

PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab-GreenBiz Survey Finds Corporations Still Struggle to Translate Water Goals into Action on the Ground

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- There is a growing sense of urgency about water scarcity as a business risk, but almost half of all companies don't have a plan to achieve their water reduction targets. That is the key finding of a new survey conducted by Ecolab Inc., the global leader in water, hygiene and energy technologies and services, and the sustainability news and research organization GreenBiz.

Companies are under pressure to reduce their water usage because of mounting water scarcity. According to U.N. projections, the world will face a 40 percent freshwater shortfall by 2030 if nothing changes. This is a growing issue for corporate water users, who consume more than 40 percent of all water used in industrialized economies and an increasing share in developing nations.

"Saving water is the smart play for the future," said Emilio Tenuta, Ecolab vice president of Corporate Sustainability. "Companies can reduce costs and save energy, and become more resilient to water scarcity and climate change."

The Ecolab-GreenBiz survey underscores the need for companies to rethink their water management. Key findings from the survey, which was conducted in February and March 2019 with responses from 86 companies with revenues of at least \$1 billion, include:

- 74 percent of the companies surveyed say water is an increasing priority
- 59 percent agreed that it is also a growing business risk
- 88 percent said they would take active steps to manage water use in the next three years

But despite that sense of urgency, 44 percent of the companies surveyed said they have no plan in place to achieve their water goals. And only 56 percent report using smart technology to monitor their water use and savings.

"It's good to see that companies are increasingly focusing their attention on water," said Paul Carp, head of research at GreenBiz. "However, it would be even more encouraging to see greater action, including the development of plans and execution of sustainable water management practices at scale, to make a difference for the planet."

The outcomes from the 2019 survey are in line with findings from 2017, the first year the Ecolab-GreenBiz survey was conducted, when 75 percent of companies said they had corporate water reduction goals, but 82 percent reported they lacked the tools and expertise to achieve them.

This persistent discrepancy is explained by a disconnect between the corporate level, where the goals are set, and the on-the-ground facility level, where the actual savings must be achieved. Seventy-five percent of companies said that water reduction targets are set by corporate sustainability teams, but only 64 percent feel that they are appropriately engaging their facility teams, down 5 percent from 2017.

To bridge the gap between corporate goals and real results, operational managers need to be fully engaged.

Earlier this month, Ecolab launched the [Ecolab Smart Water Navigator](#), a free online tool that was designed to do precisely that. Based on a 13-question survey, it enables companies to prioritize their most vulnerable locations, where water savings can make the biggest difference, and recommends the tailored tools, resources and technologies their local teams need to achieve their water savings targets.

Ecolab is a leading provider of solutions to help companies of all sizes better manage their water use. The company provides technologies, chemistries and services to a wide range of industries to solve process water, cooling and boiler water, and wastewater treatment challenges, while improving operating efficiencies and reducing water and energy use.

In addition to the Smart Water Navigator, Ecolab offers the [Water Risk Monetizer](#), a publicly available online tool that helps companies determine the true value of water to their operation - beyond what's on their monthly utility bill - and puts a dollar figure on water risk.

About Ecolab

A trusted partner at nearly three million customer locations, Ecolab (ECL) is the global leader in water, hygiene and energy technologies and services that protect people and vital resources. With annual sales of \$15 billion and 49,000 associates, Ecolab delivers comprehensive solutions and on-site service to promote safe food, maintain clean environments, optimize water and energy use, and improve operational efficiencies for customers in the food, healthcare, energy, hospitality and industrial markets in more than 170 countries around the world. www.ecolab.com

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About GreenBiz Group

GreenBiz Group's mission is to define and accelerate the business of sustainability. It does this through a wide range of products and services, including its acclaimed website

GreenBiz.com and e-newsletters, GreenBuzz and VERGE; webcasts on topics of importance to sustainability and energy executives; research reports, including the annual State of Green Business; the GreenBiz Executive Network, a membership-based, peer-to-peer learning forum for sustainability executives; and conferences: the annual GreenBiz forum and VERGE. www.greenbiz.com

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