5-Year Plan for The Movement

Strategic Framework 2021 – 2026

Pursuing the goals of Project Osiris by 2040

May 27, 2021
It's time. Let's come together as a global force for clean water. With the intention to unify, focus and streamline that goal we have developed an ambitious 5-year plan. Through coordinated and collective action, we will create enduring and measurable impact with our over 300 Waterkeeper groups. I will do all that I can, while standing beside each and every one of you, as I call on individuals, organizations, communities, companies, and governments across the globe to join us.

Gloria Reuben, President, Waterkeeper Alliance
All life depends on clean water.
We worked carefully and thoughtfully to incorporate the voices and perspectives of Waterkeepers from around the world to ensure this Plan reflects a shared vision for the future we all want for our communities. Together, working arm in arm, we will achieve it for our organizations, the people we serve, and the health of the watersheds we protect every day.

Tonya Bonitatibus, Savannah Riverkeeper

I am so grateful to have been part of this incredibly co-creative process that actively engaged over 250 of Waterkeeper Alliance’s diverse constituents. I believe we developed a compelling plan to grow our movement, drive sustainability, and provide metrics to inform decision making as we move forward in this ever changing world we all share.

Kent Weed, Director, Producer and Co-Founder of A. Smith & Co. Productions, Trustee
About This Plan

For over 20 years, Waterkeeper Alliance has been equipping communities around the globe to fight for clean water, standing on the shoulders of a movement originated in the mid 1960s to hold polluters accountable for the degradation of our waterways. Since 2017, through Project Osiris, Waterkeeper Alliance has invested in enhancing support for and strategically growing the global Waterkeeper network. The next 5 years may be the Waterkeeper Alliance’s most important yet.

In late 2020, despite the global pandemic, the Alliance launched a robust process to develop a broadly owned 5-year Strategic Plan that inspired possibility thinking, was informed by science and effectively engaged a diverse and wide array of the Alliance's constituents. Guided by Due East Partners, Waterkeeper Alliance created a new vision and mission, four bold strategic priorities paired with actionable strategies and measurable 10-year shared results to track and report on collective impact. The following constituents played a significant role in shaping this new plan and charting a clear path forward for the Alliance:

- 24 Staff
- 168 Waterkeepers
- 44 Board, Waterkeeper Council, and Trustee Council Members
- 7 Leadership Circle Members
- 12 Partners, Donors, and Funders

Thank you to our Strategic Planning Committee for their guidance and leadership:

Co-Chairs:
- **Tonya Bonitatibus**, Savannah Riverkeeper
- **Kent Weed**, Director, Producer and Co-Founder of A. Smith & Co. Productions, Trustee

- **Gidon Bromberg**, Jordan River Waterkeeper
- **Casi Callaway**, Former Mobile Baykeeper
- **Sharon Khan**, Recruiting Director
- **Patricio Chambers**, Guayllabamba Waterkeeper
- **Zainab Namutebi**, Kazinga Channel Waterkeeper
- **Kathy Phillips**, Assateague Coastkeeper
- **Mary Beth Postman**, Deputy Director
- **Maia Raposo**, Communications & Marketing Director
- **Bruce Reznik**, Los Angeles Waterkeeper
- **Ted Ross**, Boulder Waterkeeper
- **Lessing Stern**, Founder & CEO of Ten Eighty, Trustee
- **Theo Thomas**, London Waterkeeper
- **Marc Yaggi**, Executive Director
- **Senglong Youk**, Tonle Sap Lake Waterkeeper
This plan is not about one organization. It is about a powerful, global movement of leaders working together to support one another, amplify our collective voices, and strengthen the laws and policies vital to protecting everyone’s right to clean water. I am in awe of this movement and extremely proud to be part of it.

Marc Yaggi, Executive Director
The Waterkeeper Movement
A growing global alliance of Waterkeeper groups and advocates connecting people and communities to their waterways in the fight for clean, healthy, and abundant water.

Photo by and in memory of Peter Patterson, the first La Paz Waterkeeper
The Movement’s Focus and Impact

We are a global movement united for clean, healthy, and abundant water for all people and the planet.

on a mission to protect our right to clean water in communities around the world.

Because we believe...
- Water is life;
- Healthy watersheds connect and sustain us all;
- Clean water is a basic right for all living beings;
- Waterkeepers are guardians of this right, fiercely defending, enforcing, and promoting just and equitable clean water laws;
- Each Waterkeeper has a unique voice, reflecting our diverse communities and watersheds;
- As a movement, we are stronger together when we lift up each others’ voices and the voices of the communities we serve.
Our Shared 2030 Results and Indicators

With Waterkeeper groups, leaders, communities, and partners across the globe, Waterkeeper Alliance will focus its efforts over the next five years to advance three key Results by 2030 based on measurable Indicators* to track collective progress and impact.

Clean and accessible water in countries across the globe
- Drinkable, fishable, swimmable water for healthy communities and a living planet
- Support and deploy science-based standards for clean water

Hundreds of millions of people around the world actively engaged in protecting their water
- A global network of sustainable and effective Waterkeeper groups
- 10 million square miles of watersheds protected
- 4 billion people supported by clean water protections
- 5 million community members actively engaged with Waterkeeper groups

Global awareness that climate change and policy decisions have a dramatic impact on water, people and the planet***
- 70% of the global population finds climate change to be a very serious threat (Gallup/Lloyd’s Register)**
- Climate change’s impact on water included in consistent and reliable global polls

*Progress Indicators will be thoroughly reviewed and shared on a 3-year basis with all key constituents.
**CLICK HERE to view the Gallup Report
***We are working with global polling initiatives to integrate indicators related to water.
2030 Results
Achieving shared and measurable progress

Waterkeeper Alliance has over 300 Waterkeeper groups patrolling and protecting waterways on 6 continents. This team is made up of water warriors that sacrifice themselves day after day to get in the water, on the ground, and in the air to find and stop polluters at all costs. Building off the successful Waterkeeper model, the 20-year Waterkeeper Alliance business plan - Project Osiris - outlined ambitious objectives for the Movement, a powerful force of highly trained, committed, and politically and technically skilled Waterkeepers.

In order to significantly advance the goals of Project Osiris, this 5-year Strategic Plan includes mid-term, or 10-year, shared Results and Progress Indicators to measure our collective progress. We aim to achieve these Results and Indicators by supporting and expanding our Movement and working alongside a diverse mix of partners from across sectors and regions.
2021 – 2026 Strategic Priorities

**Priority 1**
Strengthen Waterkeeper groups and grow a sustainable and diverse movement

**Priority 2**
Amplify the collective voices of the Waterkeeper movement across the world

**Priority 3**
Fortify, defend, and enforce clean water policies and laws for communities and countries in which we work

**Foundational Priority**
Build and enhance Waterkeeper Alliance’s capacity and resources to sustain a global network of Waterkeepers
The Alliance is the motivation to let you know that you are never alone and that there are thousands of like-minded persons from every quadrant of the world cheering you on to continue the work you have set out to do. The pool of resources, the diverse knowledge from many watersheds, and the easy access to human connection is invaluable. Everyone rejoices during your victories and helps you get the message out when you are challenged. Waterkeeper Alliance is more than an international NGO, it’s a family of water warriors!

Rashema Ingraham, Executive Director,
Waterkeepers Bahamas
Strengthen Waterkeeper groups and grow a sustainable and diverse movement

Today, our movement includes over 300 Waterkeeper groups in more than 45 countries who patrol and protect more than 2.8 million square miles of rivers, lakes, and coastal waterways.

Waterkeeper groups have made immense progress towards cleaner, healthier, and more abundant water for all people and the planet but there is still much work to be done. Now is the most critical time to enhance each Waterkeeper group’s capacity and expand our reach – when our water is the most vulnerable and vital to the resiliency of our climate and health of our communities.

Through this priority, we will invest in training and support services for Waterkeeper groups to ensure each of our leaders and their organizations have the resources they need to engage their communities and protect their waterway. Together, we will methodically expand the Movement where there is need, opportunity, and alignment.

Priority 1

Define a broadly owned Waterkeeper culture, principles, and commitment to justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency to solidify our Movement

Develop and launch a certification program with a robust suite of trainings to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of Waterkeeper groups

Improve collection and reporting of data across all Waterkeeper groups using consistent metrics, monitoring, and shared tools

Foster community through shared learning and peer-to-peer interactions to support existing and new Waterkeeper groups

Recruit and support Waterkeeper groups based on aligned geographies, issues, and interests

Help ensure the safety and security of all Waterkeeper groups

Strategies
Priority 2

Amplify the collective voices of the Waterkeeper movement across the world

While each Waterkeeper group’s clean water issues and challenges are unique to their region, we are all aiming for the same ultimate outcome – clean, safe, and abundant water for people and the planet. When Waterkeeper groups come together, they become a unified and unstoppable force by leveraging their collective knowledge, expertise, and experiences.

Through this priority, Waterkeeper Alliance and Waterkeeper groups, with their communities and partners, will strengthen their authoritative voice to build awareness, encourage action, and advance water protections. We will support our frontline communities who are disproportionately affected by pollution and lack of access to water and invite all who are interested to join our Movement.

When we are united, we are unstoppable.

Strategies

- Connect and collaborate with Waterkeeper groups to:
  - Build shared narratives
  - Increase political will for clean water
  - Support frontline communities
  - Mobilize regional and global action
- Co-create a cohesive set of strategic communications and tools that reflect our global movement’s shared commitments and interests
- Broadly communicate our collective impact by reporting all Waterkeeper group’s measurable progress and impact
- Expand The Movement’s global brand awareness and leadership
Defending the rule of environmental law is one of the most important causes of our time. We increasingly see our hard-fought protections undermined. Environmental laws are ignored and allowed to wither. Understanding these threats and developing strategies to counter them is essential. Being a member of Waterkeeper Alliance means we can draw on the advice and experience of water advocates across the planet.

Theo Thomas, London Waterkeeper
Fortify, defend, and enforce clean water policies and laws for communities and countries in which we work

Governments around the world have enacted laws to protect both water quality and the communities most impacted by pollution and lack of access to clean water. Waterkeeper groups around the world work to restore and protect the world’s waterways by leveraging these laws. While these laws are designed to control pollution and protect our streams, rivers, lakes, and coastal waterways, many are being overlooked, rolled back, and even eliminated. All while climate change is exacerbating the challenges.

In our fight for clean water over the next five years, policies and laws continue to be essential for promoting environmental justice, protecting fresh and marine water resources, and holding polluters accountable. By working arm-in-arm with diverse partners and coalitions we will elevate critical voices and successfully enact and defend priority laws and policies that promote clean and safe waters.

Strategies

- Collaborate with Waterkeeper groups to identify and prioritize policies, environmental justice issues, and legal action in the countries in which we operate
- Support Waterkeeper groups in applying existing laws, holding polluters accountable, and advancing new legislation in targeted countries
- Work with a diverse group of partners and coalitions at all levels to elevate critical voices and successfully enact and defend laws and policies for fresh and marine water resources
- Elevate the political influence of frontline communities as part of an inclusive clean water movement
The Alliance is the backbone of our Movement. For the Movement to be strong and sustainable, we all need to invest in the strength of the Alliance.

Sharif Jamil, Waterkeepers Bangladesh
Build and enhance Waterkeeper Alliance's capacity and resources to sustain a global network of Waterkeepers

The last year and a half have reminded us how important it is to be united and connected. Solidifying the foundation of Waterkeeper Alliance – the hub of our Movement - to support the efforts of our Waterkeeper groups and closely-aligned clean water initiatives is critical to the sustainability and growth of the Movement.

Over the next 5 years, Waterkeeper Alliance will invest in critical organizational infrastructure to strengthen communications, ramp up fundraising, and enhance services for all our Waterkeeper members. As the Movement methodically and collectively expands, the Alliance will add capacity to provide high level support and services. Together we will increase awareness of the global water crisis, engage more clean water advocates and activists, and bring clean and safe water to communities around the world.

Foundational Priority

Strategies

- Recruit and deploy five additional staff by 2023 to establish and manage new fundraising, finance, operations, and internal and external communications
- Significantly increase and diversify revenue to enhance support of the Waterkeeper Movement
- Develop a global Governance and staffing structure
- Enhance member services for efficient and effective global support
- Engage in strategic partnerships to support the efforts of our Waterkeeper groups and closely-aligned clean water initiatives
## Priorities & Strategies

**Strengthen Waterkeeper groups and grow a sustainable and diverse movement**
- Define a broadly owned Waterkeeper culture, principles, and commitment to justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, and cultural competency to solidify our Movement
- Develop and launch a certification program with a robust suite of trainings to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of Waterkeeper groups
- Improve collection and reporting of data across all Waterkeeper groups using consistent metrics, monitoring, and shared tools
- Foster community through shared learning and peer-to-peer interactions to support existing and new Waterkeeper groups
- Recruit and support Waterkeeper groups based on aligned geographies, issues, and interests
- Help ensure the safety and security of all Waterkeeper groups

**Amplify the collective voices of the Waterkeeper movement across the world**
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- Co-create a cohesive set of strategic communications and tools that reflect our global movement’s shared commitments and interests
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- Expand The Movement’s global brand awareness and leadership

**Fortify, defend, and enforce clean water policies and laws for communities and countries in which we work**
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### Measuring The Movement's Progress
**2021 - 2026**

<table>
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<th>Performance Measures</th>
<th>Amplify the collective voices of the Waterkeeper movement across the world</th>
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<td>Strengthen Waterkeeper groups and grow a sustainable and diverse movement</td>
<td><strong>10% annual increase in digital engagement</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>20% annual increase in digital reach</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>20% annual increase in global traditional media reach</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>50% of all original content sourced from outside the U.S. by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>20% of all features focus on frontline community work</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>20% increase in volunteers and supporters engaged by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>100 appearances by leaders in major media coverage and high-level gatherings and events by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>20% annual increase in Waterkeeper groups participating in regional initiatives and national campaigns</strong></td>
<td><strong>200 legal papers, comments, and lawsuits filed and 60 successes by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>10 priority clean water laws and policies enacted and/or defended by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>10 advocacy actions commenced in non-U.S. countries in which we work annually by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>150 partner organizations meaningfully engaged in policy making, data collection, and advocacy action by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>500K advocacy actions taken by engaged supporters annually by 2026</strong></td>
<td><strong>5 additional staff by 2023 to manage fundraising, finance, operations, and internal and external communications</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Increase annual raised revenue to $17 million by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Double the endowment by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>15% increase in earned revenue by 2026</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>10% annual increase in the number of Waterkeeper groups reporting high ratings of member services</strong></td>
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- **55% of Waterkeeper groups are achieving global quality standards, including new JEDI standards by 2024**
- **Host 350 trainings with a total of 12,000 participants by 2026**
- **100+ Waterkeeper groups receive certification by 2026**
- **50% of Waterkeepers with access to water quality monitoring tools and technology by 2026 (a baseline and measure for tracking the # of people collecting water samples will be developed by the end of 2022)**
- **Improve water quality by reducing pollution, eliminating dumping, and minimizing release of hazardous chemicals and materials by 2026**
- **4 million square miles of watersheds safeguarded by a Waterkeeper by 2026**
- **1 billion people supported by a Waterkeeper by 2026**
- **Safety and security trainings offered annually to Waterkeeper groups in prioritized areas**

*U.N. Sustainable Development Goals (2023)*

Performance Measures will be reviewed and reported annually.
We are a drop of water alone and a strong wave together.

Margarita Diaz, Tijuana Waterkeeper