

Business Engagement in the California Water Plan

Heather Cooley

Director of Research, Pacific Institute



Pacific Institute

- Non-profit, 501(c)3, established in 1987
- **Mission:** Create and advance solutions to the world's most pressing water challenges
- Headquartered in Oakland, California, with research staff in other parts of US, Brazil, and Australia



CEO Water Mandate

Objective: Mobilize business leaders to address global water challenges through corporate water stewardship, in partnership with the United Nations, governments, civil society, and others



DIRECT OPERATIONS



SUPPLY CHAIN
AND WATERSHEDS



COLLECTIVE ACTION



PUBLIC
POLICY



COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT



TRANSPARENCY AND
DISCLOSURE

How Do Water Challenges Affect Businesses?

- **Increased operational costs** spent complying with relevant regulations, or for more expensive water and/or wastewater treatment
- **Operational crises** resulting from inadequate water availability or management capacity
- Damaged **social and legal license to operate** in a specific location
- **Diminished brand value** due to irresponsible or unsustainable behavior
- **Lower investor confidence** due to unstable or uncertain water availability and related management plans

California Water Action Collaborative (CWAC)

- Founded in 2014, CWAC is a platform for collective action to improve water security in California
- Strategic goals aligned with California Water Action Plan and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- **Metrics Working Group** is developing a standardized approach for measuring and communicating CWAC's impact

Context-Based Water Targets

- Help companies **align measurement systems** and **core metrics**, **set meaningful targets**, and **prioritize actions and investments** that address shared water challenges in the basins where they operate.
- In 2018, the project team will pilot test the methodology in basins around the world, including the **Santa Ana River watershed**.



The CEO Water Mandate



WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE



Outputs

- Integration of business community insights into the California Water Plan Update 2018; and
- Development of a white paper that identifies the opportunities for and challenges with engaging the business community on watershed sustainability assessment systems.

Thank You

Heather Cooley
Director of Research, Pacific Institute

hcooley@pacinst.org

[@_HeatherCooley](https://www.instagram.com/_HeatherCooley)

www.pacinst.org

Water Stewardship Progression



OPERATIONS

Provide WASH services in the workplace

Measure and monitor water practices

Drive water efficiency and reduce pollution



CONTEXT

Understand water-stressed and high-risk basins

Assess risks and impacts in the value chain



STRATEGY

Integrate water management into business strategy



ENGAGEMENT

Advance sustainable water management and collective action

Facilitate improved performance in the value chain



COMMUNICATION

Achieve meaningful & inclusive dialogue with stakeholders



Business Engagement

- For water managers, engagement with the business community can help to ensure buy-in from a key stakeholder group that will need to take action to realize policy objectives.
- For both parties, alignment on the indicators used to identify water challenges and track progress towards sustainability fosters collaboration, reduces fragmentation, ensures accountability, and increases awareness and political support which in turn catalyzes investment.