



The CEO Water Mandate



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## UN GLOBAL COMPACT'S CEO WATER MANDATE ANNOUNCES CORPORATE WATER DISCLOSURE GUIDELINES

### *Provides First Common Approach to Water Reporting*

**August 27, 2012, Stockholm:** The UN Global Compact's CEO Water Mandate initiative today announced the release of its [Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines](#) – providing the first ever common approach to corporate water disclosure.

Companies are fundamentally changing the way they address water. Increasingly, they are investing in water-efficient technologies, working with suppliers to encourage more responsible water use, introducing cleaner and more efficient products, and seeking to advance sustainable water management outside their fencelines as a way to mitigate water-related risks and impacts.

Corporate water disclosure is a critical component of a company's water management efforts and water sustainability more generally. The UN Global Compact CEO Water Mandate has released **Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines** to help advance a common approach to corporate water disclosure that addresses the complexity of water resources in a comprehensive yet concise and practical manner. The Guidelines suggest that companies offer several types of water-related information, which are captured in the Guidelines' **Corporate Water Disclosure Framework**.

Corporate water disclosure involves collecting data on the current state of a company's water management, assessing the implications of this information for the business, developing a strategic response, and ultimately reporting this information to stakeholders (investors, NGOs, consumers, communities, suppliers, employees, and others). With a proliferation of different water assessment and disclosure metrics and tools available, the results are not easily comparable and companies may divert unnecessary resources to complete an array of water or sustainability surveys. The new **Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines**, developed in collaboration with the Pacific Institute, Carbon Disclosure Project, PricewaterhouseCoopers, World Resources Institute, and Global Reporting Initiative, offer a common approach to disclosure, putting forward metrics that can begin to harmonize practice and also providing guidance to help companies define report content.

“It is our hope these Guidelines drive convergence with respect to how companies report their water management efforts while helping to minimize reporting burdens, thus allowing companies to allocate

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more time and resources to actively managing water,” said Gavin Power, Deputy Director the UN Global Compact and Head of the CEO Water Mandate. “Disclosure also supports more sustainable and equitable management of water resources by improving the ability of stakeholder audiences to evaluate a company’s water practices and make comparisons across companies – which fosters greater corporate accountability.”

The CEO Water Mandate **Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines** support business viability in many ways, from improving a company’s understanding of its water challenges and effective responses, to providing an opportunity to demonstrate progress and good practice to external stakeholders and investors, to establishing a dialog and building credibility with key stakeholders – paving the way for future partnerships and achievement of shared water-related goals.

The **Corporate Water Disclosure Framework** builds on three areas:

1. Company Water Profile - an overview of the company’s relationship with water resources, offering a snapshot of water performance, risks, impacts, and response strategies that nontechnical audiences can easily understand.
2. Defining Report Content - a description of the process by which a company determines which water-related content to include in its report. The company assesses the significance of different water topics to the company and its stakeholders, and the extent to which those topics cause, or may in the future cause, adverse impacts to ecosystems and communities.
3. Detailed Disclosure - specific, detailed metrics and qualitative information related to the company’s water management as well as to the specific water management programs and projects it implements.

“Following this process, whether basic or advanced, companies can make connections among the sections of the Framework, explaining how, for example, business risks and impacts result from specific basin conditions and how response strategies address and mitigate certain risks and impacts,” said co-author Jason Morrison of the Pacific Institute, which serves as part of the CEO Water Mandate Secretariat. “With their disclosure reporting, companies also have the potential to make linkages among water and other sustainability topics, shedding light on how their water management efforts address other sustainability concerns, and conversely how other issues like climate change and energy use contribute to the companies’ water-related challenges.”

Corporate water management objectives and activities vary greatly depending on industry sector and geographic location, leading to many possible disclosure approaches and metrics that are more relevant to certain companies than others. The **Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines** from the CEO Water Mandate are designed to be applicable to a broad range of corporate water users, to capture the complex and location-specific nature of water resource dynamics and corporate action. Companies that are looking for detailed guidance on how to more effectively disclose the many elements of corporate water management will also find in the new Guidelines response strategies they can take to address the risks, opportunities, and impacts that come to light in their assessment.

The CEO Water Mandate **Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines** can be downloaded free of charge from the Pacific Institute website at [www.pacinst.org/reports/corporate\\_water\\_disclosure\\_guidelines](http://www.pacinst.org/reports/corporate_water_disclosure_guidelines) and on the CEO Water Mandate website at [www.ceowatermandate.org](http://www.ceowatermandate.org).

**The United Nations Global Compact** is a both a policy platform and a practical framework for companies that are committed to sustainability and responsible business practices. As a multi-stakeholder

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leadership initiative, it seeks to align business operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption, and to catalyze actions in support of broader UN goals. With 7,000 corporate signatories in 135 countries, it is the world's largest voluntary corporate responsibility initiative. [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)

**The Pacific Institute** is one of the world's leading independent nonprofits conducting research to create a healthier planet and sustainable communities. Based in Oakland, California, the Institute conducts interdisciplinary research and partners with stakeholders to produce solutions that advance environmental protection, economic development, and social equity. The Pacific Institute works to change policy and find real-world solutions to problems like water shortages, habitat destruction, global warming, and environmental injustice. [www.pacinst.org](http://www.pacinst.org)

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