

## **What is water sustainability in natural mineral water production and how to measure it?**

(expert workshop by NMWE)

### Rationale

Via the [EU Code of Conduct on Responsible Food Business and Marketing Practices](#) (CoC), Natural Mineral Waters Europe (NMWE) committed to demonstrate the declining water use ratio and then report on the actual state every two years. However, after demonstrating the declining WUR trend, the biannual reporting does not seem to have the potential to catalyse a sufficient impact for the environment. There is very little that it can reveal, considering that companies might be approaching technical limitations in how much they can reduce the WUR. Most importantly, without context it does not say much about the impact of the production on the environment.

Therefore, NMWE believes it should expand the water-related commitment so that it better contributes to the sector's path towards sustainability. As this is a complex topic, it will, as the first step, organize a workshop of water experts to discuss and conclude what really matters to consider, measure, and monitor in varying contexts around extracting and producing natural mineral water. The outcomes of this workshop shall guide how the NMWE's CoC commitment on water use should be reformulated and delivered, with the backing of neutral expertise.

### Project objectives

- Define what water sustainability means in the context of NMW & SW production
- Identify indicators to measure and monitor to assess water sustainability performance of the companies in the NMW sector and the sector at large
- Showcase a number of best practices in the area of water management in NMWE
- Formulate an updated water-related CoC commitment for NMWE
- Deliver a communication material that summarize the above bullet points

### Workshop concept

- Date: 27 September
- Venue: Brussels, exact place tbd
- Form: closed physical meeting on invitation
- Duration: full day
- Participants: up to 20-30 persons from the following categories
  - Water experts from NMW sector
  - Representatives of academia
  - Experts from EU institutions and agencies

- Water experts from relevant NGOs
- Water experts from other relevant sectors (other beverage sectors, agriculture)
- Sustainability managers from NMW sector

## Indicative programme

### **9:30-12:30      What does water sustainability mean for natural mineral and spring waters?**

1. Current CoC commitment, findings of the water use ratio study, and the needs to go beyond the current commitment (by NMWE)
2. Presentations by experts to introduce ideas and concepts addressing NMW sector's water sustainability framework (by selected participating experts)
3. Showcase of best practices
4. Facilitated debate

Lunch break

### **13:30-15:30      How to measure and report on water sustainability in NMW sector?**

Facilitated workshop – up to 4 groups (depending on the number of participants) with each of the groups having the following tasks:

- reflecting on the morning session, how do you define the concept of water sustainability in NMW?
- following the concept, what are the indicators indicating the level of water sustainability?
- how to measure and weigh these indicators and report on the results?

Coffee break

### **15:45-16:45      What should the new improved NMWE's CoC water commitment, aspirational target and concrete action be?**

Synthesizing the learning of the day into a consistent commitment.