

Business Leaders' Open Call to Accelerate Action on Water

Supporting Document

This note clarifies key aspects of the Open Call related to the basins of focus, and how companies might approach implementation of key aspects of the call including details on direct operations, supply chains, and collaboration. Expectations of companies will not shift, but additional resources to guide companies in making progress against these expectations will be added as they become available.

Key Elements

100 Basins

- When developing the list of 100 basins, co-organizing corporate water stewardship initiatives looked to identify those basins with high water quality, quantity, and accessibility risks in addition to biodiversity importance and future climate risks in terms of drought and flood. Basins were further prioritized according to those with economic relevance, significant corporate presence and interest in collaboration, as well as the presence of local partners to enact programs that address local water challenges and bring about positive change.
- Signatory companies are not expected to take action in all 100 basins listed, but rather a subset of those that have been identified by the company as priorities based on direct operations, supply chains, and key markets.
- It is also recognized that companies may also have water stewardship activities or collective actions outside of the initial list of 100 identified basins. As such, the co-organizers will be looking to expand the list over time to ensure that we capture those collective action activities that have a positive impact.
- The 100 basins list should be thought of as dynamic and responsive to changing conditions and actions by companies and other actors. The goal of having a positive impact in 100 basins will remain as the “north-star” we strive for.

To facilitate collective action and to understand how we will be measuring positive impact, several documents and tools have been developed as practical guidance. For companies who have just begun the process, we direct you to the following:

- [Water Action Hub](#) to find interactive maps of the 100 initial prioritized basins, potential partners, and implementers.
- [Guide to Water Related Collective Action](#)
- [Guide to Managing Integrity in Water Stewardship Initiatives](#)

- Basins Diagnostic Guide to understand how positive impact at the basin level will be measured by implementers

Enterprise Level Actions

To support companies' commitments in direct operations and supply chains, companies can take a variety of practices as relevant to their business over time including by taking the following actions:

In Direct Operations

- 1) Implementing water-related standards.
- 2) Integrating context and/or science into target setting practices. Recognizing that guidance on science-based target setting is just being released in early 2023, companies will need time to assess and implement updated water targets in line with best practice.
- 3) Implementing best in practice water efficiency and wastewater management.
- 4) Implementing proven innovative technologies for water reuse, recycling, and circularity.
- 5) Ensuring safe, resilient access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for employees; and
- 6) Implementing practices that optimize for climate-energy-water co-benefits and ensure ecosystem protection.

In Supply Chains

- 1) Understanding where the greatest water dependencies and impacts exist within supply chains and setting appropriate internal targets and plans to ensure long-term resilience; and
- 2) Working with suppliers in water-stressed basins to improve water efficiency, wastewater management, and the provision of safe resilient access to water, sanitation, and hygiene in the workplace.

Working collaboratively may entail a number of actions and activities including:

- 1) Working with public sector actors, integrating best practices in data information and transparency to inform decision-making;
- 2) Engaging with local communities, including frontline, Indigenous, and under-represented communities, to improve conditions by taking a human-rights based approach;
- 3) Identifying and advancing new co-financing mechanisms with governments and multilateral funding agencies to close the financing gap; and
- 4) Applying companies' unique expertise and innovation through supporting curation and development of key technologies that can bring new tools and solutions to scale.

For more guidance and resources to implement these activities and actions, please visit the Water Action Hub at <https://wateractionhub.org/>.

The Hub will guide you to resources developed by a wide range of water stewardship implementers.

For those companies who are members of the Water Resilience Coalition, the Open Call is a continuing commitment to the pledge signed by members.

Tracking Progress

- The primary focus of tracking the progress of the open call will be around measuring basin level improvements over time against the three dimensions of water: water quantity, quality, and accessibility. As one of the main co-organizers of the Call, the CEO Water Mandate will be developing digital monitoring systems to provide real-time monitoring of basin conditions across the dimensions of water quantity, quality, and accessibility.
- For those companies who are also part of the UN Global Compact, this open call will be part of the SDG Movements and companies will be able to share actions they've taken to help achieve the Open Call through a UN Global Compact portal.