



NEWS RELEASE

# 2025 Ecolab Watermark™ Study Reveals Hidden Impact of Artificial Intelligence

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New findings connect rapid AI growth to new business opportunities and global water security

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Ecolab, a global sustainability leader offering water solutions and services, today announced findings from its third annual Ecolab Watermark™ Study, which reports on water stewardship around the world. This year's research highlights water's connection to timely global trends, including new business opportunities from the rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) and consumer concern about its impact on vital natural resources.

According to the Watermark Study, a majority of consumers across fifteen countries understand the power demands of AI, but far fewer recognize the hidden impact of AI – the amount of water required to manufacture AI technology and operate data centers. In the United States (U.S.), just 46% of consumers acknowledge the use of water in AI operations compared to 55% recognizing the use of power. In other regions, including Asia Pacific and Latin America, the gap is even more pronounced.

“By 2050, the world will have nearly 30% more people and require 47% more energy. Water demand will continue to surge—yet by 2030, the world already faces a projected 56% water deficit,” said Christophe Beck, chairman and chief executive officer at Ecolab. “The AI boom is helping to shape this future, unleashing the potential for new business growth and transformative innovation. At the same time, every week a new data center opens, and every month a new fab comes online. While we can create more of the energy these facilities need, we cannot create more of our most vital resource – water.”

“Right now, just 20 percent of industrial wastewater is reused and less than 10 percent in the microelectronics



industry. We see wastewater as an engineering flaw and a missed opportunity as a driver for business growth. At Ecolab, we believe the solution to the AI resource challenge lies within itself. By applying AI to data analytics, real-time monitoring, and temperature adjustments, we believe industrial water management systems can deliver data centers that use less water than a car wash.”

The Watermark Study reveals that most consumers agree businesses should invest in the technologies and infrastructure that mitigate the impact of AI on natural resources. It also revealed a hidden trust gap – consumers doubt that businesses will responsibly manage their water use. In fact, a majority believe smart water management, such as reusing or recycling water, should be a top priority for businesses to help address water scarcity. Yet they don’t believe that businesses and governments are using these strategies in their daily operations. Belief is particularly low in the U.S. (43% and 42%), Europe (44% and 41%), Asia Pacific (48% and 48%) and Latin America (48% and 46%).

“Global consumers recognize smart water management is essential for a resilient future, and they expect businesses to lead with both transformative technologies and transparent action to make it a reality,” said Emilio Tenuta, chief sustainability officer at Ecolab. “Businesses have an opportunity to harness the power of AI and deliver impact-driven water solutions that meet the needs of local communities, while also driving innovation and business growth.”

The Watermark Study also took a closer look at consumer perceptions of water-related extreme weather events and water availability around the world. Although concerns about water scarcity remain high, consumers are optimistic that the challenge can be addressed.

The Ecolab Watermark Study was conducted in partnership with **Morning Consult** in March 2025. Respondents came from a sample of general population adults based in the regions of Asia Pacific, China, Europe, Latin America, India/Middle East/Africa and the U.S. The online study included a selection of countries within each region to provide a global overview of water stewardship where it matters most.

To see the full global trends and country-specific results, please visit the interactive dashboard at [watermark.ecolab.com](https://watermark.ecolab.com).

## About Ecolab:

A trusted partner for millions of customers, Ecolab (NYSE:ECL) is a global sustainability leader offering water, hygiene and infection prevention solutions and services that protect people and the resources vital to life. Building on a century of innovation, Ecolab has annual sales of \$16 billion, employs more than 48,000 associates and operates in more than 170 countries around the world. The company delivers comprehensive science-based

solutions, data-driven insights and world-class service to advance food safety, maintain clean and safe environments, and optimize water and energy use. Ecolab's innovative solutions improve operational efficiencies and sustainability for customers in the food, healthcare, life sciences, hospitality and industrial markets.

**[www.ecolab.com](http://www.ecolab.com)**

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