



NEWS RELEASE

Ecolab Releases Global Study on the State of Water Stewardship, Reveals Consumer Concern for the World's Water

2023-09-18

The Ecolab Watermark™ Study found access to clean and safe water to be a leading environmental concern for consumers across the globe, including 81% of United States respondents.

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- **Ecolab**, a global sustainability leader offering water solutions and services, today announced findings from the inaugural Ecolab Watermark™ Study. The global consumer research examined the state of water stewardship through water's importance, usage, connection to climate and responsibility among key consumer populations around the world.

By 2030, the planet is set to face a 56% water deficit, according to the **World Resources Institute**, and 1.6 billion people will lack safely managed drinking water, according to the **United Nations**. It's amid this pressing water crisis that Ecolab developed the Ecolab Watermark Study to identify trends, help educate and generate action across industry stakeholders, specifically those in Asia/Pacific, China, Europe, India/Middle East/Africa (IMEA), Latin America and the United States (U.S.).

Among its global findings, the Ecolab Watermark Study uncovered several critical water-related trends:

- Access to clean and safe water is a paramount concern for consumers in every region. Latin America (92%), China (85%) and the U.S. (81%) have the highest percentage of consumers who are more concerned about access to clean and safe water than other climate-related issues, such as pollution or climate change.
- Consumers hold governments and businesses most responsible for water conservation. However, consumers do not believe these leaders care enough about their impact on water or climate change. This was most



pronounced in the U.S., Europe, Latin America and Asia/Pacific, where between 42% and 46% of people believed their leaders cared.

- Consumers believe that industry has no clear plan to address water scarcity, despite the perceived responsibility and importance. This concern is most evident in China (82%), Latin America (78%), and IMEA (78%), but also noticeably visible in Europe (66%), the U.S. (65%) and Asia/Pacific (60%).

“The water crisis impacts communities regardless of location and is often overlooked in the global response to climate change. As we continue our work to transform the way the world thinks about water, the results from the Ecolab Watermark Study should galvanize leaders to assume a larger role in protecting this precious and finite resource,” said Christophe Beck, chairman and chief executive officer, Ecolab. “Time is running out to address this challenge, and consumers across the world are saying that businesses must act now. The good news for industry is that meeting this responsibility can deliver positive sustainability and business outcomes.”

In response to the perceived lack of accountability, consumers are themselves adopting environmentally friendly buying behaviors. According to the study, consumers are willing to stop purchasing products that require a significant amount of water to produce, as well as pay more for goods that are made using sustainable business practices, particularly in IMEA (88%), China (85%) and Latin America (81%).

Despite the known challenges, consumers remain optimistic that the water crisis can be mitigated with proper and immediate action. On average, three out of four consumers across the globe believe that water scarcity can be effectively addressed, according to the study, with the optimism most evident in Latin America (84%), IMEA (83%) and China (78%).

“If industry is not at the table to advocate and develop climate and water solutions that protect our communities, we will continue to fuel consumer sentiment that we’re not doing enough,” said Emilio Tenuta, senior vice president and chief sustainability officer, Ecolab. “By focusing solely on water and consumer perceptions of the ongoing crisis, the Ecolab Watermark Study provides unique insights on where and how stakeholders—whether its government, businesses, NGOs or even individuals—can work together to successfully address critical global challenges.”

In addition to offering global and regional findings, the Ecolab Watermark Study includes data for 15 individual countries. The U.S.-specific data showed that 81% of consumers are concerned about access to clean and safe water, and they consider businesses and governments to have the highest level of responsibility when it comes to funding for water conservation. Plus, 65% of U.S. consumers agree that businesses and manufacturers lack clear guidance and plans to combat water scarcity. Lastly, even though less than half of U.S. consumers believe that business and government leaders care about climate change or water conservation, 70% remain optimistic that water scarcity can be effectively addressed.

The Ecolab Watermark Study was conducted in partnership with **Morning Consult** in 2023 among a sample of general population adults. Ecolab will update and release new editions of its Ecolab Watermark Study annually. For detailed results, including an interactive dashboard, visit 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 \$14 billion, employs more than 47,000 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

Follow us on LinkedIn [@Ecolab](#), Twitter [@Ecolab](#), Instagram [@Ecolab_Inc](#) and Facebook [@Ecolab](#).

About the Ecolab Watermark™ Study

Launched in 2023, the Ecolab Watermark Study is annual research conducted by Ecolab. The global study reports on the state of water stewardship by measuring water's importance, usage, connection to climate and responsibility among key consumer populations. This research was conducted between February 15 – March 3, 2023, among a sample of general population adults. The interviews were conducted online. Results from the full study have a margin of error of plus or minus 2–3 percentage points. Some geographies may be weighted with fewer variables depending on local census data availability.

Torry Whitney

651-250-4724

MediaRelations@Ecolab.com

Source: Ecolab Inc.

Multimedia Files:

Download:

[Download original 486 KB \(5254 x 1004\)](#)

[Download thumbnail 4 KB \(200 x 38\)](#)

Download lowres 11 KB (480 x 92)

Download square 6 KB (250 x 250)