



# **Water Funds**

## **A Governance Solution to Local Water Challenges**

**Andrea Erickson-Quiroz,**  
Managing Director, Water Security  
The Nature Conservancy

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# THE PROBLEM

## WATER IS LIFE

Freshwater species have declined by 76% over the last 40 years. Water is top long-term risk facing planet.



## INCREASING DEMAND FOR WATER

By 2025, at least 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the global population to be living in water stressed areas.



## WATERSHEDS ARE VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

1.7 billion people depend on them.



## WATERSHEDS ARE BEING DEGRADED WORLDWIDE

Nearly HALF of source watersheds show medium to high levels of degradation.





# NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

**The lands around our water sources serve as vital infrastructure that can meaningfully improve water quality and quantity for cities worldwide.**



Managing fire risk through controlled burns or thinning overgrown forests can help prevent catastrophic fire that pollutes waterways.

Restoring wetlands supports plants and animals and filters pollutants from our water sources.

Fencing around water sources keeps livestock from waterways, reducing the risk of waterborne disease.

Planting trees around crops and on pastureland can reduce erosion and give farmers and ranchers additional sources of income.

Replanting trees on barren hillsides and land reduces erosion, captures carbon and can restore habitat for imperiled species.

Using cover crops on fallowed fields can reduce erosion and nutrient pollution and ensure the long-term productivity of the soil.

Restoring and retaining pollinator habitat near farmland contributes to crop production.

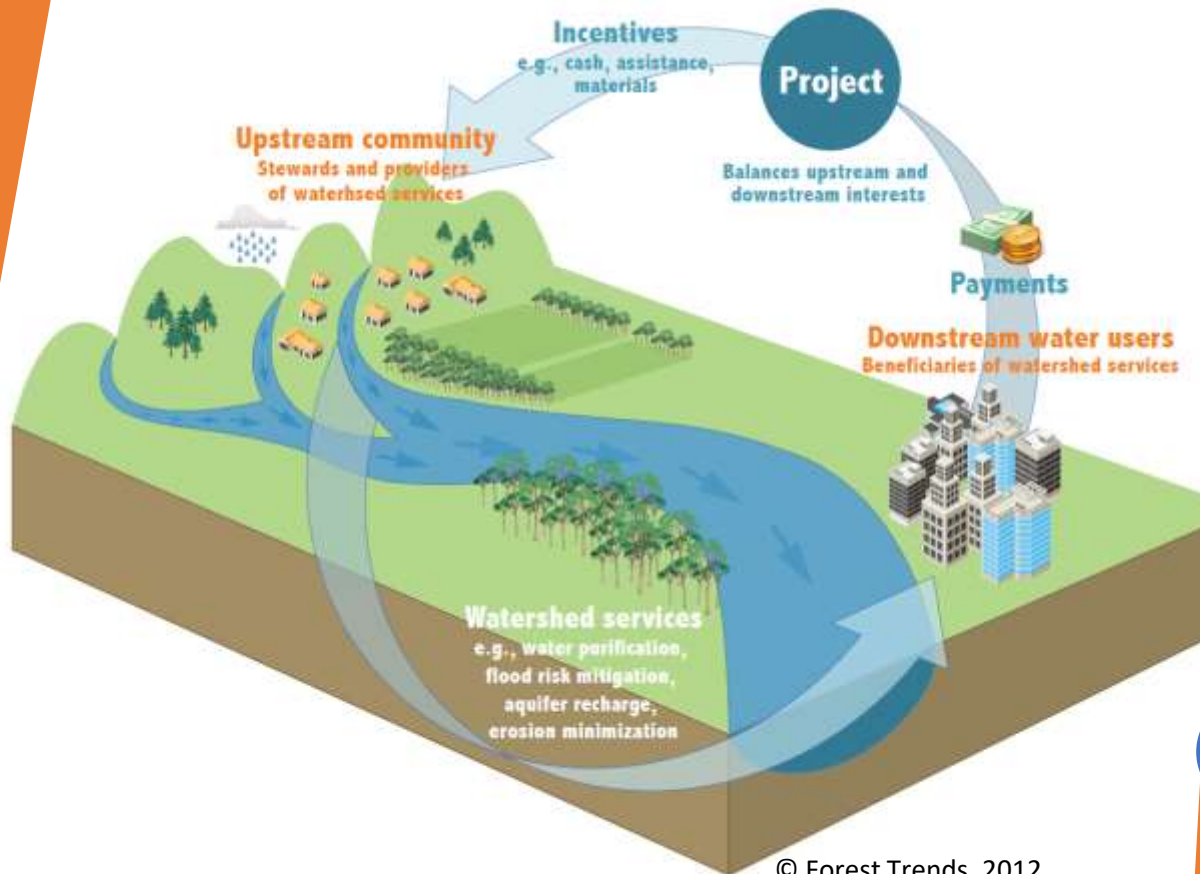
Improving roads and stream crossings reduces sediment flowing into water sources.

Planting trees, shrubs and grass along the water's edge keeps pollutants from reaching water sources and provides habitat for a wealth of species.

For more than 15 years, water funds have enabled downstream water users to invest in upstream habitat protection and land management to improve water quality and quantity.  
Learn more at [nature.org/beyondthesource](https://www.nature.org/beyondthesource)

# WATER FUNDS

## Long-term capacity for delivering conservation



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All Water Funds share some characteristics:



Science-based plan



Multi-stakeholder governance



Long-term Financing



Implementation capacity

# WATER FUNDS WORLDWIDE



## GLOBAL RESULTS

35 12

WATER FUNDS  
CREATED

COUNTRIES  
CREATED

- WATER FUNDS CREATED
- WATER FUNDS UNDER DEVELOPMENT
- PROSPECTIVE WATER FUNDS

TNC WATER CONSERVATION  
ACTION GEOGRAPHIES

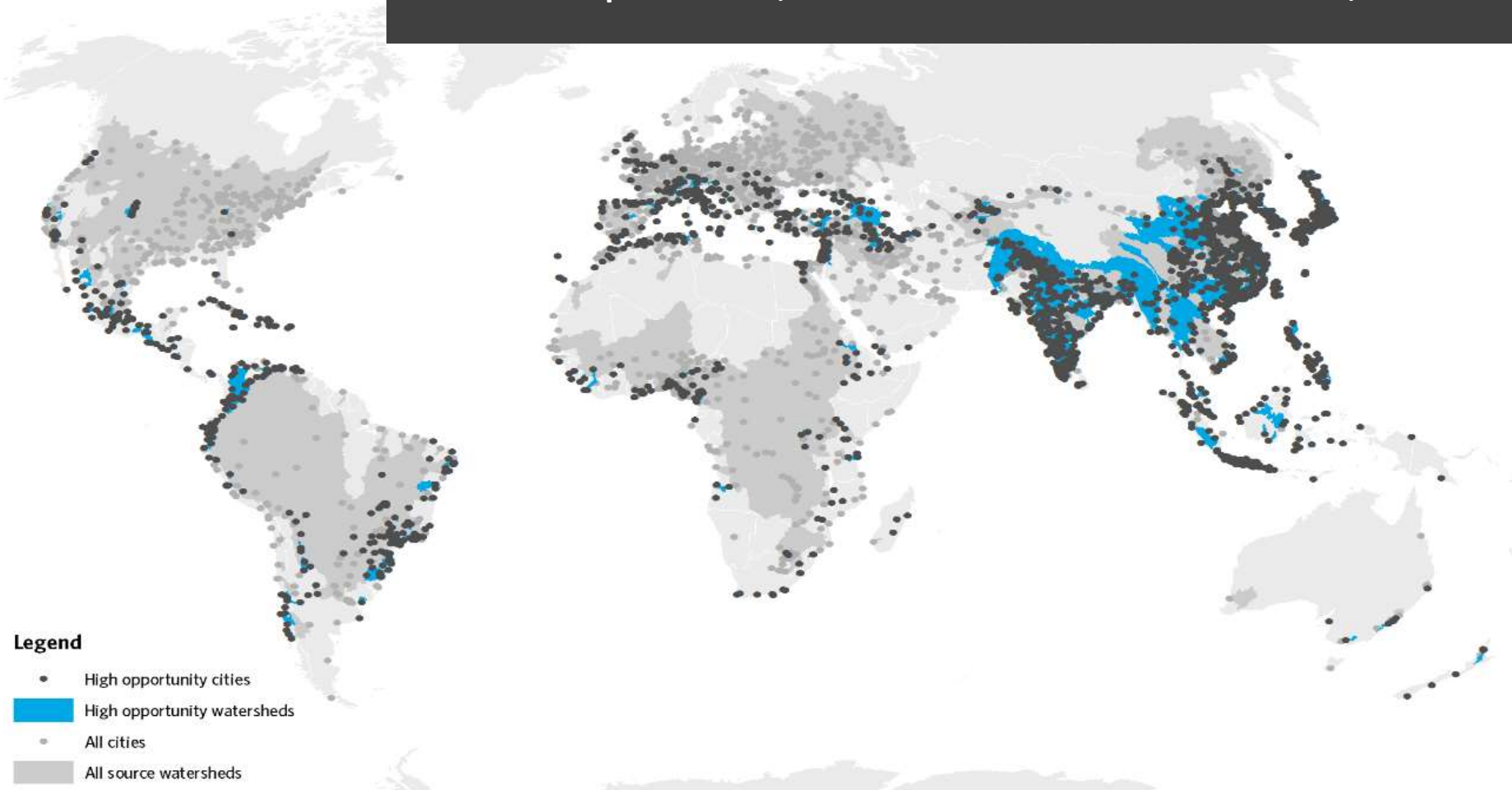
## Current Status:

- **200 + partners**
- **\$300 million + in public and private funding**
- **300,000 ha of land directly impacted through Water Fund supported interventions**
- **30+ additional Water Funds in research or design**



# OPPORTUNITY FOR GLOBAL IMPACT

- 1,000 cities should have positive ROI based on utility OPEX and CAPEX
- With multiple benefits, we estimate a total “feasible” set of 2,000 cities





The Nature  
Conservancy   
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

**THANK YOU**