



Global Sustainability Awareness Week

at cargo-partner



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- Why water matters – facts about water
- What causes water scarcity
- How water scarcity affects our world
- How to save water at work
- Bonus tip: Consider virtual water
- How to save water at home
- How businesses can save water



Water, by its simplest definition, is life. Every living thing on Earth requires water to survive.

[WWF Global Water Risk Map](#)

FACTS ABOUT

WATER

Water is essential for sustaining ecosystems, from freshwater lakes to marine environments

2.5% of the Earth's water is freshwater

Over 2 billion people worldwide live with water scarcity

Producing energy requires water, and providing clean water demands energy

Agriculture accounts for 70% of global water usage

Climate change is altering precipitation patterns, leading to more frequent droughts in some regions, and intense rainfall in others, exacerbating water scarcity and flooding

Pollution from agricultural runoff, industrial discharge, and improper waste disposal can contaminate water sources, affecting both human health and the environment

WHY WATER MATTERS

What causes water scarcity

Water scarcity is the lack of sufficient available water resources to meet the demands of water usage within a region.

- **Climate Change:** With carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions caused by humanity, the number of extreme weather events and natural disasters increases as global weather and water patterns are shifting. Some regions will face more droughts, others more floods. Melting glaciers and snow packs will reduce freshwater supplies for downstream communities. This will decrease water availability for agriculture, energy, cities, and ecosystems worldwide.
- **Pollution:** Water pollution arises from various sources, including farm runoff with pesticides and fertilizers, untreated human wastewater, and industrial waste. Even groundwater is at risk, as pollutants can leach into aquifers. Immediate effects include harmful bacteria contaminating water, making it unsafe to drink or swim in.

What causes water scarcity

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- **Agriculture:** Agriculture consumes 70% of the world's freshwater, but 60% is wasted due to leaky irrigation, inefficient methods, and water-intensive crops, depleting rivers, lakes, and aquifers. Major food-producing countries like India, China, Australia, Spain, and the U.S. are nearing their water limits. Additionally, agriculture heavily pollutes freshwater with fertilizers and pesticides, impacting both humans and wildlife.
- **Population growth:** In the last 50 years, the human population has more than doubled, leading to economic development and industrialization that have drastically altered water ecosystems and caused significant biodiversity loss. Currently, 41% of the global population lives in water-stressed river basins, and unsustainable freshwater use continues to raise concerns. The increased demand for food, shelter, and clothing further strains freshwater resources through the production of commodities and energy.

How water scarcity affects our world

Water scarcity is a global issue. Some of the most affected areas include:

- **Middle East and North Africa (MENA):** This region is one of the most water-stressed in the world due to arid and semi-arid climates, rapid population growth, and limited freshwater resources. Countries like Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Egypt face significant water scarcity challenges.
- **Sub-Saharan Africa:** Many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa experience chronic water scarcity, exacerbated by factors such as population growth, inadequate infrastructure, climate variability, and political instability. Countries like Somalia, Sudan, and parts of South Africa are particularly affected.
- **South Asia:** Rapid population growth, urbanization, pollution, and inefficient water management contribute to water scarcity in South Asian countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, particularly during dry seasons and droughts.
- **Central Asia:** Countries in Central Asia, including Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and parts of Kazakhstan, face water scarcity due to competition for water resources from agriculture, industry, and hydropower projects, compounded by the drying up of the Aral Sea.

How water scarcity affects our world

- **Southern Europe:** Countries like Spain, Italy, and Greece experience water scarcity, particularly during drought periods, which are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change.
- **Central Europe:** In countries such as Austria and Germany, falling water levels are having a major impact on local flora, fauna and agriculture, as well as inland transportation on rivers such as the Danube and Rhine.
- **Australia:** Australia faces water scarcity issues, particularly in its arid and semi-arid regions, exacerbated by prolonged droughts, population growth, and over-extraction of groundwater.
- **Parts of Latin America:** Regions like the Chihuahuan Desert in Mexico, the Andean region in Peru and Bolivia, and parts of Central America face water scarcity due to factors such as deforestation, pollution, and climate change.
- **Parts of the United States:** Certain regions of the United States, such as the Southwest (including states like California, Nevada, and Arizona) and parts of the Great Plains, experience water scarcity due to factors like overuse of groundwater, drought, and climate change.

Addressing water scarcity requires comprehensive strategies including water conservation, improved water management practices, investment in infrastructure, and international cooperation.



Water conservation involves changing habits.

Because many of these habits have developed over a lifetime, they can be difficult to change. We recommend starting with simple things and then moving on to more advanced steps to reduce your water use.

HOW TO SAVE WATER AT WORK

1. Turn off the tap in the bathroom/kitchen while washing your hands/cooking.
2. Keep a pitcher of cold water in the fridge instead of letting the tap run cold.
3. Turn off the air conditioner when you don't need it.

Bonus tip: Consider virtual water!

Virtual water is the water “hidden” in the products, services and processes people buy and use every day. Although virtual water goes unseen by the end-user of a product or service, that water has been **consumed throughout the value chain**, which makes creation of that product or service possible.

Think before you

- print
- order merchandise
- plan a business trip
- use your car
- ...

[Find out more](#)

Amount of water needed to produce...



A smartphone
12,760 liters



A car
151,416 liters



500 sheets A4 paper
5,000 liters



1 kg of beef
15,500 liters



A cotton shirt
2,900 liters



A pair of jeans
10,000 liters

You can make a difference.

Through smart household management, each of us can make a difference in our daily lives.



HOW TO SAVE WATER AT HOME

1. Use leftover drinking water to water indoor plants.
2. When using the washing machine, only wash full loads.
3. Turn off the water when you don't need it.



How to save water at home – more tips!

4. Choose toilets with a flow control option.

Think before you flush! Using the smaller flush button uses about 3 liters of water, while the larger flush button uses about 6 liters.

5. Keep water in the sink instead of letting it go down the drain.

This can help you save water when doing dishes or laundry.

6. Reduce your water use.

Think about how you can use less water in the first place.
Take shorter showers, sweep the yard instead of washing it, etc.

7. Be smart when watering your lawn.

Water your lawn in the morning or evening, when the water will not evaporate as quickly.
Make sure the water actually lands on the vegetation and not on roads or sidewalks.
If possible, save rainwater to water your lawn.

9. Keep a bottle of cold water in the refrigerator.

Then you won't need to run the tap and wait for the water to cool.

How businesses can save water

1. Install water-efficient fixtures

Low-flow taps and aerators can limit water flow without affecting user experience. Upgrading to efficient dishwashers can also lead to substantial water savings over time.

2. Use recycled water

Recycled water can be used for landscaping, flushing toilets, or industrial processes. Find out where this is feasible and build the right infrastructure to save water while keeping your operations going.

3. Monitor water usage

Track and analyze water consumption data to identify trends, peak usage periods, and areas of concern. This will allow you to make informed decisions and implement targeted measures.

4. Optimize landscaping practices

Adopt water-smart landscaping practices to balance aesthetics and conservation. One effective approach is to use native plants that are adapted to the local climate, requiring less water to thrive.

5. Educate employees

Organize training sessions and awareness campaigns to ensure that employees know how to implement water-saving practices and report water-related issues promptly.