

Case description – Can Valuing Water influence mass migrations?

This case is offered by the Dutch Government, as part of the High Level Panel on Water (HLPW).

Valuing Water is an initiative by the High Level Panel on Water (HLPW)* aimed at building “a global consensus and common language to guide better approaches to valuing water across three critical dimensions – social and cultural, environmental and economic”. A key deliverable is a set of [general shared principles](#) to motivate and encourage governments, business and civil society to consider water’s multiple values and to guide the transparent incorporation of these values into their decision-making.

The draft Bellagio Principles on Valuing Water is now open for [public consultation](#) online. Please visit this site and post your comments to Influence the next draft of the common principles and their application.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/HLPWater>

Case

The principles are meant to improve the water related issues in the world, and with that achieve the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). SDG 6.4 focusses on water use efficiency: “By 2030, substantially increase water-use efficiency across all sectors and ensure sustainable withdrawals and supply of freshwater to address water scarcity and substantially reduce the number of people suffering from water scarcity.”

One of the scenarios that links to unsolved water use efficiency is: “On the agricultural side water use efficiency will need to increase through reducing water losses, increasing yields per drop, careful crop selection to match local water availability and decreasing agricultural water pollution, thereby increasing supply and decreasing demand. A worst-case scenario in which freshwater and food security is lost would lead to major disruption in global food prices. **Furthermore, it eventually could ultimately lead to social unrest and/or involuntary mass migrations.**” (Source: *ING Economics Department, Too little, too much. The diverse sectoral challenges of water. December 2015*)

The Dutch government would like to look into this process, and find whether the set principles on Valuing Water could change this scenario. **Can applying the Bellagio principles on Valuing Water prevent social unrest and/or (involuntary) mass migrations?**

Possible ways of research:

- Research the relations between the different steps of this scenario happening.
- Simulate the possible tracks and find whether different decisions made with the help of these principles would change it.
- Interview leading institutions and governments on their view on this issue.

*The [high Level Panel on Water \(HLPW\)](#) is co-convened by United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres and World Bank President Jim Kim, and charged with mobilizing action to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, many of which depend on managing water more effectively. The HLPW recognizes that action is critical, and aims to build momentum towards a common vision for better stewardship of our water around the world.

More information: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/HLPWater>