

Innovative online tool to drive sustainable water use

September 3 2013

Water Footprint Network, the leading global authority on Water Footprint Assessment, is to launch the world's first online tool to calculate and map water footprints, and assess their sustainability. The Water Footprint Assessment (WFA) Tool 1.0 was created by Water Footprint Network in collaboration with the University of Twente and three funding partners: DEG, IFC and Unilever. The launch will take place at World Water Week in Stockholm on 3 September 2013.

The development of the tool was guided by an Advisory Board with representatives from World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), The Nature Conservancy, the Alliance for Water Stewardship, the Pacific Institute/CEO Water Mandate, the International Finance Corporation, the German Development Bank (DEG), and Unilever.

The WFA Tool 1.0 is free and can be used by anyone interested in sustainable, efficient and fair [water](#) use, including businesses, governments, NGOs, investors, researchers and communities. It provides them with clear insight into how water is used and the impacts resulting from those uses.

The WFA Tool 1.0 takes users through a structured process to quantify and map their water footprints. This can be carried out for a geographic area (by specific location, such as a river basin or catchment, in multiple locations or across an entire country), or for a single production process/multiple processes (by sector, company, individual facility, throughout the supply chain or for specific products or crops).

The WFA Tool 1.0 then analyses the sustainability of water footprints in terms of water scarcity. This means users can identify whether their water footprints are in a "water hotspot"—a location where water use exceeds freshwater availability.

The WFA Tool 1.0 makes Water Footprint Assessments accessible to all—detailed analysis is presented in a series of visually appealing maps, easy-to-read charts and informative tables—and is the most user-friendly and effective way to carry out a Water Footprint Assessment.

Arjen Hoekstra, Professor in Water Management at University of Twente, said: "It is encouraging to see that industries become interested in the sustainable use of water in their supply chain, and that the finance sector is recognizing the importance of accurate information on water use in investment decisions. Detailed mapping of the [water footprint](#) of products and identifying hotspots for taking action is key information to companies and investors. The Water Footprint Assessment Tool provides this information."

For example, the WFA Tool 1.0 can be used to:

- Quantify and map a water footprint in a river basin for different sectors and assess its sustainability
- Quantify and map the water footprint of a facility or throughout the supply chain
- Assess the sustainability of a facility or supply chain's water footprint

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Provided by University of Twente

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