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## **Global forces combine into Water Footprint Network**

Today, seven major global players have founded the Water Footprint Network. The network faces the challenge to work towards broadly shared standards on water footprint accounting. Transparent standards are key to enable the global community to constructively communicate about water footprints of consumers and producers. Shared standards are further necessary in order to formulate effective measures to reduce the negative impacts of water footprints.

Derk Kuiper, executive director of the newly established network:

“The concept of water footprint has gained huge credibility and buy in from the business, governmental and civil society communities. The Water Footprint Network is a multi-stakeholder platform and gateway to further the water footprint methodology and tools. The WFN offers a unique opportunity for businesses and governments to fully partner in and endorse this development and strive for implementation of the water footprint methodology to decrease the water risks to economy, society and nature and thereby moving towards truly sustainable and equitable water management.”

Professor Arjen Hoekstra, creator of the water footprint concept and scientific director of the network: “The interest in the water footprint is rooted in the recognition that human impacts on freshwater systems can ultimately be linked to human consumption and that issues like water shortages and pollution can be better understood and addressed by considering production and supply chains as a whole. Local water depletion and pollution are often closely tied to the structure of the global economy. Many countries have significantly externalized their water footprint, importing water-intensive goods from elsewhere. This puts pressure on the water resources in the exporting regions, where too often mechanisms for wise water governance and conservation are lacking. Not only governments acknowledge their role in achieving a better



management of water resources, also businesses and public-service organizations increasingly recognize their role in the interplay of actors involved in water use and management.”

### **The founding partners**

The founding partners of the newly established Water Footprint Network are seven major global players in the field: University of Twente, WWF-the global conservation organization, UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education, the Water Neutral Foundation, the World Business Council on Sustainable Development, the International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group) and the Netherlands Water Partnership.

The network is open to partners from all relevant stakeholders in water resources management: academic institutions, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, businesses, public utilities and UN-organizations. Partner registration will start in a few weeks time from now and will be announced on the website. The public launch of the network will be in December 2008.

For more information about the Water Footprint Network:

[www.waterfootprint.org/?page=files/WFN-mission](http://www.waterfootprint.org/?page=files/WFN-mission)

### **Water Footprint Network**

Website: [www.waterfootprint.org](http://www.waterfootprint.org)

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