

Glossary (modified from the [Water Footprint Assessment Manual](#))

Blue water – Fresh surface and groundwater, in other words, the water in freshwater lakes, rivers and aquifers.

Blue water footprint – Volume of surface and groundwater consumed as a result of the production of a good or service.

Green water footprint – Volume of rainwater consumed during the production process.

Grey water footprint – The grey water footprint of a product is an indicator of freshwater pollution that can be associated with the production of a product over its full supply chain.

Return flow – The part of the water withdrawn for an agricultural, industrial or domestic purpose that returns to the groundwater or surface water in the same catchment as where it was abstracted. This water can potentially be withdrawn and used again.

Water consumption – The volume of freshwater used and then evaporated or incorporated into a product.

Water footprint – The water footprint of a business is the total volume of freshwater used to produce the goods and services of the business, and the geographic location of that freshwater.

Water footprint assessment – Water footprint assessment refers to the full range of activities to: (i) quantify and locate the water footprint of a process, product, producer or consumer or to quantify in space and time the water footprint in a specified geographic area; (ii) assess the environmental, social and economic sustainability of this water footprint; and (iii) formulate a response strategy

Water footprint of a business – The water footprint of a business is the total volume of freshwater that is used directly and indirectly to run and support a business. The water footprint of a business consists of two components: the direct water use by the producer (for producing/manufacturing or for supporting activities) and the indirect water use (the water use in the producer's supply chain). The 'water footprint of a business' is the same as the total 'water footprint of the business output products'.

Water footprint of a product – The water footprint of a product (a commodity, good or service) is the total volume of freshwater used to produce the product, summed over the various steps of the production chain. The water footprint of a product refers not only to the total volume of water used; it also refers to where and when the water is used.