



## Water – the most Precious Drop

### Around the World and Here at Home

### How much Water Wastage is there?

WWWW=World Wide Water Wastage

#### Sinking while Drinking:

The world's largest metropolis, **Mexico City**, is sinking because of the amount of water being pumped out from under its foundations.

**Bangkok** and **Venice** are 2 more cities, sinking because the ground water is not being managed properly.

#### Is oil more precious than water?

The largest freshwater wetland in the world is in **Southern Sudan**. It is being drained in the search for oil – how much water do you think is being wasted by doing this?

#### Would you drink what goes down the sink?

Many cities in the developing world are polluting their own water supplies because their waste water is seeping back into the ground which holds their limited supply of fresh water.

#### Where will the next drop come from?

By 2025, the world will need to make available 20 % more water to supply the extra three billion people expected on the planet. By then, one in every three people – mostly in developing countries— will struggle to find water just to drink and bathe, much less to grow food

#### Leaky pipes?

The proportion of households in major cities connected to piped water is 100% for **North America** in comparison with only 43% for **Africa**. Piped water available in developing areas may be reduced a further 40% due to leakage and neglect.

#### How much will it cost?

Countries which are short of water are already buying more and more on the world grain market. **Jordan** imports 91% of its supplies from abroad, **Israel** 87%, **Saudi Arabia** 50% and **Egypt** 40%.

#### Going...going...

In agriculture, about 60% of water seeps from channels of the distribution system and is lost. Using current farming methods, it takes 3 cubic metres of water to produce one kilo of rice and 1000 tonnes of water to produce one tone of grain.



*Dirty Water requires a great deal of attention*

#### Use it too much and you'll lose it.

**China's** Yellow River is so over-used that for an average of 70 days a year for the past 10 years, its waters have dried up before reaching the Bohai Sea. In 1995, the dry period lasted for 122 days, withering crops in the once rich delta so that upstream factories and farms could take all the water.

#### Swim in the Sewer?

Raw sewage is still being pumped into the world's oceans.

The city of **Lima in Peru** discharges 18,000 litres of wastewater per second into the Pacific Ocean.

#### Spray Away?

Traditional farming techniques contribute to a vicious cycle of water wastage. Each year, as irrigation deteriorates the soil, more water is used to grow crops on land whose fertility is steadily worsening.

In **Europe** if these practices continue, more than 40 % of all groundwater reserves will be polluted with nitrates and pesticides by 2025.

*Water...the Amazing Journey*

## Water in Australia

### Did you know...?

"Australia has about 1% percent of the world's water resources, and about 0.3% of its people.

On this basis Australia could be regarded as 'water rich' per person. However, other considerations need to be taken into account.

For example, almost half of Australia's water resources are in the far north, remote from the major population and agricultural centres.

Australia's relatively high rate of per capita water usage reflects its large agricultural production, much of which is exported, and the amount of water used in irrigation."

**Surface water use in Australia increased by 59%** between 1983/4 and 1996/7. An estimated 26% of Australia's 325 surface water management areas are either **close to or overused** compared with their sustainable flow regimes.

Approximately 75% of the water used in Australia is for irrigated agriculture.

NSW (48%), Victoria (25%) and Queensland (16%) account for 90% of Australian irrigation.

Half of the profit in 1996/97 from Australian agriculture was generated from irrigated production systems. These occupy less than 0.5% of Australia's land area.

About 20% of total water use is for urban and industrial purposes, the rest for other rural uses such as stock and domestic needs.

(Federal Parliamentary report)



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### Water Pressure World-Wide

Population growth and rising demand per capita are creating water shortages in many countries. Globally, the annual population increase of nearly 80 million per year means an increased demand for freshwater of about 64 billion cubic metres a year - an amount equivalent to the entire annual flow rate of the Rhine River – one of the major rivers in Germany.

### Nature's limits

A substantial portion of the total freshwater supply is needed to sustain marshes, rivers, coastal wetlands, and the millions of species they shelter. As humanity withdraws a growing share of all available freshwater, less is available to maintain vital wetland ecosystems.

Already, over 20 per cent of the approximately 10,000 freshwater fish species in the world are either endangered, threatened or going extinct.

The world's 6 billion people are already appropriating just over half of all the accessible freshwater contained in rivers, lakes, and underground aquifers.

By 2025 humankind's share will be at least 70 per cent - a conservative estimate that reflects the impact of population growth alone. If per capita consumption of water resources continues to rise at its current rate, humankind could be using over 90 per cent of all available freshwater by 2025.

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