

Water Facts and figures

water & sanitation - Some 1.1 billion people still do not have access to an adequate supply of drinking water and some 2.6 billion do not have access to basic sanitation.

health - Globally, diarrhoeal diseases and malaria killed about 3.1 million people in 2002, 90 % of them children under the age of five. An estimated 1.6 million lives could be saved annually by providing access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene.

food production - On average, it takes about 3,000 litres of water per person to produce our daily intake of food.

food consumption - The world will need 55% more food by 2030. This translates into an increasing demand for irrigation, which already claims nearly 70% of all freshwater consumed for human use. Food production has greatly increased over the past 50 years, yet 13% of the global population (850 million, mostly in rural areas) still do not have enough to eat.

urbanization - Half of humanity will be living in towns and cities by 2007. By 2030, this will have risen to nearly two thirds, resulting in drastic increases in water demand in urban areas. An estimated 2 billion of these people will be living in squatter settlements and slums.

usage - Water usage has increased six times in the last century – twice the rate of population growth.

wastage - A staggering 30-40% of water being transported goes unaccounted for worldwide due to water leakages in pipes and canals and illegal tapping.

environmental species - Freshwater species are more threatened by human activities than species in other realms. On average, populations fell by about 47 % between 1970 and 2000.

energy investment - Total worldwide investment in renewable energy rose from \$6 billion in 1995 to approximately \$22 billion in 2003, and is increasing rapidly.

hydropower - Europe makes use of 75 % of its hydropower potential. Africa, where 60% of the population has no access to electricity, has developed only 7 % of its potential.

disasters - In the last decade, 90 % of natural disasters are water-related events, and they are on the increase. Two out of every five

people now live in areas vulnerable to floods and rising sea-levels.

lakes – Lake Baikal (Russia) is the world's largest, deepest and oldest lake, it alone contains 27% of the freshwater contained in all the world's lakes. The world's 145 largest lakes contain over 95% of all lake freshwater.

rivers – The Amazon carries 15% of all water returning to the world's oceans. An estimated 263 international river basins have drainage areas that cover about 45% of the Earth's land surface, excluding polar regions.

Source: The United Nations World Water Development Report 2 (2006)