Water

Why is it important?

Water is a key component of many of our products, and there are clear environmental benefits to using it over other solvents. We recognise water as a valuable, shared resource and need to ensure we are responsible in how we manage our water consumption.

Global water use has been increasing by roughly 1% per year over the past 40 years, and is expected to grow at a similar rate through to 2050,[1] driven by a combination of population growth, socioeconomic development, unsustainable management and ecosystem degradation. Climate change is making the problem worse, intensifying floods and droughts, shifting rainfall patterns and affecting sea levels.

Our commitments

Synthomer is committed to adopting a risk-based approach to its sites and, where appropriate, ensuring that we have sustainable water management systems and practices in place, minimising net consumption and water quality impact, and supporting the objectives of the associated UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 6).

Our Vision 2030 target

- Establish sustainable water management[2] at all sites located in areas of high water stress[3].

Associated policies

Our Water Management Policy

Our Environment Policy

Our Risk Management Policy

Our Group policies are all available on our website.

1 United Nations World Water Development Report 2023.
2 Sustainable water management is defined as being certified to the Alliance for Water Stewardship standard or an equivalent standard.
3 Priority sites for water stress have been identified by combining local risk factors using WRI Aqueduct tool and relative water demand related to high baseline water stress and/or high forecast water stress, high water demand.

Our approach

We recognise that we need to identify and responsibly manage the impacts and dependencies related to water use across our entire value chain.

Our water policy explains our approach to managing water use at our sites, and the steps we need to take to deliver our Vision 2030 target. We are making good progress in the following areas:

- Implementing water stewardship systems for any of our own operations located in areas of high water stress to minimise water withdrawal, net consumption and increase effluent discharge quality
- Putting systems and controls in place to prevent incidents at our sites that could lead to water-related environmental consequences and ensure we minimise the potential impact if these incidents occur
- Understanding the impact that our operational activities have on key ecosystems and biodiversity.

In 2023, we adapted our Vision 2030 target to reflect the increasing maturity in our approach to water management. We concluded that the most effective water-related goals for us should focus on the local context of water risks and dependencies, so we decided to set context-based qualitative goals for our manufacturing sites.

Our Vision 2030 target is now to establish sustainable water management at all our sites located in areas of high water stress by 2030.

To understand each site's local water context, we take a three-step approach to determine materiality and assess site-level water risks. First, we completed a baseline and future water risk screening of physical quantity and quality using the World Resources Institute (WRI) Aqueduct water risk tool to identify our high-risk sites. We then prioritised those high-risk sites with high volume and withdrawal dependencies and conducted a site-specific review at each to better assess the local context. As a result of this work, we identified six sites as high risk and high dependency, and prioritised the need to develop context-based water stewardship goals at three of those sites by 2030.

Our previous climate risk assessment and scenario analysis conducted in 2021 and 2022 identified the need to explore our resilience to physical water-related risks, such as floods and drought. The climate risk assessment and scenario analysis we conducted in 2025 assessed potential climate-related risks and opportunities across all Synthomer operations under five shared socioeconomic pathways (SSPs):

1. Paris Ambition SSP1-1.9
2. Paris Agreement SSP1-2.6
3. Stated Policy SSP2-4.5
4. Current Policy SSP3-7.0
5. No Policy SSP5-8.5.

We conducted the analysis over three time horizons: the near term (to 2025), mid term (to 2030) and long term (to 2050), using CMIP6 climate models.

This approach also supports the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) recommendations for companies to assess the relevant physical risks to their business.

The analysis assessed the following risk categories:

- Transition risks: policy, technology, market demand, litigation and reputation
- Physical risks: flood (coastal, riverine and flash), drought/water stress, temperature and wind.

The following specific climate-related issues could potentially have a material financial impact:

Transition risks: across all three time horizons include the risk to earnings value as a result of evolving carbon price/tax regulations, particularly in Europe, related to our raw materials and own operations, as well as increasing energy costs. In addition, in the medium term, we also expect to see increasing market and environmental policy changes drive the need for a transition in our future product portfolio, requiring greater low-carbon product innovation. Failure to deliver Scope 1 and 2, and Scope 3, GHG emissions reductions by 2030, in line with our science-based targets, could give rise to market and reputational risk.

Physical risks: flash flooding, riverine flooding and heatwave were shown to be the three physical risk categories with the greatest potential for supplier and facility disruption, giving rise to revenue loss and asset damage costs. These physical risks do not increase materially across each of the three time horizons, meaning that the level of site exposure and vulnerability that we are experiencing today will likely continue in the short, medium and long term. We are therefore not proposing to change our current risk-based approach to how we manage water risks.

Our performance in 2025 and next steps

Our three priority sites with high baseline water stress and/or high forecast water stress, high water demand continued to make progress against their water stewardship targets, albeit more slowly than we would like. This was due to cost challenges and regulatory factors.

Our site in Langelsheim, Germany, aims to implement phase one of a project to reduce reliance on river water for cooling in the next two years, which could reduce demand by 15-20%.

Our site in Ribécourt, France, has met its legally binding 10% reduction target and has a clear set of objectives to hit its 25% reduction target by 2035. Le Havre has worked with a third-party expert to develop and submit an action plan to its regulator, setting out proposals to meet a 20% reduction target.

Our overall absolute water withdrawal was 1% lower and our water withdrawal intensity was almost 5% higher than in 2024. This was largely due to lower output and higher demand for cooling at some of our locations that experienced a particularly hot summer.

We are proud that our sites have continued to drive improvement projects through our Manufacturing Excellence programme in areas like demand management, leak repairs and cooling system management, which have helped reduce water use significantly. At our site in Sokolov, Czech Republic, for example, the team has reduced the use of river water by more than 200,000m^3 as a result of ending the use of coal in our boilers.

Through our Manufacturing Excellence programme, all sites will look at deploying good water management practices and developing detailed water balances in 2026, as outlined in our water policy.

We will continue to assess the need to develop water stewardship programmes at our lower-volume water stress sites and, where needed, implement those programmes by 2030.

Group water usage	Unit	2025	2024	2023	2019	Variance 2025 vs 2024 [4]	Variance 2025 vs 2019 [5]
Total water withdrawal	‘000m^3	6,913	6,967	6,916	7,143	-0.8%	-3.2%
Specific water withdrawal	m^3/tonne production	5.33	5.09	5.22	3.93	4.8%	35.6%
Water withdrawal by source							
Public potable supply	‘000m^3	1,954	2,123	1,975	1,756	-7.9%	11.3%
Raw water from river	‘000m^3	2,260	2,658	2,662	2,810	-15.0%	-19.6%
Raw water from borehole	‘000m^3	822	772	783	1,192	6.5%	-31.0%
Raw water form canal	‘000m^3	58	41	39	65	39.7%	-11.4%
Raw water from other	‘000m^3	1,819	1,374	1,458	1,320	32.4%	37.9%
Total water consumption[6]	‘000m^3	2,069	1,823	1,945	n/a	13.5%	n/a
Specific water consumption[5]	m^3/tonne production	1.6	1.33	1.44	n/a	20.3%	n/a
Sites in extremely high-risk location for water stress							
Number	#	3	3	n/a	n/a	0	n/a
Proportion of Group production volume	%	11.7	11.8	10.9	n/a	-0.8%	n/a
Proportion of Group revenue	%	13.5	12.5	12.4	n/a	8.0%	n/a

Our methodologies

Water withdrawal: sum of all water drawn from surface water, groundwater, seawater, or a third party for any use, as per GRI and CDP definitions.

Water discharge: sum of effluents, used water, and unused water released to surface water, groundwater, seawater, or a third party, for which the organisation has no further use. Includes drainage, wastewater (effluent), used cooling water and irrigation surplus.

Water consumption: sum of all water that has been withdrawn and incorporated into products, used in the production of crops or generated as waste, has evaporated, transpired, or been consumed by humans or livestock, or is polluted to the point of being unusable by other users, and therefore not released back to surface water, groundwater, seawater, or a third party.

In practice, water consumption = total water withdrawal – total water discharge.

4 2022 data included the sites of our new adhesives business.
5 2019-2021 data excluded our new adhesives business.
6 In 2022, we began using the water mass balance approach. We are not reporting on this approach before 2022.