



# **A Key Strategic Challenge “Water”**

**Perspectives from Water  
Footprint**

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[www.waterfootprint.org](http://www.waterfootprint.org)

# ✓ Business and Water: A Key Strategic Challenge

Importance of water in businesses & water related problems

## ✓ Water Footprint

Water footprint of products and businesses

## ✓ From Concept to Practice

Impact assessment, reduction and offsetting

## ✓ Carbon-Water Footprint

Similarities and differences

## ✓ The Way Forward

Water footprint network: vision and mission



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# Business and Water



# Business & Water

## Importance of Water for Businesses

- ✓ Water has becoming scarce
- ✓ Companies which consider water as a key strategic challenge will benefit in the future.
- ✓ Companies which continue to ignore this challenge put themselves at a risk
- ✓ Businesses need to bring new type of thinking to using the most essential ingredient of life: water



# **Business & Water**

## Water Related Risks for Businesses

- ✓ Physical Risks
- ✓ Reputational Risks
- ✓ Regulatory Risks



# Business & Water

## Water Related Problems for Businesses

- ✓ Companies have to understand their water related problems and risks
- ✓ Water scarcity directly impacts business activities, raw material supply, intermediate supply chain and product use in a variety of ways
- ✓ **Businesses' traditional water use estimates often fail to address water problems and risks embedded in the supply chain.**



# Business & Water

## How to sustain business?

- ✓ Measure the company's water footprint.
- ✓ Assess physical, regulatory and reputational risks associated with companies water footprint.
- ✓ Engage key stakeholders as a part of water risk assessment, long term planning and implementation activities.
- ✓ Disclose and communicate water performance and associated risks.



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**The water footprint**



# Water Footprint

## What is Water Footprint?

- ▶ The water footprint of an individual, community or business is defined as the total volume of freshwater that is used to produce the goods and services consumed by the individual or community or produced by the business.
- ▶ when and where the water was used:  
a water footprint includes a temporal and spatial dimension.
- ▶ type of water use:  
green, blue, grey water footprint.



# Water Footprint

What is Water Footprint?

## Green water footprint

volume of rainwater evaporated.

## Blue water footprint

volume of surface or groundwater evaporated.

## Grey water footprint

volume of polluted water.



**How much water is  
needed to produce?**





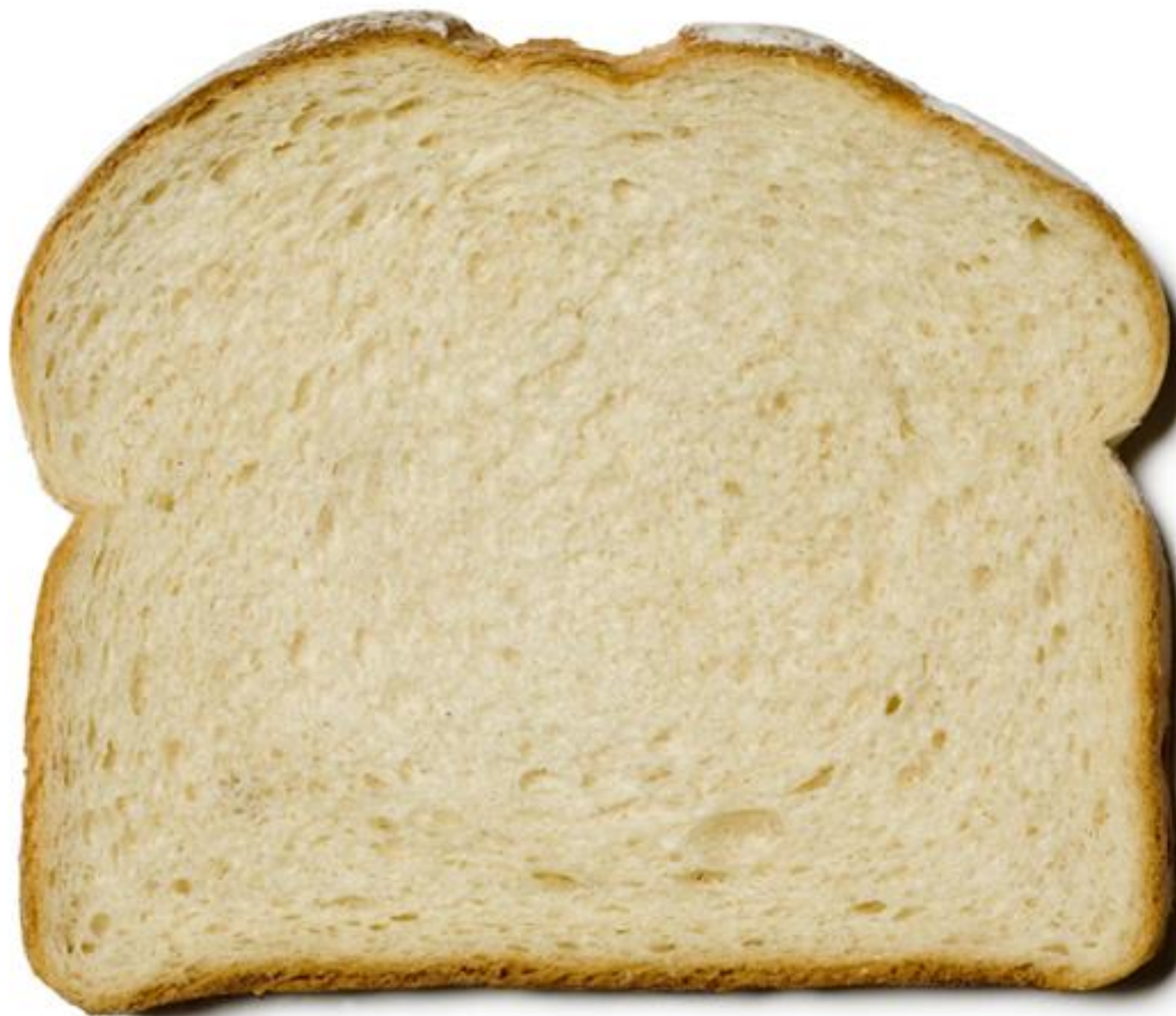
30  
litres

1 cup  
of tea



**2,400  
litres**

**100 gr of  
chocolate**











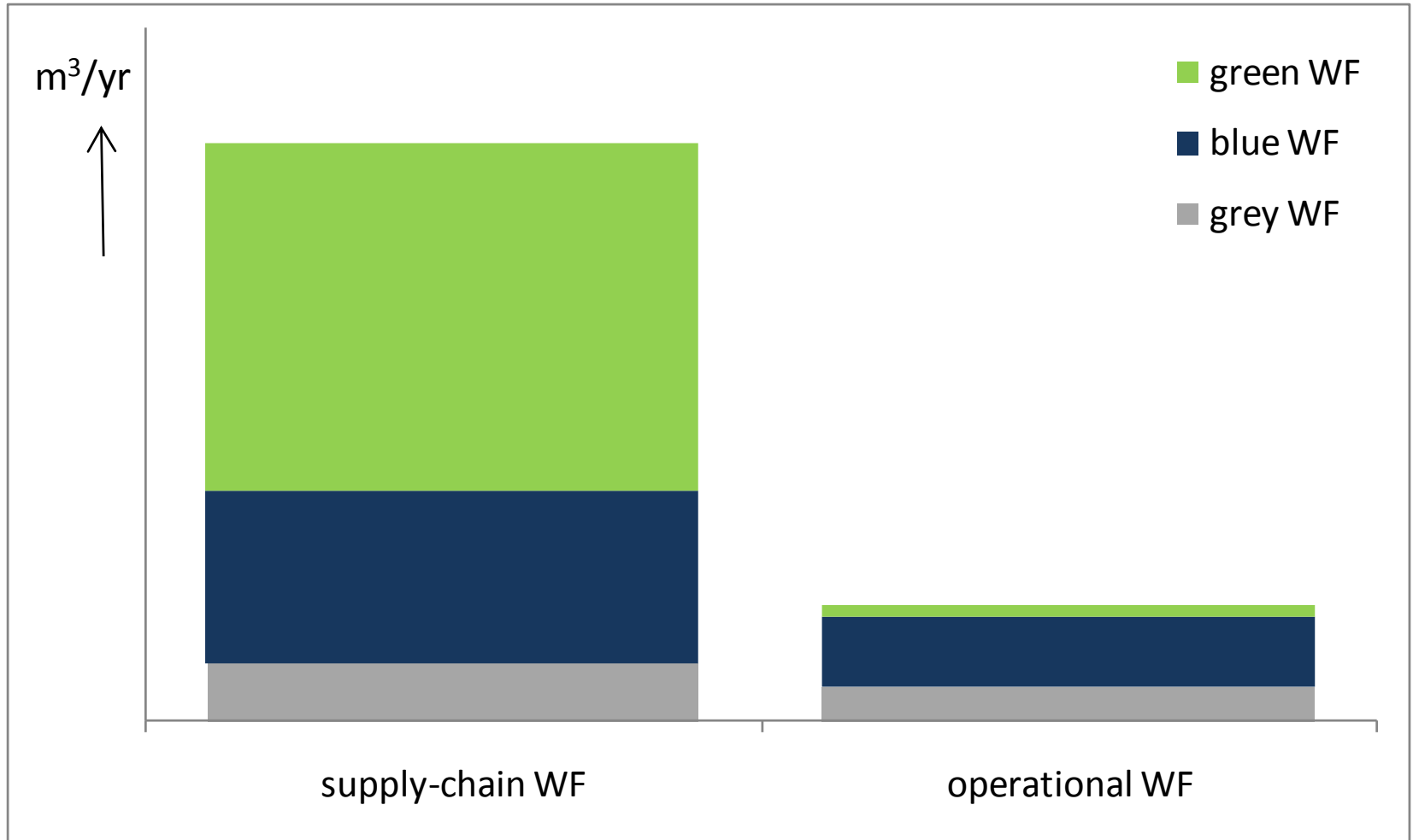






# Product

## Water Footprint of a Product





# Product Water Footprint

## Supply Chain Water Footprint

- 1) Ingredients: Agricultural products such as sugar, barley, fruits etc.
- 2) Other components: Water usage due to production of bottles, packing material, containers, energy
- 3) Grey water from agricultural practice: fertilizers, pesticides etc.
- 4) Overhead Activities - supplied: Factory, energy

## Operational Water Footprint

- 1) Water as a product ingredient: Water withdrawal for bottled water
- 2) Water usage during process: washing, cleaning, cooling etc.
- 3) Grey water from beverage process such as cooking, fermentation, from retail and commercial facilities etc.
- 4) Overhead operational activities



# Water Footprint

## Why Water Footprint?

- ✓ Water footprinting is an emerging approach for water accounting of direct and indirect water use.
- ✓ It is a useful tool for assessing water use and pollution
- ✓ One unit of water is not equal to another.
- ✓ Enables distinction between type of water use: **green**, **blue**, **grey** water footprint.



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From concept to practice

# Practical use of the concepts of water footprint

## 1. Analysis

providing understanding of the relation between production chains, trade and water use

## 2. Awareness raising

showing the link between consumption and impacts of water use

## 3. Indicator for policy making

labelling of products; certification of businesses; benchmarking; setting community standards with respect to water use; international negotiations on sustainable & equitable water use

## Target groups

governments, civil society, businesses, investors, consultants, international agencies, academia

# Water footprint – Carbon footprint

## Water footprint

- spatial and temporal dimension
- actual, locally specific values
- always referring to full supply-chain
- focus on reducing own water footprint (water use units are not interchangeable)

## Carbon footprint

- no spatial / temporal dimension
- global average values
- supply-chain included only in 'scope 3 carbon accounting'
- many efforts focused on offsetting (carbon emission units are interchangeable)

*Water footprint and carbon footprint are complementary tools.*



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Water Footprint Network

**Mission:** Promoting sustainable, equitable and efficient water use through development of **shared standards** on water footprint accounting and guidelines for the reduction and offsetting of impacts of water footprints.

**Network:** bringing together expertise from academia, businesses, civil society, governments and international organisations.



# Water Footprint Network

## Why WF Network?

- ✓ **Water footprint network is:**
  - ✓ **developing standards for water accounting,**
  - ✓ **developing tools,**
  - ✓ **facilitating harmonization and dissemination of the methodology,**
  - ✓ **providing support and advice.**

Water footprint

La huella hídrica

L'impronta idrica

Su ayak izi

Empreinte sur l'eau

Wasser-Fußabdruck

**Thank You !**

Water-voetafdruk

