



The CEO **Water** Mandate

INTRODUCTION TO THE UN GLOBAL COMPACT'S CEO WATER MANDATE





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What is water stewardship?

Water is perhaps humanity's most vital natural resource. By the same token, water crises pose some of the most vital sustainable development challenges of our time. According to the [World Economic Forum](#), water crises have been among the top five global risks in terms of impact in each of the last four years.

Water stewardship is the use of water in ways that are socially equitable, environmentally sustainable, and economically beneficial. Stewardship can be adopted by businesses - through corporate water stewardship - as well as by growers, communities, and others. Ultimately, stewardship is a key practice to address critical water challenges, drive water security, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Corporate water stewards implement five core activities that drive water security:

1. Provide water, sanitation, and hygiene for all employees
2. Drive water use efficiency and reduce pollution throughout their operations
3. Facilitate improved water performance throughout their value chain
4. Advance collective action in river basins
5. Achieve continuous, meaningful dialogue with stakeholders

In addition, stewards often implement several actions that inform and support these core activities, such as risk and impact assessments, target setting, and embedding water into corporate strategy.

What is the CEO Water Mandate?

The [CEO Water Mandate](#) is a global **commitment platform** for corporate water stewardship. By endorsing the Mandate, companies publicly commit to advancing water stewardship across six commitment areas*:

1. Direct Operations
2. Supply Chain & Watershed Management
3. Collective Action
4. Public Policy
5. Community Engagement
6. Transparency

*To learn more about the commitment areas, go to: <https://ceowatermandate.org/about/the-six-commitment-areas/>

Endorsing the Mandate is an **aspirational pledge**; we welcome companies of all sizes and all levels of water stewardship maturity so long as they commit to continuous improvement.

The Mandate is a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General and the [UN Global Compact](#), implemented in partnership with the [Pacific Institute](#). Established in 2007, the initiative was created out of the acknowledgement that global water challenges create risk for a wide range of industry sectors, the public sector, local communities, and ecosystems alike. As such, cross-sectoral collaboration is the most effective and credible path to water security. The private sector can be a critical partner in this effort.

In addition to garnering public commitments, the Mandate also advances stewardship by:

- Developing research, guidance, and tools
- Convening multi-stakeholder events
- Facilitating meaningful on-the-ground collective action

What is required of companies wishing to endorse the Mandate?

Companies of all sizes, industry sectors, geographies, and levels of water stewardship maturity are eligible and encouraged to endorse the Mandate. **We welcome endorsements from companies with limited experience with water** who want to use the initiative to spark their stewardship efforts. All that is required is that companies make an earnest commitment to continuous improvement regarding the Mandate's six commitment areas.

However, to endorse the Mandate, companies must already be signatories of the UN Global Compact **OR** agree to become UN Global Compact signatories within one year of endorsing the Mandate.

There is **no financial commitment required** to endorse the Mandate.

Once they have endorsed the Mandate, **companies must publicly report on their progress** toward water stewardship on an annual basis, in what are known as Communications on Progress or COPs. COPs for the Mandate can take several forms (see examples [here](#)) including:

- A company's [CDP Water Questionnaire](#) response
- A section within the company's broader UN Global Compact COP reports
- A section within the company's broader annual sustainability report
- A standalone report

NOTE: *For companies that are already UN Global Compact signatories and already complete the CDP Water Questionnaire on an annual basis, no extra work is required.*

What are the benefits of endorsing the Mandate?

By endorsing the Mandate, companies can:

- **Attend Mandate events** to learn about stewardship trends and cutting-edge best practices
- **Demonstrate their commitment** to sustainability to investors, customers, employees, communities, and other key stakeholders
- **Keep abreast of engagement opportunities** through quarterly email communications from Mandate Secretariat to all endorsing companies

The Mandate is now endorsed by more than [140 companies](#) worldwide include: AB InBev, The Coca-Cola Company, Danone, Diageo, Dow Chemical, Ecolab, Ford Motor Company, General Mills, H&M, Hilton, Mars, Microsoft, Nestle, Netafim, Nike, PepsiCo, PVH, Radisson, Siemens, Unilever, and many others.

How do companies endorse the Mandate?

Endorsing is easy! Companies can endorse the Mandate by simply filling out this [form](#) on behalf of their CEO, C-suite representative, or equivalent.

What is the Mandate's Water Security through Stewardship Action Platform?

Companies that wish to take their water stewardship engagement even further can join the Mandate's **Water Security through Stewardship Action Platform**.

The Action Platform houses all of the Mandate's programmatic work and [working groups](#). It is the core mechanism through which companies, UN entities, governments, NGOs, and other stakeholders work together to: 1) test, refine, and scale cutting-edge water stewardship practices and 2) foster local partnerships, collective actions, and policy engagement.

The Action Platform is carried out across four [focus areas](#), each with its own associated working group:

- WASH & Human Rights
- Direct Operations & Supply Chains
- Collective Action & Policy Engagement
- Metrics, Indicators & Disclosure

By joining the Action Platform, companies can participate in project meetings, inform the strategic direction of the four focus areas, and attend the annual Action Platform Members meeting. **Companies must be Mandate endorsers to join the Action Platform.** Action Platform participation is entirely optional.

In addition to their UN Global Compact annual contribution, Action Platform members pay a participant fee based on their annual sales/revenue (see this [page](#) for more information).

THE CEO WATER MANDATE'S SIX CORE COMMITMENT AREAS:

Direct Operations

Mandate endorsers measure and reduce their water use and wastewater discharge and develop strategies for eliminating their impacts on communities and ecosystems.

Supply Chain and Watershed Management

Mandate endorsers seek avenues through which to encourage improved water management among their suppliers and public water managers alike.

Collective Action

Mandate endorsers look to participate in collective efforts with civil society, intergovernmental organizations, affected communities, and other businesses to advance water sustainability.

Public Policy

Mandate endorsers seek ways to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable, equitable, and coherent water policy and regulatory frameworks.

Community Engagement

Mandate endorsers seek ways to improve community water efficiency, protect watersheds, and increase access to water services as a way of promoting sustainable water management and reducing risks.

Transparency

Mandate endorsers are committed to transparency and disclosure in order to hold themselves accountable and meet the expectations of their stakeholders.