

# Strategic partnerships for better water management



**Country**  
Colombia

## Partners

IDEAM Colombia, Rural Agricultural Planning Unit (Ministry of Agriculture), Centre of Science Technology, National Business Association, Partner companies, Cleaner Production Center, Quantis, Insitu, CEO Water Mandate (UN GC), Alianza BioCuenca, Good Stuff International

## Background information

Businesses are increasingly aware of water risks; facing challenges related to inefficient water use, non-existing or deficient water treatment, water scarcity / climate variability and competition among water users.

## Project targets

- Facilitate PPP to provide at least 20 convincing business cases
- 2 water policy instruments enriched (agriculture and water quality)
- 1 scheme for investment on ecosystem services established.
- Scaling corporate water stewardship in Latin America linked to the Pacific Alliance.

## Target groups

Communities, public institutions, business associations, companies, water practitioners, citizens

## Costs

CHF 2,000,000

## Duration

01.2016 – 12.2020

Water management being one of the main challenges of the 21st century, the generation of knowledge to make decisions and collaboration between different sectors; are the axis of the present and future well-being of humanity. The initiative “El Agua Nos Une” articulates the work of public institutions, business associations and research organisations. It aims at: i) scaling corporate water stewardship in Colombia; ii) strengthening knowledge on water uses, particularly in the agricultural sector; iii) contributing to the national water quality and quantity monitoring program; iv) developing an investment scheme in ecosystem services; and; v) facilitating a community of practice on water footprint and corporate water management in Latin America.

## Context

The OECD estimates that by 2030, nearly 4 billion people in the world - almost half of the population - will live under conditions of severe water stress. The Water Objective (SDG 6) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for action and mobilization of the different sectors to face the global water crisis. In addition, the private sector is increasingly aware that weaknesses in integrated water resource management are a substantial risk to business. Therefore, committed alliances among different actors must promote good governance, equitable access to water and efficient water management. In this context, there is a need for recognized and standardized tools to lead water risk management at corporate and territorial levels.

## Key results and insights from previous phases

- The water footprint went from being a little-known concept to a tool used by the private sector, public institutions, academia and research centers. The water footprint contributes as an indicator to evaluate, monitor and prioritize investments to reduce the direct and indirect impacts of water uses, within the production of goods and services.

- A productive Public Private Partnership experience with 11 multinational companies from diverse productive sectors.
- The partner companies invested about 2.5 Mio USD in the reduction and monitoring of the water footprint and in actions at the water basin.
- The water footprint was included, for the first time, in the National Water Study of (ENA), as IDEAM’s renowned public policy instrument.
- Knowledge management and communication was achieved and supported international visibility and scaling up in the region (Peru and Chile).

## Lines of action 2016-2020

- Lead business cases of corporate water stewardship, more than 30 partner companies. Partnership with ANDI, CNPML, Insitu and Quantis. It includes application the water footprint (ISO 14046), achievement of the value chain involvement and implementation of collective actions for better water management.
- Create and invigorate a community of practice in Latin America, reaching professionals and institutions from at least 10 countries.
- Knowledge development and business cases in Mexico, in coordination with public bodies and with the Life Cycle Analysis Center (CADIS), strengthening the relation with the Pacific Alliance.
- Development of stronger criteria for agricultural planning based on crop water requirements and water availability, along with the IDEAM, the agricultural sector UPRA – Ministry of Agriculture and CTA.
- Contribution to the design and implementation of the National Water Monitoring Program (quantity and quality) with IDEAM.
- Develop the investment scheme in ecosystem services „MiParamo” for the conservation of the high mountain ecosystem and improve living conditions of the vulnerable population.