



UN
2023 WATER
CONFERENCE

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UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

Advancing Water Positive Impact Locally Through Collective Action

Friday, March 24, 15:30 – 16:45, Conference Room 9

Organized by: Global Water Challenge, Cargill, The Coca-Cola Company, Starbucks, Nestlé, AB InBev, Alliance for Water Stewardship

Background on the Event (one paragraph)

The UN 2023 Water Conference brought nearly 10,000 people from around the world together to commit to solving the global water and sanitation crisis. During the conference, the [Global Water Challenge](#) (GWC) convened a session focused on collective action approaches to make positive local impacts. Climate change is a global problem that manifests locally, and communities and utilities are on the front line of this crisis. To combat this trend, collective action efforts on water are one key lever to reduce the impacts of climate change risks. Collective action offers unique opportunities for the private sector to work in partnership with communities to mobilize and deploy expertise and resources. This session featured successful examples of the private sector, governments, and civil society coming together to meaningfully adapt to the impacts of water insecurity and climate change, build more resilient communities, and set course for a healthier, more sustainable planet.

Water Action Agenda (one paragraph, if possible, please include the link to your commitment in the [Water Action Agenda database](#))

GWC is a coalition of leading organizations deploying expertise and networks to advance global water security and achieve universal access to safe and affordable WASH in communities around the world. Since 2006, GWC has positively impacted nearly 3 million people in 40 countries across Africa, the Americas and Asia with clean water access. GWC joined the over 700 commitments to advance progress across the SDGs; please see more information on GWC's commitment [here](#).

Key Issues Discussed (5-8 bullet points)

- **Align priorities and focus on local** – Partners shared that building positive water impacts at the local scale begins with prioritizing actions where needs are greatest for the business, supply chains, and communities.
- **Put people at the center** – Partners underscored the importance of putting people at the center of sustainability strategies and called for a shift towards more engagement with local farmers, governments, and other relevant stakeholders during the design phase of projects.
- **Work through brands** – Partners highlighted the importance of leveraging and working through its brands to drive positive local water impact through purchasing products that could have a co-benefit of supporting land conservation.
- **Get the incentives right** – Partners emphasized that targeting the right incentives could unlock multiple benefits, especially in the water-food nexus.
- **Look at the data** – Partners were excited about the discussions during the week around a transformation in the type of data that companies are looking for, especially around watershed health, social ROI, and the expansion of volumetric water benefit accounting.

Key Recommendations for Action (5-6 bullet points)

- **Greater Inclusivity** – Climate and water action needs to be focused on the local level. Therefore, local engagement and capacity building is urgently needed to co-design and implement projects and will be essential to developing a pipeline of sustainable solutions.
- **Amplify Investment** – During the week, there were several large-scale financial commitments, but more investment is needed to address the size of the challenge. Investment needs to reach the community level.
- **Accelerate Innovation** – There is a need to accelerate innovative approaches for community resilience while also unlocking co-benefits (i.e., biodiversity, gender equity, regenerative agriculture). Technology will play a key role along with political will.

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