



General

The ICIS Water Footprint Program provides a standardized, science-based framework for organizations to quantify, manage, and reduce their water use and related impacts across supply chains and product life cycles. Developed in alignment with the principles of the International Climate Intelligence System (ICIS) and based on globally recognized methodologies such as ISO 14046, this program offers a consistent approach to evaluating both direct and indirect water consumption, as well as water-related environmental risks.

The Water Footprint Program helps organizations assess water use in terms of quantity and quality, addressing freshwater availability, local watershed stress, and potential ecological consequences. Through transparent accounting and responsible water stewardship, the program supports more sustainable operations and enables credible reporting to stakeholders, regulators, and the public.

This program empowers decision-makers to:

- Identify hotspots of high water use or pollution risk across operations and supply chains.
- Benchmark performance and set data-driven water reduction goals.
- Mitigate water-related risks in high-stress regions.
- Enhance stakeholder trust through third-party verification and transparent disclosures.

By adopting the ICIS Water Footprint Program, organizations demonstrate leadership in sustainable water management, support global water conservation efforts, and align with broader environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals.

Disclaimer for Water Footprint Program

This document is intended solely for informational purposes as part of the ICIS Water Footprint Program. It does not constitute legal advice, regulatory guidance, or compliance certification. While the content is based on internationally accepted standards and the latest scientific methodologies, organizations must consult relevant local, national, and industry-specific regulations to ensure comprehensive water management practices.

The program structure, tools, and requirements may be updated periodically to reflect new scientific research, technological advancements, and evolving sustainability priorities. ICIS assumes no responsibility for decisions made or actions taken based on this material. For official certification and the most current requirements, please refer to www.climateintell.com or contact an authorized ICIS representative.

Table of Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION.....6

2.0 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS6

 2.1 Strengthen Water Management Practices 6

 2.2 Promote Water Stewardship and Risk Resilience 6

 2.3 Improve Transparency and Reporting 7

 2.4 Certification Process Overview..... 7

3.0 REGULATORY CONTEXT AND COMPLIANCE7

4.0 WATER FOOTPRINT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY8

 4.1 Boundary Definition 8

 4.2 Water Use Categories..... 8

 4.3 Regional Water Stress Adjustment..... 9

 4.4 Quality Assurance and Verification 9

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL WATER MAPPING.....9

 5.1 Facility Level Water Accounting 9

 5.2 Supply Chain Water Footprint 9

 5.3 Product Level Analysis 9

 5.4 Water Flow Visualization 9

6.0 DATA COLLECTION FRAMEWORK9

 6.1 Primary and Secondary Data 10

 6.2 Data Quality Standards..... 10

 6.3 Automation and Digital Systems 10

 6.4 Verification Protocols 10

7.0 WATER RISK ASSESSMENT 10

 7.1 Physical Water Risks 10

 7.2 Regulatory Risk 11

 7.3 Reputational Risk..... 11

 7.4 Risk Prioritization Matrix 11

8.0 SETTING WATER TARGETS 11

 8.1 Science Based and Contextual Targets..... 11

 8.2 Absolute Vs Intensity Targets 11

 8.3 Time-Bound Commitments 11

 8.4 Validation and Oversight 11

9.0 WATER FOOTPRINT REDUCTION STRATEGIES	12
9.1 Operational Efficiency	12
9.2 Supply Chain Engagement	12
9.3 Water-Smart Product Design.....	12
9.4 Alternative Water Sources	12
9.5 Watershed Protection and Offsets	12
10.0 IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP	13
10.1 Phased Implementation Timeline	13
10.2 Governance and Team Structure	13
10.3 Capital Planning and Investment Strategy	13
10.4 Capacity Building and Organizational Change.....	13
11.0 MONITORING & MEASUREMENT	13
11.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	13
11.2 Monitoring Technologies.....	14
11.3 Data Management Platforms	14
11.4 Progress Evaluation and Continuous Improvement.....	14
12.0 REPORTING & COMMUNICATION	14
12.1 Internal Reporting Framework	14
12.2 External Disclosure Alignment.....	15
12.3 Stakeholder Communication Strategies.....	15
12.4 Water Stewardship Storytelling	15
12.5 Annual Water Footprint Report	15
13.0 WATER FOOTPRINT CERTIFICATION	15
13.1 Certification Process.....	16
13.2 Verification Protocol.....	16
13.3 Certification Tiers and Maintenance	16
13.4 Recognition and Integration.....	16
13.5 Certification Benefits.....	16
14.0 RESOURCES & SUPPORT	16
14.1 ICIS Support Services	17
14.2 Calculation Tools	17
14.3 Templates and Frameworks	17
14.4 Expert Consultation	17
14.5 Sector Specific Guidance	17



15.0 SUMMARY 17

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The water footprint concept represents a paradigm shift in how we understand and measure water use. Defined as the total volume of freshwater used directly and indirectly to produce goods and services, a water footprint provides a comprehensive lens through which organizations can assess their complete water impact. Unlike traditional water accounting that focuses solely on direct water withdrawals, the water footprint methodology captures the full life cycle of water use, including hidden or "virtual" water embedded in products and supply chains.

Water footprints comprise three distinct components, each representing different types of water appropriation. Blue water refers to surface and groundwater resources consumed through operations, such as water withdrawn from rivers, lakes, or aquifers. Green water encompasses rainfall consumed through evapotranspiration, particularly relevant for agricultural products. Gray water represents the volume of freshwater required to assimilate pollutants to meet specific water quality standards, effectively quantifying water pollution impacts.

Since its conceptual development by Professor Arjen Hoekstra in 2002, water footprint methodologies have evolved significantly, gaining international recognition and standardization through efforts like the Water Footprint Network and ISO 14046. These advancements have coincided with growing awareness of the global water crisis, where approximately 2.3 billion people currently live in water-stressed countries, a figure projected to increase substantially by 2040. In this context, the water footprint serves as both an analytical tool and a communication mechanism to drive more sustainable water management practices across sectors and geographies.

2.0 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The ICIS Water Footprint Program provides a structured framework to help organizations understand, manage, and reduce their water-related impacts. Through a combination of standardized methodologies and a robust certification system, the program supports three core objectives and a defined pathway for obtaining ICIS Water Footprint Certification.

2.1 Strengthen Water Management Practices

Establish standardized methodologies for quantifying direct and indirect water usage across operational boundaries and value chains. This includes identifying high-impact areas (hotspots) and setting baselines for reduction targets.

2.2 Promote Water Stewardship and Risk Resilience

Foster responsible water governance aligned with SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation). Build organizational resilience by addressing physical water scarcity, regulatory risks, and reputational concerns through forward-looking mitigation strategies.

2.3 Improve Transparency and Reporting

Enhance organizational capacity to collect, analyze, and report water footprint data. Support informed decision-making and stakeholder communication through robust disclosure aligned with investor and regulatory expectations.

2.4 Certification Process Overview

The ICIS Water Footprint Certification process ensures organizations meet globally recognized standards for water stewardship. The certification involves the following steps:

- a) **Application & Readiness Assessment:** Organizations submit an application through www.climateintell.com and complete a readiness checklist evaluating baseline water use, data quality, and internal capacity.
- b) **Documentation Submission:** Applicants prepare a complete water footprint inventory and supporting documentation, including system boundaries, data sources, reduction targets, and governance structure.
- c) **Independent Verification:** A third-party verifier, approved by ICIS, conducts a comprehensive review including document audits, data testing, interviews, and facility inspections.
- d) **Certification Decision & Levels:** Based on verification findings, ICIS issues certification at one of three levels (Basic, Advanced, Leadership). A digital certificate and certification logo are granted for eligible promotional use.
- e) **Certificate Validity & Renewal:** Certificates remain valid for 3 years. Annual progress updates are required. A full reassessment is needed for renewal, ensuring continued compliance and improvement.
- f) **Logo Usage and Registry:** Certified organizations are listed in the ICIS public registry and may use the ICIS Water Footprint Certification logo in accordance with the ICIS Branding Guidelines.

3.0 REGULATORY CONTEXT AND COMPLIANCE

The regulatory landscape related to water usage and disclosure is evolving rapidly, with increasing expectations from governments, investors, and other stakeholders. The ICIS Water Footprint Program supports organizations in meeting these diverse requirements through standardized methodologies and transparent reporting frameworks.

The European Union's Water Framework Directive is among the most advanced regulations for water protection, requiring member states to adopt river basin management plans and enforce ecological and chemical water standards. The ICIS methodology supports compliance by offering structured quantification and impact assessments that align with these reporting obligations.

The following table summarizes key regulatory and voluntary frameworks and how the Water Footprint Program aligns with their requirements:

Regulatory Framework	Key Requirements	Program Alignment
SEC Climate Disclosure Rules	Mandatory reporting of material water risks and management approaches (2023-2025)	Comprehensive water risk assessment and quantification methodology
CDP Water Security Framework	Annual disclosure of water withdrawals, consumption, and facility-level risk	Structured data collection and monitoring systems
Alliance for Water Stewardship	Site and catchment-level water stewardship criteria	Contextual water assessment and stakeholder engagement processes
ISO 14046	Standardized water footprint assessment methodology	Fully compatible calculation and reporting processes

In the United States, the SEC’s Climate Disclosure Rules (2023–2025) will mandate disclosure of material water risks. The Water Footprint Program includes a structured risk assessment process designed to support compliance with these disclosures.

Beyond mandatory requirements, the program aligns with key voluntary standards such as the CDP Water Security Framework and the Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS) certification. The ICIS approach complements these frameworks by providing consistent, auditable data on water use, consumption, and associated risks.

By adopting the ICIS Water Footprint Program, organizations strengthen compliance readiness and build capacity to meet emerging global standards in water stewardship.

4.0 WATER FOOTPRINT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The ICIS Water Footprint Program is grounded in a standardized, science-based methodology to measure and manage water consumption and impacts. This framework ensures consistency and credibility across sectors and geographies.

4.1 Boundary Definition

Assessment begins by defining the system boundaries, covering both direct water use (within organizational operations) and indirect water consumption (embedded in purchased goods, energy, and services). Boundaries should reflect operational control or influence and be applied consistently for accurate Footprinting.

4.2 Water Use Categories

The program categorizes water use into:

- **Blue water:** surface and groundwater withdrawals
- **Green water:** rainwater used in agriculture or land systems
- **Gray water:** volume required to dilute pollutants to acceptable standards

Clear differentiation among these categories enables accurate tracking and reporting.

4.3 Regional Water Stress Adjustment

Footprint values are adjusted using local water stress factors to account for geographic variation. The same quantity of water can have a higher environmental impact in water-scarce areas. ICIS methodology incorporates these contextual multipliers for better prioritization and decision-making.

4.4 Quality Assurance and Verification

Robust quality controls—such as data validation, uncertainty analysis, and third-party verification—are embedded in the methodology to ensure transparency and stakeholder confidence. The ICIS certification process requires adherence to these protocols for verified disclosure.

5.0 ORGANIZATIONAL WATER MAPPING

Water mapping is the foundation of effective footprint management. It identifies water flows across operations and supply chains, enabling organizations to locate hotspots, optimize resource use, and plan reductions.

5.1 Facility Level Water Accounting

At each facility, organizations should map all water sources (e.g., municipal, surface, groundwater), usage areas (e.g., process, sanitation, cooling), and discharge pathways (e.g., treatment, evaporation, reuse). Methods include meter readings, utility bills, infrastructure walkthroughs, and staff interviews.

5.2 Supply Chain Water Footprint

Supply chain mapping focuses on water-intensive materials and suppliers operating in high-risk regions. A tiered approach is encouraged—starting with high-volume or high-risk inputs—using supplier data, industry benchmarks, and proxy models where data is limited.

5.3 Product Level Analysis

For product-centric operations, lifecycle water assessment helps quantify embedded water use from raw materials to end-of-life. Aligned with ISO 14046, this analysis supports product improvement, eco-labelling, and stakeholder disclosure.

5.4 Water Flow Visualization

Effective communication of water data is supported through visual tools like water flow diagrams and Sankey charts, which show inputs, outputs, and hotspots across systems. These visuals help engage both technical and non-technical audiences.

The ICIS methodology emphasizes temporal and geographic context, ensuring seasonal variations and regional water scarcity are factored into mapping. This improves decision-making and prioritization of water stewardship efforts.

6.0 DATA COLLECTION FRAMEWORK

High-quality data is the foundation of credible water footprint assessments. The ICIS-aligned framework ensures consistent data gathering across operations and value chains.

6.1 Primary and Secondary Data

Organizations must prioritize primary data (e.g., metered withdrawals, usage, discharges, recycling volumes) from facilities under operational control. Where direct measurement is unavailable, interim estimations are allowed, with timelines for metering upgrades.

For indirect water use, such as in supply chains, secondary data (e.g., industry benchmarks, input-output models, regional databases) should be used with proper justification. Data should reflect the latest available values and account for geographic and technological relevance.

6.2 Data Quality Standards

All data must meet minimum ICIS standards for accuracy, completeness, consistency, and transparency. Data quality should be periodically reviewed through uncertainty analysis and completeness checks.

6.3 Automation and Digital Systems

The program encourages the use of automated systems such as IoT sensors, SCADA platforms, and digital water meters. These improve real-time monitoring, anomaly detection, and analytics.

6.4 Verification Protocols

Verification procedures include internal cross-checks, trend analysis, and third-party audits. Certification requires documented data custody trials, validation procedures, and adherence to ICIS quality assurance protocols.

As organizations advance, integration of water data with EMS, ERP, and financial platforms is encouraged, enabling better performance tracking and alignment with broader sustainability strategies.

7.0 WATER RISK ASSESSMENT

Understanding and mitigating water-related risks is a critical element of ICIS water footprint certification. The Water Footprint Program provides a structured approach to assess key risk categories across direct operations and the value chain.

7.1 Physical Water Risks

Organizations must map operational and supplier sites against tools such as the WRI Aqueduct or WWF Water Risk Filter to assess water stress. Key physical risks include:

- **Quantity risks** (e.g., drought, insufficient supply)
- **Quality risks** (e.g., contamination, inadequate treatment infrastructure)

Localized assessments are encouraged to refine these findings.

7.2 Regulatory Risk

Evaluate exposure to regulatory changes including water pricing, allocation rules, permitting, and discharge standards. ICIS-aligned assessments require monitoring of emerging regulations and their financial or operational implications.

7.3 Reputational Risk

Organizations should assess stakeholder expectations and public perception, especially in water-stressed or high-profile locations. Failure to address water issues may result in brand damage or community opposition.

7.4 Risk Prioritization Matrix

Risks must be prioritized based on likelihood and business impact. A clear matrix supports decision-making for mitigation, investment, and reporting, and is required as part of ICIS verification preparation.

8.0 SETTING WATER TARGETS

Water targets are a critical part of the Water Footprint Program under ICIS. These targets help organizations define measurable outcomes to reduce water impacts and demonstrate stewardship across operational sites and supply chains.

8.1 Science Based and Contextual Targets

Organizations are encouraged to set science-informed and locally contextual targets that reflect ecological thresholds and watershed-level sustainability. Tools from the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN) and local water stress data should guide target design, particularly in high-risk regions.

8.2 Absolute Vs Intensity Targets

Targets can be:

- **Absolute** – Reduce total water consumption across all sites
- **Intensity-based** – Reduce water use per unit of product/output

Organizations may combine both, depending on growth outlooks and operational priorities.

8.3 Time-Bound Commitments

ICIS recommends water targets aligned with key global benchmarks, such as:

- **Short term (by 2030)** – to align with SDG 6 goals
- **Long term (by 2040 or 2050)** – for transformational improvements requiring systemic or infrastructure changes

8.4 Validation and Oversight

All targets should be:

- Reviewed against historical data and peer benchmarks
- Evaluated for feasibility and business alignment

- Approved by executive leadership and integrated into organizational sustainability strategies
- ICIS provides optional support for aligning water targets with external programs such as the CEO Water Mandate and SBTN.

9.0 WATER FOOTPRINT REDUCTION STRATEGIES

To effectively reduce their water footprint, organizations must translate assessments and targets into practical actions. The Water Footprint Program provides a flexible framework of key strategies adaptable to diverse industries and water risk contexts.

9.1 Operational Efficiency

Improving efficiency in direct operations is the most immediate method for water reduction. Typical measures include leak detection and repair, upgrading to closed-loop cooling systems, and investing in wastewater recycling. The program encourages prioritization based on site-level assessments and water stress exposure, enabling high-impact improvements through both low-cost interventions and capital projects.

9.2 Supply Chain Engagement

Since a significant portion of water footprint often lies upstream, the program emphasizes proactive supplier engagement. Steps include mapping supplier hotspots, setting minimum water management expectations, sharing tools and training, and establishing incentive-based collaborations. Joint watershed protection with key suppliers is also encouraged where risks are shared.

9.3 Water-Smart Product Design

Water-efficient product innovation helps minimize footprint across the lifecycle. This includes reducing embedded water in materials, enabling reuse or recycling, and limiting water use during the product's usage phase. Organizations are encouraged to embed water impact screening in early design stages.

9.4 Alternative Water Sources

Reducing reliance on freshwater withdrawals is key in water-scarce areas. Feasible alternatives include rainwater harvesting, treated wastewater reuse, and brackish water use. ICIS supports feasibility assessments that balance cost, quality, and regulatory compliance.

9.5 Watershed Protection and Offsets

In cases where water use cannot be avoided, organizations may invest in credible watershed restoration, aquifer recharge, or community access projects. ICIS recognizes water offset initiatives if they demonstrate additionality, permanence, and measurable impact, and recommends their use only as a complement to direct reductions.

10.0 IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP

The Water Footprint Program supports a phased and practical roadmap that enables organizations to integrate water stewardship into core operations over time.

10.1 Phased Implementation Timeline

Implementation is typically structured across 24–36 months.

- **Phase 1 (Months 1–6):** Establish governance, conduct baseline assessment, and define plans
- **Phase 2 (Months 7–18):** Develop data systems, initiate pilot projects, and build internal capacity
- **Phase 3 (Months 19–36):** Scale reduction initiatives and embed water goals into core business functions

This approach promotes early results while enabling long-term transformation.

10.2 Governance and Team Structure

Effective governance requires clear leadership and coordination:

- An executive sponsor champions the program
- A cross-functional steering committee provides strategic oversight
- Designated water management teams handle implementation

Water stewardship should be integrated into broader ESG governance to ensure consistency and accountability.

10.3 Capital Planning and Investment Strategy

Water efficiency projects should be prioritized using risk-based assessments and standardized ROI analysis. Clear Capex allocation procedures and exploration of alternative financing (e.g., green bonds, PPPs) support long-term investment planning aligned with ESG goals.

10.4 Capacity Building and Organizational Change

Building internal capabilities is essential. Organizations should train relevant teams, support supplier engagement, and promote knowledge-sharing. A structured change management approach—emphasizing communication, stakeholder involvement, and success recognition—helps embed water stewardship into the organizational culture.

The roadmap is adaptable to different organizational types—multinational corporations, SMEs, service sectors, and public entities—ensuring all can progress regardless of size or maturity level.

11.0 MONITORING & MEASUREMENT

Effective water footprint management requires continuous monitoring and performance measurement to support decision-making and drive improvements. The Water Footprint Program outlines a structured framework for ongoing tracking, analysis, and evaluation.

11.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The program recommends a multi-dimensional set of KPIs, including:

- **Absolute Consumption:** Total water withdrawals

- **Efficiency Ratios:** Water use per production unit
- **Quality Metrics:** Contaminant concentrations
- **Contextual Indicators:** % of withdrawals from stressed basins

These KPIs help organizations assess trade-offs and ensure balanced water performance. Sector-specific benchmarks and scorecard templates support relevant KPI selection.

11.2 Monitoring Technologies

Organizations are encouraged to adopt real-time monitoring solutions, from basic meters to advanced IoT-enabled sensor networks. The program provides technical guidance on equipment selection, calibration, and integration with existing systems such as Building Management Systems (BMS) or Manufacturing Execution Systems (MES).

11.3 Data Management Platforms

Centralized platforms facilitate data collection, validation, analysis, and reporting. The program supports a range of tools—from dedicated water management systems to broader environmental platforms—with capabilities like:

- Automated data checks
- Metric calculations
- Visualization dashboards
- Reporting aligned with ICIS and other frameworks

11.4 Progress Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Water performance should be reviewed regularly:

- **Daily/Weekly:** Operational metrics
- **Monthly:** Consumption trends
- **Quarterly:** Performance vs. targets

When deviations occur, root cause analysis is performed, and findings feed into a structured improvement cycle to enhance future performance.

12.0 REPORTING & COMMUNICATION

Clear, accurate, and audience-tailored reporting is essential for maximizing the impact of water stewardship efforts. The Water Footprint Program provides a framework for internal tracking, external disclosure, and stakeholder engagement.

12.1 Internal Reporting Framework

Internal reports provide operational teams and leadership with timely insights to inform decisions. The program recommends:

- **Dashboards** for facility managers
- **Quarterly reviews** for business units
- **Executive summaries** for top management

Guidance includes selecting key metrics, using effective visuals, and linking water performance to financial outcomes such as cost savings and risk mitigation.

12.2 External Disclosure Alignment

To meet growing expectations for transparency, the program supports alignment with leading disclosure standards such as:

- **GRI** (Global Reporting Initiative)
- **SASB** (Sustainability Accounting Standards Board)
- **TCFD** (Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures)

It covers both quantitative (e.g., water withdrawals, efficiency ratios) and qualitative content (e.g., risks, governance, initiatives), with verification support for credibility.

12.3 Stakeholder Communication Strategies

Targeted communication ensures messages resonate with diverse stakeholder groups:

- **Investors:** Focus on risk, compliance, ESG integration
- **Customers:** Emphasize product innovation and sustainability
- **Communities:** Address local water issues and impacts
- **Employees:** Build awareness and motivation internally

Planning guidance includes message framing, channel selection, and feedback collection for continuous improvement.

12.4 Water Stewardship Storytelling

Beyond data, organizations are encouraged to share their water journey through stories that highlight challenges, innovation, and impact. Storytelling tips include:

- Using relatable case studies
- Visual storytelling (e.g., photos, infographics)
- Balanced tone—showing both progress and limitations

12.5 Annual Water Footprint Report

The annual report consolidates key findings and commitments into a publicly shareable document. Suggested content includes:

- Executive summary and key performance indicators
- Methodology and boundary explanation
- Reduction strategies and outcomes
- Partnerships and watershed engagement
- Next steps and future targets

This report supports both internal accountability and external reputation, providing a complete picture of the organization's water stewardship.

13.0 WATER FOOTPRINT CERTIFICATION

The ICIS Water Footprint Certification formally recognizes organizations that demonstrate excellence in water stewardship through credible, verified performance. Certification provides independent assurance to stakeholders and supports alignment with global sustainability standards.

13.1 Certification Process

Organizations begin by conducting an internal assessment to evaluate readiness. A formal application is submitted along with the water footprint report, evidence of reduction initiatives, and relevant documentation. ICIS-accredited verifiers then review submissions, validate data, conduct site assessments (as applicable), and confirm alignment with certification criteria.

13.2 Verification Protocol

Independent verification is central to certification integrity. Approved third-party verifiers assess:

- Data accuracy and completeness
- Effectiveness of water management systems
- Compliance with ICIS methodological standards

Verification includes document review, data sampling, interviews, and optional facility visits. Findings are summarized in a verification report submitted to ICIS for final review.

13.3 Certification Tiers and Maintenance

ICIS offers three certification levels—Basic, Advanced, and Leadership—to accommodate organizations at different stages of water stewardship. Certification is valid for three years, subject to:

- Annual progress reports
- Reverification at renewal
- Evidence of continuous improvement

Organizations are encouraged to advance toward higher certification tiers over time.

13.4 Recognition and Integration

Certified organizations are listed in the ICIS public registry, with access to benchmarking tools and eligibility for sustainability awards. The certification aligns with frameworks such as:

- Alliance for Water Stewardship (AWS)
- ISO 14001
- CDP Water Security Disclosure

This ensures compatibility with broader ESG and water-related reporting programs.

13.5 Certification Benefits

Achieving certification helps organizations:

- Demonstrate leadership in water stewardship
- Enhance stakeholder trust and brand value
- Improve operational efficiency and resilience
- Reduce exposure to regulatory and supply chain risks

14.0 RESOURCES & SUPPORT

The ICIS Water Footprint Program equips participants with a comprehensive set of tools, templates, and expert services to ensure successful implementation and continuous improvement of water stewardship practices.

14.1 ICIS Support Services

Organizations receive baseline support through the ICIS helpdesk, orientation workshops, and virtual coaching. For more advanced needs, tailored assistance such as implementation reviews and strategic advisory is available via enhanced support packages.

14.2 Calculation Tools

ICIS offers validated calculators ranging from basic spreadsheets to advanced software platforms. These tools integrate water use data with stress indicators and support sector-specific needs in industries such as F&B, textiles, and electronics.

14.3 Templates and Frameworks

To streamline implementation, downloadable templates are provided for:

- Data collection and reporting
- Risk assessment and target setting
- Supplier engagement and initiative tracking

All templates are customizable and ensure consistency with ICIS methodology.

14.4 Expert Consultation

Specialized advisory is available for organizations with complex water challenges, including hydrological risk modeling, high-efficiency technology selection, and stakeholder engagement planning. Consultations are delivered by vetted ICIS water experts.

14.5 Sector Specific Guidance

Industry guidance documents offer targeted recommendations based on common water use patterns, risks, and best practices. Currently available for 12 high-impact sectors, with ongoing updates based on user demand.

All resources are maintained through the ICIS online portal, offering easy access, regular updates, and recommendations tailored to the organization's implementation stage.

15.0 SUMMARY

The ICIS Water Footprint Program is a comprehensive framework designed to help organizations measure, manage, and reduce their water-related impacts across operational and value chain activities. Rooted in ISO 14046 principles and aligned with global disclosure standards, the program promotes responsible water stewardship through science-based, context-specific methodologies.

Key sections of the program include:

Program Objectives & Certification Process: Organizations are guided through structured objectives such as water quantification, risk resilience, and stewardship practices. The certification process outlines application requirements, verification protocols, and performance criteria, offering Basic, Advanced, and Leadership levels of recognition

Assessment Methodology & Mapping: The program standardizes boundary definitions, distinguishes between blue, green, and gray water use, and incorporates local water stress factors. It emphasizes detailed facility-level accounting, supply chain mapping, and product-level footprinting

Data and Risk Management: A robust data collection framework ensures quality and verification, supported by automated systems and clear data governance. Risk assessment tools cover physical, regulatory, and reputational water risks, enabling strategic prioritization

Target Setting & Reduction Strategies: The program supports the development of science-based and contextual water reduction targets, distinguishing between absolute and intensity-based goals. Reduction strategies span operational efficiency, supplier engagement, product innovation, and alternative water sourcing

Implementation & Monitoring: Organizations follow a phased implementation roadmap with emphasis on governance, capital planning, and change management. Monitoring systems use KPIs, IoT-enabled technologies, and integrated platforms for real-time visibility and performance evaluation

Reporting & Communication: Internal and external reporting frameworks align with GRI, SASB, and TCFD. Emphasis is placed on stakeholder communication, annual water footprint reporting, and authentic water stewardship storytelling

Resources & Support: ICIS offers calculation tools, implementation templates, expert consultation, and industry-specific guidance to support organizations at every stage. A dedicated online portal ensures ongoing access and updates to all resource

The ICIS Water Footprint Certification serves as both a performance benchmark and a pathway for continuous improvement, enhancing credibility, transparency, and competitive positioning for participating organizations.