Water Footprint Network provides science-based, practical solutions and strategic insights that empower companies, governments, small-scale producers and individuals to transform the way we use and share fresh water within earth’s limits.

Founded in 2008 by the University of Twente, WWF, UNESCO-IHE, World Business Council for Sustainable Development, International Finance Corporation, Netherlands Water Partnership and Water Neutral Foundation, we are a dynamic, international learning community.

Working together with and supported by our partners from around the world, we drive action towards sustainable, efficient and equitable water use, build communities to escalate change in river basins, share knowledge and train practitioners to solve the world’s water crises.

As the global leader in Water Footprint Assessment, we find solutions using a common methodology that interlinks water related issues and leads to strategic action for water stewardship, resource efficiency, fair allocation and good governance. Our data, tools and Global Water Footprint Standard bridge sectors and viewpoints, illuminate the path towards integrated water resource management and accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

www.waterfootprint.org
At Water Footprint Network, we consider clean fresh water to be a fundamental requirement for people and the planet, for economic development and environmental sustainability.

In the context of population growth and climate change, meeting this requirement will take ambition, innovation and collaboration; success depends on every global citizen fundamentally rethinking how we value, use and share this increasingly scarce resource.

This was a year of significant change and exciting new horizons for Water Footprint Network as we moved from our founding base at the University of Twente to establish ourselves in a more central location at the International Water House in The Hague. In light of our move and the new challenges laid down in the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, we felt the time was ripe to reflect on our first years of operation and look at a future that builds on our strengths and achievements. We devised a new strategic plan that positions us for the coming years and sets us on the right path to deliver our unique contribution to solving the world’s water crises.

We also took the opportunity to rebrand ourselves and to create a fresh new identity and a logo that reflects the three types of water use that are central to the concept of water footprint – green, grey and blue. We redesigned our website so that we can open the doors wider to our expertise, resources and knowledge. Its new features and clearer layout means that a greater variety of visitors can find the information they need, whether they are experts or newly interested in learning about the water footprint and what it can contribute to the central issue of unsustainable use of our water resources.

This was just one of many initiatives we took to reach out to people and encourage them to factor water into every decision they make, at work or at home. During the year, we supported numerous companies and government representatives in their journey towards sustainable water use. We nurtured advancement in science and assisted the media with water footprint data, resources and expertise. We shared
our knowledge and inspired debate at more than 20 international and regional forums in 17 countries and we trained more than 200 people in Water Footprint Assessment so that they can act as catalysts for change.

I would like to thank our valued partners, who lie at the heart of our organisation. By joining together our many skills and ideas, we can accelerate progress towards the global changes required to sustain our communities and nature’s diversity long into the future.

I look back at 2015 as a year in which we took a bold step forward as an organisation and in our commitment to making a lasting contribution to sustainable development. We look to the future with both optimism arising from a solid foundation and enthusiasm for the challenges ahead.

Ruth Mathews
Aims & direction

Water Footprint Network is a global network of expertise, innovation and exchange. Our partners are from 45 countries and represent the full range of stakeholders and sectors involved in finding solutions to water scarcity and pollution - business and government, international organisations and civil society, academia and consultancy.

As the world leader in Water Footprint Assessment, our standard, data and tools illuminate the path towards Integrated Water Resource Management and accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

Our aim is to ensure fair and smart use of the world’s fresh water by providing robust scientific insights into how we use and manage water resources. We do this to strive towards our vision of a world in which we share clean fresh water fairly amongst all people to sustain thriving communities and nature’s diversity.

Since our foundation in 2008, investment and interest in sustainable water use has increased and is expected to intensify in coming years as the frequency and scale of water crises escalates. To ensure we continue to provide a unique contribution towards solving these crises within this new context, Water Footprint Network has developed a Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020. This was drawn up during the second half of 2015 through a consultative and collaborative process involving a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in the future development of Water Footprint Network and our work.

The plan builds upon the experience of our first years of operation and an assessment of upcoming opportunities in order to define the direction for the organisation over coming years.
Water Footprint Network Core Strategy 2016 - 2020

Overall aim

Fair and smart use of the world's fresh water

Specific aims

- Strengthen the multi-stakeholder Network
- Increase water footprint awareness amongst companies, governments and citizens
- Influence policy and practice through the uptake of Water Footprint Assessment
- Fortify scientific foundations for local and global change

Delivery strategies

- Provide open access to customised information, analyses and tools
- Develop joint initiatives and expand knowledge sharing
- Conduct projects and build capacity in others
- Develop the Water Footprint Research Alliance

Principles

- Science: Our work is grounded in science
- Partnership: Collaboration and cooperation are essential to us
- Multiplier effect: We accelerate change by empowering others
- Focus: We focus our efforts where our impact is greatest
- Learning: We learn from our work and share that learning
- Accountability: We are open and transparent
Improving Access to Resources

In 2015, we **advanced knowledge in sustainable water** use by exchanging information, ideas and innovation. We made every effort to share our expertise and resources as widely as possible in order to equip people with the essential ingredients they need to rethink how they value water.

During the year, we launched a **new brand identity** and **website**. Our [website](#) provides open access to Water Footprint Assessment knowledge, tools, data and results. It includes information about the water footprint methodology and explains how and why we apply it across regions and sectors. The new site is designed to be easier to navigate and to guide a variety of visitors, from water footprint novices to experts, towards the information they need.

Expanding Tools & Data

We continued to provide **access to reliable and accurate data and improve tools** that support smart solutions for water stewardship, resource efficiency and effective governance.
We updated the **National Water Footprint Explorer** with new data, improved function and design. We upgraded the **Water Footprint Assessment Tool**, which presents detailed analysis, based on the most robust water footprint data, in a series of visually appealing maps, easy-to-read charts and informative tables. By adding a new sustainability step to the Production Assessment, users can now see where a product or business water footprint passes or fails river basin or sustainability benchmark checks. We have added response guidance on how and where to work if it fails, to help users reduce the water footprint and progress towards water stewardship.
Sharing Knowledge

Events

In 2015, we participated in more than 20 events in 17 countries

At these events, we brought forward the valuable contributions that Water Footprint Assessment can make to achieving the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. We demonstrated how we can support progress toward sustainable water use by contributing insights on water stewardship, the circular economy, the water-food-energy nexus and Public-Private Partnerships. We shed light on how understanding the water footprint can lead to innovation in government policies and business enterprise and turn water challenges into opportunities and we advocated steps to take towards achieving our vision for sustainable, equitable and efficient water use.

Contributing to Sustainable Development

We kicked off the year in Spain by convening a side event in January at the UN-Water Annual International Zaragoza Conference - Water and Sustainable Development: From Vision to Action. Speakers from government, business, academia and non-governmental organisations demonstrated how Water Footprint Assessment can support the achievement of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. We further discussed how the stand alone water goal (Goal 6) would encourage the building of bridges between experts in Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and water resource management at an event held in March by the IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre.

With the focus on Water for Development at Stockholm World Water Week in August, we presented an example of successful sustainable development based on our study of cotton farming in India. The results show that improvements in agricultural practices can increase farmers’ yields and benefit the environment through reduced water footprints. That week, we also co-convened an event with Alliance for Water Stewardship - Feeding Nine Billion People: How Water Stewardship Can Help - during which we moderated a debate on whether water issues are only local or whether they also need to be addressed from a global perspective. The conclusion was that building local capacity in addressing water issues is essential as is using the water footprint to link local producers with global consumers; understanding local water uses within the context of global economic drivers will strengthen the results of local efforts.
Supporting Progress

Water Footprint Assessment can inform innovation and advance solutions on all scales – local, regional and global. At the International Water Summit in Abu Dhabi in January we discussed water stewardship and the economics of water with representatives from some of the world’s most water stressed countries. We joined an international expert panel to celebrate World Water Day in March with local government officials, teachers and students in San Luis, Argentina, a farming community that has conducted the first ever water footprint study of a state in Latin America. In April, we shared our global water expertise and practical solutions at the World Water Forum in South Korea in sessions that took a global perspective on water stewardship, Public-Private Partnerships, water for food and energy, the circular economy and on water efficiency in the EU regional process. In October, at the World Resources Forum in Davos, we laid out a multi-layered approach to establishing global and regional targets for the sustainable use of freshwater resources.

Turning Challenges into Opportunities

In March, the drought in Brazil brought us to Belo Horizonte in the state of Minas Gerais. There, we shared our experiences with the area’s key public and private sector actors, at an event organised by the Secretariat of Science, Technology & Higher Education of the State of Minas Gerais (SECTES) and the Dutch Network in Brazil. Finding solutions to local challenges, like those faced in this state, requires innovation by local governments and businesses. We showed how they
could use Water Footprint Assessment to identify innovative ways to address unsustainable local water usage, reduce the negative economic and environmental impacts of competition for water and improve water management during drought.

In November, we were invited to Bangkok to explain how Water Footprint Assessment can advance innovation and help turn water challenges into business opportunities across the Asia Pacific region at the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Task Force on Innovation and Competitiveness.

Advocating Solutions

To meet the aims of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, we must build momentum for responding to the challenges of unsustainable use of water resources and endeavour to turn water related risks into opportunities at all scales. At the launch of the World Water Development Report 2015 Water for a Sustainable World in May, we shared our vision of a world in which environmentally sustainable, fairly shared and efficient water use can be achieved by setting water footprint caps for river basins, water footprint shares per person and water footprint benchmarks for products.
Media

2015 saw interest in the water footprint grow amongst media, most notably in the USA, which has one of the highest water footprints per capita in the world. In a feature that summarized the top five food related issues of the year, a Los Angeles Times reporter cited 2015 as “…the year that consumers learned about the water footprint of food”.

Water Footprint Network, our founder Arjen Hoekstra and his research team at the University of Twente provided advice and shared knowledge and resources with hundreds of individuals and media outlets. Many media outlets used WaterStat, the world’s most comprehensive water footprint database, which we develop and maintain.

Where is Water?, the second film of The Water Rooms by UNESCO WWAP uses data from WaterStat to create an engaging and succinct story about the water footprint of the products we consume. The short film clearly illustrates our inter-dependency on fresh water in a globalized economy and illuminates our collective responsibility to live sustainably, within earth’s limits.
National Geographic used our global water footprint averages to create infographics that explain *The Hidden Water We Use* and published a feature that threw the spotlight on the water footprint of crops grown in the USA for export. The Huffington Post ran a blog based on a radio feature about our work by Peter Neill, Director of World Ocean Observatory. It also used WaterStat data in a feature about the water footprint of popular drinks, as did *Mother Jones*. WaterStat was used by Future Food 2050 to create a graphic and by the Washington Post for a feature on the importance of eating grains for our own health and that of the planet. WaterStat data was also used for a series of graphics by the Los Angeles Times about the water footprint of food (1, 2, and 3).

The water footprint of food waste also caught significant attention in 2015, captured in an article in the Smithsonian that featured a graphic by our partner, GRACE Communications, produced using WaterStat data, as well as a quote by our Executive Director, Ruth Mathews:

An advert featuring actor Pamela Anderson, produced by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), urged consumers to think about the water footprint of meat and dairy products.
The Guardian used water footprint data from our product gallery for an article about food companies and global water scarcity and cited water footprint research in a feature on the water related cost of cotton in India.

With our support, BBC Radio 5 Live Breakfast created a new Water Footprint Calculator tailored for use by UK citizens. The new tool indicates how diet and lifestyles affect the amount of water you use and compares your footprint with the rest of the UK.

Sustainability published a ranking guide of water use of 75 of the largest listed companies in The Netherlands, produced by Arjen Hoekstra and Marissa Linneman of the University of Twente and Wouter Berkhout of Royal HaskoningDHV, with support from us and WWF.

In spite of increased public attention, many companies are still just waking up to the importance of understanding their water footprint. A briefing paper, produced by Ethical Corporation Magazine, discussed the slow growth in water stewardship amongst companies, in which Ruth Mathews said:

“Mostly the leaders – in terms of companies engaging in water stewardship – are those with the most financial or reputational risk. Though it is still a small proportion, there are many more than there were five years ago, and I think there will soon be exponential growth.”
Advancing Water Footprint Assessment

Water Footprint Assessment is both unique and versatile. It can inform a broad range of strategic actions and policies from environmental, social and economic perspectives. It is uniquely capable of addressing both water quantity and water quality issues with a common indicator. It can assess water use and pollution where it occurs and link this throughout the supply chain. It can also provide a geographic perspective which means that the sustainability and efficiency of each step of the supply chain can be examined.

By assessing their water use, businesses, governments, investors and farmers can find out how much water is available in river basins and aquifers and how much pollution can be assimilated. These insights help identify which strategic actions should be prioritized in order to make the water footprint more sustainable. They can lead to practices, policies, regulations and governance that safeguard economic and food security and support sustainable development, based on fair water allocation within ecological limits.

Influencing Policy

2015 was the year that interest in the water footprint in Latin America spread from the private sector into the public sector. Colombia, Chile, Peru and Mexico all took steps to incorporate the water footprint into public policy.

In Colombia our partners, Good Stuff International (GSI) and the Centre for Science and Technology Antiochica (CTA), assessed the water footprint of all river basins, in a project that supported the national Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM) and was funded by the Swiss Development Corporation (SDC) and the CTA. In Chile, the SDC funded our work with Fundacion Chile to develop a methodology for Water Footprint Assessment at the river basin scale and piloted it in the Rapel River Basin. The Peruvian water authority conducted a national Water Footprint Assessment with WWF and published a voluntary water footprint programme for companies that encourages them to commit to reducing their water footprint.

The Mexican Water Commission (CONAGUA) adopted the blue water footprint per unit of product to measure water use efficiency. The new regulation establishes a methodology to determine the volume of efficient water use, the coefficient of efficient water use and the direct blue water footprint, resulting in fiscal benefits for efficient users. It will be applied to specific river basins with an aim of rapidly expanding it across the country so that it can be applied to all Mexican users. This contributes towards implementing a comprehensive development policy that links
environmental costs and benefits towards a competitive, sustainable, resilient and low-carbon economy, a goal of the National Development Plan 2013-2018.

In Argentina, the province of Buenos Aires started to apply legislation that uses the grey water footprint in wastewater fees, by piloting projects in the Arroyo Conchitas-Canal Platanos.

Following our project with partner Servicios Ambientales S.A., (SASA) on the water footprint of La Paz (Bolivia), Quito (Ecuador) and Lima (Peru), a further eight cities are learning about their water footprint: Tarija and Santa Cruz de la Sierra (Bolivia); Loja, Santa Cruz de Galapagos and Guayaquil (Ecuador); Fortaleza and Recife (Brazil); and Cali (Colombia). This is part of an initiative that works with municipal governments across South America to orientate the growth of cities towards low carbon and climate resilient development. La Paz, Quito and Lima all had a high grey water footprint, indicating a high level of contamination in the water courses. Results are pending for the other eight cities.

In Turkey, we contributed technical assistance, training and supervision for the Mugla Municipality Urban Water Footprint Project, conducted by our partner GTE Carbon, a leading carbon and sustainability project development and consultancy company. We participated in a high level stakeholder meeting discussing the project results - a clean water action plan based on the water footprint for Mugla province, a popular tourist destination and an important region for agricultural production.

As part of the European’s Horizon 2020 programme, we have joined an impressive consortium of 23 knowledge institutes in nine countries in IMPREX (IMproving PRedictions and management of hydrological EXtremes). Launched in the end of 2015 and running until 2018, we will assess the impacts of hydrological extremes on the European economy and examine the risks related to the global supply and production of goods due to climate change.

Towards Sustainable Production

Water Footprint Network is working to improve the sustainability of the textile sector, one of the most water intensive industries in the world. In 2015, as part of a multi-year programme with the C&A Foundation, we studied the impact of cotton farming on water resources in India. Using farm data provided by CottonConnect, we compared the
water footprint of three different agricultural practices – conventional, Responsible Environment Enhanced Livelihoods (REEL) Cotton and organic - in three Indian states. We found that significant water footprint savings are possible with changes at farm level, with clear benefits seen on farms where investment had been made into technology, local expertise and capacity building.

We are an implementing partner in the Bangladesh Partnership for Cleaner Textile (PACT), which brings together international clothing brands, washing-dyeing-finishing mills and multi-stakeholders to transform the sector for its long-term viability and sustainability. The number of washing-dyeing-finishing mills in and around Dhaka, Bangladesh has grown rapidly in recent years putting mounting pressure on groundwater and degrading surface water quality. We are calculating the water footprint of the mills, the brands and the textile clusters to better understand how water can be used more sustainably and what can be done to reduce the impacts on local communities. In 2015, the data and evidence base for completing the Water Footprint Assessment of the Konabari textile cluster was developed. The cluster Water Footprint Assessment will provide the local context within which the buyers’ and mills’ water footprint occurs, and the impacts that it is having on water resources, the environment and local communities.

We are also working with the drinks industry. In 2015, we helped the Chilean wine sector manage water more efficiently. Together with our partners, Mayor University and Agrosustentable, we conducted a Water Footprint Assessment of agricultural production and industrial processes for wine production. As part of the project, advanced technology was used to determine the optimal irrigation scheduling to reduce water consumption.

Through our partnership with The Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI), we participated in a multi-stakeholder process that included leading industry representatives and academic experts to develop the methodology for conducting a Water Footprint Assessment of paper products. Strengthened by two case studies from Europe, the final paper represents a sector approach to calculating the water footprint, unravelling key water footprint hotspots and formulating appropriate response strategies to use fresh water both sustainably and efficiently.

We provided expertise and capacity building for a Water Footprint Assessment of five companies from a variety of sectors in both Peru and Chile, as part of SuizAqua, a programme initiated by the SDC when it learned that 82% of Switzerland’s water footprint lies outside its border.

Engaging Citizens & Small and Medium-sized Enterprises

Water Footprint Network contributed our expertise to a number of public facing, awareness building initiatives. In 2015, we joined consortia of organisations for two
programmes that are developing resources and tools to increase water footprint awareness in Europe. Both are funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The AquaPath Project is an initiative to help empower European citizens to use water more responsibly. It is developing a set of accessible training and awareness materials that will be publicly available in multiple languages soon. These include a personal water footprint calculator, personal training tests and specific educational materials for children and school teachers. The resources encourage everyone in Europe to: reduce their direct water consumption; change their consumption habits by using less water intensive products; and apply pressure on brands and manufacturers so they alter their processes and offer products with sustainable water footprints.

The Save H2O Project will help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Europe understand their water footprint in order to embed sustainable water management into their businesses. The project team is creating a set of training materials and tools. The resources will equip SME managers and owners, as well as technical staff and experts from business support organisations, with the skills and knowledge to evaluate the water footprint of SMEs and to design strategies that help reduce the water footprint whilst remaining competitive.
Suppliers & Supply Chains

We have joined forces with founding partner International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the China National Standardization Institute (CNIS) on a project for Muyuan Foodstuff Company, Ltd. in China. The company, which is principally engaged in the breeding and distribution of pigs, has launched the first ever sector-wide Water Footprint Assessment. We are assessing the water footprint of the company’s five facilities along its production chain and assessing the sustainability and impact of their direct operational water footprint and the water footprint of the supply-chain materials. Through this project, the company will contribute to the development of China’s national water footprint standards, supported by CNIS.

With an interest in building water footprint awareness in its guests through its BLU PLANET initiative, Radisson Blu, one of Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group’s leading global hotel brands engaged us to compare the water footprint of two breakfasts. Using the Radisson Blu Hotel, Zurich Airport as a case study we assessed the water footprint of the existing and new Blu Super Breakfasts. We found that the new Blu Super Breakfast can potentially lead to a 22% reduction in the breakfast water footprint. This is an important first step for Radisson Blu in its water stewardship journey and has encouraged the hotel group to help raise awareness amongst its guests on the issues of water sustainability and the value of reducing every water footprint.

“Everything we eat, drink and buy creates a footprint on our planet. It is estimated that 86% of a hotel’s water use in the total value chain is the embedded water in Food & Drink products. Signalling our commitment to water stewardship, Radisson Blu is delighted to report these significant reductions in the water footprint of its Super Breakfast offer.

Inge Huijbregts
Vice President Responsible Business Radisson Blu
Water-Related Risk Assessment

Many regions of the world are experiencing serious droughts, severe water scarcity and poor water quality. This has concentrated investors’ attention on the problems that water risks could pose to companies and portfolios. Working with the Netherlands Development Finance Company (FMO) portfolio, we developed an online tool that allows FMO to explore water-related risks in their portfolio of clients. The results from the tool can be used to manage FMO’s investment risks and for engagement with clients in monitoring and mitigating their water risks.

In Turkey, together with GTE Carbon, we established a water risk assessment framework for the Yaşar Group and applied it to help four companies within the Group understand their water footprints, the sustainability of those water footprints, and the risk to their business emanating from the use of water in their operations. The results reveal how, even with a limited amount of data, these facilities could improve their water use and minimize their potential risk related to their water use. Understanding the water footprint of its portfolio companies, the sustainability of their water use, the risks they face and the actions they could take to mitigate those risks provides a sound foundation for the Yaşar Group to move along the corporate water stewardship progression path.

As a first step in developing a worldwide water stewardship programme for the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG®), one of the world’s leading hotel companies, we are conducting a detailed water risk assessment for all existing and pipeline hotels. We are working with IHG to develop a deep understanding of the group’s water usage and to identify water stewardship actions that can reduce a hotel’s water footprint.
The businesses and governments we have worked with gained insights from Water Footprint Assessment giving them a solid, scientific foundation for more effective water strategies. This will help them make positive progress towards balancing agricultural and industrial water use with the needs of communities and nature. Gaining an understanding of the impact of the water footprint not only makes humanitarian and environmental sense, it also makes economic sense because lack of access to sufficient water of the quality needed poses a material risk.

Training

In 2015, we trained more than 200 people from over 20 countries

We continued our training and capacity building programme with the International Network for Capacity Development in Sustainable Water Management (Cap-Net UNDP), a partnership that began in 2013 with a training course in South Africa. We conducted the first Water Footprint Training Course in Malaysia, organised by UNESCO Jakarta, Malaysian Water Partnership (MyWP) and Malaysian Capacity Development for Sustainable Water Management (MyCDNet). During the three-day course, 47 participants from Southeast Asia were equipped to become Water Footprint Assessment practitioners and trainers in the region. We also ran a short Water Footprint Awareness course at the XXI Brazilian Symposium on Water Resources with Cap-Net UNDP and Cap-Net Brazil, in partnership the Brazilian Association of Water Resources (ABRH).

Det Norske Veritas and Germanischer Lloyd (DNV GL), a business committed to safeguarding life, property and the environment through assurance and certification, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and Water Footprint Network have formed a partnership to raise awareness of the importance of water sustainability to companies and to build capacity in Water Footprint Assessment. This year, we delivered a Global Water Footprint Assessment Course in South Africa and conducted a short course in Denmark for business representatives to learn about how Water Footprint Assessment can be used to support their company’s water stewardship journey.

In South America we delivered several training courses to support the rapidly growing interest in water footprint. In Colombia we held our Global Water Footprint Standard Training Course with GSI and CTA. Fifty participants from the public, corporate and education sectors learned how to conduct and apply Water Footprint Assessment to public policy for Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and sustainable water management in the private sector. In Mexico we ran an intensive course on Water Footprint Assessment methodology and application with the Mexican Water Technology Institute (IMTA) and the University
of Twente. Twenty-five representatives from IMTA joined the course, along with 14 from other research institutions and universities, as well as public agencies and private companies. We shared the stage with other water experts at a course for business professionals and government officials in water footprint and sustainability, organised as part of Latin American Water Week held in Chile.

Our partner, Water Observatory of the Botín Foundation, organised an International Training in Applied Methods for Water Footprint Assessment: Global Water Footprint Standard and ISO14046. Held in Spain, we helped train participants from the private sector on how to incorporate Water Footprint Assessment as part of their company’s strategy for sustainable water use.

We held our flagship four-day Global Water Footprint Standard training course in Amsterdam that not only trained participants in Water Footprint Assessment and facilitated knowledge sharing, but also provided an opportunity to explore future collaboration in the field. In addition, we conducted two e-learning courses together with researchers from the University of Twente and contributed to their ten-week Master Course Hydrology and Water Footprint Assessment.
Advancing science

Water Footprint Network bridges science and practice. To ensure a strong scientific foundation for Water Footprint Assessment, we stimulate research that can support practical applications for governments and businesses.

In 2015, we launched the Water Footprint Research Alliance, a new platform that brings together leading researchers from around the world. The Alliance identifies and fills gaps in current knowledge, holds events and shares research.

We also supported a PhD researcher at the University of Twente, with funding from WWF. The research focuses on a global assessment of green water scarcity and explores how the use of green water could reduce the agricultural industry’s reliance on blue water.

Key Publications 2015

Since our foundation, there has been an increase in the number of publications that mention water footprint every year.

In 2015, 284 new publications mentioned water footprint and 114 mentioned virtual water flows


Written in clear language and with high scientific integrity, it is a concise and comprehensive digest of emerging concepts, tools and arguments around water footprint approaches and is a 'must read’ for any business wanting to become a good water steward.
Figure featured in one of the papers, *The Water footprint of Food Aid* by Jackson, N., Konar, M., and Hoekstra, A.Y., (2015) Sustainability, 7, 6435-6456; doi:10.3390/su7066435. The figure was created with network visualisation software available at http://circos.ca, developed by Krzywinski et al.


FMO commissioned us to undertake a Water Footprint Assessment of three of its clients to represent the sugar value chain. The study furthers FMO’s aim to be the first financial institution to set measurable indicators and targets for both its development impact and its environmental footprint. *Water Footprint Assessment of FMO’s Agribusiness Portfolio: Towards halving the footprint in the sugar supply chain* by Chico, D. Zhang, G. of Water Footprint Network (2015).

More publications can be found on our [website](#).
2015 was a year of significant organisational development for us. We **moved our head office** to the International Water House in The Hague having spent the first years of our growth at the University of Twente. The more central location means we can respond with greater agility to the rising call for our expertise and is already accelerating our impact.

Whilst The Hague is our base, we are a multicultural team that is united in its passion for our shared vision. We are committed to ensuring that our organisational principles flow through all aspects of our efforts to escalate global change in water use.
Governance

Water Footprint Network is a foundation under Dutch law. Our governance structure consists of a Supervisory Council and Executive Board.

Supervisory Council

Arjen Y. Hoekstra
Chair

Arjen is Professor in Water Management at the University of Twente. He created the water footprint concept in 2002 and co-founded the Water Footprint Network.

Richard Holland
Treasurer

Richard is Director of WWF’s Market Transformation Initiative which aims to reduce the impact of global commodity production on priority places for biodiversity worldwide.

Joppe F. Cramwinckel
Member

Joppe is Director of the Water Programme at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. Before joining the WBCSD, he was Sustainable Development Lead for Shell International Exploration and Production.

Wim Bastiaanssen
Member

Wim is a professor of global water accounting for UNESCO-IHE and professor of civil engineering and geosciences at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands.
Executive Board

Ruth Mathews  
Executive Director

Ruth has led our multi-cultural team for the past five years. In that time, she has provided strategic direction for the organisation and steered the way on initiatives and projects. She presents at numerous forums, sharing insight into the value that water footprint can bring to society and the environment and contributes to scientific, technical and policy agreements.

With thanks to our valued partners

100 organisations from 45 countries, working together for sustainable water use

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GAIA Servicios Ambientales S.A.S.
Geoclock
Global Footprint Network
Good Stuff International
GRACE Communications Foundation
Green Wise
Grontmij
GTE Carbon
Heineken
International Finance Corporation (IFC)
iMdea Water Foundation
Instituto Mexicano de Tecnología del Agua (IMTA)
INHA University
Universidad Autonoma de San Luis Potosi (UASLP)
Universidad de Zaragoza
University of British Columbia
University of the Free State
University of Twente
Viña Concha y Toro S.A.
Water Neutral Foundation
Waterscan
WBCSD
WRAP
WWF
Yara GmnH & Co.
Yasin Knittex Industries Ltd.
Read the full 2015 financial report on our website.