levels of ambition and describes the action taken.**

1/ Analyze and share water-related risks to implement collaborative response strategies

Water is a shared resource where the actions of others profoundly impact a company's ability to sustain its own operations. **Shared risk** is the idea that companies have an incentive to invest in sustainable water stewardship beyond their fence-line in a way that advances the public interest, because it manages business risk at the same time. Shared risk does not imply that water challenges create an equal and similar risk or sense of urgency to all stakeholders. Rather, the concept elevates local water challenges as common or shared issues and, ideally, **triggers proactive and collaborative responses.**

The business community commits to managing water resources based on a robust understanding of the degree of water risks and exposure in their direct operations and value chain. On that basis it will develop and implement a response strategy which will embed water stewardship principles.

2/ Measure water footprint with existing standards

The business community has to make every effort to reduce its water footprint. To do so, the first step consists of **measuring water-related risks in direct operations and all along the value chain.** Various methodologies and tools exist to assess a company's direct and indirect impacts on water resources, in accordance with the ISO14046 norm dedicated to water footprint or other existing standards. The measure of water footprint will enable to:

- Assess the extent and potential environmental impacts on water related to business activities;
- Identify opportunities to reduce potential impacts on water caused by companies' processes and products, at any stage of their life cycle;
- Manage strategic risks relating to water;
- Implement efficient use of water and optimize water management in processes and products;
- Inform decision makers with regard to business impacts on water;
- Provide scientific, consistent and reliable information for reporting on water footprint towards stakeholders.



The business community commits to measure its water footprint by using existing methodologies and standards, in view of identifying the business impacts related to water, as well as the relevant activities, geographical areas and temporal scales for taking action.

3/ Reduce impacts on water availability and quality in direct operations and all along the value chain

This relies on the implementation of a **strategic action plan**, aiming at improving the operational eco-efficiency of water use thanks to the best available technologies, in adequacy with the local context.

The business community proposes an action plan or an alternative solution aiming at improving the water footprint of a specific activity or product, in partnership with other actors of the value chain.



This initiative that we invite you to join is supported by the French and Peruvian governments as part of the Lima Paris Action Agenda, as well as the following professional organizations and private companies:

Professional organizations:



CDP



CEO Water Mandate

The CEO Water Mandate



WBCSD Water

wbcsd water

Private sector companies:



SUEZ



Signed in Paris, on 2 December 2015

Name

First Name

Position: Organization:

Signature:



Appendix

1. Title of the action
2. Organization(s) in charge of implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Description of the Action (max. 200 words)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Schedule of implementation (duration, expected date of completion)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Method for monitoring the implementation of the Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contact point (organization, name, phone number and email)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Optional: additional information (website)