

# VISION

## ‘A new mindset is needed: drinking water really is finite’

Due to the drought, less water is flowing in the Maas River and the Netherlands could face a shortage of drinking water, the television news channel NOS reported last week. This is indeed cause for concern, responds Ryan Teuling of the Hydrology and Quantitative Water Management chair group. ‘A new mindset is needed’.

### *How problematic is it that there is less water in the Maas?*

‘Water from the Maas is filtered in the dunes and nearly all the drinking water in the major cities and South Holland province comes from there. If the Maas transports less water, it is dirtier because the same quantities of waste are diluted in less water. It’s hard to filter it more as the water purification plants do not currently have the capacity to do so.’



## ‘Better water management for consumers is needed’

### *Will there soon be no water coming out of the tap?*

‘We should be seriously concerned about that. The drinking water companies could hardly keep up with demand, especially during the hot dry summer, and they had to reduce the pressure in the pipes. The demand for water is only increasing, while the supply is falling, due to climate change.’

### *The union of Maas water companies (RIWA) makes a case for European consultations on water distribution.*

‘I can understand that they are getting nervous. Agreements on water distribution have been made with Belgium but there is no integral plan. But I cannot imagine that we could agree that the Netherlands will get a certain amount of water. Other countries can’t guarantee that: their own water supply comes first.’

### *What is the solution?*

‘Better water management. Not just in agriculture, but also for consumers. Everyone has the right to water, but the supply is finite. You could decide that everyone gets a certain amount of water for their basic needs, and has to pay extra for additional water. A new mindset is needed: we in the Netherlands are used to the idea that there is always water coming out of the tap.’ **® TL**