

July : NBI outlines water risks

[previous page](#)

8 July, 2016

NBI outlines water risks

Water must be treated as a strategic asset, and companies should plan carefully to ensure that critical operations can continue if their water supply dries up or becomes too polluted, or even too expensive, for us in future.

This is the upshot from Bertus following research by the National Business Initiative (NBI) outlining the high water risks that South African companies face. Dolphin Bay recently joined the NBI.

The researchers assessed the responses to water-related risks of 59 of the 100 largest companies on the JSE. A staggering 83% of respondents - higher than any other country in the world - reported that their direct operations face risks.

The research was conducted on behalf of the CDP, formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project.

Only about half the companies responded in South Africa, implying that many companies do not realise their need to assess their risk. This is "of serious concern", the researchers said.

In an interview, the NBI's Programme Manager for Climate and Water, Alex McNamara, said all companies in South Africa face water risks to varying extent. The risk could be due to water shortages, diminishing quality and / or rising prices. Companies in the largest cities, Gauteng, Cape Town and Durban, would probably be least affected. Even in these areas, however, prices were expected to escalate.

Says Bertus: "We should make decisions now, to be well-placed to weather the inevitable constraints in future.

"The first step is to measure the total volume of water your business uses, and its flow through your business. This entails setting up water meters in key locations. Which of these areas is most critical?"

Water harvesting and re-use should then be investigated. Dolphin Bay will soon start to measure the water flow through our own factories.

"The thrust of all this is that we should not be complacent about water," concludes Bertus. "We need to prepare for shortages, because water is not something we can put a cost to."

Source: [Dolphin Bay Chemicals](#)