



On World Water Day, see how global grocery CEO's can unite to combat plastic pollution and water poverty

22 March, London, UK – On World Water Day, the new Water Unite Chair, Lord Malcolm Bruce, calls on chief executives of the most influential global grocery retailers to unite in the fight against plastic pollution and water poverty by backing an ambitious reinvestment initiative that can bring real change to underserved communities.

Shockingly only 10 per cent of the 300 million tonnes of plastic produced each year is recycled. Every year 2.4 million tons of PET plastic is discarded in the US and an estimated 26-41 percent of this is water bottles.

With global bottled water sales rapidly approaching 500 billion litres a year, the time is ripe for creating a big impact movement in partnership with global grocery retailers, who have the power to create a seismic shift towards reducing plastic pollution and providing better drinking water.

Water Unite, is today (Friday, 22 March 2019) contacting over 80 CEOs of the biggest global grocery retailers to ask for their support in combatting plastic pollution and providing critical clean water across Africa and South Asia.

The UK-based organisation is asking for a **voluntary levy of 1 cent per litre on global bottled water sales**, which will be reinvested to combat plastic pollution and provide critical clean water across Africa and South Asia.

'A mere 1 cent per litre voluntary contribution from key grocery retailers could raise up to \$5 billion per annum delivering life-saving measures for people in the poorest countries of the world. As Chair of Water Unite, my first order is business is bringing together leading grocery retailers, so they can play their part in this global challenge', said Lord Bruce.

Steve Murrells, CEO The Co-operative Group, a Water Unite partner and the largest consumer-owned business in the UK, supports Lord Bruce's call for action:

'Co-op's global supply chain stretches across six continents and 68 countries. The products we sell connect us to half a million workers around the world and to their families. As we all focus on the Sustainable Development Goals, what Water Unite can achieve, for all retailers globally and collaboratively, is really quite remarkable.'

Water Unite will convene an event on the sidelines of the Vancouver Consumer Goods Forum in June to kick start this momentum.