Waterscan

5 steps to start
Measuring and reporting on water

You can't manage what you don't measure.
What you don't measure, you can't improve.

In an age where consumers and buyers are increasingly making purchasing decisions based on the environmental and social impacts of businesses and brands, your sustainability strategy has never been more critical.

Amid growing global concern about the security and quality of our water supplies, water management is increasingly regarded as one of the greatest risks to business continuity and growth.

Organisations that take proactive, focused action on water stewardship will not only realise short-term financial benefits but they will also safeguard long-term operational resilience.

A measured path to success.

The Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) outlines the tangible benefits of measuring and reporting on water as an integral part of any environmental, social and governance work.

Protect and improve your reputation: build trust through transparency and respond to increasing water concerns.

Boost your competitive advantage: gain a competitive edge, drive efficiencies and free-up cash flow.

Get ahead of regulation: prepare your business for increasing mandatory reporting and disclosure.

Uncover risks and opportunities: identify emerging water risks and opportunities that may be overlooked.

Track and benchmark progress: benchmark environmental performance and develop a data-driven strategy for improvement.

1. Map your water

The first step is to build a holistic view of your site portfolio and water use.

Conduct site tours to audit the points water enters your building, where it's coming from (mains pipes, boreholes, rainwater harvesting, other sources) and where water is being used throughout your business.

Note down where you have flow meters and submeters, and which parts of the building each meter/submeter serves.

2. Collate existing data

It's important to know where you are now, so that you can plan where you want to get to and how you're going to get there.

You can use your own meter readings or the readings that appear on your water bills for this.

This will help you understand how much water is being used by each site on an annual basis.

Repeat this process for wastewater.

3. Install logging devices

Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) devices and smart meters are the best way to obtain regular, accurate data without the need to physically read each meter across your site portfolio.

Combined with intelligent data aggregation and analysis software, you have access to live actionable data by site, region or group, in a single, visually compelling dashboard.

AMR can be particularly useful in areas of high usage, or where usage fluctuates significantly throughout the day, week or year. Monitoring consumption patterns will highlight any abnormal usage which could signify a leak.

4. Benchmark and target

Next, set the baseline from which you're going to measure progress. You could use the most recent year in which you have a good set of data.

Then, set your improvement targets. If you're only just starting out, choose a smaller amount of concise, clear targets. For example, a total water reduction target or a water reduction target relative to your output.

A retail business might choose to report water relative to footfall, a manufacturer relative to product output, a restaurant relative to meals served, a hotel relative to guests and so on. Pick a relevant metric for your business.

5. Monitor and disclose

First decide how you plan to report on progress. CDP, or report internally.

The benefits of joining a disclosure scheme are that you get a robust, structured set of questions, providing direction for your reporting. And, following submission of your disclosure, you receive an independent score. Your score can be used to measure and track year-on-year performance, benchmark yourself against your peers and prove to investors and customers the positive action you're taking to protect our environment and your operational success.

By reporting and disclosing on your water through CDP, your business will be seen as a leader in water stewardship. The public visibility will in turn help influence your internal teams to make continual progress towards meeting your targets and improving your annual score.

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For bespoke advice and support, email info@waterscan.com or call 01243 839 880
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