



About us	▼
Our work	▼
Why disclose?	▼
Become a member	▼
Data and insights	▼

[Guidance & questionnaires](#)      [Contact](#)

[Regional websites](#) ▼      [Language](#) ▼



[Home](#) > [Blog](#) > Corporate water stewardship and science-based targets for freshwater

# Corporate water stewardship and science-based targets for freshwater

Akanksha Aggarwal, Senior Analyst, Water Security  
January 12 2024

The state of freshwater resources globally is a significant cause for concern, and water risks are becoming noticeable to more and more businesses and communities each year. Water insecurity poses extensive risks to nature and people, such as scarcity, floods, droughts and pollution. However, these impacts also pose material risks to businesses, including operational and supply chain disruptions, increased operating costs, heightened regulatory uncertainty and reputational risks, according to the information reported by companies through [CDP](#). Therefore, it is vital that companies take action to manage, reduce, and ultimately overcome the water challenges that communities, ecosystems and businesses face.

Water stewardship presents an opportunity for all stakeholders impacted by water insecurity to come together and find solutions to our shared water challenges. In today's corporate landscape, water stewardship has become a key focus for companies aiming to mitigate their impact on the planet. Addressing water-related challenges is a critical aspect of this commitment and several frameworks have emerged to guide businesses in their journey towards responsible water management. Implementing these frameworks helps companies identify and mitigate risks associated with water quality, water availability, water sanitation and hygiene (WASH), ecosystem risks, flooding, etc. In short, companies that prioritize water stewardship are better equipped to navigate the challenges posed by global water insecurity.

One key step in any corporate water stewardship journey is setting science-based targets for freshwater use. Incorporating science-based targets for freshwater enables companies to future-proof growth without depleting or polluting water resources beyond locally relevant ecological tipping points, thus driving the transition to a water-secure world. As part of the Science Based Targets for Nature (SBTN) initiative, freshwater targets are specific, measurable and time-bound targets that companies can set to reduce their impact on freshwater resources. These targets are informed by the latest science and are designed to help companies contribute to global sustainability goals, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and commitments within the Global Biodiversity Framework. Science-based targets are not only critical to balance and protect the world's water resources but can also drive long-term resilience for businesses.

The SBTN's Freshwater Hub is a collaborative effort led by CDP and WWF, along with Pacific Institute, World Resources Institute (WRI), and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Together, we have developed the [Technical Guidance](#) for setting science-based targets for freshwater to build on companies' existing sustainability strategies with recommendations that are fully aligned with existing and upcoming standards and frameworks such as CDP disclosure, the [Alliance for Water Stewardship](#) (AWS), and the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosure ([TNFD](#)). Understanding how these align and complement one another can allow companies to take a holistic, systematic approach to water stewardship.

Embracing the above-mentioned frameworks is a strategic imperative for companies committed to sustainable practice. They provide a path for companies to not only manage their water resources responsibly but also contribute positively to the broader environmental and social landscape. By setting science-based targets for freshwater use and following the recommendations provided by these organizations, companies will be taking proactive steps towards a water-secure and sustainable future.

In order to support companies in managing and reducing their water impacts across the entire value chain, and navigating through the water tools and frameworks landscape, the SBTN's Freshwater Hub partners along with AWS published their new paper, [Corporate water stewardship and science-based targets for freshwater](#). The goal of this paper is to provide increased clarity for companies on how these frameworks can be used together to set science-based targets for freshwater as a part of advancing their water action journey.

Later this month, CDP is hosting the webinar '**Corporate water stewardship and Science-Based Targets: alignment to accelerate the company journey**'. This will take place on 18 January in two different times, and all companies seeking to act on water-related impacts within their operations and value chain are encouraged to register. For the session from 8:00 to 9:00 GMT [register here](#), and for the session from 16:00 to 17:00 GMT [register here](#).



Still need help? [Contact us](#).

© 2023 CDP North America  
Inc.U.S. registered 501(c)3 with tax-exempt status  
127 West 26th Street, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001, U.S.

---

[Accredited solutions  
providers](#)

[Offices](#)

[Staff](#)

[Trustees, board and  
advisors](#)

[Cookies](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Terms & Conditions](#)

[Careers](#)

---

 [LinkedIn](#)

 [Twitter](#)

 [YouTube](#)

 [Vimeo](#)