**Value conversation game – facilitator notes**

**Introduction**

During this game, a group of stakeholders will have a conversation about the multiple values of water. The **goal of the game** is for participants to better recognize and understand each other’s water values and to find a way to reconcile them. This document contains the relevant information for a moderator to facilitate this conversation in order to reach that objective.

This game can be played either with actual stakeholders around a real shared water issue, or with a fictional case and assigned stakeholder roles. This guiding document provides all the necessary instructions for a fictional case, but some of these instructions (such as introducing the case and suggesting values or problems) can be skipped in case of a real situation.

**Preparation**

In preparation of the game, make sure you have a room available and all the materials you need. If you will play the game with a fictional case, also pick which case you will use.

**Setting:** Participants gather in the same room to play the game. In case of an actual situation, be sure to identify all relevant stakeholders and invite them for the conversation.

**Materials needed:**

* The PowerPoint presentation which introduces the values perspective and the case – Note that some questions in the presentation slides may differ according to whether you play the game in a real situation or with a fictional case, and make sure to adjust the questions accordingly (see notes below)
* Cards with stakeholder roles associated with the case
* The assigned water values map printed on a large format
* A flipchart or whiteboard and pens
* A watch or timer

**The presentation**

Before starting the conversation, introduce the values perspective and the case you will discuss with the participants.

## Introducing the values perspective

Start by introducing the Theory of Change of VWI and what the value perspective entails. The goal of this presentation is to make it clear to participants why taking a values perspective and reconciling values is important when making decisions about water, before they practice doing so themselves.

## Introducing the case

Next, introduce one of the cases in the appendix to the participants (also see presentation slides). In case of an actual situation, you can skip this part. Instead, define the (scope of the) situation or problem you want to address together with the stakeholders.

**The conversation**

Guide the conversation by using the steps and questions below. The questions in the game will stick to the following order: 1) Values (the values of each individual stakeholder); 2) Problem (the problem they are facing); Us (how values align or conflict); 4) Conclusions.

During the game, you will focus on assigned water values on a personal and organizational level (depending on the stakeholder). In general, try to guide the conversation in such a way that stakeholders bring in most of the content themselves. In case it is needed, you may bring in some of the values, problems and solutions as suggestions (see Appendix). Furthermore, try to summarize what is being said as if you are holding up a mirror to the participants.

## Steps to play the game & Questions to ask

Start by **assigning stakeholder roles** (in case participants take on fictional roles. In a real case, skip this step). Divide the stakeholder cards associated with the case among the participants. If there are fewer players than cards, you can give some players a maximum of 2 cards, preferably with values which are likely to align. Try to have a wide range of values (cultural, economic, and environmental) represented with the stakeholder cards you use during the game.

Then play the game and facilitate the conversation. As a guiding principle: Use ~15 minutes for each step in steps 1-4.

1. **Values:** In the first part of the conversation, focus on uncovering the values which each stakeholder assigns to water. The central question in this part is: “*What values do you and/or your organization assign to the water source?*” Follow-up questions may include: “*How do you use the water?*”, “*What is that use of water worth to you?*” and “*Why?*”. Let stakeholders answer the open-ended question first. Then, present the assigned water values map and ask stakeholders to stand in different corners of the room, according to the value cluster which dominates their decision-making. During this part of the conversation, a few things to consider are:
   1. For a fictional case, focus on the values of stakeholders from their organizational perspective (clarify this when asking the question and change it in the presentation slide accordingly before starting). For a real situation, you may want to bring in the distinction between organizational values and personal values by asking stakeholders which values they personally find important, which values their organization prioritizes, and whether or not this aligns.
   2. Make sure all stakeholder voices are heard
   3. Write down the values they mention in an overview on the flipchart or whiteboard
   4. Have the assigned water values map ready to be shown to the participants (as a back-up. Let them answer the questions by themselves first.) In case it is needed, you may also use the overview in the appendix of this document which shows potential values the different stakeholder groups may hold and bring them into the conversation (for the fictional cases).
   5. Stakeholders may mention multiple values per person
   6. This part is not yet about reconciliation, but about recognizing & appreciating each other’s values
2. **Problem:** Next, have the stakeholders talk about the problems they experience linked to the situation as described in the case. The questions to be asked here are “*What are the (potential) problems you are experiencing due to the current situation, and how do they relate to the water values your hold?*” and “*How significant are these water problems to you in comparison to other issues?*” Points to consider are:
   1. Because stakeholders are standing in different corners of the room according to their dominant value cluster, you may notice that some stakeholders (from either the same or different value clusters) have the same type of problems. Give this back to the group for discussion.
   2. Make sure all stakeholder voices are heard and participants listen to each other
   3. In case it is needed, you may use the overview in the appendix which shows potential problems for the different stakeholder groups and bring them into the conversation (for a fictional case – but let them answer by themselves first).
   4. The second question may reveal other important issues in the context for stakeholders, and the relative importance of these issues and the water issues. This further informs the discussion. Only include this question in case of a real situation and adjust the slides accordingly.
3. **Us:** In this step, the group will set a shared vision and aim to reconcile their values. Questions to ask here are “*What is your vision for the water system?*”, “*Where do the group’s values align and where do they conflict?*” and “*What is each stakeholder’s respective decision-making power in addressing the water issue?*”. Considerations here are:
   1. For the first question, try to summarize what each stakeholder says about their vision for the system, and find common ground. Aim to guide the group towards a shared vision. (Note: A vision is a desired future state – this part of the conversation does not focus on *how* to get there, only on *what* that future state broadly entails.)
   2. For the second question, use the overview of values written down in part 1 (‘Values’) as a basis for this conversation.
   3. The third question will uncover the underlying power dynamics. It is an important question, but often difficult to discuss. Guide the discussion in such a way that stakeholders not only indicate their own decision-making power, but also that of others. It may be useful to plot each stakeholders on a visual line from ‘no power’ to ‘a lot of power’ and find agreement on how to plot them.
   4. Try to guide the discussion, but let stakeholders find the aligning and conflicting values by themselves as much as possible. If needed, make some suggestions.
4. **Conclusions:** The final part of the conversation is about drawing conclusions from the conversation. Questions to ask here are “*Overall, do many of the different stakeholders’ values align or conflict?*” and “*What needs to happen in order to leverage the aligning values and reconcile the conflicting values?*”. A follow-up question to ask here is: “*In case there are many conflicting values, what are the underlying power dynamics?*”
   1. There are 2 types of conclusions that can be drawn here: 1) The group is generally aligned in the values which underly their decision-making, or 2) The group is not aligned in the values which underly their decision-making. In the second case, address the underlying power dynamics leading to this outcome, and what could be done to change these.
   2. The questions in this part should be answered from a shared perspective as much as possible, rather than an individual perspective. Encourage this way of thinking in the participants.
5. **Reflection:** Briefly reflect with the group on what they think of this exercise. Potential questions to ask the group are “*What did you notice during the conversation?*”, “*What are benefits of having such conversations?*” and “*How likely is it that you would apply a values-perspective in your decision-making processes from now on?*”

**A final note**

If you want to learn more about the reconciliation of multiple values or the overall integration of multiple values in your approach to water challenges, please contact the Valuing Water Initiative team at [vwi@rvo.nl](mailto:vwi@rvo.nl). You may also contact the team in case of any questions regarding this Value conversation game, or if you seek a facilitator for the conversation.

If you want to know more about the development of this tool, please contact the NewForesight team at [info@newforesight.com](mailto:info@newforesight.com).

**Appendix: The cases**

**Case 1: Water shortage in Türkiye.** Türkiye will move out of the list of "water-stressed" countries and into the list of "water-poor" countries in the next 20 years. Particularly the Konya Basin experiences water shortages due to extreme droughts and excessive abstraction of water for agriculture. A number of lakes and wetlands have dried up as a result, and the formerly second largest water body of the country - Lake Tuz - has significantly reduced in size. Stakeholders will discuss how to handle this issue.

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| **Stakeholders** | **Possible values** | **Possible problems** |
| Turkish central government | * Water is a source of livelihood * Water is an asset for economic development | On the one hand, they are scrutinized by environmental groups for bad agricultural policies. On the other hand, they may lose votes in the next election if they restrict farmers to extract water. |
| Local government | * Water is a source of livelihood * Water is a means of transportation | Farms in the region have turned to growing profitable but water-intensive crops. This is a source of income for farmers in the region and the local government, which they do not want to stop. Lake Tuz is also a tourist attraction, which they do not want to go away. |
| Rural population near Lake Tuz | * Water is used in households * Water is a place for recreation and leisure * Water is the basis for agricultural production | They need to extract the water from the basin for irrigation purposes. If the basin dries up, they cannot perform their agricultural activities. |
| Urban population near Lake Tuz | * Water is used in households * Water is a place for recreation and leisure | If the basin dries up, they can no longer use the water in households and for recreation. In addition, the region becomes more susceptible to the formation of sinkholes and wildfires. |
| Soda company | * Water is the basis for industrial production * Water is the basis for agricultural production * Water is a source for renewable energy | They need the water to produce soda, and further down in their supply chain it is used to grow sugar beets. They are making an effort to be more green by using renewable energy in their production processes. |
| Tourists | * Water is a place for recreation and leisure * Water is a place of beauty * Water is a means of transportation | Tourists will stop visiting the region if it dries up, as they will not be able to use the lake and other water sources for recreation and transportation. |
| Government of downstream country | * Water is a source of livelihood * What is an asset for economic development * Water is a source for renewable energy | Similar to in Türkiye, people in downstream countries use the water for several reasons. They want to avoid the Turkish government keeping the water from the basin in Türkiye. |
| Greenpeace | * Water helps support natural environments * Water provides a habitat for aquatic animals and plants * Water ensures wildlife survival | Many flamingos and other bird species are dying due to the drought in the basin. |

**Case 2: Water pollution in the textile sector.** The textile sector uses a wide range of hazardous dyes and other chemicals in their production processes. These chemicals are often discharged in wastewater in nearby rivers. For instance, denim factories in Mexico have been found to pollute the water of the Lerma and Atoyac rivers. Mexico is one of the largest producers of denim in the world and a major supplier to the US market. Stakeholders will discuss how to handle this issue.

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| **Stakeholders** | **Possible values** | **Possible problems** |
| Textile manufacturer | * Water is the basis for industrial production | Textile manufacturers want to keep the costs of production as low as possible, to adhere to the low prices asked by brands. The cheapest way to manage water is to discharge of used water in the rivers. |
| Apparel brand | * Water is the basis for industrial production | The textile industry is often scrutinized for being wasteful, and brands are often the subject of that scrutiny. However, in the fast fashion industry there is a high demand for apparel against low prices, and brands need to compete against others to adhere to this demand. |
| Cotton farmers | * Water is the basis for agricultural production * Water is a source of livelihood | Cotton farmers need to use chemicals in their production processes in order to grow larger amounts of cotton, which will lead to a higher income for their families. |
| Chemical producer | * Water is the basis for industrial production | Producers sell chemicals to manufacturers according to what is asked. There are high investment costs to develop and sell other types of products which may be less wasteful, and current trends do not indicate this investment will pay itself back. |
| Greenpeace | * Water helps support natural ecosystems * Water provides a habitat for aquatic animals and plants * Water ensures wildlife survival | The Lerma and Atoyac rivers, among with many other rivers across the globe, are polluted with harmful chemicals from the textile industry. Companies take too little responsibility for the problems this causes for our natural environment. |
| Local Mexican population | * Water is a source for renewable energy * Water is used in households * Water is a means of transportation * Water is a place for recreation and leisure * Water is a place of beauty | Communities living near textile manufacturing sites face water pollution as it harms their drinking water, household water and views on the river. |
| Consumers of clothing in the US | * Water is the basis for industrial production * Water is a place of beauty * Water is used in households | Consumers want to buy apparel for the lowest possible price. The problems experienced in Mexican rivers does not directly impact US citizens. |
| Mexican central government | * Water is an asset for economic development | Denim export is a source of income for the country which the government does not want to lose. |

**Case 3: Flood risk in Ho Chi Minh city.** Ho Chi Minh city is extremely vulnerable to flood risks, being less than one meter above sea level. The consequences of climate change across the globe make this risk even more severe. In October 2013, there was a severe flooding in the city which caused extensive damage. The city is continuously developing new flood mitigation methods, and stakeholders discuss how to best address this issue.

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| **Stakeholders** | **Possible values** | **Possible problems** |
| Vietnamese central government | * Water is an asset for economic development * Water is a source of livelihoods | There are high costs associated with restoring the city after a flood |
| Vietnam Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control | * Water helps support natural environments * Water is a source of livelihoods | Floods are unpredictable and cause a lot of damage to communities |
| Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs | * Water is an asset for economic development * Water helps support natural environments | As a fellow Delta, the Netherlands may be able to help the Vietnamese government with flood mitigation plans – but cultural and other difference should be considered. |
| Citizens of HCMC | * Water is used in households | Floods cause major damage to their houses and other parts of their lives, and sometimes restoration takes a long time. |
| Rural population near HCMC | * Water is the basis for agricultural production * Water is a source of livelihoods | Salinized ground cannot be used anymore as agricultural land, and flooding forms a threat to their livelihood |
| Human aid organization | * Water has many purposes | They try to build more resilience in the Vietnamese policies around water management. |
| UN IPCC | * Water helps support natural environments | There is still a general lack of recognition of the detrimental impact of climate change and the importance of addressing it in order to avoid flooding. |