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VOLVIC WATER A NATURAL TREASURE IN PERIL



THE FACTS

>>> A RESOURCE IN DANGER

The Volvic region, famous for its pure water from the local aquifer, is facing a major environmental crisis.

Historically, this natural aquifer provided abundant water for local streams, with an impressive cumulative flow of 450 liters per second. This water benefited both the local population and the surrounding ecosystems.

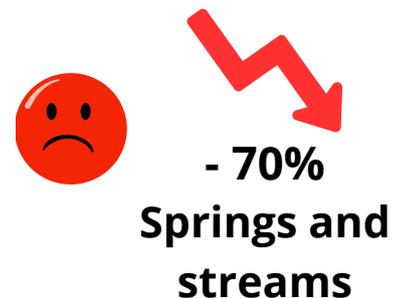
2013-2023

Available water



The resource has diminished drastically (-40%), with a 9% reduction for drinking water supply at the goulet and 70% at the springs.

Outgoing volumes



➤➤➤ HUMAN ACTIVITY

In 1926, a gallery was dug to provide drinking water for 60,000 people in the Riom/Volvic area.

More problematically, the Danone bottling plant has been authorised since December 2021 to withdraw 2.5 billion litres per year, corresponding to a production of 7 million litres per day. Since 1985, bottlers have increased their withdrawals tenfold.

Over the same period, the annual flow of natural springs feeding the streams has been divided by 8.

Over the last 10 years, the annual flow of these springs has been divided by 3 (assuming constant rainfall), with catastrophic consequences for the environment in general, and for aquatic biodiversity in particular.

➤➤➤ CONSEQUENCES

Danone's over-exploitation of water has led to a marked drying up of streams and the disappearance of wetlands, with a consequent loss of animal and plant biodiversity.

In addition, this drying-up, linked to commercial activity, has led to the closure of the oldest fish farm in France.

The impact also extends to local agriculture and the quality of life of local residents.

There is also the impact of the 200 tonnes of plastic produced every day, some of which is shipped by 300 lorries a day to European countries that have no shortage of water.

Lastly, local authorities are concerned about the growing difficulties in providing drinking water under good conditions to local residents, who are also subject to restrictions on water use for 7 months of the year under the drought decree.



THE MECHANISMS OF APPROPRIATION BY DANONE

»»» SOCIAL COMPONENT

The company provides 800 local jobs and has been awarded the B Corp label for its social and environmental performance.

»»» TOURISME ET SPORT

Danone is heavily involved in local tourism, sponsors major sporting events and seeks to 'add value' to the region through various activities.

INFLUENCE STRATEGY

Danone has deployed a well-honed influence strategy, based on communication, tourism, sport and close links with elected representatives and state authorities.

»»» ENVIRONMENT

The company advertises its contribution to preserving the environment through its participation in the CEPIV (environmental committee for the protection of the Volvic impluvium).

At the same time, it blames global warming and falling rainfall for the decline in water resources, which is totally contradicted by data from Météo France.



PRÉVA'S ACTIONS



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MOBILISING AND RAISING AWARENESS

PREVA, in collaboration with other associations, is working to raise awareness among representatives of the State and local authorities, as well as the general public, of the dangers associated with Danone's over-exploitation of water.

➤➤➤ ALERT AND ADVOCACY

Raising awareness among government departments and local elected representatives of the critical water situation in the Volvic basin. **Préva is calling for the 2006 law on water and aquatic environments (the LEMA law) to be respected by everyone, and for commercial exploitation to be the system's adjustment variable.**

This law very clearly defines the priorities for use, with industry in last place, so the marketing of water must become the variable for adjusting the various uses of water from the Volvic impluvium, and not the other way round, as is the case today.

➤➤➤ WHISTLEBLOWING ON SHORTCOMINGS

Denouncing and participating in the development of measures validated by the State and considered insufficient and non-restrictive to protect water resources; these include water extraction authorisations for the SEV considered to be too high, the PURE (rational water use plan) and the drought framework decree.

➤➤➤ COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Publication in the press and among the inhabitants of the Riom / Volvic area of scientific data and analyses highlighting the water problems in the Volvic region and denouncing Danone's arguments.



The situation in Volvic is a very worrying example of how the privatisation of water can disrupt ecosystems and impact local populations. Residents are subject to water restrictions for 7 months of the year, with no significant constraints for Danone; it is also planned that, in the event of a shortage, they will be supplied with lower quality surface water through interconnections with water from the alluvial plain of the Allier.

While Danone continues to exploit the aquifer for its commercial activity, the natural balance of the region's water resources is at risk, highlighting the need for sustainable and equitable management of this vital resource.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO MAKE OUR VOICE HEARD AND PROTECT THIS PRECIOUS RESOURCE. JOIN US IN TAKING ACTION!

