

Strategic partnerships for better water management



Country Colombia - Latin America

Partners

- National Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM)
- Unit for Rural Agricultural Planning (UPRA) of the Agricultural Ministry
- National Business Association (ANDI)
- Companies
- Alianza BioCuenca (water fund)
- Centre of Science and Technology
- National Center for Cleaner Production and Quantis
- Good Stuff International
- CEO Water Mandate Colombia

Background information

Water risks are rapidly increasing, due to inefficient water use, meagre water treatment, increasing water scarcity and competition among different water uses.

Project targets

- Results of partner companies constitute convincing showcases.
- A collaboration group on water with key players of the agricultural sector is active.
- The WBC pilot project counts with established methodology and verification mechanism.
- Communication strategy with scope and products in place.

Target groups

Direct: communities involved in water stewardship actions and WBC implementation, mostly in vulnerable socioeconomic conditions. Water and agriculture institutions, business associations.

Intermediate: companies and their stakeholders, water practitioners, citizens reached by public awareness actions.

Phase Costs

Duration: 01.2016 – 03.2019

Total: CHF 5'985'800

SDC: CHF 1'589'000

Contact: SDC – Global Programme Water Initiatives

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 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

With growing water scarcity, improved water management and collaboration between different sectors has become key for future well-being and sustainable development. SuizAgua Colombia works with the Ministries of Environment and Agriculture, the National Business Association and applied national and international research centers, in order to: i) scale up the water footprint tool; ii) promote corporate water stewardship strategies; iii) identify and advocate for stronger water criteria in the agricultural sector; iv) introduce a verifiable investment mechanism for the provision of water as part of ecosystem services and v) setting-up a community of practice to influence water management positively in Colombia and through partners in other countries of the Latin America region.

Context

The OECD estimates that by 2030, about 4 billion people worldwide – almost half of the population – will live under severe water stress. On one hand, the recently established dedicated Water Goal (SDG 6) within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasizes the urgency and interest of addressing the global water crisis, attributing also to the private sector a key role in realising a sustainable future. And on the other hand the private sector is increasingly aware that water is becoming a substantive risk for business. Thus, committed partnerships among different actors, including the private sector, are key to foster good governance for more equitable access and efficient water management. In this context, there is a need for recognised and standardised tools for steering water risk management at corporate and territorial levels. The **water footprint (WF)** contributes as an indicator for assessing, monitoring and motivating strategic investments for reducing direct and indirect impacts from water uses, in the production of goods and services.

Key results and insights from previous phases

- WF went from an unknown concept to well appreciated tool by private sector, public institutions, academia, and research centers.
- A fruitful PPP experience with 11 multinational companies from diverse productive sectors.
- Companies' investments up to 2.5 Mio USD (2010-2015) in WF [reduction and monitoring](#), and water focus actions (CSR).
- WF introduced for the first time in Colombia's public policy instrument the [National Water Study](#) (ENA).
- Knowledge management and communication supported international visibility and scaling-up in the region (Peru / Chile).

Objectives and intervention lines 2016-2019

- Business cases on water collective actions through corporate water stewardship strategies and WF application (as a verifiable ISO process). ANDI is a strategic partner.
- Stronger water criteria are used by the agricultural planning sector and the National Monitoring Program on Water Quality Standards, with regards to WF, is enhanced.
- A practical scheme of Water Benefit Certificates (WBC) in place, as verifiable investment mechanism for Integrated Water Resources management.
- Partners constitute a community of practice where knowledge is shared and technical common grounds agreed upon in order to jointly influence water management.
- Develop guidelines based on practical application in Latinoamerica of the ISO 14046, in partnership with the Mexican Center of life-cycle assessment and eco design (CADIS)