



# WATER FOR THE FUTURE

## THROUGH WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS

*SWIM*

Through long-term partnerships, Unilever will play its part in the protection of water resources for present and future generations, encouraging an integrated catchment management approach, thereby raising the quality of water and helping improve people's lives.



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SWIM has been developed in partnership with Forum for the Future.

Forum for the Future is a UK charity founded in 1996 by leading environmentalists with the purpose of taking a positive, solution-oriented approach to the challenge of sustainable development.  
<http://www.forumforthefuture.org.uk>

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# Managing water partnerships



SWIM is a practical management tool developed with an international panel of water experts to focus on sustainable local water management projects.

Unilever's activities are intimately linked with safe water supplies – whether used directly in our operations, or by our suppliers, or ultimately by consumers who use our products. We also have to take a realistic view on how to meet society's expectations and needs. For these reasons, the Sustainable use of Water is one of our three chosen sustainability initiatives, alongside Agriculture and Fisheries.

Competing demands for water – for agricultural production, manufacturing industry and human consumption – and the need to sustain a healthy environment in rivers, lakes and wider ecosystems, have brought recognition that society needs to adopt more integrated approaches to water management.

This is particularly relevant for Unilever operating in regions facing water stress. Here the success of our own operations depends on understanding how water is allocated between competing local demands, and in contributing to improved water management. Our engagement strengthens our connections to our consumers, and the communities and regions in which we operate.

The Sustainable Water Integrated catchment Management (SWIM) principles define how Unilever can make an effective contribution to community water initiatives through partnerships. They combine a structured approach to understanding the full scope of demands in a specific water catchment area with a framework for systematic management of partnership projects. SWIM itself was only realised through a partnership between different organisations and individuals brought together with the assistance of Forum for the Future. We are grateful for the contribution they have all made. The result is the

methodology set out here, and is illustrated in action through three case studies: the Mersey Basin in England, the Pasig River in the Philippines, and the Don River in Canada.

SWIM is now established as an important element in Unilever's approach to water care, and we trust it will also make a practical contribution to society's much wider agenda on integrated water catchment management. The SWIM principles will make it easier for Unilever and potential partners to engage with each other in water initiatives and agree joint objectives and actions, so furthering our commitment to sustainable water use.

In all our water partnership activities we are committed to share our knowledge. In this spirit of openness we hope this description of Sustainable Water Integrated catchment Management will be useful to others concerned with the sustainable management of our shared water resources.

Antony Burgmans

Niall FitzGerald

Chairmen of Unilever

# What is SWIM?



SWIM is a set of principles to guide our companies and their prospective partners to ensure that the projects and the partnerships they engage in are effective.

There are three SWIM principles:

- 1** Water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners, policy makers and all other appropriate stakeholders, at all levels, taking account of social and cultural diversity.
- 2** Fresh water is a bounded, finite but infinitely renewable and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment.
- 3** Water has an economic, social and environmental value in all its competing uses.

# SWIM explained

## What is a 'catchment'?

A catchment is the area of land from which a river or lake gathers its water. It includes all the tributaries, streams and groundwater that eventually flow into the main river or lake.

## What does Integrated Catchment Management (ICM) involve?

ICM involves assessing all current and potential uses of water in the catchment, including all water-related activities, as well as the factors that impact or influence them. An ICM assessment should identify important and relevant environmental, social and economic impacts, plus issues and variables that must be tackled to make the catchment sustainable.

Clearly it is impossible to know everything there is to know, but the assessment should provide sufficient information to provide pointers to a more sustainable way forward.

## How do we pull together so much information?

By consulting with a wide variety of stakeholders. They could include local authorities, landowners, farmers, recreational organisations, conservation groups and local citizens. Water companies, business and industry

will also contribute, and others, depending on the local situation. Sometimes this information is readily available, for example if it is from Unilever sites. Or it can also be generated by liaising with other experts and stakeholders.

## Why is the approach described as "Integrated"?

Such a wide information-gathering process is open-ended. An integrated approach focuses on *key* issues and variables, concentrating on the links between them.

## What other aspects should be considered?

The SWIM approach is consultative, and balanced.

## Consultative?

It recognises the right of different groups and organisations to participate in decisions which affect them. Wide discussion allows each group to make an input, and helps establish common objectives.

## Balanced?

It considers the relative merits of economic development, protecting the integrity of natural ecosystems, and respecting social and cultural diversity.

## What is the point of ICM?

Water problems cannot be tackled in isolation. Using water for whatever reason – cooking, washing, irrigation, in industry, leisure and many other activities – is bound to have an impact on someone else and usually many people.

The bottom line is: we all need water for multiple uses, directly and indirectly. An integrated approach is the only sustainable way forward.

## And what is Unilever's role?

ICM is not part of Unilever's business, but much of our business should be part of ICM.

Unilever's role is not to be experts in ICM, but to act as facilitators: working to bring people together, using management skills to drive the actions required to achieve the best solution to improve a water catchment area. Sometimes the issue is wider than a single catchment, or crosses international boundaries. Again, Unilever can help draw the parties together, where appropriate. Meanwhile in our own operations we must continue to maintain the highest standards of best practice in our use of water.

# How to develop a SWIM project

## STEP 1: SELECT

### Select an appropriate area or region

Selection will depend on the nature of Unilever's operations in the region and the relative impact of each on water supply and quality, as well as existing institutions. Focus on operations with the greatest impact on the local catchment.

### Identify an area for action

Where does the company have the biggest impact on water supply and quality in the region?

Consider for example:

- Location of factories/plantations (water use/waste streams)
- Consumer demand for water to use company products and subsequent product disposal

## STEP 2: SEEK

### Seek partners

After selecting an appropriate area for action and its relevant catchment, potential partners may be identified through consultation with local stakeholder groups. The next step is to form a working group of interested parties and then develop terms of reference, aims, objectives and targets for the group.

### SWIM Principle 1 Participatory Approach

#### Who should you work with?

Unilever should act as the catalyst for pulling stakeholders together. Consider for example:

- Groups currently involved in water management/protection activities
- Drinking water and sanitation service providers
- Environmental, community, consumer groups and NGOs, educational groups, local business and industry
- Water experts (eg. universities, government institutes)
- Local farmers and landowners
- Relevant government departments
- Others

## STEP 3: ASSESS

### Assess the catchment

Once a working group is formed, assess the local environmental and economic/social situation in the catchment. (Such reports may already exist, especially if there are on-going local water protection activities.)

### SWIM Principle 2 The Environment

#### What is the current state of the environment in the catchment?

With appropriate partners, gather information on water and land use patterns. Establish the current (and likely future) fitness of the water supply and quality to meet human needs whilst protecting the local ecosystem. Consider for example:

- Reports from existing projects on water quality, water supply, ecological systems
- Information from existing networks and monitoring systems
- Water quality data, hydrology (river flows, rainfall patterns)
- Water resource/capacity data, demand trends/scenarios
- Source/cause of water resource and quality problems
- Species and sites of essential ecological systems (eg. reed beds)
- Land use and agricultural practices
- Geology and soil characteristics

## SWIM Principle **3** Economy and Society

### What are the local economic and social factors that influence, and are influenced by, water supply/demand and quality?

With appropriate partners, gather information on water-dependent human activities (economic and societal). Evaluate the environmental impact of the demand and the value of water in the different aspects of its use. Consider for example:

- Water supply vs current and future demand (eg. trends in industrial, household, agricultural, leisure uses of water, and demographics)
- Efficiency of water use, enforceable regulatory or voluntary management frameworks
- Political situation (eg. government administration, national and regional boundary conflicts, ethnic groups)
- Sources of pollution/contamination and methods of waste reduction
- Need for improved infrastructure

## STEP 4: PREPARE/IMPLEMENT

### Prepare and implement action plan

Bearing in mind the aims of your project and the improvement activities/plans of any other local groups, formulate an action plan to tackle the critical areas for improvement as identified in the catchment assessment report. Implement according to agreed time-scale. Concentrate on the essentials – it is impossible to satisfy everyone.

### What needs to be done to improve the supply, flow and quality of water in the catchment? How, and by whom?

Use output from Step 3 to prepare an action plan for the catchment to:

- Improve protection for the environment
- Manage water in an efficient and equitable manner

Unilever's role should be to:

- Help reduce impact on the environment eg. to reduce impacts on water from its own operations
- Play its part in contributing finance, management skills and manpower
- Support appropriate community improvement activities

## STEP 5: EVALUATE

### Evaluate the project

Projects can of course be evaluated against the SWIM principles at any time, but it is particularly useful to do this early in a new project to ensure the initial aims and action plan are appropriate.

Evaluation against SWIM is also valuable for existing water management projects to identify further areas for improvement. It can also be useful in identifying the suitability of future projects where the company is approached for support.

### Evaluate the Project

Is the proposed Project consistent with SWIM?

Assess the project and record progress against the SWIM principles by using Steps 1-4 here. To pursue a project further, turn to page 11 for suggested Evaluation Forms. These are *guidelines*, which may be adapted to help practical understanding of the problem and possible solutions.

# Mersey Basin, England

Lever Fabergé in Port Sunlight began work on SWIM in 1998. The company sponsored the development of the SWIM Principles in liaison with Forum for the Future (FFF), and started to put them into practice locally following the 1999 Unilever SWIM Conference.

## STEP 1: SELECT

### Select an appropriate area or region

Ian Stringer, site manager Lever Fabergé, Port Sunlight, explains the background: "The well established Mersey Basin Campaign (MBC) was the obvious place to start. The Mersey Estuary in north-west England is a European Special Protection Area and a RAMSAR wetland site, thanks to the richness of its waterfowl population".

But the Mersey Basin was facing many problems. Its rivers, streams and canals have suffered contamination throughout history, and the UK government, keen to regenerate the north west's waterways, initiated the MBC campaign in 1985. "Unilever has two factories and a research laboratory in the Mersey Basin, and today Unilever UK is a main industrial sponsor of the MBC. Building on existing MBC networks was the best way forward," Ian adds.



*Working in the woodlands of the Dibbinsdale Nature Reserve. Lever Fabergé employees and other volunteers have a regular programme of maintenance.*

## STEP 2: SEEK

### Seek partners

Lever Fabergé has been involved with the local MBC River Valley Initiative, RiVa 2005 (River Valleys Action 2005) since 1999. "This brought us into contact with the key local stakeholders such as the Council, conservationists, wildlife experts, community groups, water services providers as well as like-minded commercial organisations, all of whom were determined to promote the health of the Mersey Basin catchment area and already had significant programmes in place. We listened and learnt how the stakeholder group operated and then decided how we could most usefully contribute to their activities," says Ian.

The MBC were keen to focus the campaign on specific stretches of river where local problems and issues had been identified by a locally drawn steering group. Lever Fabergé suggested the formation of a sub-group to focus on the River Dibbin, a

tributary to the River Mersey which passes through the factory site. The idea was accepted, and so the Dibbinsdale sub-group was born. Members include NGOs, community and wildlife groups and teachers.

"As well as contributing money and time, one of Unilever's main roles is to be a facilitator," says Ian. "We don't have in-depth knowledge of the local Dibbinsdale habitat, but what we can offer is our project management and team-building skills to assist decision making, prioritising and delivering practical solutions."

Ian stresses the importance of building trust through participation and co-operation as an equal partner in the sub-group. "Decisions on activities and spending are always based on the consensus view of the group, not on the decision of Lever Fabergé. That's the best way of working together," he adds.

## STEP 3: ASSESS

### Assess the catchment

Ian Stringer admits he is no environmental expert. "I spent three days learning from local conservation and wildlife experts. I've lived here all my life, but this was a real eye-opener for me!" he remembers. This first-hand experience helped later when the sub-group was deciding how to prioritise tasks. Within the Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve beside the factory site several problems were identified:

- Babbs Meadow reed bed, vital for the health of the river system, was dying due to poor water level management.
- Cross connections resulting in foul water which should be discharged into a sewer were being discharged indirectly into the river.
- Visitor guides, trail signs and public information needed much improvement.



*The Dibbinsdale Nature Reserve in the Wirral Peninsula, the focus of Lever Fabergé's SWIM project.*

## STEP 4: PREPARE/IMPLEMENT

### Prepare and Implement Action Plan

A management strategy for Babbs Meadow was proposed involving regulation of the river flow to encourage reed growth with its natural water cleansing properties. A new reed bed will be built to tackle the cross connection problem. This will help to develop local knowledge of reed bed construction and maintenance, before tackling the much larger Babbs Meadow reconstruction.

Access, pathway signage and visitor information is being improved, and there are plans to upgrade the visitor centre facilities. Lever Fabergé employees on a team building exercise have cleaned an area

around the Dibbin which is now being developed to attract birds, which in turn is an attraction for school children's projects.

In addition, the local University is studying the source of the River Dibbin, mapping its history by sampling and analysing sediments. An extensive botanical survey of the whole area is also planned.



*The reed beds of Babbs Meadow in the Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve are now starting to thrive again.*



*Ian Stringer answers some frequently asked questions.*

### Why did Lever Fabergé start a SWIM project?

Unilever HPCE (Home and Personal Care, Europe) asked every company to have a water project. In the UK, HPCE worked with the UK charity Forum for the Future and identified the need to develop a best practice approach to sustainable water catchment management. Hence SWIM.

### What was the first thing you did?

We investigated existing local activities and identified the many RiVa 2005 initiatives of the MBC.

### Who else did you involve?

In the early stages of SWIM we brought together a large group of external experts and practitioners to help us develop the three SWIM Principles. We also involved some of our Unilever colleagues from around the world at the 1999 SWIM Conference.

### How is the project funded?

Unilever UK contributes £50K per annum to the MBC. Lever Fabergé have also committed to the Dibbinsdale sub-group a further £10K per annum for the years 2000-2002. Other funding includes Friends of Dibbinsdale Group (£25K over five years, from EU Landfill Tax) and a contribution from English Heritage for the Botanical Survey of the Dibbin Catchment.

habitat, a key aspect of the second principle, which focuses on the environment.

The third principle is about achieving a balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of water management. Ian reflects, "So far we have addressed educational and amenity aspects quite well, and it's possible that further development of the nature reserve and visitor centre could lead to some economic improvements to the area too".

### How did you get support for the project?

One way was to take advantage of visits by senior Unilever managers, showing them the Dibbinsdale Reserve and the potential for Unilever to make a difference. We also hosted visits by local councillors, the Mayor as well as Members of Parliament.



*Unilever chairman Niall FitzGerald (centre) discussing ideas for the Dibbinsdale Local Nature Reserve with employees and members of local community groups.*

### What have been the best and the most difficult moments?

Best? Being personally educated – learning about the local environment, and establishing the Dibbinsdale sub-group of RiVa 2005. Most difficult? Being overwhelmed by the technical jargon associated with ICM, plus having to adjust to the pace of multi-stakeholder group action and decision-making to reach consensus. But the effort has been more than worth it.

### What are the main Unilever contributions?

Hands-on support by employees, finance, facilitating decision making, helping to prioritise.

### And what have you learned?

The need to allow time for the evaluation of complex ecological issues to ensure appropriate solutions are identified. How to operate within a group of volunteers, setting and achieving clear goals, when you have no authority. The realisation that after years of walking through a forest every day, you can't 'see the wood for the trees' until a local expert points it out.

### The next challenges?

Obtaining sources of funding to complete the Botanical Survey. Getting local people to sign on to improvement activities that result in physical changes to the environment. Ensuring measures are in place to determine whether or not actions are successful.

## STEP 5: EVALUATE

### Evaluate the project

Ian believes the project is well aligned with the three SWIM Principles.

"We have taken on board the first principle of a participatory approach. I believe our activities have helped to strengthen existing networks and working groups, and we have involved a wide range of local people, including our own volunteer employees," he says.

The project should lead to a significant improvement in the quality of the River Dibbin and the surrounding wildlife

# Pasig River, Philippines

Unilever Philippines is sited on a small tributary of the Pasig River, the 25km waterway stretching between the freshwater lake Laguna de Bai and Manila Bay which is a vital source of water and livelihood for the residents of Metro Manila and beyond. Since 1993 Unilever has been involved in the US\$1 billion 15-year international multi-sector Pasig River Development Plan.

As a key partner in what is now the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC), Unilever Philippines has led the corporate sector in contributing to partnership projects working to return the Pasig to health. The aim is to improve water quality to Class C (ie with thriving aquatic life once again, and clean enough for boating) and to improve the environmental state of the entire river system by 2008.

Unilever's focus is in three areas:

- ensuring its own operations do not pollute
- partnership programmes helping neighbours not to pollute
- a wider advocacy programme, including encouraging wider participation and support for the establishment of Clean River Zones (CRZs) in partnership with the NGO Sagip Pasig (Save Pasig) Movement (SPM).

Eight years into the project, it is instructive to see how Unilever Philippines activities measure up to SWIM principles and project development Steps 1-5.

## STEP 1: SELECT

### Select an appropriate area or region



Chito Macapagal, general manager corporate development, explains the background. "Here was an urgent environmental catastrophe on our doorstep which impacted on our employees, factory, local inhabitants and the wider community. Everyone could see the dire condition of our river – it had deteriorated steadily throughout the 20th century, and by the 1980s was declared biologically dead."

## STEP 2: SEEK

### Seek partners

Over fifty stakeholder groups are involved with the PRRC programme, from major international agencies to small community groups. For administrative purposes the Pasig is divided into Clean River Zones (CRZs) serving different areas of the catchment. Unilever focuses on community mobilisation, public information and advocacy within its own CRZ.



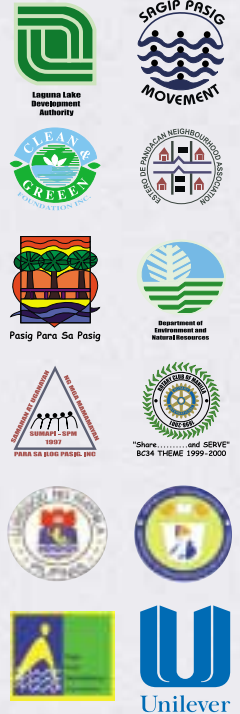
*Although tremendous co-operative effort is going into the rehabilitation of the Pasig River, there is still much work required to clean it further.*

"In establishing our CRZ we talked to the PRRC, national and local government, the city of Manila, community groups including nearby Paco Market vendors, local residents' associations, school and student bodies; seven major industrial companies; academe (through Rotary Club of Manila) – maybe fifty different bodies in all. Today we work closely with nine stakeholders, including the highly energetic NGO Sagip Pasig Movement (SPM)," says Chito Macapagal.

## STEP 3: ASSESS

### Assess the catchment

Prior to 1993 a major international feasibility study of the Pasig's problems and prospects identified nine priority, and twelve support, regeneration projects. Unilever drew on relevant data from this and other environmental studies to research issues such as geology & soil; geomorphology; groundwater; water resources; water demand trends; water quality; sources & causes of water resource problems; saline & estuarine characteristics. It also focused on neighbouring businesses large and small, including stallholders in the nearby food market, as well as the needs of community groups.



## STEP 4: PREPARE/IMPLEMENT

### Prepare and Implement Action Plan

"As with so many of our water projects, Unilever and its employees is contributing within our own CRZ what we understand best: Clean Up, Pollution Prevention, Greening, and Advocacy to achieve results in the community and raise environmental consciousness throughout the company," says Chito.

**THE FACTORY SITE:** here there has been a steady reduction in the amount of water used, and therefore wastewater produced. "But our outstanding contribution is our own domestic sewage treatment plant - the first such plant in Metro Manila, completed in 1998. And in 2000 we opened a dedicated Save Pasig Action Center within the Unilever compound which is much used by numerous Pasig River advocates for debate, workshops, etc," says Chito.



Above: Unilever's pioneering \$250,000 waste water treatment plant, with key personnel dedicated to the Pasig project. Treated sewage water from the company's domestic water use in canteens and toilets flows into a fishpond full of healthy freshwater fish, before discharging into the river.



Right: some of the thousands of children whose families live along the river banks. Their future depends on a cleaner, greener Pasig River.

**HELPING NEIGHBOURS NOT TO POLLUTE:** Unilever conducts regular clean-up drives and community-based waste management training in neighbouring communities. Four examples:

i. Paco Environment Enhancement Programme (PEEP): a partnership with a World Bank funded project group under the Department of Environment & Natural Resources and stall-holders of Paco Public Market. This is work with NGOs and community groups to encourage better management of market waste: discarded coconut husks and other fruit and vegetables, meat carcasses and fish, as well as packaging and other debris that stall-holders find it easier to throw into the river. Unilever financial support for PEEP has helped provide drums to collect recycling materials, cleaning public comfort rooms as well as training and leaflets to encourage hygiene and waste segregation.

ii. Who Cares? We Do publicity campaign: ten partners working together to promote community clean-up, schools programmes, advertising and press.



iii. Isang Ilog, Isang Diwa, Isang Gawai (One River, One Thought, One Action): a programme initiated in 2000 by the Rotary Club of Manila and Unilever to raise awareness of the Pasig rehabilitation. Activities include community workshops on waste segregation and composting, inter-school competitions, educational materials including 150,000 books on the environment.

iv. Tree Planting: Support for government efforts to green the environment. Employees have planted 150 trees in a small public garden by the factory, and the company is adopting a local park. It also supports the restoration over the next four years of some 25 hectares of land beside La Mesa Dam, a vital watershed.

## STEP 5: EVALUATE

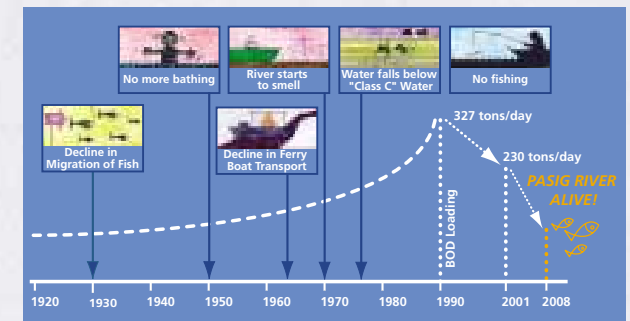
### Evaluate the project

Saving the Pasig is a long term internationally backed programme. With a biological oxygen demand (BOD - a scientific measure of river health) down to 230 in 2001, the river is no longer classed as "dead", but there is a long way to go to achieve the aim of a BOD of 50.

Chito believes Unilever's focused contribution (so far US\$20,000 in cash, and many times more than that in resources) fits the SWIM principles well. "The first principle stressing a participatory approach is reflected in our work with the PRRC to see how best we could contribute within our local CRZ. Key partnerships concentrate on clearly defined projects, and our practical step-by-step action plan is widely supported by our employees, their families as well as local people.

"The factory's water treatment plant is a very public example of Unilever's respect for fresh, clean water and reflects the second principle focusing on the environment. Our various campaigns from the local market to the wider catchment underline our sustained commitment to a healthier river.

"Achieving a balance between economic, social and environmental issues is on-going. Many issues need further attention, such as the waste problems of the local market. We will continue to encourage improvements from all who can contribute," says Chito Macapagal.



# Don River, Canada

In 1892 William Hesketh Lever built a soap manufacturing plant in Toronto on the banks of the Don River. Since then, like many urban rivers, the Don has suffered the impacts of urbanisation. Unilever has been involved with the City of Toronto and the Task Force to Bring Back the Don in working toward the river's regeneration since 1993.

## STEP 1: SELECT

### Select an appropriate area or region



The Don River is 38km in length, with a watershed of some 360 sq. kms. Approximately 800,000 people live in the watershed – the Don is Canada's most urban river.

For 200 years the Don, like many urban rivers, suffered the impacts of agriculture and urbanisation. In the early 1900s the delta marshlands were filled in, creating the Toronto Port Lands. Under this Don 'improvement' project, city engineers

attempted to create a shipping channel north from Lake Ontario by re-routing the course of the Lower Don into a wide, straight, deep concrete channel. The project was a failure, and in the process a natural wildlife habitat was destroyed.

Meanwhile over the decades water quality became degraded as pollutants washed into the river unchecked – particularly stormwater containing contaminants such as grease residue from vehicles, road salt and pesticides as well as waste from factories, plus combined sewer overflows, spills and other illegal discharges. By the second half of the 20th century wildlife populations were in sharp decline, and many had disappeared. By the 1970s the dire state of the Don was a causing widespread alarm, particularly among the citizens of Toronto.

Thus when Unilever Canada launched an environmental improvement program in the early 1990s the Don River was an obvious target.

## STEP 2: SEEK

### Assess the catchment

The failed attempt of a century ago to "channelize" the river and create a shipping channel removed established riverbed and marshlands. This essentially not only halted the river's historic flow but removed natural cleaning mechanisms such as cattails – often called garbage gobblers, because they filter pollutants out of the water as well as providing food and habitat for wetland creatures.



*In the 1950s a motorway was built across the marshes that drained into the Don.*

Throughout the last century the river itself, now flowing through concrete, became especially polluted and stagnant at its most southerly point near the Unilever plant. The major expressway running right through the valley was another major assault on the aquatic ecosystem.

Unilever and the Task Force agreed the biggest immediate local need was to recreate the natural riverbanks and marshlands: first deal with rubbish, then plant trees, bushes, plants and wildflowers to create a habitat to attract birds, animal and fish species back to the Don.

## STEP 3: ASSESS

### Seek partners

In 1979 the City of Toronto, recognising that the Don River was neglected and abused, created the Task Force to Bring Back the Don. This was the primary organisation addressing the problems of the river that flowed adjacent to the Unilever plant and so it was a natural Unilever partner. Since then the Task Force has been involved in numerous regeneration projects working alongside government, provincial agencies, businesses, community groups and other volunteers. The Task Force's aim is to create aquatic habitats, create terrestrial habitat, improve water quality, or control water quality. In 1993 Unilever Canada initiated discussions with the Task Force to explore how best to contribute to the overall improvement plan.



*The Don River flows through heavily industrialised areas including Unilever Canada's site in Toronto.*

## STEP 4: PREPARE/IMPLEMENT

### Prepare and Implement Action Plan

Unilever began work with the Task Force in a small way by funding and providing manpower for litter clean up and tree plantings. These initial modest efforts grew as the company relationship with the Task Force strengthened. The first major partnership project undertaken with the Task Force, the Conservation Authority, the Provincial government and the City was the creation of Chester Springs Marsh alongside the river just north of Unilever's plant. The aim was to create habitat for native species and provide a much-needed natural cleaning mechanism for the lower part of the river.

Through the 1990s Unilever expanded its river interests to include the whole watershed. Further projects included:

- Assistance in the purchase of land in the river valley to be preserved as parkland and protected from development
- Restoration of an industrial site – the Toronto Brickworks – adjacent to the river to restore underground streams and wetlands which flow into the River. This project combines architectural restoration, geological interpretation and natural habitat creation. Five connected ponds clean water before it flows into the Don.

In 2000 Unilever became the Conservation Authority's first 'Corporate River Partner' with a CDN\$210,000 contribution over three years toward projects throughout the watershed aimed at attracting native wildlife back to the river valley and restoring water quality.



*Unilever employees with members of local environmental groups working on the river bank during a tree-planting weekend.*

## STEP 5: EVALUATE

### Evaluate the project

Over the past decade Unilever has expanded its horizons from the initial local interest of the lower Don to include the entire Don watershed. The various partnership programmes and the expanded interest in the watershed are a direct result of working to the SWIM principles and guidelines. Partnership with the Task Force in conjunction with other industry partners, agencies, residents and community groups is delivering real river improvements. The new marshlands and other wetlands also contribute, along with improved water management practices on Unilever's site. However, there is still a long way to go in the Don regeneration programme. This partnership initiative will continue to be central to Unilever's water stewardship activities.



*As water quality in the Don valley improves through regeneration projects, many wildlife species, including the great blue heron (above), are taking advantage of the newly constructed or improved wetland habitats. Chester Springs Marsh, for example, now routinely attracts sandpipers, American toads, belted kingfishers, wood ducks and painted turtles.*

# SWIM evaluation forms

No two SWIM projects are the same, and there are no firm rules about the best way to evaluate any one against the Three SWIM Principles on page 2. The suggestions on the next page are offered to help you measure your activities as you proceed so that you manage the project effectively within the context of other Unilever commitments as well as the needs of your SWIM partners.

Before embarking on a project be sure to understand fully the impact of Unilever operations on water supply and quality regionally. Identify operations with greatest impact and potential for improvement. Then select an appropriate water catchment.

Good SWIM management means being able to measure a project's progress year on year against your original aims and in the light of developments.

Adapt these guidelines to suit your local situation.

## SWIM Principle 1 Participatory Approach

### Suggested Activities

- Assess existing initiatives to improve water quality/supply in the catchment
- Identify all relevant stakeholders in catchment and, if relevant, neighbouring catchments
- Review existing consultation opportunities with surrounding communities and industries
- Consult with other relevant stakeholders
- Proactively communicate with the community to raise awareness of issues
- Involve the community in practical projects and training
- Implement education programmes with local schools and colleges
- Funding

### Progress

- (e.g. date, activity, result, next step)

### Suggested Measures of Success

- Willingness of local communities and industries to participate in projects
- Degree of representation from the social spectrum (economic, cultural)
- Increase in local beneficial activities/practices
- Decrease in local adverse activities/practices
- Improvement in local knowledge, media support, educational programmes

## SWIM Principle 2 The Environment

### Suggested Activities

- Identify existing projects protecting or enhancing water quality/supply and ecological systems in the catchment
- Identify existing information networks/monitoring systems for catchment
- Review and report on the current state of the environment (eg geology & soil, geomorphology, groundwater, water resources, water demand trends, water quality, sources and causes of water resource problems, saline & estuary characteristics, agriculture, flora & fauna)
- Identify key areas for improvement to protect/enhance water quality/supply and ecological systems

### Progress

- (e.g. date, activity, result, next step)

### Suggested Measures of Success

- % achievement of "best practice" (as determined locally) water conservation practices in local households, industry, agriculture
- Reduction in air/effluent/waste pollution sources
- Improved river water quality
- Key local species/habitats protected
- Increased river flow/ground water recharge
- Reduction in soil loss

## SWIM Principle 3 Economy and Society

### Suggested Activities

- Review and report on the current and future economic and social factors impacting on water supply/demand and quality, including current and future demand, population growth
- Consider current efficiency of water use
- Identify potential areas of conflict (political, local, boundaries, industry)
- Determine whether technologies/techniques for water protection and management are appropriate for the region

### Progress

- (e.g. date, activity, result, next step)

### Suggested Measures of Success

- Increase in number of trained local water professionals
- Development and implementation of water demand management frameworks
- % of population supplied with safe water and sanitation
- Publication of best practice guides/technologies for pollution reduction
- % catchment with management framework achieving balance between environmental, social and economic needs



For more information about Unilever's sustainable water activities, see *Our Everyday Needs: Unilever's water care initiative*.

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“Companies such as ours cannot solve water issues, or indeed any of the other pressing environmental concerns, on their own. A multi-partner approach is essential.”

Antony Burgmans *World Water Forum, March 2000*

“We need water to produce our products and the consumer needs clean water to use and consume them. No water: no washing, no cooking, no tea. It’s as simple as that.”

Niall FitzGerald *Dublin Castle, March 2000*

