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## 4.2 THE CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: THE CASE STUDY OF THE WATER AS A STRATEGIC COMMODITY FOR FUTURE

**Summary:** The main goal of this paper is to focus on the issues related to water. Humans have always been connected to the nature and natural resources. There is no doubt that humanity cannot live without nature and it has to be a social priority to take care of the nature and natural resources. This paper inquires about the current situation of world's water supply and the differences between water withdrawal and consumption between countries. There is also a tremendous problem with growing demand, diminishing water supply and negative features connected with water wasting. Necessary awareness of companies in decreasing the negative phenomena by corporate social responsibility and by participating in international aimed programmes related to improvement the care of the world ecosystems (including water sources). In the case study, you will be given some examples how a big international company as Coca-Cola participates in international programs and by using tools of corporate social responsibility is fighting against the diminishing water supply issue. The significance of Corporate Social Responsibility has changed from "voluntary approach" towards one of the important tools used to improve performance and increase competitiveness of companies. The aim of this article is to provide a theoretical approach on how should companies proceed in order to create successful implementation of CSR into management processes leading towards sustainable performance of a company. Primary and secondary data have been analyzed to get an overview on current theoretical approaches in terms of CSR implementation in international companies. The findings indicate the effects CSR implementation and strategic approach in international management can bring to overall performance of international companies.

**Keywords:** corporate social responsibility (CSR), international trade, natural resources, scarcity, water, water withdrawal

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The significance of Corporate Social Responsibility has changed from "voluntary approach" towards one of the important tools used to improve performance and increase competitiveness of companies nowadays. To achieve positive impact of CSR on a company, management should devote sufficient focus on strategic planning and implementation of CSR into all management processes conducted in a company. The aim of this article is to provide a theoretical approach on how should companies proceed in order to create successful implementation of CSR into management processes leading towards sustainable performance of a company. Primary and secondary data have been analyzed on in order to get an overview on current theoretical approaches in terms of CSR implementation in international companies. The findings indicate the effects CSR implementation and strategic approach in international management can bring to overall performance of international companies.

First decade of the 21 century can be characterized by rapid development of global society as well as by remarkable growth of global issues, both on environmental and social level. These issues have strengthened the necessity to develop and apply more systematic and sustainable approach towards business activities realized on international and local level. Therefore, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an important tool, many companies have decided to apply considering their business activities on local as well as global markets. Business world has undergone several changes over the last decades, considering the role of multinational companies (MNCs) as well as small-and-medium

enterprises (SMEs). Beside maximization of company's profit, current development requires focusing on systematic and sustainable approach in doing business more than before. Moreover, MNCs and SMEs should focus not only on profit (primary bottom line), but on people (second bottom line) and planet (third bottom line) aspects of their business activities as well (Bielik, Smutka, Horská, 2010). Therefore Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has become an important tool used to achieve sustainable business approach. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) has defined the CSR as a business commitment that contributes to a sustainable economic development via team work with employees and its representatives, families, local and public communities in order to improve the quality of life by beneficial ways both for the business itself and the development (Jamali, 2006). Moreover companies should take seriously their 'obligations to society' and actively fulfil them (Godiwalla - Damanpour, 2006). In general, all CSR definition agree that the concept of CSR in the means of business world should take into consideration financial, environmental and social aspects and that sustainable development lies in the synergy of all three aspects (Hidayati, 2011).

The report Green Paper distinguishes two dimensions of CSR, internal and external. Within the company, internal CSR includes HR management, health and safety at work, change management, etc. External CSR extends beyond the doors of a company and involves local communities, a wide range of stakeholders in addition to employees and shareholders as business partners, customers, public authorities, variety of NGOs, etc. (Green Paper, 2005). Furthermore, some authors divide CSR into two categories, responsive and strategic CSR. While responsive CSR is concentrating on acting as a good company citizen, strategic CSR transforms the valued-chained activities of the company into community benefits. Besides, it improves the company strategy in competitive context (Porter-Kramer, 2006). Porter and Kramer claim, that the most strategic CSR occurs, when a company adds a social value to its value proposition, making social impact integral to the overall strategy. Except competitiveness, implementation of CSR in overall company strategy can bring far more advantages as reduction of costs, profit growth, improved access to capital, enhancing of brand and image, loyalty of customer, sales increase, motivation and reduced fluctuation of employees or risk reduction (CSRNETWORK, 2009).

Meanwhile, to demonstrate socially responsible behaviour of a company, corporate social marketing(CSM) is considered to be the 'tool' (Kuldová, 2011). CSM supports Company marketing objectives, market development and increase sales, but it triggers the behaviour change, too (Kotler-Lee, 2004). CSR communication via CSM means not only communicating a company's behaviour through standards and codes of conduct, but also communication very long projects which do not have any evidence of outcome (Birth-Illia-Lurati-Zamparini, 2006). Moreover, Kotler and Lee claim that use of CSM should result not only in company's benefit but in personal behaviour change, followed by consumer behaviour change. Nowadays, still many companies (McDonald's, Tesco Stores SR, Heineken) consider CSM as a tool for building up image. In Slovakia many companies present themselves as socially responsible through sponsoring or charity, which as they claim should not be perceived as a way to strengthen their brand or image. We can assume that use of CSR as PR tool rather confuse consumers than send out a clear message supporting good reputation of a company. Moreover, perception of CSR as a PR tool is common especially among companies, which yet do not have their own CSR departments. Other negative phenomena regarding application of CSR in companies, especially SMEs, is due to the fact CSR is considered as cost center, or companies do not have a time to create and implement relevant CSR strategy in their business as they have to focus on their core business, etc. There is also still the argument presented by Milton Friedman who claims that the only responsibility of a business organization is to its shareholders, to maximize the profit (Robbins-Coulter, 2004). These are

the arguments that often come up because of misunderstanding of a CSR concept or it is perspective from short-term, rather than long-term perspective. The important fact is CSR business strategies require long – run and continuous approach to obtain benefits from CSR in the future.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODOLOGY

The main attention of submitted paper is to explain the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) from the viewpoint of the water as a strategic commodity for future. For the purpose of the world trade in water analysis, the authors used the World Trade Organisation's foreign trade database and the United Nations' foreign trade database (UN COMTRADE) as the main information sources for this paper. The world trade with water is not concentrated only to non-sparkling fresh water but also include other beverages under commodity group HS22 (Beverages, spirits and vinegar) that can be divided into three commodity subgroups structure: HS 220110 (Mineral and aerated waters not sweetened or flavoured), HS 220190 (Ice, snow and potable water not sweetened or flavoured) and HS 220210 (Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured. This latter sub-aggregation covers the following: Waters, including mineral waters and aerated waters, containing added sugar or other sweetening matter or flavour). In this paper, we use the methods of analysis, synthesis and comparison.

In order to demonstrate the role of CSR as an important tool used by international companies while dealing with solutions of global problems such as water scarcity we chose currently the world's greatest user of water supplies Coca-Cola Company that is running several international projects supporting the sustainable water management and protection of water resources all around the world.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Water resources are sources of water that are useful to humans. Uses of water include agricultural, industrial, household, recreational and environmental activities. Fresh water plays unsubstitutable role in human population development. The quantity of water is limited, especially fresh water becomes scarce factors. Approximately 97% of water on the Earth is salt water and only 3% of total water capacity is represented by fresh water of which slightly over two thirds is frozen in glaciers and polar ice caps. Fresh water is a renewable resource, yet the world's supply of clean, fresh water is steadily decreasing. Water demand already exceeds supply in many parts of the world and as the world population continues to rise, so too does the water demand.

The current water consumption is mainly divided into these 3 sectors:

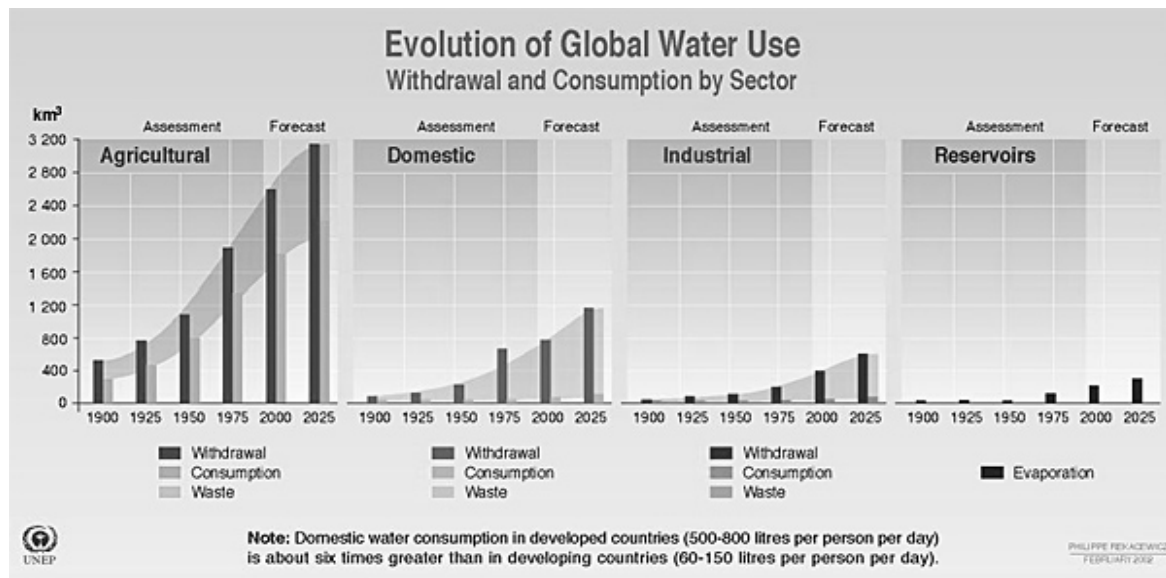
- Agriculture- it is estimated that 69% of worldwide water use is for irrigation, with 15-35% of irrigation withdrawals being unsustainable.<sup>14</sup> As global populations grow, and as demand for food increases in a world with a fixed water supply, there are efforts underway to learn how to produce more food with less water, through improvements in irrigation methods and technologies, agricultural water management, crop types, and water monitoring.
- Industry- it is estimated that 15% of worldwide water use is industrial. Water is used in many industrial processes and machines. Major industrial users include power plants, which use water for cooling or as a power source (i.e. hydroelectric plants), ore and oil refineries, which use water in chemical processes, and manufacturing plants, which use water as a solvent.

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<sup>14</sup> "WBCSD Water Facts & Trends". <http://www.wbcd.org/includes/getTarget.asp?type=d&id=MTYyNTA>. Retrieved 2009-03-12.

- **Households-** it is estimated that 15% of worldwide water use is for household purposes. These include drinking water, bathing, cooking, sanitation, and gardening. It has been estimated by Peter Gleick<sup>15</sup> at around 50 liters per person per day, excluding water for gardens. The water consumption/withdrawal development during 125 years is presented by Figure 1.

*Figure.1 The water consumption/withdrawal development during 125 years*



Source: UNEP

If we consider water consumption by regions a tremendous differences emerge between developed and developing regions. While the average volume of domestic consumption in developed countries is about 500-800 litres per capita a day, in developing countries it is about 60-150 litres. The huge problem of current fresh water consumption development is the fact that while the volume of fresh water sources is diminishing (during the last two decades, the volume of available fresh water in the world decreased by 30%), demand for fresh water is constantly increasing. If we compare water consumption and withdrawal in 1900 with water consumption and withdrawal in 2000, we can see huge differences. During the last century water withdrawal increased its volume more than six times.

Water pollution is one of the main issues of the world today. The governments of many countries have striven to find solutions to reduce this problem. One of the most important presumptions of prosperity and progress towards the sustainable development is the improvement of care of the world ecosystems (including water sources). Human activity leads to degradation of many ecosystems, while the requirements for “ecosystem services” (for example food, drinking water, environment and so on) grow significantly.

World population has been steadily growing; its consumption patterns are becoming more and more sophisticated. Demand for fresh water has been growing and price of is also increasing. The result of last 20 years development is the reduction of available fresh water sources for human consumption by about more than 30%. Water becomes not only one of the production factors; water becomes also strategic factor for future human society development.

While in 1995 the number of people facing to fresh water scarcity and stress was about 500 million, Currently there is almost 1, 2 billion people suffering from water scarcity that means they do not have proper access to 20-50 liters of daily freshwater, which is minimum set by UN organization. Another 1 billion of people do not have access to the fresh water at

<sup>15</sup> Gleick, P. H., 1996: Water resources. In Encyclopedia of Climate and Weather

reasonable prices (Bielik – Smutka – Horská, 2010). In 2025 the estimated number of people is about 7 billion.

The result of above mentioned development is the fact, that fresh water becomes the important part of world economy. Nowadays fresh water represents the target of huge international investments.

*Table 1: World trade volume of analysed commodity sub-groups (in Kg)*

Year	Total trade in HS 220210, 220110, 220190	Mineral and aerated waters not sweetened or flavoured	Ice, snow and potable water not sweetened or flavoured	Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured
1996	779 914 694 786	2 968 983 028	774 124 371 000	2 821 340 758
1998	769 089 476 720	3 683 710 027	762 538 214 759	2 867 551 934
2000	735 180 545 695	4 670 263 875	726 535 150 565	3 975 131 255
2002	833 878 246 554	6 010 311 378	822 955 610 561	4 912 324 615
2004	828 111 904 118	6 481 441 634	815 307 235 846	6 323 226 638
2006	737 356 108 833	7 221 526 251	721 988 180 941	8 146 401 641
2008	791 432 730 814	6 112 761 473	777 094 115 858	8 225 853 483

Source: Comtrade, (Bielik, Smutka and Horska, 2010)

This table 1 shows the proportion of all three commodity subgroups in the whole HS22 commodity business. We see that the main pillar of the world fresh water trade – HS 220190 is stable and during the analysed time period almost no significant changes were recorded, in the case of the other two analysed commodity groups significant changes were recorded in the traded volume during the analysed time period (1996-2008).

Later on in the Case study we will enquire about Coca-Cola company producing beverage waters in the third commodity subgroup HS220210 (beverages, sweetened or flavoured) that has recorded in the monitored time period, a growth of traded volume of over 190% (the average value of inter annual growth rate reached almost 9.3%).

On the other hand, it must be emphasized that while the share of “Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured” is very high, its share in total trade volume is minor – only 1% (in 2008). The characteristic, which distinguishes this commodity group from the other analyzed commodity groups, is unit value development. During the monitored time period, the average unit value of one kilogram of “Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured” varied between 0.44 USD.kg<sup>-1</sup> and 0.8 USD.kg<sup>-1</sup>. In 2008, the average value of one kilogram of traded “Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured” (world market) was 0.8 USD.kg<sup>-1</sup>.

The main drivers of world import of “Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured” are the developed countries. In the analyzed time period, the share of OECD members in total world imports was over 77% (European Union 57%, North America 16%). The shares of developing countries and regions were only minor.

On the other hand, the main drivers of world trade are the OECD members. Their share in world exports is over 80% (European Union 62%, North America 11%). On the basis of this data we can see that world trade (export and import) in “Beverage waters, sweetened or flavoured” is controlled by the developed countries. It must be stressed, however, that the majority of trade operations take place among the developed countries

### 3.1. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is the idea that management has broader responsibilities than just to make a profit. Those who embrace the classical economic model content that business's social responsibility is to maximize profits for stockholders. Proponents of the social and economic model disagree saying that business has a responsibility to improve the general quality of life and beyond making profit (Crane and Matten, 2007). According to these authors, the schools of economy are divided into.

Behaviouristical school of economy:

- convinced that the corporation should be more than simply a profit machine.
- business is unavoidably involved in Social issues
- business has the resource to tackle today's societal problems
- a better social means a better environment for doing business
- corporate social action will prevent government intervention

Classical school of economy:

- profit maximalization ensures the efficient use of society's resources.
- as an economic institution business lacks the ability to pursue social goals
- business already has enough power
- Since managers are not elected, they are not directly accountable to the people.

Probably the most established and accepted model of CSR is the four-part model of Corporate Social Responsibility as initially proposed by Archie Carroll. Carroll regards CSR as a multi-layered concept which can be differentiated into four inter-related aspects-economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic responsibilities. He presents these different responsibilities as a consecutive layer within a pyramid, such that true social requires the meeting of all four levels consecutively.

**Figure 2.: Carroll's four-part CSR pyramid**



Source: Crane, A. – Matten, D. (2007)

*Economic responsibilities:* Shareholders demand reasonable return from their investments, employees who want safe and good-paid jobs, customers who demand good quality products at fair price. This first layer is the basis for all the subsequent responsibilities.

*Legal responsibilities:* businesses should abide the law, abiding these standards is a necessary condition for any further reasoning about social responsibility.

*Ethical responsibilities:* These responsibilities oblige corporations to do what is right just, and fair even when they are not compelled to do so by the legal framework

*Philanthropic responsibilities:* Lastly, as the tip of the pyramid the fourth level of CSR looks at the philanthropic responsibilities of corporations. By using this idea in a business context, the model incorporates activities that are within the corporation's discretion to improve the quality of life of employees, local communities, and ultimately society in general.

As was mentioned all four layers of the pyramid has to be fulfilled if the corporation wants to act and be Socially Responsible. In the recent year we could observe the increasing number of national and international companies contributing to the effort of governmental and non - governmental organizations to reduce the water shortage and help to obtain the water for most suffering communities in the world. All activities are provided via numerous international projects. Water scarcity and other global issues belong to the sphere that is managed with assistance of special tool: CSR. It is focusing company’s interest and activities in searching of possible solutions of global problems for the future. At the same time it is a respond towards public interest in company decision making processes.

**4. CASE STUDY: COCA-COLA COMPANY**

The problem of water scarcity has become a serious issue that requires unifying the effort of all the international, national and local policies that need to coordinate the common steps in order to find effective solutions. The main steps were done by UN organization that set the target MDG – reduce the shortage of access to water by 2025 by half. What is more responsible approach towards solving the problem of water shortage is dependant also on the approach of local, national and international companies, mainly in agricultural and food industry that are using great deal of world water supplies in order to satisfy the increasing demand of growing population.

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Well – know international giant Coca-Cola Company is one of the greatest users of water supplies in the world. Established in 1886, it operates in 200 countries, produces 3000 beverage products, and has portfolio of 500 brands. These products include sparkling and still beverages, such as waters, juices and juice drinks, teas, coffees, sports drinks and energy drinks. Coca-Cola products are consumed by 1,6 billion people per day and it placed 10 million machines at all strategic places to meet consumer’s requirements around the world. Unit case volume of Coca-Company in 2008 represented 23, 7 billions sold products. Table 2 provides an overview of the financial results in years 2004 -2008 in million US dollars.

*Table 2.: Review of Coca – Cola financial results in years 2004 – 2008 in mil. \$*

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Gross profit</b>	<b>14068</b>	<b>14909</b>	<b>15942</b>	<b>18451</b>	<b>20570</b>
<b>Net income</b>	4847	4872	5080	5981	5807

Source: www.thecoca-colacompany.com, 2008

**4.1. COCA-COLA COMPANY IN RUSSIA**

Coca-Cola was first sold in Russia in 1980, during the Summer Olympic Games in Moscow. In 1994, the country's first plant was opened in Moscow. Currently, 120 different flavour extensions of the 23 brands exist to meet consumer tastes. The Coca-Cola System in Russia - consisting of The Coca-Cola Company and its bottling partner, Coca-Cola Hellenic (CCH) - is one of the country's largest foreign investors, having invested up to US\$1.8 billion

to date in the Russian economy. In 2008, more than 11% of unit case volumes were sold in Russia from the total share of unit case volumes sold in Eurasia.

In terms of water requirements, Coca-Cola Company uses annually approximately 300 billion litres of water to produce sufficient amount of required production. In order to provide successful water management ensuring availability and sustainability of water Coca-Cola has set two main targets:

- to improve water efficiency by 20% by 2012 in comparison to year 2004, through the partnership with WWF,
- at the sufficient level supporting aquatic life, return the water used in their system operations, by the end 2010 via comprehensive wastewater treatment.

What is more, Coca-Cola is focusing its water stewardship on three main areas, included in targets. The first area is aimed at increasing the efficiency (reducing water ratio) while growing their unit case of volume. Secondly, Coca-Cola is dealing with recycling of used water and thirdly is oriented on replenishing water access and watershed restoration and protection. Over the years 2004 – 2008, Coca-Cola reduced its water ratio by more than 9%, from 2, 68 l per product to 2, 43 l per product (from 2, 43 litres of water to produce one litre beverage one litre goes into the beverage itself, 1, 43 litres are used for manufacturing processes such as rinsing, cleaning, and cooling.) The final goal is to reach 2, 17 litres per product by 2012 representing the set target to improve efficiency by 20% Table 3 below is reflecting the volume of water ratio in each year during the period 2004 – 2008.

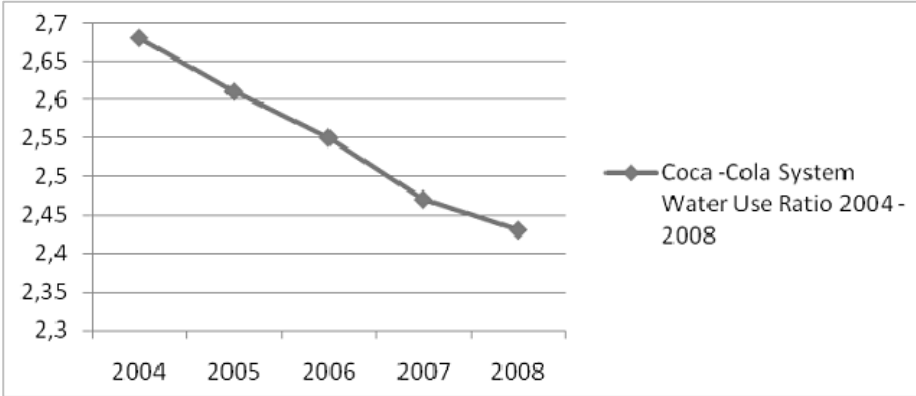
**Table 3: Coca- Cola System Water Use Ratio 2004 - 2008**

Year	Litres of Product
2004	2, 68
2005	2, 61
2006	2, 55
2007	2, 47
2008	2, 43

Source: The Coca-Cola Company Sustainability Review, 2008/2009

In 2007, the Coca-Cola Company has become one of the six companies committed to the CEO Water Mandate through which Coca-Cola is managing their direct operations and supply chains. Moreover, Coca-Cola Company is establishing wide range of worldwide projects based on partnership with many NGOs, committees as well as governments, for instance WWF, UNDP, CARE, or U.S. Agency for International Development. Following chart provides us with the number of partnerships established by Coca-Cola and local communities devoted to the water management around the world (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Coca- Cola System Water Use Ratio 2004 – 2008**



Source: The Coca-Cola Company Sustainability Review, 2008/2009



For illustration (Table 4) of the Coca-Cola Company project activities, we can mention the launch of the first Volga Day activities based on partnership with UNESCO and Coca-Cola Hellenic in Russia. The main aim was to conserve the lower wetlands of Volga and sustainable development on the delta. Coca-Cola Company has similar supporting activities all over the world.

**Table 4: Number of community water partnerships supported by Coca-Cola Company**

Year	Number of partnerships established between Coca-Cola and communities	Number of countries – projects exist	Share of real existing projects in percentage
2005	17	14	82%
2006	65	38	58%
2007	116	48	41%
2008	203	56	27%

Source: The Coca-Cola Company Sustainability Review, 2008/2009

For instance, in Brazil and Mexico, it cooperates with local governments and NGOs to reforest more than 30,000 hectares of ecosystems to nurture and protect local watersheds. In Thailand, project “RAKNAM” was launched to drive public awareness and action for sustainable water resource management. RAKNAM also provides an estimated 49 million liters of clean water annually to water-stressed communities in northeast Thailand.

As we can see, especially multinational companies are increasing their responsiveness towards the increasing global problem considering their local responsibilities. At the same time international community calls for actions of companies at all levels to align their steps, production decisions with more sustainable and reasonable approaches. Coca-Cola Company realizes that acting sustainable is not just the requirement of international community but it will influence the whole future of company from the perspective of consumers too.

Especially nowadays, consumers are making their decisions based on the character of the company that makes the products. People want to interact with brands and companies that share their values and are doing their part to protect and enhance people’s lives, communities, environment and the world. By engaging in sustainable business practices and helping to improve the lives of people, Coca-Cola can earn the social license to operate and the opportunity to thrive (Coca-Cola Company, Sustainability review, 2009). From this point of view CSR is one of the most efficient tools that help to achieve missions and objectives of the companies. In the same time CSR encourages not only the community growth, but sustainability towards the future as well. Generally said, CSR is a tool that is interconnecting and honours the triple bottom line: people, profit, planet (Bielik – Smutka – Horská, 2010).

**5. CONCLUSION**

According to the paper results demand for water use and consumption is increasing simultaneously with the increase of world’s population. Beside households, great proportion of all water resources is used by industrial (15%) and agricultural (69%) sectors. On one hand demand for water is increasing, on the other hand water supplies all around the world are decreasing. Due to the unsustainable use of water, many parts of the world already suffer from water scarcity and many inhabitants already do not have access to daily fresh drinking water. Over the last two decades, availability of fresh daily water for consumption was decreased by more than 30%.

Water is one of the key economic factors for future development of all the countries around the world. Especially in recent years, it has become a strategic commodity in the world trade. As a consequence, value of water is growing. It is important to notify, that majority of

world trade operations considering water are realized by developed countries. Developing countries play only small role as they suffer from water scarcity. In order to solve the problem of increasing water scarcity, many multinational companies, governmental and non-governmental organizations are undertaking various steps in order to provide sustainable water management towards the future reduce the water shortage and provide fresh water for the most suffering communities in the world. In order to reach set targets companies are using one of the most powerful tools: CSR approach, which at the same time is a respond to a public interest and companies are using it to demonstrate their share on solving the global problems. To demonstrate such behaviour we used case of Coca-Cola Company that is one of the world's users of water supplies and therefore water plays strategic role in its future existence. Coca-Cola is currently running several projects in cooperation with international organizations such UNESCO and many other NGOs to support the sustainable development of water use and protect endangered water areas. Moreover, it focuses its own company activities on increase of water efficiency, recycling and replenishing the watershed.

On the whole, CSR can be perceived as a tool which through public interest is urging companies to provide sustainable business operations considering use of natural resources as water, to protect the environment and to create positive impact on the communities where they operates.

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