



The CEO Water Mandate

Summary of Steering Committee Conference Call, 28 October 2010

Present: D. Bena (PepsiCo), M. Gama (Banco do Brasil), A. Meyer (Sasol), A. Salloum (Dow Brasil), M. Whaley (Allergan), G. Power (UN Global Compact), J. Morrison (Pacific Institute). **Special Guest:** B. Freeman (Calvert Group).

Agenda item	Task
<p>1. UN Resolutions on Water as Human Right and Implications for Mandate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ G. Power introduced the discussion with references to the recent resolutions by the UN General Assembly and UN Human Rights Council recognizing access to safe drinking water and sanitation as a human right. ▪ G. Power noted that the CEO Water Mandate, well in advance of these UN resolutions, has addressed the issue of water/sanitation as a human right. He noted that the Mandate incorporated the topic in its three most recent general conferences, as well as through the creation, in early 2009, of a special human rights workstream and related working group. ▪ This working group, in partnership with the Pacific Institute, has recently developed a draft white paper entitled “Water, Business, and Human Rights”, which will be shared at the upcoming Mandate conference in S. Africa (15-17 November). ▪ The draft white paper contains a range of options with respect to how the Mandate might further move forward on this issue. The draft paper was shared with the Steering Committee prior to the conference call. ▪ Bennett Freeman, SVP for Policy at Calvert Group, and a recognized expert with respect to business and human rights, was invited to offer his comments and perspectives on the topic and the options presented in the draft white paper. ▪ B. Freeman said he believes the paper is the most thorough and concise he has seen on this topic. He also noted that the Mandate, as an initiative, has proactively addressed this topic at many of its conferences, placing it in a strong position to make informed choices in light of the recent UN resolutions. ▪ B. Freeman stated his belief that the two UN resolutions firmly establish water/sanitation as a human right in the context of the international community. 	

- Given this, B. Freeman recommended that the Mandate incorporate a basic reference to these resolutions in the CEO Water Mandate core document. This reference, B. Freeman noted, would not commit companies to undertaking additional specific actions, but would ground the Mandate in the realities of the international context and help the initiative move past the almost “theological” discussions that have characterized the global debate. This, in turn, would allow the Mandate and its endorsers to focus on tangible options – most notably, those outlined in the draft white paper.
- One SC member noted that the Mandate’s six core elements, including principles related to community engagement and watersheds, are already quite consistent with notions around the human right to water/sanitation.
- With respect to the options presented in the white paper, B. Freeman expressed his support for all options to one degree or another, with the exception of Option A – “No action”. This option would have the Mandate conclude its work on this topic and devote attention to other focus areas. B. Freeman said that he believes the issue to be too important for the Mandate to completely drop.
- (Note: the white paper options and other related recommendations will be discussed by endorsers during the S Africa conference.)

2. Overview: S. Africa Conference Agenda

- J. Morrison presented an overview of the upcoming sixth working conference of the CEO Water Mandate, scheduled for 14-17 November in Cape Town.
- On Sunday, 14 November, there will be a field trip of the surrounding areas to learn about various initiatives involving S African companies engaged with local/regional stakeholders to advance sustainable water management in the area.
- On 15 November there will be a South Africa-focused one-day workshop co-convened by the South African Department of Water Affairs, the World Economic Forum, and the CEO Water Mandate, and in collaboration with WWF South Africa. The event will examine shared water risk between public and private sectors. A touch point of the one-day workshop will be the official global release on this day of the CEO Water Mandate’s Guide to Responsible Business Engagement with Water Policy. (See next items).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ On 16 November, the main CEO Water Mandate conference will commence. The first half of the day will focus on community engagement and business support of water policy implementation at the local, catchment, and national levels. The second half of the day will focus on the human right to water. ▪ [With respect to the launch of the Guide to Responsible Business Engagement with Water Policy, the Steering Committee agreed with a strategy of releasing, in advance of the conference, embargoed guides to key international stakeholders, including media (via press kits). ▪ [One SC member also suggested that the Secretariat consider taking part in a UN Radio Stakeholder Forum podcast on the Guide and its relevancy with respect to the global water challenge. ▪ The evening of 15 November will feature a special briefing by CDP Water Disclosure on their latest water information request results.] ▪ On 17 November the conference will focus on the Mandate’s third workstream – water disclosure. The segment will conclude at 12:30 pm, to be followed by the traditional endorsers meeting. ▪ During the briefing on the agenda, a discussion took place on the idea that the Mandate might consider a strategic shift (or expansion) in relation to the initiative moving forward – with greater emphasis in terms of on-the-ground implementation. It was noted that several bodies and related initiatives – including UNEP, UNDP, GTZ (and other development agencies) – have expressed interest in working, in one form or another, with the Mandate on local implementation. This topic will be discussed at the endorser meeting in S Africa. 	<p>Secretariat</p> <p>Secretariat</p>
<p>3. Miscellaneous Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ G. Power concluded the conference call with a discussion of the status of endorsers’ Communications on Progress. ▪ He noted that many endorsers have developed content-rich COP-Water reports, resulting in an increasingly rich public database of best and emerging practices. ▪ He also reported that two companies have been officially delisted from the Mandate for failure to develop their required COPs – Banesto S.A. (Spain) and Grupo Via Delphi (Mexico). A news item has been posted on the Mandate’s public website indicating this action. 	

