



WORLD WATER WEEK

Water in the World

Stockholm, 25 August 2006 - Fifty participants representing business, non-governmental organizations and academia came together for a WBCSD side event during [World Water Week](#) in Stockholm (20-26 August) to discover the WBCSD [Water Scenarios to 2025](#) (1 MB), and then brainstorm about their relevance in group discussions.

The scenarios offer three stories about the role of business in relation to the growing issue of water in the world: Hydro – about efficiency, Rivers – about security, and Ocean – about interconnectivity. They cover major global challenges of technology, security and interconnectivity, as well as the associated business challenges of innovation, social security to operate and water governance.

Rather than offering answers, they create a common language and a shared context so that we can begin conversation on the future of water. The scenario process involved over 200 people, of whom nearly half were from business.

After a brief introduction to the scenarios by key contributors to the scenario building process, the participants were asked to reflect upon one of three questions, respectively related to the three stories:

1. Which legacies need to be unlocked to enable more sustainable water practices and more appropriate solutions?
2. Who should have a seat at the table for fair water allocation and why?
3. What could be a governance structure for a more holistic water management and what could trigger its set up?

In discussing the first question, participants felt that there is a need for a change of mindset with regards to water reuse and recycling, infrastructure and efficiency as resources are currently going to production that is not maximizing output.

For the second question, “who should have a seat at the table for fair water allocation and why”, participants answered:


- Everybody – i.e. all those impacted and beneficiaries, including women who are the primary source of education and influence;
- There are actually different tables (depending on scale/geography, sector) and different stakeholders at each table;
- The government could consult with all around separate tables; need to have democratic representation and appreciate scale (e.g., regional diversity).

And for the third question, concerning a governance structure for a more holistic water management, participants felt that no one governance structure can deal with the whole system. At the same time, the view was that it could only happen if it were isolated from

the politics of the day, if there were a functioning governance hierarchy (local, sub-national, national...) and a framework for risk management at global level.

This first public presentation of the finalized scenarios was a success in that they served the purpose of being a framework for stakeholder discussion, helping to by-pass important emotional arguments or assumptions. In addition to using the scenarios to brainstorm and initiate internal discussions surrounding water, companies worldwide can also use them as a tool for testing their internal business strategy. How will your company react in the three changing worlds?

Further information

- Download [Business in the World of Water - WBCSD Water Scenarios to 2025](#)
( 1 MB)
- [World Water Week](#) website
- [Subscribe to WBCSD's Water and SD newsletter](#)