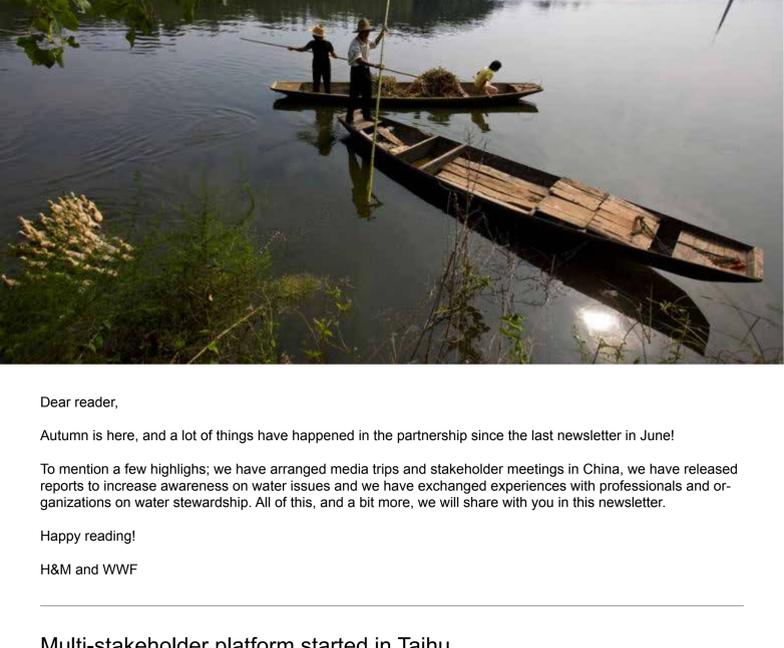


[About WWF](#) | [About H&M and water](#) | [Water Stewardship](#)



Dear reader,

Autumn is here, and a lot of things have happened in the partnership since the last newsletter in June!

To mention a few highlights; we have arranged media trips and stakeholder meetings in China, we have released reports to increase awareness on water issues and we have exchanged experiences with professionals and organizations on water stewardship. All of this, and a bit more, we will share with you in this newsletter.

Happy reading!

H&M and WWF

Multi-stakeholder platform started in Taihu

Text: Erika Sundell, WWF Sweden

WWF and H&M have started the first multi-stakeholder water stewardship platform in Taihu to gather the voices from IP committees, local dyeing associations, dyeing mill representatives, academics and NGOs, around the implementation of water stewardship in the region. The first workshop was held in August 2015 and this was the first time that local NGOs communicated face-to-face with policy-makers on water stewardship issues.

WWF and H&M have also started an NGO network, also participating in the platform, in the Taihu basin which will play a critical role on public participation and collective actions around the basin level, connecting policy makers and local communities.



Picture from the multi-stakeholder meeting in Taihu, China.

Press trip to demonstrate water stewardship work in China

Text: Eric Wang, H&M China

During mid August, H&M China organized a press trip to Wuhan, to showcase H&M's water stewardship work in China, in particular the Tian E Zhou finless porpoise conservation project. H&M will be funding the WWF conservation project since 2013 with the overall purpose to save the endangered species by securing the habitat of the porpoises.

Five media titles joined the press trip; four of them were fashion media and one business media. On the first morning, H&M China's region sustainability department and WWF Wuhan office made a joint presentation on H&M's sustainability vision, water strategy and the results of the H&M-WWF Yangtze Basin Water Stewardship work.



Photo: H&M

Media then visited the Institute of Hydrobiology (IHB) to interact with the finless porpoises. On the next day, media headed to the Tian E Zhou conservation site. The group went to Tian E Zhou Oxbow Lake to visit the sustainable cotton farming demonstration site to get a better understanding of the approaches taken on sustainable farming and how it contributes to conserving the local habitat of the finless porpoise.

The purpose of the press trip was to raise awareness of H&M's environmental sustainability work, focusing on sustainable water management in the Yangtze River Basin.



Photo: H&M

View some coverage from the trip here:

["YICAI: Will finless porpoise be next disappearing smiling angel?"](#) (in Chinese)

Managing business water risk through collaboration

Text: Erika Reje, WWF Sweden

During [World Water Week](#) - the global annual conference for everyone with an interest in water issues - H&M and WWF arranged a joint seminar together with CEO Water Mandate, an initiative to drive water action among corporations. The session had a panel of six coming from both private and non-profit sector; CEO Water Mandate, InBev, Tommy Hilfiger, H&M and WWF. The session started off by short presentations held by each panel member, followed by discussion on learning and trends in water stewardship.

The panelists had noticed a growing interest for water stewardship among companies, as more companies gain further perspective on how water can affect their business. During the past ten years, the discussion has moved from "water footprint" to "a global risk of the economy" and "value".

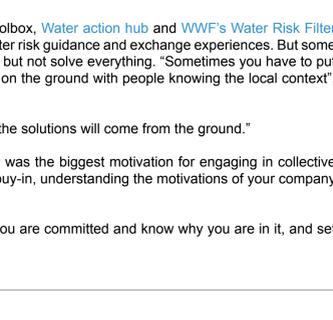


Image showing six of the panelists. From left: Stuart Orr, WWF International, Joyce Tsai, H&M, Ezgi Barcanas, AB InBev, Jason Morrison, CEO Water Mandate, Esther Verburg, Tommy Hilfiger, Wenwei Ren, WWF China. Photo: Erika Sundell



Elisabeth Swayze, H&M, presents H&M's global water strategy.

Common challenges when working with water stewardship and collective actions were trust and to find mutual interests. That standards are lacking also makes it challenging. WWF and H&M work collaboratively to develop an international water stewardship standard with a localised methodology, and are piloting this localised methodology in the Yangtze river basin with a wide range of stakeholders.

Wenwei Ren from WWF China explained how they adapt their language to their audience. "Water stewardship is a new concept that not many in China understand. We try to use a language that incentivize the listener, and talk in opportunities and actions rather than risks."

Tools such as CEO Water Mandate's WSI management toolbox, [Water action hub](#) and [WWF's Water Risk Filter](#) were mentioned as examples where companies can find water risk guidance and exchange experiences. But some panelists also stressed that tools will give a good overview, but not solve everything. "Sometimes you have to put your computer down. You also need to do some dirty work on the ground with people knowing the local context", said Stuart Orr at WWF International.

Joyce Tsai at H&M agreed: "Local approach is key. A lot of the solutions will come from the ground."

To see the biggest success when working with sustainability was the biggest motivation for engaging in collective actions. Other key success factors were top management buy-in, understanding the motivations of your company and to accept uncertainty.

Jason Morrison at CEO Water Mandate said: "Make sure you are committed and know why you are in it, and set objectives to measure results."

Voices on water stewardship during World Water Week

Text: Erika Reje, WWF Sweden

World Water Week attracts around 3000 participants from different organisations every year. We asked Water Week participant Stuart Orr at WWF International and Water Week organizer Torgny Holmgren at SIWI about their main takeaways at World Water Week and how they think water stewardship will develop in the coming years.



Torgny Holmgren, Managing Director of SIWI and organizer of World Water Week. What was distinctive for this year's Water Week?

One topic discussed was water scarcity and how we can solve the growing crisis; how do we achieve better water management and the behavioral changes needed? Other topics were the UN Sustainable Development Goals where water is a separate goal but also a prerequisite for several others, such as health and poverty. Positive trends that also were highlighted were how countries unite to collaborate on shared water resources and companies' increased interest in water risks.

What are the biggest trends within water today?

The increasing interest in water issues among companies. A growing number recognize that water is a prerequisite for their future operations. Not only to avoid risks and potential costs, but also to recognize that sustainability is both profitable and necessary.

How will the area develop in the next five years?

We will see new innovations and solutions that will improve water management and generate new jobs. I usually compare with the energy industry, where the discussion around sustainability has helped push innovation in the sector. We will also see new pricing mechanisms on water. In some countries, like Australia and China, this has already started.



Stuart Orr, Head of Water Stewardship at WWF International. What were the main highlights of World Water Week this year?

There were a lot of interesting discussions about the UN's new sustainability goals. A positive development was that more seminars were held on water stewardship and water risks for companies. Moreover, I liked that the conference was so central in Stockholm this year!

Water risks and water stewardship were topics discussed during the week. What are the biggest trends in the area?

The sheer amount of sessions on this is a good sign that the interest is growing.

However, while we are seeing some progress there are still too many companies using this as a way to communicate without much substance. For sure the debate is moving ahead - groups like AWS are more established, and WFN, WBCSD, IPIECA and WRI have their audiences. One of WWF's objectives during the week was to show how we are evolving our own thinking and work on risk and valuation as well as show experiences from the field. This is a big change and a welcome one, as it's making it hard for companies to hide. What I mean is that real opportunities are arising in river basins around risk issues and it's hard to say you are a 'steward - addressing risk' if you're not involved.

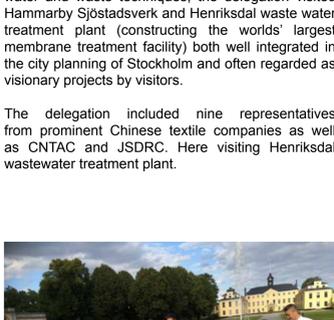
Looking five years from now, how will companies work with water stewardship?

The shift is already happening. On the one hand you will see a lot of progress around collective action and genuine efforts to change the situation on the ground. But I think you will equally see companies still stuck in meaningless pledges and missing their audience and strategy. One of the hardest things for WWF and companies alike is to navigate an area where there will be real innovation but ensuring that what we do is meaningful and not just about making empty claims. That's a challenge for sure.

WWF releases reports to help companies use water sustainably

Text: Erika Reje, WWF Sweden

Managing our water resources in a sustainable manner is a prerequisite for future growth. This autumn, WWF Sweden launched a report on water risks in the Swedish industry and a water guide with advice on how companies can understand and manage their water risks.



Water is essential to all life and provides us with food, energy and resources. But water is a scarce resource, and already by 2030 water demand is expected to exceed supply by 40 percent. According to the World Economic Forum, water shortage is the world's largest risk that is likely to have a major impact on people, nature and the economy.

The WWF report ["No water, no business"](#) analyses water risks in some of Swedish biggest industries with operations abroad: Five of the six in the manufacturing industry and the sixth being the fashion sector. The report also looks at water risks for three important intermediary goods: steel, cotton and rare earth elements. The results show that water risks among Swedish companies are common and need to be managed. While managing risks mean challenges, they also mean new opportunities for companies that are in the forefront. Accompanying the report, WWF also released a [water guide](#) for companies with advice on how to start working with water risks.

- The water crisis is a growing challenge. Far from all companies have full control over what happens in the entire value chain of their business. We hope that the report and the guide will raise awareness and serve as practical tools when working with water issues, and that more companies, boards and investors get the issue higher up on the agenda, said Daniel Robertson, Senior Manager Corporate Partnerships at WWF.

In both publications, H&M and the partnership's work is illustrated as a positive example for water stewardship.

Read more - press coverage:

- [Swedish business daily Magazines Industri: "Water issues becoming more important to companies"](#) (In Swedish)
- [Swedish environmental magazine Miljöaktuell: WWF launches "water guide for companies"](#) (in Swedish)

Chinese delegation CNTAC visits Sweden

Text: Yuqing Shen WWF China and Charlotta Jarmark, WWF Sweden

In August, WWF, H&M and the city of Stockholm received a prominent delegation from [China National Textile & Apparel Council \(CNTAC\)](#), a strong stakeholder in the water stewardship partnership between H&M and WWF. The CNTAC business visit to Europe focused on water stewardship and waste textile recycling.



Image: The delegation included 9 representatives from prominent Chinese textile companies as well as CNTAC and JSDRC. Here visiting Henriksdal wastewater treatment plant. Photo: Charlotta Jarmark, WWF

A connection for increased opportunities

There is a strong need to establish an open platform of broad collaboration when engaging in Water Stewardship, involving international brands, production corporations, NGOs and intergovernmental institutions. WWF connected with CNTAC to accelerate information sharing and capacity building and to improve the industry as well as the public awareness of environmental and natural resource protection.

Exploring potential and needs for water stewardship

Already during the opening meeting, intense discussions started on the potential to transform water management practices of the textile industry in China. Since implementing sustainable development requires capacity building with various stakeholders, the need for new finance models is evident. Therefore, sharing best practices in collective action means to engage both with companies, knowledge and labor. To succeed, more partners to join the collective action are needed.

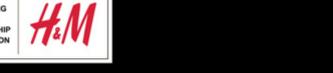


Image: Yuqing Shirley Shen presents WWF work in Water Stewardship together with WWF Global Freshwater Director Dr Lifeng Li and WWF Senior Manager of Corporate Partnerships Daniel Robertsson.

CNTAC and H&M hope to boost the development of China's waste textile recycling industry and put joint efforts on connecting China to the international waste textile recycling industry. Water stewardship and waste textile recycling are important approaches to develop circular economy and construct ecological civilization for textile industry, but currently they are also two comparatively weak aspects in term of technologies and systematic frameworks.

Study visits in Stockholm

For inspiration and discussions focused on innovative water and waste techniques, the delegation visited Hammarby Sjöstadsvärk and Henriksdal waste water treatment plant (constructing the world's largest membrane treatment facility) both well integrated in the city planning of Stockholm and often regarded as visionary projects by visitors.

The delegation included nine representatives from prominent Chinese textile companies as well as CNTAC and JSDRC. Here visiting Henriksdal wastewater treatment plant.

Finally, WWF invited the delegation to visit WWF Sweden's office at Ulriksdal's castle and continued the discussions on water stewardship opportunities. There, the delegation had a beautiful and inspiring afternoon in the castle park before returning back to China.

Closing the loop for fashion - H&M Conscious Foundation launches award

Text: H&M

On August 25, the H&M Conscious Foundation launched the first ever Global Change Award - one of the world's biggest, truly ground-breaking ideas the aim of the challenge is to protect the earth's natural resources by closing the loop for fashion.

The awareness about the challenge is spreading fast across the globe! So far, more than 2,000 innovators, entrepreneurs, researchers, students and designers from 102 countries have signed up for the competition to contribute with their ideas on how to close the loop for fashion.

Find latest external updates (newsletter) [here](#) and sign up for future newsletters [here](#).

There is still time to apply! Application is open until 31 October on www.globalchangeaward.com.

Good-to-know, need-to-have:

- Want to know how H&M works with more sustainable materials? [Find out here](#)
- Check out H&M's film on [Water Stewardship](#)
- Also do not miss the 2 degrees' blogpost ["Five ways water is worth more than you think!"](#)

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