

Preparation and Expert Analysis = Successful Shareholder Advocacy: Highlighting Our Partnership with Ceres

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NJCIR's shareholder engagements often require our team members to invest significant resources and time in learning about the operation of a particular company, as well as gaining an in-depth understanding of the substantive issues and business risks at hand before initiating dialogue with a company. The concerns NJCIR raises with companies cover a broad range of issues from mining management to environmental issues to best practices in prison management. In order to ensure that our corporate dialogues remain goal-oriented, NJCIR dialogue teams need to have a firm grasp of complex issues and business models. Conducting background reading and research is a useful starting point, but the advocacy of NJCIR is immeasurably strengthened by partners whose subject matter expertise helps our teams prepare for engagements, raise relevant questions and concerns with the company, and remain focused on key issues throughout the dialogue.

Currently, two of NJCIR's ongoing corporate dialogues with **Bunge** and **Ingredion** are focused on the human right to water, urging companies to develop water use reduction and risk management policies, in their own operations as well as supply chains, and to disclose this information with investors. With agriculture accounting for roughly 70% of freshwater withdrawals from lakes, rivers, streams and groundwater reserves, we see the direct risks to our water resources – both from a water quality and quantity perspective – and to long-term business success.

In the face of changing weather patterns and growing food needs, it is critical that large food companies take responsibility for their water use beyond direct operations, to work with suppliers and farmers on water stewardship actions and goals. At NJCIR, we're working to ensure our companies understand their risk and work towards solutions: incentivizing farmers to adopt water-friendly practices, safekeeping natural resources and soil, and practicing appropriate fertilizer and nutrient management. Investors concerned with the human right to water want to protect food and our water resources for years to come, and we believe that by understanding and mitigating these risks agricultural companies like Bunge and Ingredion will better protect their long-term sustainability and financial growth.

Developing meaningful benchmarks for corporate stewardship on water and analyzing risk assessment tools and data disclosure are not simple tasks. NJCIR is fortunate to have partners contributing to our efforts who are thought leaders in this work. Through the guidance of staff at the [Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility](#) and the investor water working group, NJCIR has benefited from a partnership with [Ceres](#).

A Boston-based non-profit, Ceres works closely with businesses, policymakers and economic players – including investors – to advocate for sustainable business practices, that protects vital resources, like freshwater. Their staff, in addition to

other issue experts, produce data-driven research, technical insights and strategic framing as dialogue teams prepare for meetings with corporate leaders. Siobhan Collins, an associate with the Ceres Water Program reinforced the importance of investor work and our efforts. "Our investor partners, including leaders at NJCIR are pushing companies on pressing sustainability and ESG (environmental, social and governance) risks - and raising critical water and management approaches with large food and beverage companies. These engagements and thoughtful dialogues are pushing corporations to value water appropriately within their direct operations and agricultural supply chains - and to look at innovative solutions towards challenges like water pollution, nutrient management, supplier standards, and beyond."

NJCIR is thankful for the contributions of all of our dialogue partners.