



**STRATEGIC  
SUSTAINABILITY  
CONSULTING**

## Company Y\* – Diversified Industrial Manufacturing

In 2014, Strategic Sustainability Consulting was brought in to help a Fortune 100 company develop a process to identify and manage water risks across hundreds of its global facilities. SSC's analysis incorporated water risk assessment tools, water management frameworks, and a process to maximize the value of engaging high-risk facilities.

### The Challenge

Company Y is a Fortune 100 company with diversified industrial manufacturing operations, selling both to consumers and to private industry. It has hundreds of facilities around the world, ranging from complex chemical facilities to low-impact sales offices, with a variety of manufacturing and assembly factories with mid-level impact issues.

Company Y had traditionally managed water use on a facility-by-facility basis, relying on local personnel to identify and manage water risk, compliance, and efficiency issues. It realized, however, that the company needed a more sophisticated approach that would provide a corporate-wide picture of water scarcity, quality, and risk.

### The Solution

- **Contextualize water risk:** Because of Company Y's diversified operations and global reach, water risk varies tremendously from facility to facility. The first step was to identify which physical, regulatory, and reputation risk factors were the most important to Company Y's long-term success. Altogether, SSC reviewed more than two dozen water risk factors to determine their relevancy.
- **Evaluate water tool options:** SSC analyzed five publicly-available corporate water tools (WBCSD Global Water Tool, GEMI Local Water Tool, WRI Aqueduct, Ceres Aqua Gauge, and WWF/DEG Water Risk Filter) against Company Y's needs, making recommendations about what tools would provide the best water risk-mapping capabilities, facility-based water management frameworks, and corporate-wide data aggregation and reporting functions. Our recommendations focused on providing the client with robust, easy-to-use, and credible tools that would add real value to the process.
- **Prioritize facilities and develop water management plans:** Rather than force each facility to develop a full-blown water management plan, SSC recommended a prioritization process to identify high-risk facilities and provide them with a framework and process to consistently evaluate and manage local water issues. This process provides the right mix of company-wide consistency and on-the-ground flexibility.

### The Results

SSC's analysis provided much-needed clarity for Company Y's water strategy, and the company's Sustainability Director stated that our work was "outstanding", further adding that it "has provided both an education and practical approach for water management." Armed with the prioritized list of its high-risk facilities, Company Y is now engaging its sites in better tracking and reporting practices, and honing in on water risk-mitigation opportunities around the world.



*\* We are careful to honor our clients' wishes for privacy and confidentiality. While the results of this case study are accurate, we have removed the company's name and changed identifying details.*

