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**WATER FOUNDRY**

**NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2020**

Dear Colleagues,

This is our first newsletter since launching Water Foundry in January 2017.

It has been an exceptional three-year journey as we ventured into the world of water technology startups, investors and new partnerships in addition to continuing our Corporate Water Strategy engagements. I view this newsletter as an opportunity to communicate what we believe, what we’ve done and learned, and where we are heading. We intend to issue a newsletter like this quarterly going forward.

Our efforts at Water Foundry are a continuous process guided by our passion to solve water, bias for action (we are impatient) and firm belief that we have the capacity to implement innovative technologies, public policies, financing and partnerships. Water is a “wicked problem” and as result requires all stakeholders to contribute to solving water. We are committed to actively engaging diverse stakeholder groups and bringing in folks who are not in the world of water to accelerate moving beyond business as usual.

**What we believe:**

We can solve water, but much needs to change. Business as usual is killing us and we no longer have time for incremental progress in addressing water scarcity, poor water quality and access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

We must broaden our view of diversity in the water sector. For us this means engaging with entrepreneurs, students, civil society in both developed and emerging economies. We need to work harder to increase diversity and engagement with non-traditional stakeholders including those outside of the water sector (e.g., information, communication technology, transportation, etc.).

We must change how we talk about water scarcity, poor water quality and access to WASH. Continuing to frame water scarcity as “a drought” and “day zero” are not helpful. These terms mask the reality of poor or last century public policies, under investment in water infrastructure, ignoring the impacts of climate change and failure to scale innovative solutions in technology, business models, financing and partnerships. We need clear, concise and honest language to engage all stakeholders in a quest to solve water.

*It is time to be bold and have a bias for action.*

We also believe:

*“Relationships matter”* (John Hoholik, COO of Plutoshift) *and “Culture eats strategy for breakfast” (*Peter Drucker, Management Guru)

*“The future is already here – it's just not evenly distributed, yet.”*
William Gibson, Author of Neuromancer

**What we’ve accomplished and learned:**

Since our launch, we’ve advanced thinking on water stewardship to be more holistically focused around a robust, innovative corporate water strategy. Our goal has been to bring together the water tech innovation community and the corporate world to engage in addressing water risks **(**[From Corporate Risk to Value Creation](https://www.globalwaterintel.com/news/2019/31/from-corporate-water-risk-to-value-creation)). We’ve continued to focus on the value of water and worked with WWF on the Water Risk Filter WaVE Module ([WWF Water Risk Filter WaVE Tool](https://waterriskfilter.panda.org/en/Value/ValuePotentiallyAffectedTool)). Our work on corporate water strategy has continued with U.S. and non-U.S. multinationals in the food and beverage, mining and technology sectors.

Here’s more on what we’ve accomplished so far we’ve:

* Expanded our work to include innovative water technology companies ([Flowater,](https://www.myflowater.com/)  [Instream Water](https://www.instreamwater.com/), [spout](https://safespout.com/), [Plutoshift](https://www.plutoshift.com/), [CropMetrics](https://cropmetrics.com/) and [Clear Cove](http://www.clearcovesystems.com/)) and water technology accelerators and prize competitions ([TNC - techstars](https://www.techstars.com/content/accelerators/create-sustainable-future-2019-class-techstars-sustainability-accelerator-partnership-nature-conservancy/) and [Urban Water Prize](https://www.imagineh2o.org/urban-water-challenge-overview)). As part of the TNC – techstars program, we were one of the mentors for [Gybe](https://www.gybe.eco/), [microTERRA](https://www.microterra.com.mx/) and [Mammoth Water.](https://mammothwater.com/)
* Increasingly focused on the digital transformation of the water sector through speaking, writing, partnerships ([Plutoshift Water Foundry](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20191022005499/en/Plutoshift-Water-Foundry-Announce-Partnership-Bring-Digital)) and initiatives ([Digital Water Technologies for the Colorado River Basin](https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/environmental-law-institute-and-water-foundry-publish-report-digital-technology-solutions-for-the-colorado-river-basin-300967906.html?tc=eml_cleartime)). A complete list of articles, blogs, press releases and presentations is provided as an appendix to this newsletter. *I always welcome your thoughts on these pieces.*
* Started working with [Water Works Fund](https://www.waterworksfund.com/about-us) to accelerate investment in water solutions and also with a Swedish investment fund.
* Continued our work with non-profit organizations such as [Project WET](https://www.projectwet.org/) and [101010](https://101010.net/) to support water education and awareness along with accelerating innovation, respectively.
* Launched [Water FoundryEU](https://www.waterfoundryeu.com/) to facilitate the expansion of our work with European multinationals, water technology companies and innovation platforms.

The majority of our efforts with regards to technology innovation, writing and speaking have been on the digital transformation of the water sector. We’ve received recognition for our thinking, strategy and advisory work. Recaps of our progress in advancing “digital water” are included in the appendix to this newsletter.

While we’ve focused on digital technologies, we’ve also learned to value the human side of technology innovation and adoption. These learnings were from co-authoring the [Digital Water: Industry Leaders Chart the Journey](https://iwa-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/IWA_2019_Digital_Water_Report.pdf) white paper and also from the book [The Technology Fallacy](https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/technology-fallacy). If you are interested in the digital transformation of water, we encourage reading these as a starting point. We are also reading; [21 Lessons for the 21st Century](https://www.amazon.com/Lessons-21st-Century-Yuval-Harari/dp/0525512179) and [Super Forecasting: The Art and Science of Prediction](https://www.amazon.com/Superforecasting-Science-Prediction-Philip-Tetlock/dp/0804136718).

**Where we’re headed:**

Our focus in 2020 and beyond will be to support the “digital, decentralized and democratized” trend in water through investments, working with corporations and entrepreneurs, writing and speaking. We are committed to scaling; adoption of digital water technology solutions, democratized access to data and actionable information, decentralized water supply and treatment technologies and business models.

And on a personal note, a shout out to [WWF’s partnership](https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/wwf-and-world-rowing-partner-to-protect-fresh-water) with World Rowing (FISA) – an innovative partnership that combines two of my passions – water and sculling.

Thanks for your continued support. We couldn’t do it without you.

Onto the next three years!

*Will Sarni and the Water Foundry Team*

**APPENDIX**

**PUBLISHED ARTICLES**

[A Call to Cities: Run out of Water or Create Resilience and Abundance](https://www.intechopen.com/books/water-and-sustainability/a-call-to-cities-run-out-of-water-or-create-resilience-and-abundance-).

[Sustainable and Resilient Water and Energy Futures from New Ethics and Choices to Urban Nexus Strategies.](https://www.intechopen.com/books/water-and-sustainability/sustainable-and-resilient-water-and-energy-futures-from-new-ethics-and-choices-to-urban-nexus-strate)

[Essays on Disruptive Technologies Which May Transform the Water Sector in the Next 10 Years](https://publications.iadb.org/en/future-water-collection-essays-disruptive-technologies-may-transform-water-sector-next-10-years).

[The Case for Green Infrastructure: Conclusions from SWWW 2018](https://publications.iadb.org/en/case-green-infrastructure-lac-conclusions-stockholm-world-water-week-2018).

[Building a Sustainable & Resilient Urban Water Strategy](https://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/article/building-sustainable-resilient-urban-water-strategy/).

[From Corporate Risk to Value Creation](https://www.globalwaterintel.com/news/2019/31/from-corporate-water-risk-to-value-creation).

[Corporate Water Strategy and Innovation U Penn Water Center](http://watercenter.sas.upenn.edu/corporate-water-strategy-and-innovation/).

**PRESS RELEASES**

[Plutoshift Water Foundry Partnership](https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20191022005499/en/Plutoshift-Water-Foundry-Announce-Partnership-Bring-Digital)

[WWF Water Risk Filter WaVE Tool](https://waterriskfilter.panda.org/en/Value/ValuePotentiallyAffectedTool).

[Digital Water Technologies for the Colorado River Basin](https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/environmental-law-institute-and-water-foundry-publish-report-digital-technology-solutions-for-the-colorado-river-basin-300967906.html?tc=eml_cleartime).

**ONLINE ARTICLES**

[Sarni's Liquid Assets Greenbiz Column](https://www.greenbiz.com/blogs/featured/liquid-assets).

[Water Stewardship](https://www.raconteur.net/sustainability/water-stewardship-vital).

[Aquatech Water Leader Focus: Is Water Facing Its Cyberpunk Moment?](https://www.aquatechtrade.com/news/article/will-sarni-leader-focus/)

[Water inequality used to be a developing world problem only. Not any more](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/10/water-inequality-developing-world-usa-west).

[Aquatech 2020 Trends Digital, Decentralized & Democratized](https://www.aquatechtrade.com/news/article/water-trends-2020/).

[Why Have we not Solved the World's Water Problem?](http://news.trust.org/item/20190919133741-fteo8/)

[What will AI really do for the water industry?](https://www.raconteur.net/sustainability/water-technology-ai).

[Water Technology and AI](https://www.raconteur.net/sustainability/water-technology-ai).

[Transparency is Essential to Drive Rational Water Public Policy](https://smartwatermagazine.com/news/water-foundry/will-sarni-transparency-essential-drive-rational-public-policy-water-supply).

[Creating Abundance: Nexus Stress as a Driver for Innovation in Solving Energy and Water Stress](https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783030130671).

[The Myth of Day Zero: What We Got Wrong with Water](http://news.trust.org/item/20191224104130-e1ztu/).

**NEWS COVERAGE**

[The Key Players Pressuring Businesses to Care About Water](https://qz.com/1768560/the-key-players-pressuring-businesses-to-care-about-water/).

[5 Key Players in Digital Water](https://smartwatermagazine.com/news/smart-water-magazine/digital-water-5-key-players)

[15 Top Interviews 2019 Smart Water](https://smartwatermagazine.com/news/smart-water-magazine/15-top-interviews-2019-smart-water-magazine).

**PRESENTATIONS**

[Colorado Water Congress Keynote](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWnh_oplcaA#action=share).

 [Alianza Latinoamericana de Fondos de Agua](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0ODbyw7r_Q)

**DOCUMENTARY**

[Flint: The Poisoning of an American City](http://www.flintpoisoning.org/)

**INTERVIEWS**

[Circle of Blue: Action in the Water Sector](https://www.circleofblue.org/2019/wef/will-sarni-and-action-in-the-water-sector/)

[One of the World Leaders in Water Sustainability Strategy](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQU4-4FRxh0).

[Water Strategy and Innovation](https://msudenver.yuja.com/V/Video?v=530999&node=2497909&a=2032408908&autoplay=1).

[Aquatech: Unconferenced.](https://youtu.be/GN3MwdjRNQE)