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## **Report: Water's Impact on Business**

The [Carbon Disclosure Project](#) (CDP), an independent, nonprofit organization that maintains databases of climate change-related information, reports that 39 percent of companies it surveyed are already experiencing detrimental impacts related to water issues.

The water issues reported in the survey, which involved 302 of the world's largest companies and was published in November 2010, include service disruptions due to flooding, drought, as well as declining water quality. These challenges can add to business operational costs, which ultimately must be paid for by the consumer.

According to the CDP, demand for water is projected to outstrip supply by as much as 40 percent in the next 20 years. The organization also estimates that as much as 80 percent of the world's population "already lives in areas where fresh water supply is not secure."

Some of the other findings from the survey include:

- 89 percent of the companies surveyed have developed specific water policies, strategies, and plans to deal with potential water problems
- 62 percent have identified potential business opportunities as a result of water challenges such as developing water efficiency systems and products
- 67 percent now report water-related issues to their company's top executive committees

"The fact that water-related issues are now reported to top management of a company indicates the growing concerns about water," says Klaus Reichardt, CEO and founder of Waterless Co., Inc. "For many companies around the world, water is now as much a concern as fuel and oil."

The CDP report indicates that the sectors most vulnerable to water risks in the future are food, beverage, tobacco, metals and mining. It also lists global companies that have taken a leadership role when it comes to developing best practices for dealing with water problems.

Many of these are American companies and include Colgate-Palmolive, Ford, General Electric and Proctor and Gamble.