



BAFWAC

Acciona Agua - Sustainable water supply in water scarce regions

an Acciona case study

November 2017



Company details

Acciona is a global leader in renewable energy and infrastructure, with revenues of US\$6.8 billion in 2016 and over 32,000 employees worldwide. Acciona operates in over 30 countries, carrying out environmental and socially responsible projects: it produces 100% renewable energy, provides water to over 90 million people, and constructs efficient infrastructure. Thanks to desalination, purification and wastewater-treatment, Acciona generates a net positive hydric footprint. <https://www.acciona.com/>

Summary of action

The Acciona Agua division supplies water to over 90 million people around the world, primarily in water-scarce regions. As water scarcity is predicted to increase in the future, this is not only beneficial to those living in these regions but also to Acciona, who won four bids in 2015 cumulatively worth over US\$500 billion. In supplying clean energy and producing a net-positive hydric footprint, Acciona's profits represent the business case for water and climate stewardship.

Program rationale

The predicted rise in climate-related water scarcity will incentivise desalination and the treatment of wastewater to high quality standards, as well as the commissioning of water-efficient infrastructure. Acciona is well-placed to capitalise on this and has created the Acciona Agua division to provide global solutions for the sustainable development of the water sector. Acciona Agua's operations are increasingly concentrated in water stressed regions and has an annual income of US\$513 million.

Program approach

Acciona Agua is committed to R&D: in 2015 they invested over US\$20 million to increase Acciona Agua's expertise and ability to win contracts in water-scarce regions. Acciona Agua also participates in the LIFE+ 'Renewat' program, working to reduce energy consumption during water treatment for reuse.

Acciona is also committed to tackling emerging pollutants- trace composites such as pesticides or medicines which are not eliminated in conventional purification processes. In anticipation of future discharge regulations relating to these substances, Acciona has several projects investigating the most promising avenues in water treatment technology.

Lessons learned

As this is an ongoing program, Acciona will not fully understand the outcomes for some time. It is clear, however, that the Acciona Agua division has been able to recognize and capitalise on the growing demand in water-stressed regions. Acciona Agua has identified promising gaps in best practice for future investment, such as treatment efficiency and emerging pollutants, and estimates full returns on its research programs in as little as 2 years.



Results & Benefits

- In 2015, Acciona Agua managed 634,000 megaliters, with a positive hydric footprint and a net contribution of 495,000 megaliters.
- In that year Acciona Agua also won four bids in water-stressed countries for treating a combined total of 460 megaliters per day (worth a total of US \$545 million over 10 years).

What next?

Investment in 'Renewat' from Acciona Agua has the overall aim of dramatically reducing the costs involved in water treatment. Acciona Agua has set a target of reducing the cost per m³ of treated water by 24%, and will need to continue investing in innovation to achieve this ambitious target.

Sources

- <https://www.acciona.com/shareholders-investors/financial-information/annual-report/>
- <http://www.life-renewat.com>





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BAFWAC was jointly launched by CDP, CEO Water Mandate, SUEZ, and World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) in December 2015. The initiative commits companies to analyze and report water-and-climate-related risks and impacts, and to implement collaborative response strategies along the value chain.

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