



ORSAM WATER BULLETIN

Weekly Bulletin by ORSAM Water Research Programme

Events-News-Politics-Projects-Environment-ClimateChange-Neighbourhoods-Cooperation-Disputes-Scarcity and more



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06 July – 12 August 2012

- ❖ Turkey Finds 15 Unsanitary Bottle Water Brands
- ❖ Iraq, Pell Frischmann Sign Design Contract
- ❖ Iraq, EU Sign Agreement to Improve Water Management
- ❖ Iraqi Government Allocates Nearly \$10 Million USD for Karbala Project
- ❖ Iraq Signs Accord With U.K.'s Pell Frischmann on Water Project
- ❖ Tigris-Euphrates levels increase, spur new irrigation techniques
- ❖ JICA refutes news of \$2bn Iraq loan
- ❖ Iran dries second river that flows into Iraq
- ❖ Iran Currently Constructing 130 Dams
- ❖ UN calls on Iraq to protect his rights in waters shared with neighboring countries
- ❖ Syria and Iran Signed the Memorandum of Understanding about Electricity, Water and Health
- ❖ EIB Lends Armenia \$8 Million USD to Improve Water Supply
- ❖ Palestinian President Warns of Possible Water Wars
- ❖ Jordan Adopts National Plan to Reduce Water Shortages
- ❖ Lebanon Prison Gets 50 Percent More Water
- ❖ Capitalism and Global Apartheid: Capitalizing at the Expense of the Peoples
- ❖ Jordan's Crippled Water Resources Protected by Security
- ❖ Gaza Water Increasingly Polluted and Expensive
- ❖ Farmers adopt local micro irrigation to mitigate the impact of water scarcity
- ❖ Jordan Has Enough Water to Irrigate Winter Crops
- ❖ Eco Logic / Keeping Israel's springs natural
- ❖ Gazans Pay One-third of Income for Clean Water

- ❖ Pulling Water from the Air
- ❖ New guide seeks to create ‘water education’ among students, teachers
- ❖ Anger boils in Sidon over power, water cuts
- ❖ Germany Lends Egypt \$24.3 Million USD to Upgrade High Dam
- ❖ Ain Helwan’s therapeutic waters are squandered and neglected
- ❖ Kenya Sees Increased Water-Related Crimes
- ❖ Water shortages driving growing thefts, conflicts in Kenya
- ❖ Kenya to Use \$7.5 Billion USD AfDB Loan for Dam in “Silicon Savannah”
- ❖ Malawi Calls for Peaceful Resolution to Dispute With Tanzania Over Lake
- ❖ Delhi Sets Requirements for Spending on Water, Sanitation
- ❖ Droughts Bring Climate Change Home to Nepali Farmers
- ❖ Indian State Blames Nepal Releases for Floods
- ❖ Hydel projects to continue on Ganga, says IITs
- ❖ Munificently treading water
- ❖ One Billion Without Sanitation Services in South Asia
- ❖ Pakistan Releases \$63 Million USD to Complete Kachhi Canal
- ❖ Asia, U.S. facing water extraction crisis
- ❖ International Activists Demand Action on Human Right to Water
- ❖ One of Beijing’s Water Sources May Be Contaminated, Juma River Turns White
- ❖ Chinese Desal Capacity Increasing
- ❖ China Firms Are Front Runners for Ethiopian Water Pipeline Contract
- ❖ Haikui affects 6 mln people, destroys thousands of houses
- ❖ Reservoir collapse leaves 10 dead
- ❖ Thai Villagers Launch Another Attempt to Stop Mekong Dam
- ❖ Thai Lawsuit Threatens to Derail Laos Plans for Mekong River Dam
- ❖ Cambodian PM warns of floods as water begins to rise
- ❖ ADB, World Bank Open Offices in Myanmar
- ❖ UN Announces Details of North Korean Food Aid Program
- ❖ US Military Base in Tajikistan Could Nix Controversial Roghun Dam?
- ❖ EU Approves \$98.7 Million USD Nigerian Water, Sanitation Aid

-
- ❖ **North Korea famine not imminent but flood impact not yet clear-UN**
 - ❖ **Qatar's Pearl GTL highlights industry water issues**
 - ❖ **The economic cost of increased temperatures**
 - ❖ **World over-using underground water reserves for agriculture**
 - ❖ **EBRD Provides \$2.5 Million USD for Kara-Balta Water Supply**
 - ❖ **Bulgarian Engineer Calls for Replacing 75 Percent of Sofia Infrastructure**
 - ❖ **Rising food prices threaten hunger for millions**
 - ❖ **Drought conditions affect 20,000 farmers**
 - ❖ **Rice Hoard Offers World Respite as Food Costs Surge: Commodities**
 - ❖ **Here's Where Farms Are Sucking The Planet Dry**

❖ Turkey Finds 15 Unsanitary Bottle Water Brands

ANKARA (Trend News Agency) — The Ministry of Health of Turkey has announced that it has discovered 15 bottled water companies that are selling unsanitary water in violation of government health codes, in a written statement it released on Friday. The ministry stated that it had tested over 1,000 water samples from treatment plants and distributors and discovered that 15 companies contained unsanitary levels of bacteria

“Turkey Finds 15 Unsanitary Bottle Water Brands”, 07/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/turkey-finds-15-unsanitary-bottle-water-brands_23751

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Iraq, Pell Frischmann Sign Design Contract

BAGHDAD (Bloomberg Businessweek) — Iraq signed a contract with Pell Frischmann Ltd. for the design of a \$85 million USD water project in the western Al Anbar province, a local municipal official said. The U.K.-based consulting company will draw designs for a new water station in Hadeetha, which will pump 4,500 cubic meter of water an hour to feed surrounding towns, within two years, Basim Naji said by phone today. Pell Frischmann will also design an upgrade to an existing water station in the same district which pumps 1,500 cubic meter an hour, he said. The Iraqi government is seeking foreign investment and expertise to rebuild its infrastructure and energy industry damaged by decades of conflict and sanctions. Iraq holds the fifth-largest proven crude reserves, including Canada's oil sands, according to data from BP Plc.

“Iraq, Pell Frischmann Sign Design Contract” , 09/08/2012,, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/iraq-pell-frischmann-sign-design-contract_23796

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Iraq, EU Sign Agreement to Improve Water Management**

Iraq, BAGHDAD — The Iraqi government last week signed a cooperation agreement with the European Union to improve the country’s water management capabilities.

Jana Hybaskova, the EU Delegation to Iraq’s ambassador, said the program “marks a new chapter in EU-Iraq cooperation. The European people are committed to assist the Iraqi people in their quest for quality basic services.”

Iraq has a Millennium Development Goal target of ensuring that 91 percent of households have access to a safe potable water supply by 2015, but the country is facing major challenges in achieving this, notably pollution from septic tanks and deficient wastewater pipelines, damaged during the war, as well as a lack of monitoring and control systems.

The EU program aims to help Iraqi water management authorities become more effective and raise the standard of public water services, focusing in particular on supporting integrated groundwater management, water quality monitoring and water education.

The first element of the program targets the whole population -- the EU notes in a statement that “water wastage cannot be accepted and the public must be sensitized on how best to use this precious source.” To achieve this, \$3.6 million USD will be spent to establish 18 public awareness units across the country that will develop and undertake campaigns targeting waste prevention, water harvesting and reuse.

Another key component is aimed at improving the country’s capacity for integrated groundwater management. Around \$6.2 million USD, along with matching funds from the Iraqi government, will be allocated to carry out an exhaustive analysis of the country’s groundwater resources. A survey will determine the location and formation of the country’s aquifers, and the data will be shared with academics, enabling them to make recommendations on how best to use these resources.

Around \$8.7 million USD will be allocated for a water supply monitoring system in selected cities. Government officials will be trained and advised in current EU best practice for water management,

and state-of-the-art online water quality monitoring systems will test water in real time within urban areas across at least 10 provinces.

A central GIS system will allow the results to be collated.

The agreement is the first under the EU-Iraq Country Strategy Paper, and is the first program between the EU and Iraq that involves a financial contribution from the Iraqi government.

As well as its financial commitment, the Iraqi government will provide in-kind aid such as facilities, staffing, and distribution of communications materials.

“Iraq, EU Sign Agreement to Improve Water Management”, 08/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/iraq-eu-sign-agreement-improve-water-management_23760

BACK TO TOP

❖ Iraqi Government Allocates Nearly \$10 Million USD for Karbala Project

BAGHDAD (Bloomberg Businessweek) — Iraq’s municipalities ministry has allocated \$9.9 million USD for a project to expand drinking water supplies in Karbala, southwest of Baghdad. The project calls for drinking water from two stations for about 35 neighborhoods in the Karbala area, the Aswat al-Iraq news agency said, citing Jassem al-Fatlawi, head of Karbala council’s water commission. No other details were disclosed.

“Iraqi Government Allocates Nearly \$10 Million USD for Karbala Project”, 08/08/2012, online at:
http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/iraqi-government-allocates-nearly-10-million-usd-karbala-project_23771

BACK TO TOP

❖ Iraq Signs Accord With U.K.'s Pell Frischmann on Water Project

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The Iraqi government is seeking foreign investment and expertise to rebuild its infrastructure and energy industry damaged by decades of conflict and sanctions. Iraq holds the fifth-largest proven crude reserves, including [Canada](#)'s oil sands, according to data from [BP Plc. \(BP/\)](#)

"Iraq Signs Accord With U.K.'s Pell Frischmann on Water Project", 08/08/2012, online at:
<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-08-08/iraq-signs-accord-with-u-k-s-pell-frischmann-on-water-project.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Tigris-Euphrates levels increase, spur new irrigation techniques

As Iraq reports increased water levels in the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers this year, water management officials and agricultural specialists are calling for the adoption of modern irrigation techniques to make the most of the resources.

"This year, we have seen a rise in the water reservoirs of dams due to rising water levels in the upper stretches of the Tigris and Euphrates," said Awn Thiab, director general of the Ministry of Water Resources' National Centre for Water Resource Management.

"For this reason, we have increased the daily releases of water [from the dams] according to a plan adopted by the ministry that includes the release of 400-600 cubic metres [of water] per second", he said.

Thiab told Mawtani that his ministry is working with the Ministry of Agriculture to help Iraq's farming industry benefit from the increased water levels.

"Rising water levels should not mean that we continue to use traditional systems for water delivery to agricultural fields, which usually involve excessive wastage," he said.

Thiab recommended a policy to conserve irrigation water and referenced some experiments that successfully increased conservation.

He pointed to the closed irrigation technique, which is currently employed in Najaf province and spanning some 3,500 dunams. Wasit and Diwaniya provinces are also preparing to adopt this technique and use it on larger areas, he added.

In addition, the Ministry of Water Resources is also considering using "lined rivers" (channels lined with various materials to prevent water from seeping out) to transfer water to agricultural farms, where the use of advanced irrigation methods are preferred, Thiab said.

He told Mawtani that Iraq must also learn from other countries' experiments in this field.

"There are experiments in other countries we can adopt and benefit from, especially in the field of agriculture, which at its core depends on water," he said, adding that modern techniques to deliver water will prevent losses incurred when employing traditional methods.

"There are projects that have been executed and others that are still in the pipeline, including projects for lining irrigation canals and the closed irrigation project adopted by the ministry, which proved widely successful in conserving water and raising the volume of production," Thiab said.

Meanwhile, Ali Hashim, the ministry's director general of projects, told Mawtani, "The water incoming from the Tigris and Euphrates reached 75% of its original average, which is considered good, and better than the past four years."

"The ministry's plan for this year seeks to provide water for three million agricultural dunams so various crops can be planted," Hashim said, adding that the plan aims to deliver water to all the provinces.

The plan also involves "using modern irrigation methods, removing the islands that accumulate in the middle of the riverbed and using accurate standards to gauge the amount of water entering into each province," he told Mawtani.

In turn, agriculture ministry specialist Riyad al-Azzawi said various Iraqi ministries are cooperating "to maintain the water balance and [preserve] what the country needs for its various purposes, the most prominent of which is agriculture".

"There are important and precise annual plans for storing water inside dams, and the general plan includes a change in traditional irrigation systems," al-Azzawi confirmed.

"This year will witness the planting of huge areas of shilib rice, which requires huge amounts of water," he said.

Thus, officials are working to gain the greatest crop yield for the least amount of resources.

A number of provinces "completed their projects to renew and line [irrigation] canals to ensure [...] using the least amount of water to obtain the largest amount of crops," he said.

"Tigris-Euphrates levels increase, spur new irrigation techniques", 10/08/2012, online at: http://mawtani.al-shorfa.com/en_GB/articles/iii/features/2012/08/10/feature-01

BACK TO TOP

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❖ JICA refutes news of \$2bn Iraq loan

Japan's International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has told *Utilities Middle East* that reports that the organisation had agreed a US \$2 billion loan for the construction of a new Iraqi power plant are inaccurate. The organisation, which is Japan's principal overseas development agency, was previously said to have agreed the massive loan to help finance a new 1800 MW electricity project in Al-Nasseriya in the south of Iraq.

JICA says that the most recent Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) loan to Iraq was a \$1.12 billion agreement for three projects in the first quarter of 2010. This included a Water Supply Sector Loan Project to upgrade and construct water facilities to ensure potable water supplies to Anbar, Ninawa and Salah ad-Din governorates, together with the construction of the Al-Alkkaz Gas Power Plant project which will see the construction of a gas thermal power station in Anbar governorate. The loan also covered the construction of the Deralok Hydropower Plant in Kurdistan's Dahuk governorate to boost power supply in the region.

"JICA refutes news of \$2bn Iraq loan", 08/08/2012, online at: <http://www.utilities-me.com/article-2052-jica-refutes-news-of-2bn-iraq-loan/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Iran dries second river that flows into Iraq

DIYALA, Aug. 9 (AKnews) – Iran has blocked a second river that flows into Iraqi territories in Diyala province and which is the source of farms for many families in the area.

Residents of Qoratu district told Aknews that the river that originated from Iran and flowed into the Iraqi territories through their district had stopped running leaving many families without with no choice but to think of leaving the area.

Iran also blocked Alwan River, that flows into Khanaqin district in Diyala, earlier. The Islamic Republic has been cutting off the river and released it again for years.

Despite efforts by the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) no permanent solution has been reached.

“Iran has cut off the Qorastu River. It has been a week now that no water runs in the river and some villages near the river are under the threat of being abandoned” said Braim Mohammed, a resident of the area.

Another resident of Qoratu told AKnews that they buy drinking water in the nearby Kala district because the river is not running anymore.

Sardar Mohammed, mayor of Qoratu said they had contacted the Iranian authorities but there were no response from the Iranian side.

“Iran dries second river that flows into Iraq”, 19/08/2012, online at: <http://www.aknews.com/en/aknews/3/321077/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Iran Currently Constructing 130 Dams

TEHRAN (Zawya) — Some 130 dam projects are underway, said deputy energy minister for international affairs on Tuesday. Esmail Mahsouli announced that about 700 dams are presently operating across the country, adding that Iran ranked fourth in the world in this respect. The official added that feasibility studies are being conducted on the construction of 170 new dams, Mehr News Agency reported on Tuesday. He said Iran, which is now 95 percent self-sufficient in the field of implementing water projects, has managed to cope with the sanctions imposed on the country since the beginning of the victory of Islamic Revolution. Mahsoli said that Iranian experts and engineers enjoy significant capabilities in the field of designing, building and maintaining water facilities. Some 270 out of 900 projects which have been approved by the government to be implemented under "Mehr-e Mandegar" plan pertain to Energy Ministry. Meanwhile, deputy energy minister for electricity, Mohammad Behzad, said that Iran's electricity industry is 98 self-sufficient in the field of power generation, transmission and distribution.

“Iran Currently Constructing 130 Dams”, 09/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/iran-currently-constructing-130-dams_23794

BACK TO TOP

❖ **UN calls on Iraq to protect his rights in waters shared with neighboring countries**

Twilight News / called on the Ministry of Water Resources, Wednesday, the United Nations to intervene to protect the rights of Iraq in waters shared with neighboring countries.

The Minister of Water Resources Muhannad al-Saadi said in a statement received “Twilight News” a copy of it after a meeting of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations Jacqueline Badcock and the delegation accompanying him that “the ministry is implementing several irrigation projects and has taken several measures to develop the practical irrigation and reduce waste in the water in addition to the implementation of the project channel carrying the waters of the Shatt al-Arab in Basra and inclusive implementation of Nazim large to prevent the arrival of the tongue and salt from the Gulf to reduce the salinity in the Shatt al-Arab “

Saadi added that “The ministry is implementing several events and activities in the area of the Iraqi marshes in order to improve and revitalize the area and provide the necessary services to the children of the Marsh”

He stressed the importance of forming al-Saadi of the Supreme Council for Water in Iraq, especially in the circumstances of the current shortages in the country in order to improve water management and water pressure on the riparian States with Iraq to obtain their legitimate rights and its fair share of water.

He called on al-Saadi of the United Nations to provide technical support and engineering consultancy to the Ministry in the areas of water resources of different and also to the intervention of the United Nations in resolving conflicts between the riparian States on shared water through the enactment of laws and issuance of international agreements that are binding on all parties riparian on shared waters.

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki called, in the month of July last, to hire foreign expertise to develop a comprehensive plan to address the water problem in the country, in order to form a committee to choose a company that will work in this regard.

It is said that successive Iraqi governments since the sixties of the last century and now to seek to conclude agreements with neighboring countries for the purpose of reaching understandings on Iraq's water share in the common rivers that flow from these countries.

The researchers attribute the scarcity of water in Iraq to the presence of dams and water reservoirs in Turkey, Syria, on the course of the Tigris and Euphrates, which reduces the amount of water entering Iraq through the course of these two, Mesopotamia, Vtdnt water levels in the two rivers, which scions of the two neighboring countries more than 60% Over the past twenty years.

“UN calls on Iraq to protect his rights in waters shared with neighboring countries”, 08/08/2012, online at:
<http://theiraqidinar.com/2012/08/08/un-calls-on-iraq-to-protect-his-rights-in-waters-shared-with-neighboring-countries/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Syria and Iran Signed the Memorandum of Understanding about Electricity, Water and Health

Syria which is dependent on foreign financial sources about electricity, recently, has problems about this issue. Furthermore, relating to this topic in Syria, energy conversation campaign works has been done and closing the electricity gap has been aimed. Power cut affects life of society negatively on the security, accessing to water and on the field of health.

Turkey is also one of the country from which Syria imports the electricity. Since March 2011, after the events which have developed in Syria, a tense process has started on the relation of Turkey and Syria. In November 2011, Turkey decided to apply a series of economic sanction such as the suspension of the relations with the Syria Central Bank, ceasing the operations of the Syria Commercial Bank, ceasing the credit operations with Syria, the suspension of Eximbank contract for providing credit to the investments in Syria. Since 25 July 2012, Turkey has closed all of his borders with Syria. As long as a third country doesn't come into a question truck entrance and exit has been prohibited. 10 months before, Turkish authorities mentioned that there won't be any restriction about the Euphrates rivers waters that origins from Turkey and pass from first Syria then Iraq, and still as this situation continues its validity, it has been mentioned that, recently, it won't be made a sanction about water. In 1987, Turkey signed two protocols with Syria. One of the protocols which are signed is about security and the termination of support given from Syrians to PKK. And with the other protocol Turkey has accepted to give approximate 500 cubic meters of water per second from Turkey – Syria border. Subsequently in 1990, Syria has made an agreement with Iraq and has left to usage of Iraq 58 per cent of water approximate 500 cubic meters per second, which was left by Turkey.

Last week the Minister of Energy, Taner Yıldız, in the meeting with think tanks in Turkey, has voiced that absolutely there wouldn't be a sanction about water, electricity sanction had been assessed but in today's conditions of Syria, the society of Syria need to electricity therefore Turkey would continue to give electricity to Syria, to the question of against Syria whether there will be an electricity sanction or not. Aksa Electricity Company from Turkey, since June 2011 has sold 2 billion kWh electricity to Syria per year. Last week the company, applied to EPDK/ EMRA (Energy Market Regulatory Authority to extend his annual agreement with Syria. Company officials

mentioned that they would behave according to the decisions that Council of Ministers would make, related to the sale of electricity.

Last week Syria deputation, during his visit to Tehran, signed agreements about electricity, health and water, and it has taken its place on new agencies. Iranian Minister of Energy and Syrian Minister of Electricity signed memorandum understanding, according to this; Iran will import transmission and distribution equipment to provide electricity to Syria and will set up power plant and automatic remote reading systems. In addition, recently damaged power grid will be repaired in Syria. And another agreement contains establishing waste water treatment facility and preparing water sources management plans. Since last year, due to the events that started in Syria in March 2011, which is facing various sanctions in the international arena, Syria signed an agreement with Iran in order to compensate for trade deficits. From Iran to Syria, 50 Mw electricity is being exported over Iraq, it is being planned to raise this figure first 100 Mw and then 200 Mw in the following days.

Iran is allied with Syria for many years. Minister of Energy Majid Namjou of Iran, said that “Islamic Republic of Iran won’t leave Syria alone in this difficult period.” This expression and the electricity that Iran gives Syria have showed that she will continue support Syrian government with current support in water and health areas.

“Syria and Iran Signed the Memorandum of Understanding about Electricity, Water and Health”, Tuğba Evrim Maden, ORSAM, 05/08/2012, online at: <http://www.orsam.org.tr/en/WaterResources/showAnalysisAgenda.aspx?ID=1840>

BACK TO TOP

❖ EIB Lends Armenia \$8 Million USD to Improve Water Supply

YEREVAN (New Europe Online) — The European Investment Bank (EIB) is providing two loans to the Republic of Armenia. \$37.7 million USD to finance the construction and modernisation of three border crossings on the Armenian side of the border with Georgia and the related infrastructure, and \$8 million USD to support the rehabilitation of water supply, sewerage and sewage treatment facilities in small municipalities across Armenia. Work to improve water and sewerage will finance the improvement of the drinking water supply and wastewater treatment for some 300 000 inhabitants of 17 smaller towns in Armenia. This will help to increase the quality of life by providing water services meeting international standards particularly for citizens with lower incomes living in the poorer areas of the country that will benefit most from this project, says the bank.

“EIB Lends Armenia \$8 Million USD to Improve Water Supply”, 07/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/eib-lends-armenia-8-million-usd-improve-water-supply_23752

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Palestinian President Warns of Possible Water Wars**

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas warned last week of a looming “water war” in the region, as the West Bank and Gaza grapple with severe water shortages.

“The water crisis is a serious one. We have to find solutions for it,” he said.

Abbas said the Palestinian Authority was “ready to work with Israel and Jordan on finding water resources.”

Among the solutions Abbas proposed for the region was construction of more desalination plants.

“Ninety percent of water in Gaza is polluted. Desalination is the key to solving this problem there. But we need to find solutions for water crisis in the West Bank as well,” he said.

He had high hopes of attracting foreign aid to help ease water problems.

“Our Mediterranean partners will help us solve the water problems in Gaza by building desalination plants,” he said.

In its attempt to combat decreasing water resources, the Palestinian Authority last month signed a memorandum of understanding with a number of donor organizations and governments, including representatives of the European Union, Finland, Germany, Japan, Norway, Spain, Austria, the World Bank, the US Agency for International Development, and the French Development Agency to improve the water sector in the Palestinian territories.

Drinking water and sanitation conditions there have been deteriorating due to a lack of government funds. In Gaza, a number of international and local organizations last month warned against a humanitarian crisis there because of water pollution.

In the West Bank, excessive use of groundwater, desalination and reuse of wastewater have become the only viable option available for Palestinian policymakers.

“Palestinian President Warns of Possible Water Wars”, 09/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/palestinian-president-warns-possible-water-wars_23787

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Jordan Adopts National Plan to Reduce Water Shortages**

AMMAN, Jordan — The Jordanian government is adopting an urgent plan to deal with severe water shortages throughout the kingdom.

With summer temperatures rising and consumption increasing, residents have taken to the streets in many areas to protest the lack of supply.

This prompted King Abdullah to hold a government meeting and instruct officials to adopt an urgent national plan to address the situation.

Water officials blame the shortages on increasing power cuts during the summer, especially in the governorates of al Karak, Irbid, al Zarqa, al Mafriq, Aglon and Jarash.

They also point to illegal connections to water pipelines in affected areas.

Ministry officials said the action plan would start by replacing old drinking water pipeline networks with new, higher-capacity ones.

“The Water Authority will lease a large number of water tankers from private companies to provide drinking water for the residents of al Zarqa, al Rasifa and al Karak governorates,” said Water Authority Director General Fayez al Bataina.

The authority will rehabilitate and reopen old wells and building new drinking water pipelines in affected areas.

“The ministry will launch a number of new water wells to achieve sustainability in supply,” said al Bataina. The ministry will also build a major water reservoir in al Karak.

Government officials acknowledged that many water projects that could have averted the water deficits had been postponed due to lack of funds.

Jordan is ranked among the five poorest countries in the world in terms of water resources. By 2020, Jordan's available water resources will meet only one-third of country's needs, according to government estimates.

The problem is exacerbated by the kingdom's limited energy sources.

To that end, the government is planning to build nuclear facilities to secure energy supply for water and other development projects.

The Jordanian Nuclear Agency is still searching for a strategic partner to fund 70 percent of the cost of building a nuclear plant that will provide some 900 megawatts of electricity to pump water from the Red Sea to the Dead Sea.

It will also help desalinate 800 million cubic meters of water annually and pump it to the capital city, Amman.

"Jordan Adopts National Plan to Reduce Water Shortages", 06/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/jordan-adopts-national-plan-reduce-water-shortages_23718

❖ Lebanon Prison Gets 50 Percent More Water

BEIRUT (The Daily Star) — The water supply to the country's biggest prison has increased by almost 50 percent after a project implemented by the International Committee of the Red Cross was handed over to authorities Monday. Roumieh prison was originally built for 1,500 detainees but now holds around 3,000. The water project, which has been implemented gradually over the last two years, links the prison's water system to a new well. Monday's handover took place at the Internal Security Forces headquarters, and the protocol was signed by both the director general of General Security, Maj. Gen. Ashraf Rifi and the head of the ICRC delegation in Lebanon, Jurg Montani. Montani said that "it is a practical example of how the cooperation between detention authorities and the ICRC can directly lead to an improvement in the conditions of detention." Roumieh prison, north-east of Beirut, has been the scene of several riots over recent years. In April 2011, prisoners and detainees' relatives protested at the levels of overcrowding and conditions within the prison. Four inmates died in the riots, with several more injured.

"Lebanon Prison Gets 50 Percent More Water", 08/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/lebanon-prison-gets-50-percent-more-water_23770

BACK TO TOP

❖ Capitalism and Global Apartheid: Capitalizing at the Expense of the Peoples

The marriage between capitalism and the imperial, racist and violent project of the powerful- which is implemented here in Palestine by the apartheid regime of Israel-, is the same project being carried out in different regions around the world. It is a project guided and financed by a global society of corporations, industries and politicians, who profit from the suffering and the oppression of the marginalized peoples.

Israeli security companies, such as Elbeit, one of the two main providers of electronic systems across the Israeli Apartheid Wall, obtained a contract to provide this type of systems for the wall between the United States and Mexico. The illegitimacy of the U.S.-Mexico Apartheid Wall- accomplice in the violation of the right to life of the migrants from the South who, fleeing from the repressive sight of this monstrous and violent construction, risk their lives in the dessert, thousands of them dying each year-, is still not accepted at the international level. A white North American will never ask himself if his life is in danger as he crosses the wall freely and without much inconvenience.

Elbeit is also responsible for building drones (unmanned flying vehicles), used by the Israeli military in Gaza and the West Bank, which are also used to patrol the Mexico-U.S. border. The military uses this as a weapon, violating international law. In 2008, Elbeit got a contract of \$22.5 million dollars with the Mexican air force, and a contract of 44.5 million Euros with the British army to provide vigilance technology in Afghanistan. In other words, Elbeit is getting rich through the criminalization of the peoples of the Global South.

Motorola, global company of telecommunications and technology, provides the systems of vigilance in tens of Israeli settlements, which are illegal under international law. Guilty of the same crime is HP, a global tech company that provides the mechanisms for identification and control at the checkpoints along the Israeli Apartheid Wall, as well as providing equipment and services to the Israel occupation forces. Motorola and HP continue to capitalize with impunity.

Similar contracts have Israeli companies ADS and Magna BS with the Mexican government as well as with U.S. military corporations. The Israeli military gets trained in the U.S. on border tunnel detection. The relations with the U.S. border patrol industry are quite strong.

The U.S. military industry is guilty of arming the oppressive militaristic governments around the world, as in Colombia. The Plan Colombia, a U.S.-Colombian policy to fight the infamous 'war against terrorism and drug trafficking'- cause of around 5 million displaced and thousands of deaths-, is mainly financed by the United States. The same U.S. funded policies are underway in Mexico where more than 50,000 people have died during the last years due to violence generated by these policies. Imposed by the North and financed by their capitalist lords, such policies criminalize and assassinate the citizens of the South.

Similar is the military-corporate agreement between Israel and Colombia. Israel, for the past 20 years, is one of the biggest providers of military aid to Colombia along with the United States. The military intelligence corporation Global CST, owned by an Israeli ex-general, has contracts of more than \$10 million dollars in Colombia. The interconnectivity between these global corporate-militaristic systems which--with the blood of the innocent-, draw their borders, create their laws and extract their profits, is not pure coincidence.

Water companies are also involved in this inhumane capitalist apartheid such as Eden Springs, which profits from the water extracted from expropriated Palestinian and Syrian land, water which is sold in the European continent. The Mehadrin Group is the biggest Israeli agricultural company which exports water intensive crops to Europe, providing water to Israeli farmers and millions of cubic meters of drinking water for domestic consumption in Israel from the more than 19 wells it controls.

Merekot is another company that has violated water rights since 1950 when it expropriated all the water infrastructure of Palestine. Merekot constantly cuts its water supply to Palestinian villages while it supplies water to the illegal settlements. This happens while the Palestinian people are denied their right to water; the majority of Palestinians consume only 50 of the 100 liters per day recommended by the World Health Organization. Israeli citizens, on the contrary, consume on average 300 liters per day.

These are only some examples that highlight the impossibility of separating global capitalism with the systems of violence, segregation and criminalization of the world's poor, which are in place in

many regions around the globe; systems that are part of one global, imperial structure of apartheid and violence. These companies have more rights than the citizens of the marginalized world, as for them, borders do not exist in this globalized world. They can exploit the natural resources in any part of the world; they can get rich while they assassinate the peoples of the Global South without fear of being judged by the law, since everything they do is "legitimate". The inhumane laws of the global capitalist system are faithfully obeyed by the powerful.

This political, economic and ideological system is sustained not by its policies of "democracy and justice"- the emblem by which this project is sold to the entire world. Rather, it is sustained illegitimately through the violation of human rights, the criminalization of the poor and the world's minorities, and the destruction of Mother Earth in each corner of the globe with the sole purpose of profiting.

“Capitalism and Global Apartheid: Capitalizing at the Expense of the Peoples”, 09/08/2012, online at:

<http://english.pnn.ps/index.php/opinion/2421-capitalism-and-global-apartheid-capitalizing-at-the-expense-of-the-peoples>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Jordan's Crippled Water Resources Protected by Security

Jordan's armed security forces have been enlisted to protect the Kingdom's scarce water resources from recurring vandalism and theft.

Jordan is dealing with an increase in [water theft](#). Ironically, as I type, I am awaiting a water truck arrival to refill our new apartment's tank: I'd jumped in the shower, turned the knobs, and was met with – nothing. Landlord says it's been three weeks since the city pumped water to the roof tanks, and the situation seems to be city-wide.

Now it makes sense why people would be breaking into the system. Mark my words, water is the new oil.

Representatives of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, the Ministry of Interior and the Public Security Department (PSD) met last week to address the [rising number of violations on water wells and pipelines](#). The water protection campaign was announced soon afterwards: start date unspecified due to security reasons.

Omar Salameh, speaking on behalf of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, said the operation is directed at areas most vulnerable to theft of water and equipment: the Jordan Valley, south Amman, Mafraq and Zarqa.

“We are providing the PSD with a list of locations that require protection, either because of their importance or because they witness recurring theft and vandalism,” Salameh told [The Jordan Times](#). “Scores of water resources from which around 1,870 cubic meters of water were pumped per hour remain shut down because of violations and theft,” he added.

“We will provide the police directorates with the list of locations that need protection and the names of suspected violators. The PSD will also coordinate with district governors to end violations,” said PSD spokesperson Lt. Col. Mohammad Khatib.

The Ministry will conduct a concurrent media campaign to [raise public awareness](#) about the [impact of water violations on individuals](#).

Violations to the water network deprive people of their fair water share and magnifies the nation's water crisis.

Minister of Water and Irrigation Mohammad Najjar told the media last month that theft and vandalism of water resources were dramatically rising, threatening an adequate public supply of clean water.

This year, by mid-May, that ministry recorded 28 violations on the Kingdom's main water network, causing remedial actions exceeding \$200,000. Pumping has been suspended at 50 points in the network until \$600,000 in additional repair funds can be identified.

As comparison, there were 50 acts of vandalism recorded in 2011; and 52 registered in 2010. At this rate, Najjar anticipates 2012 repair costs to fall between \$1.4 an \$1.6 MIL.

Constant reinvestment in water infrastructure and associated environmental mitigation is money down the drain, but the real losses are in actual potable water supply. Mostly semi-arid Jordan is characterized by [severe water scarcity](#), receiving less than two feet of rainfall per year in most areas. The country shares its major surface water resources with Syria and Israel: its share from the Yarmouk and Jordan Rivers is a comparative trickle. Groundwater resources are over exploited and aquifers are vulnerable to contamination.

Water supply is further exacerbated by steady population increase resulting from [constant immigration](#) from Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine. Impacts stemming from climate change will stress the situation further.

Lack of municipal water causes a rising demand of [bottled water](#) for many households. It's estimated that 20-30% of Jordan's water consumption is from sources other than the public system, including water bought from tankers, rainwater harvesting, wells and that bottled variety.

Still getting water delivery

Despite severe scarcity, more than 97 percent of Jordanians are linked into a modern system of water conveyance. The problem is that water supply is intermittent: water was provided to my last apartment's tank every week (surrounded by embassies, I suspect the district got special handling).

Residential water delivery to most of Amman's rooftop tanks this summer has more typically been every other week.

"Jordan's Crippled Water Resources Protected by Security", 06/08/2012, online at:
<http://www.greenprophet.com/2012/08/jordan-water-theft-2/>

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Gaza Water Increasingly Polluted and Expensive

Gaza's population is increasing, and the water supply is not keeping pace according to Oxfam, the British human rights organization. In a new report, the group asserts that Gazans are spending as much as one-third of their household income on drinking water, and are facing growing health risks.

"The infrastructure has been deteriorating rapidly because we are not able to repair and maintain it," Karl Schembri, a spokesman for Oxfam in Gaza told The Media Line. Referring to action as far back as Operation Cast Lead at the end of 2008 and start of 2009, "Israeli military attacks have had a severe impact on the civilian infrastructure and particularly on the water network."

Gaza's main source of water for its dense population of 1.6 million people is the coastal aquifer. Ghada Snunu of EWASH, a non-governmental organization that deals with water quality, says that 95 percent of the water in the coastal aquifer has dangerous levels of nitrates and chloride, often ten times what the World Health Organization recommends.

"Drinking this water is causing diarrhea among children and 'baby blue syndrome' in which it is difficult to transfer blood into tissues, making the baby blue," she told The Media Line. "Children in refugee camps have an increase in water-born diseases because of the poor quality of the water."

Both Oxfam and EWASH blame the Israeli "blockade" of Gaza, which limits imports of some raw materials that could be used to make weapons, which was implemented in 2007 after the Islamist Hamas forcibly took over control Gaza from the Palestinian Authority.

Israeli government spokesman Mark Regev says Israel is doing everything possible to help Gazans drink clean water.

"Israel has been helping to improve the water infrastructure in Gaza and Israel was willing to double or even triple the amount of water going into Gaza," Regev told The Media Line. "It is the same water that you and I drink, and the Gazans would pay less than what we pay but they weren't willing to accept that solution."

Palestinian water officials in Gaza say that Israel provides just 4 – 5 million cubic meters of water to Gaza per year, while Gaza uses 100 million cubic meters of water per year for drinking and an additional 80 million cubic meters of partially treated wastewater for agriculture.

Monther Shublaq, the director of Gaza's Coastal Municipal Water Utilities (CMWU) told The Media Line that Israel has recently raised prices for the water it provides from 75 cents per cubic meter to \$1.00 per cubic meter. And while Israel has offered more water, he says, it will not say when it will provide it.

“I don’t want it in the winter when I don’t really need it,” Shublaq said. “I want it all year.”

He said the majority of Gazans now rely on private water deliveries which are not regulated and are often contaminated.

Gaza is surrounded by the sea, and one solution is desalination. Oxfam and CMWU recently inaugurated a desalination plant and water distribution pipeline in the southern city of Rafah.

“Finally, for the first time in our life, we can drink water directly from our taps,” Abu Rami from Rafah told representatives from Oxfam. “It will take me a while to remember that I can drink tap water.”

But desalination is expensive. Shublaq says Palestinians hope to eventually desalinate 100 million cubic meters per year to cover most of Gaza’s requirements. Updating the infrastructure would also help stop leakage.

Ghada Snunu of EWASH says Israel must allow water from the mountain aquifer, which runs under both Israel and the West Bank, to reach Gaza. Palestinians say the West Bank and Gaza, along with east Jerusalem, should be part of the Palestinian state.

But all of these solutions take time and are expensive. Meanwhile, many Gazans will continue to drink water that is expensive, polluted, or both.

“Gaza Water Increasingly Polluted and Expensive”, 06/08/2012, online at:
http://themedialine.org/news/news_detail.asp?NewsID=35738

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Farmers adopt local micro irrigation to mitigate the impact of water scarcity**

PUNE: In a country where about a third of farmland is drought-prone, farmers have started adopting technologies that help mitigate the impact of [water scarcity](#) and maximise output with minimum inputs.

[Micro irrigation](#) is the known technology to save water which has been used successfully by countries like Israel. Despite government subsidy, micro irrigation is not affordable to a large number of farmers. This has led to a widespread adoption of cheaper micro-irrigation systems of the local companies.

"The use of cheaper micro-irrigation systems is growing rapidly. Those who cannot afford to spend about Rs 30,000 required for the standard micro-irrigation systems covered under [government subsidy](#) schemes are opting for the cheaper sets. Though they are not covered under subsidy, farmers afford the cost," said Shreeram Gadhve, president, [Vegetable Growers' Association of India](#).

[Drip irrigation](#) reduces water requirement by 50 per cent while the use of mulching paper, which controls evaporation, brings down water requirement to about one fourth, say farmers. Gadhve said, "We expect the area under mulching to increase by tenfold by next year. Mulching reduces requirement of fertilisers and increases production due to better development of root zone and reduces pest incidence which means less number of sprays."

Use of local, non-hybrid seed varieties is another way in which farmers try to maximise their returns in times of drought. "Despite our advisories, farmers go for local varieties when rainfall is deficient. Though the yield of local, non-hybrid varieties is less compared to hybrids, in drought conditions, they get better yields," said Dr B Venkateswarlu, director, Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture.

"Farmers adopt local micro irrigation to mitigate the impact of water scarcity", 06/08/2012, online at: http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-08-06/news/33065572_1_drip-irrigation-water-scarcity-farmers

BACK TO TOP

❖ Jordan Has Enough Water to Irrigate Winter Crops

AMMAN ([The Jordan Times](#)) — Sufficient amounts of water have been secured for Jordan Valley farmers as they start preparing their land to cultivate winter crops, officials said on Thursday. A total of 100 million cubic metres (mcm) is required for the irrigation of winter crops, locally referred to as orweh tishrineyeh, according to Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary General Saad Abu Hammour. "We are prepared to provide farmers with their needs of water during orweh tishrineyeh from various water resources including dams which currently hold 77.4mcm," Abu Hammour told The Jordan Times yesterday. Orweh tishrineyeh is a local agricultural term that refers to the period between September and the end of the year during which farmers plant vegetables in the Jordan Valley. Different kinds of vegetables are cultivated during this period, including cucumber, tomato, eggplant and zucchini. During orweh tishrineyeh, farmers also rely on rainwater for irrigating their winter crops, however, the JVA will increase the amount of water allocated for irrigation if the rainy season comes late this year.

"Jordan Has Enough Water to Irrigate Winter Crops", 10/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/jordan-has-enough-water-irrigate-winter-crops_23823

BACK TO TOP

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❖ **Eco Logic / Keeping Israel's springs natural**

While development at natural springs can make them more tourist-friendly, environmentalists caution that it can also lead to their destruction.

Some of the most popular Israeli travel guides invite hikers to visit natural springs. The success of these books may be attributed to the draw that bodies of water have in an arid land, as well as to the fact that many natural springs have, in recent years, undergone some form of construction. This has made them less natural and more like manmade tourist attractions, which makes them more popular. Their popularity, of course, comes with an environmental price tag, because during the various renovation projects at the springs, the surrounding landscape and nature are inevitably damaged.

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel is now engaged in a concerted effort to protect the springs. This month, it published a guide for visitors to springs and the institutions interested in developing them. The new document is entitled “Israel's Springs: Recommendations for effective management of recreation activities in Israel's springs as a unique ecosystem for the benefit of man and nature.” It discusses the ecology of springs and includes recommendations for protecting them. It's goal is not to keep visitors away, but rather to try to curb destructive development.

While there are springs from which only a tiny trickle of water flows during certain periods of the year, they still provide a year-long refuge and habitat for a host of flora and fauna, including amphibians, insect varieties, birds and even insect-eating bats. Surveys taken recently in the upper part of the Kishon River have shown a surprising range of animals and plants at the springs along the river.

Springs have long been diverted to serve human needs, but many have been allowed to flow unimpeded, thus maintaining the vitality of the natural assets that are dependent on them. While such springs are endangered by pollution, it seems that in recent years, the main threat has come from private and public initiatives aimed at renovating them and turning them into travel destinations.

Various forms of diversions at the springs, such as putting up structures and building pools, often transform, and even destroy, the character of the spring and its surroundings. “The problem is most

severe in the Jerusalem hills,” according to the SPNI’s new document. “There are virtually no springs left that have not been interfered with in some way.”

From development to neglect

The organization says that in some cases, the spring’s natural environment has been changed “in a very aggressive way to modify it for its new purpose. For example, Ein Motza, a spring near Jerusalem just off the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem highway, is a small spring that underwent construction and became an improvised men’s mikveh (Jewish ritual bath), consisting of three immersion pools. As in other cases, this spring suffered from neglect after its conversion and is now full of debris and waste.”

Even institutions such as the Jewish National Fund are liable to cause ecological damage during efforts to turn springs into public-friendly sites, says the SPNI document. It cites, for example, the T’heilet Valley Park near Safed, which has several springs, which was developed by the JNF without environmental planning and oversight. The result: Some of the natural habitats were destroyed, and instead there is a series of concrete pools and artificial waterfalls.

The JNF insists it has not harmed the site. “Working for nature is important to us, as is making it more accessible to the public at large,” the organization said. “We have the most experience in the field of rehabilitating natural springs.

“We make use of outside experts, such as Ran Molcho who has a tremendous amount of experience in the ecological rehabilitation of springs and served as our consultant during the T’heilet Valley Park reconstruction. The work done at the site did not change any of the natural processes. On the contrary: We increased the flow of the springs by installing drainage to the benefit of plant and animal life.

We reconstructed ancient pools and built additional pools to slow down wintertime flooding and increase output in the summer, when the natural gushing slows down. The assertions made by the SPNI indicate a lack of familiarity with the location and are belied by studies and observations done over the course of many years.”

The SPNI is not looking to quarrel with the JNF or with any other group doing work on springs. Instead, it wants to issue recommendations for development and for public tourism at the springs, in order to prevent damage to nature.

According to the environmental organization, professional ecological consultants must be part of the team developing springs. During such work, natural areas must be left untouched; sites such as manmade pools can be built near these areas, for the enjoyment of visitors. Both the continuity of water flow and the physical complexity of the site must be maintained. For example, rocks of varying sizes and shapes must cover the floor of the pool in order to create a range of biological niches.

The SPNI also recommends that springs of great ecological value should be preserved as they are, and the number of visitors allowed should be limited. The inherent natural value of these springs must outweigh considerations of public access, says the organization.

For the public at large, the document presents its “ten golden rules for conduct at a spring.” It suggests that construction not be undertaken without the necessary permits from the various authorities, such as the Israel Nature and Parks Authority or drainage authorities, and that nothing at all be done without an ecological consultation.

Another recommendation is to avoid entering the wellspring itself, as it is extremely vulnerable ecologically. The SPNI also asks the public to avoid disturbing the muddy spring bottoms as much as possible, in order to protect the sensitive breathing apparatus of the animal life.

“Eco Logic / Keeping Israel’s springs natural”, Haaretz, 09/08/2012, online at:
<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=5628>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Gazans Pay One-third of Income for Clean Water

[Gaza](#)'s population is increasing, and the water supply is not keeping pace according to Oxfam, the British human rights organization. In a new report, the group asserts that Gazans are spending as much as one-third of their household income on drinking water, and are [facing growing health risks](#).

"The infrastructure has been deteriorating rapidly because we are not able to repair and maintain it," Karl Schembri, a spokesman for Oxfam in Gaza told The Media Line. Referring to action as far back as Operation Cast Lead at the end of 2008 and start of 2009, "Israeli military attacks have had a severe impact on the civilian infrastructure and particularly on the water network."

Gaza's main source of water for its dense population of 1.6 million people is the coastal aquifer. Ghada Snunu of EWASH, a non-governmental organization that deals with water quality, says that 95 percent of the water in the coastal aquifer has [dangerous levels of nitrates](#) and chloride, often ten times what the World Health Organization recommends.

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“Gazans Pay One-third of Income for Clean Water”, 11/08/2012, online at: <http://www.greenprophet.com/2012/08/gaza-drinking-water-expensive/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Pulling Water from the Air

No water in my house last week in Amman, Jordan and I'm mildly freaked: I'd just taken delivery on some giant bottles for our water cooler, and I was up to speed on laundry. But no water means no cleaning. Not much cooking happening either. And let's not talk on the toilet issue.

Residential cut-offs are commonplace in Amman, but for me it's a first. I'm unnerved. Not so much by the apartment's micro-drought (I'd cope for a few days, no 127 Days crisis looms). I'm edgy because my First-World-Barbie belief tells me that when I turn a knob, clear water will pour forth — is seriously flawed.

I've never experienced an instance when household water failed to act on my command. I make it cold or hot, get it flowing in forceful jets or delicate sprays. Seems I have a bit of a Moses complex when it comes to controlling water, but when it comes to accessing clean stuff when needed, shouldn't we all?

Set aside that divining rod. Unlace your rain dance shoes. Purified drinking water can now be directly produced from the humidity in the atmosphere. This isn't pipe dream, Rube Goldberg contraptions not required. Unlimited, pure drinking water can be pulled from the air for an investment less than \$2,000 bucks.

An eight-mile swath of free floating moisture encases the globe; an untapped resource for us to stick a straw into. Atmospheric water trumps the liquid in the oceans. Compared to ground sources, water extracted directly from the air is relatively clean.

EcoloBlue Atmospheric Water Generators (AWGs) are now available in Jordan. The device produces unlimited drinking water by extracting humidity out of the air, then condensing it to water. The sky-water is stored in the system's main storage tank, where it runs through an hourly 12-step filtration process to remove chemicals and particulates.

When water's consumed from the machine, it refills itself automatically. It comes in three versions (one makes sparkling water) that work with any power source, including solar, wind and gas powered generators, rendering the hydration system both sustainable and portable.

They're also being marketed as an antidote to plastic water bottles (eliminating demand for both grab-and-go mini bottles and the larger refills for water coolers) and as a safe alternative for everyone tethered to dodgy municipal water lines. AWGs can be easily "plugged in" to existing plumbing, allowing its filtration system to clean tap water of harmful chemicals, and common pollutants such as arsenic, trace prescription drugs, bacteria and human hormones.

Gizmos like this can cut demand on municipal water usage by 90 percent.

Water harvesting systems that are self-sustaining, energy efficient and eliminate plastic bottles are a marvelous reality, but they don't let us off the ethical hook of unsustainable consumption patterns.

Water shortfalls are rampant in the Middle East. The 2011 Green Economy in a Changing Arab World Report released by the Arab Forum for Environment and Development states, "An annual per capita water share below 1,000 cubic meters poses a significant constraint to economic development, health and well-being; below 500 cubic meters, and water scarcity becomes a threat to life."

Green Prophet reported that the Jordan-Arab region could face severe water crisis in the next three years, when annual per capita water share may fall to less than 500 cubic meters, leaving us with less than one tenth of the average world citizen's share of the wet stuff. Over 45 million people in Arab nations lack access to clean water. It's unlikely they'll be rushing to buy AWGs, unless, as with clean cookstoves, prices to produce and deliver the units becomes economically sensible.

Let's get active on water use reduction; it's easy to do.

Look at your water consumption. See your patterns of usage: don't judge, just view them. Become aware of your daily waltz through the wet stuff. Next, pick a few low-hanging opportunities for conservation. The behavioral ones are simple and free.

Cut back your showers by a minute or two. Create your own grey-water recycling program: rinse veggies and fruits in a pot of water instead of a running tap, then use that dusty liquid to water your plants. Sweep dusty paths and stairways instead of hosing them down. Only run clothes- and dish-washers when they're full.

Stay out of the bathtub. Reuse your towels. Keep taps open only to as needed: don't run faucets awaiting the perfect temperature or to create background music to your teeth brushing. And, Amman

car owners: could you relax on the thrice-weekly car washes? Drop a few bucks on water conserving shower heads. Lay down some drip-irrigation tubing to keep your gardens green.

It takes 1500 liters of water to produce 1 kg of wheat, but it takes 15,000 liters to produce 1kg of beef. So skip the steak, add a few meat-free menus to your diet. Poke around the Green Prophet archives to find excellent tips on choosing food with positive water impact.

My water-scare is a wake-up call I'll happily share with you. So what are you doing to save water?

"Pulling Water from the Air", 12/08/2012, online at: <http://www.greenprophet.com/2012/08/pulling-water-from-the-air/>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **New guide seeks to create ‘water education’ among students, teachers**

AMMAN — The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN) has issued a guide on the country’s aquifers, which calls for their protection as vital ecosystems, specialists said on Saturday.

The guide seeks to create “water education” among students and teachers, especially those living near aquifers and wetlands, such as Azraq Wetland and Mujib Biosphere Reserve, RSCN Spokesperson Omar Shoshan told The Jordan Times.

“The guide includes results of RSCN’s water education projects... it aims at raising awareness on the need to protect such vital ecosystems and encouraging students to adopt practices that protect aquifers and wetlands from pollution or depletion,” Shoshan said.

It also provides teachers with educational and environmental activities that address the importance of water for biodiversity.

Mervat Batarseh, head of the environmental education department at the RSCN, highlighted the importance of water education in a country that suffers from water scarcity.

“Many countries around the world that are rich in water resources are starting environment and water education programmes as a precautionary measure in the event of future water shortages,” Batarseh noted.

Wetlands, which are rich in biodiversity, continuously suffer from water depletion because population near such locations is higher, she stressed.

“It is vital to raise the awareness of local communities on the importance of wetlands and aquifers to their lives and to the ecosystems they support,” Batarseh highlighted.

The RSCN guide cites the situation in the Mujib Biosphere Reserve, where the area’s unique species and ecosystem are being negatively impacted by decreasing water levels.

According to RSCN experts, water levels in Mujib are dropping due to the diversion of streams feeding the valley to dams, which is driving away birds and threatening the survival of indigenous fish species.

Covering an area of 220 square kilometres, the reserve is home to seasonal and permanent rivers that flow through several valleys, as well as ponds and waterfalls.

But conservationists have warned that water pumping and improper farming practices are threatening the biosphere's ecosystems.

Water levels on the reserve's hiking trails — which involve both climbing and swimming — differ depending on the amount of rain during winter.

Meanwhile, the Azraq Wetland Reserve, a vital stop for migratory birds and the only home of the indigenous *Aphanius sirhani* fish, includes marshlands and natural pools and streams.

However, excessive extraction of water from the wetland, which started in 1980, has caused water levels to drop by 12-15 metres below the surface, leaving only 0.04 per cent of the marshland, which used to be rich with flora and fauna, according to experts.

More than 60 million cubic metres [mcm] of water is currently being pumped from the oasis on an annual basis; 25mcm is pumped to Amman and other cities and the remainder for irrigation, according to the RSCN.

“New guide seeks to create ‘water education’ among students, teachers”, Jordan Times, 07/08/2012, online at: <http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=5617>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Anger boils in Sidon over power, water cuts

SIDON, Lebanon: Sidon residents are losing patience with the increasingly long power outages in the southern city this summer, as the cuts have left residents without water or sleep and light on cash.

Power cutoffs can last for up to 20 hours a day, and regularly go on for at least six. The power is off for so long every day that water pumps are no longer able to supply many apartments, and city residents are being forced to pay huge generator bills.

“Many poor areas in Sidon are completely in darkness at night, and people have decided to use candles instead of private power generators,” said Abu Antar, owner of a private electrical generator. “Others are getting only two amperes per month to use the television and the lamp.”

Unable to sleep in the heat and angry over the power cuts, some people have staged protests outside the Electricite du Liban and water management offices to try and get the government’s attention.

Late Saturday night dozens of residents lit candles and made a bonfire outside the EDL office.

“How are we to live? The fridge feels like the closet and we don’t sleep,” protester Um Mustafa told The Daily Star.

“We want to drink cold water and to sleep – not [necessarily] with air conditioning but at least with a fan on,” she added.

Protests and political wrangling have put EDL and its power facilities on the brink of collapse, compounding major electricity shortages that hit the country every summer.

The government has floated a number of plans to ease the nation’s electrical woes but none of them will be ready before summer ends.

Increased outages and extra electricity use during the holy month of Ramadan have spiked peoples’ bills from generator companies. Generator owners have said they are being forced to raise their prices because of the increased strain on their generators.

New posters are being placed along the streets in Sidon by the owners of the private generators announcing the new rates.

In response, many Sidon residents have reduced their monthly consumption from five amperes to as low as two. In some parts of Sidon, people have completely given up on private generators, viewing them as too expensive.

Nazih al-Nakouzi, an Ain al-Hilweh resident, has decided to reduce his generator electricity consumption to 2.5 amperes to be able to pay his monthly bills.

His monthly bills have reached more than \$110 since the beginning of August. The cost has Nakouzi considering a further reduction to the lowest two amperes.

In Sidon's old city, Wafiq Hussein, a generator owner, said that generator owners are beginning to feel like they are the national electricity provider.

“We are providing power, but who is going to ensure that poor people have power?” he asked.

Um Amer, who lives with her son, shares five amperes of electricity with another apartment. She says all she needs is enough to watch TV during the day, with her fans working on batteries which recharge when the power is back. Yet she is still barely getting enough electricity.

Power cuts are also causing a water shortage in Sidon, with the water crisis not being due to a shortage in water. The city gets around six hours of water service per day, with some apartments getting more or less depending on their location relative to the water source.

Thousands of residents in Sidon are unable to have daily water access to their apartments despite protests against the water companies. Last week protesters held a sit-in in front of the water company and called on its director general to provide backup power which would keep pumping water into the city.

The further up the apartment, the less water they usually get, forcing people to buy new water tanks equipped with pumps and place them in different locations on their building.

Many residents are complaining that they don't even have enough water to wash themselves once a day.

“Anger boils in Sidon over power, water cuts” ,Daily Star, 07/08/2012, online at:
<http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=5626>

BACK TO TOP

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❖ Germany Lends Egypt \$24.3 Million USD to Upgrade High Dam

CAIRO, Egypt — The German government is lending the Egyptian government \$24.3 million USD to upgrade facilities at the High Dam in southern Egypt.

Egyptian Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Fayza Abul Naga and German Ambassador to Cairo Michael Bock signed the agreement last week.

The funds will be used to upgrade hydropower facilities at the Aswan High Dam, Egypt's main reservoir of Nile water.

The project is in line with the German government's commitment to support development projects in the wake of Egypt's January 25, 2011 revolution, and with the Egyptian government's national plan to upgrade irrigation and hydroelectric facilities on the Nile.

Egyptian officials have also revealed that the German government could exchange \$292 million USD in Egyptian debt for aid, which will be directed to infrastructure projects.

The German government last year allocated \$424 million USD for irrigation improvement projects in Egypt. A portion of the money will be allocated for reconstruction of the New Assiut Barrage in southern Egypt.

Of the new funding, \$6.7 million USD will be in the form of a soft loan, to be repaid over 40 years with 10-year grace period, and the remaining \$17.6 million USD will be repaid over 10 years, with a five-year grace period.

"Germany Lends Egypt \$24.3 Million USD to Upgrade High Dam", 06/08/2012, online at:

<http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/germany-lends-egypt-243-million-usd-upgrade-high-dam> 23719

BACK TO TOP

WWW.ORSAM.ORG.TR

❖ **Ain Helwan's therapeutic waters are squandered and neglected**

Old books describe Helwan, a southern suburb of Cairo, as “the sacred healing city” — one of Egypt's main centers of therapeutic tourism since the pharaonic era.

Any book that mentions the medical healing value of Helwan has a description of Ain Helwan or Kabrittaj Helwan as marvelous places containing several unique sulfurous and mineral springs that flow 24 hours a day and have therapeutic powers. These traits made the place one of the main destinations for millions of tourists from all over the world.

But going to Helwan's springs today will ruin all of your expectations. The place has turned into a barren wasteland where stray animals frolic. It was neglected by the government for more than 10 years, until it completely lost its archaeological and medical value and reached the worst levels of regression.

Ain Helwan was first discovered by the ancient Egyptians, who called it “Ain-An” and considered it a grace from the gods. It was rediscovered in the era of Khedive Abbas, when many of the soldiers were infected by scabies, a contagious skin infection, after one of the soldiers found the springs by chance.

When Khedive Abbas learned about the springs, he ordered the school of medicine to analyze them. When they were discovered to have healing powers, he ordered the establishment of Helwan's sulfur baths.

Springs still exist at the Ain Helwan therapeutic garden, but the entrance gate doesn't even have a sign with the name of the place, let alone any explanation of its history and value.

Pipes that pump underground water to the surface are rusty and make the flowing water unfit for consumption. All of the taps from which the mineral water should flow are broken, so visitors have no choice other than going inside the well to get some water.

The neglect and absence of governmental supervision over this place naturally opened the way for corruption and encroachment. Some contractors and businessmen have appropriated the garden's

land to build blocks of flats, even though it is state-owned land, Mohamed Abdo, an engineer and the administrator of the Ain Helwan garden.

Contractors broke some of the walls that surround the garden and used large excavators to dig a 20-meter-long road to serve people living in their buildings, actions which Abdo said would cost the country more than LE20 million. Abdo said he filed many lawsuits against those contractors, but nothing has changed.

The garden's land isn't the only thing that was left open to violations.

"More than half of the amount of mineral water that flows from the springs is wasted on filling the swimming pools of the resort that is built close to Ain Helwan garden," said Amir Ali, one of the guardians of the Ain Helwan therapeutic garden, referring to Al-Waha resort.

He said the spring water is pumped underground to the pools, and that the rest of the water goes to waste.

"These water springs had a magical power to treat many kinds of diseases, such as rheumatism and rheumatoid arthritis as well as liver, kidney and skin diseases," Ali said. "Although these water springs have in the past attracted the attention of international researchers and chemists who came to Egypt to study Helwan's sulfurous and mineral water springs, most Egyptians know nothing about them."

The Planning and International Cooperation Ministry allocated LE4 million for the construction and repair of the Ain Helwan garden in 2010, but work has not yet started. The former governor of Helwan had also ordered Helwan University to study the area and make a plan for reviving and developing it, under the supervision of the vice president of the university.

Many professors came from the university to study the gardens and examine the components of the water, and some plans were made and sent to the governor.

"After Helwan governorate became a part of Cairo governorate in 2011, these papers and plans were lost," said Abdo.

Moving to Kabrittaj Helwan, located a few kilometers away, the picture isn't any better. Kabrittaj Helwan was known as one of the main destinations for people with chronic and intractable skin diseases, who would attempt to cure themselves in the springs' bathing area.

The Tourism Ministry and the Czech Republic had agreed in 2008 to develop and revive Kabrittaj because of the therapeutic value of its springs, which contain a high percentage of sulfur. Unfortunately, no subsequent improvements were made, and it ultimately closed after some people drowned in the bath.

A medical center linked to the Kabrittaj called the Helwan Sulfur Center for Rheumatology and Physical Medicine — considered the only center in Egypt that treats people using only sulfurous mud and water, the center says — is still open and offers service to hundreds of patients every year.

For Ibrahim Mohamed, a 50-year-old doctor who has lived in Helwan for more than 40 years, the therapeutic waters have a lot more potential.

“My father and my grandfather used to tell me stories about Helwan springs and its great influence on the people's health in the past,” Mohamed said. “I think that Helwan itself could qualify as the most important therapeutic city in the world, and it could also save millions of pounds each year that are spent on treatment and medicines.”

“Ain Helwan's therapeutic waters are squandered and neglected – Egypt Independent”, 07/08/2012, online at: <http://mideastenvironment.apps01.yorku.ca/?p=5615>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Kenya Sees Increased Water-Related Crimes

nairobi (AlertNet) — As droughts become more frequent and water shortages worsen, Kenya is seeing an increase in water thefts and other water-related crime, police records show. The most common crimes are theft, muggings and illegal disconnections of water pipes by thieves who collect and sell the water. Many of the crimes occur in urban slums, which lack sufficient piped water. "Since 2003, we have made piped water available to at least half of the slum residents in the entire country, but we are faced with severe hurdles as populations continue to grow and demand for the commodity continues to increase," said Peter Mangich, acting director of water services in the Ministry of Water. Police statistics show that in Kibera - Nairobi's largest slum with over one and a half million inhabitants - there are as many as 75 reported incidences of water-related theft daily. Police say they believe many other cases go unreported since residents fear reprisals. In Nairobi's Kawangware slum, the problems are the same but the reported thefts are half those in Kibera. The reason? Kawangware borders on Lavington, one of Nairobi's most affluent suburbs. Police say slum residents, instead of stealing from others in the slum, sneak into Lavington to steal water. Affected Lavington residents have asked the government to intervene.

"Kenya Sees Increased Water-Related Crimes", 07/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/kenya-sees-increased-water-related-crimes_23754

BACK TO TOP

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❖ **Water shortages driving growing thefts, conflicts in Kenya**

NAIROBI (AlertNet) – As droughts become more frequent and water shortages worsen, Kenya is seeing an increase in water thefts and other water-related crime, police records show.

The most common crimes are theft, muggings and illegal disconnections of water pipes by thieves who collect and sell the water. Many of the crimes occur in urban slums, which lack sufficient piped water.

“Since 2003, we have made piped water available to at least half of the slum residents in the entire country, but we are faced with severe hurdles as populations continue to grow and demand for the commodity continues to increase,” said Peter Mangich, acting director of water services in the Ministry of Water.

Police statistics show that in Kibera – Nairobi’s largest slum with over one and a half million inhabitants - there are as many as 75 reported incidences of water-related theft daily.

Police say they believe many other cases go unreported since residents fear reprisals.

In Nairobi’s Kawangware slum, the problems are the same but the reported thefts are half those in Kibera. The reason? Kawangware borders on Lavington, one of Nairobi’s most affluent suburbs.

Police say slum residents, instead of stealing from others in the slum, sneak into Lavington to steal water. Affected Lavington residents have asked the government to intervene.

Studies currently being conducted by the University of Nairobi suggest that water scarcity may drive worsening domestic and international conflict.

A TIME BOMB?

“What we are witnessing in the slums is very serious. Some think that water theft is petty, but we are living with a time bomb,” said Makumi Mwagiru, a professor at the Institute of Diplomacy Studies at the University of Nairobi.

Most cases involving water crimes rarely make it to court, he said, largely because Kenyan police view water theft as a petty offense.

But “there have been incidents where people have been killed that relate to water,” he said.

In July, a Kenyan newspaper, the Daily Nation, reported that an old man living in Kenya’s Rift Valley killed another man with his walking stick after being refused permission to jump to the head of a long queue of people waiting for water at a community well.

Because the man with the walking stick was over 80, the court ordered him to pay the family of the victim a camel as a fine and did not seek a jail sentence.

Gladys Murimi, who lives in Korogocho slum in Nairobi, says home break-ins and water thefts are an ongoing problem in her neighborhood. She regularly has her window panes broken and three times has had thieves steal plastic containers of water from her home.

“I am currently looking for a better place to stay since my job is well paying and do not want to reside in the slum anymore. My immediate neighbors have also been affected,” she said.

Kenya police spokesman Eric Kiraithe said that last year more than 16,000 water crimes were reported to police. He said the crimes were taken seriously and many thieves were prosecuted.

CORRUPTION PROBLEMS

But a junior police officer in the Kenya police, who did not want to be named, said that corruption in the force is a problem in combating the water thefts.

“Once my colleagues arrest someone who has, for example, stolen a jerry can of water, they release that person after just one hour instead of going to court. The courts usually give very lenient sentences for such crimes. One may pay a (small) fine.”

Another problem, he said, is that people caught for thefts are often quick to try to bribe officers to release them, sometimes even offering more than the fine they would have been charged.

“Those arrested do not usually know their rights. For instance, one may pay the police huge bribes to be released, an amount more than what he can pay as a fine. Police usually take advantage of ignorant offenders,” said the officer who is attached to the Central Police station in Nairobi.

Water thieves who plead guilty are often sentenced to do community service, such as sweeping courtrooms for a day, the officer said.

He said that regular water shortages sometimes make people do desperate things such as breaking into people's houses and taking water.

John Munyua, a psychologist in private practice in Nairobi, agreed.

“Clean water is very vital not just for drinking but for bathing and cooking food. People will also steal any food they find,” Munyua said.

“Arresting the offenders does not make them stop. The only way forward is to give them employment and other alternative methods of income generation,” he said.

“Water shortages driving growing thefts, conflicts in Kenya”, 06/08/2012, online at:
http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/water-shortages-driving-growing-thefts-conflicts-in-kenya?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=6b72820232-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ Kenya to Use \$7.5 Billion USD AfDB Loan for Dam in “Silicon Savannah”

nairobi, Kenya — The African Development Bank is lending the Kenyan government \$7.5 billion USD to support construction of a multipurpose dam to supply clean water to the new technology city being developed in the country’s arid lower eastern province.

David Stower, permanent secretary at the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, also told an investors’ briefing on August 7 that the government had allocated another \$140 million USD to fast-track construction of the Thwake Dam, which will provide 1 million liters of water daily to Konza technology city.

The Konza project, which is part of the country’s Vision 2030 development program, is intended to become an ICT (information and communications technology) hub – what the government has dubbed a “silicon savannah” along the lines of Silicon Valley.

The government has invited investors to develop critical infrastructure for the city. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation has been tasked with developing its water supply and sewerage infrastructure.

“Thwake Dam will support irrigation, water supply and hydropower generation for Konza city. The project will commence in October 2013 and will be completed in three years,” Stower said.

“Dam construction will proceed parallel to laying of water mains to ensure that new arrivals in Konza city have access to piped water,” he told investors.

Both food and water security are major concerns for potential investors in the tech hub, and the government intends to put 3,000 hectares of land adjacent to Konza under irrigation, Stower said.

In the short term, the government will finance drilling of 10 boreholes to provide 2 million liters of water to Konza.

“This is a stop-gap measure to address water supply challenges in Konza,” Stower added.

“The government has embraced climate change strategy in water sector,” he said, attempting to allay concerns over recurrent droughts in the lower eastern plains where Konza is located.

“We are negotiating \$750 million USD with the World Bank to scale up water storage. Several projects on water conservation and storage have been rolled out,” Stower said. “Thwake Dam is part of effort to cushion Konza communities from water scarcity.”

Meanwhile, the government also announced this week that it will allocate \$36 million USD for an irrigation project in Wikithuki, in the eastern district of Tseikuru. The project will build canals and trenches to irrigate over 2,000 hectares of land using water from the Tana River.

“Kenya to Use \$7.5 Billion USD AfDB Loan for Dam in “Silicon Savannah”, 09/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/kenya-use-75-billion-usd-afdb-loan-dam-silicon-savannah_23788

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Malawi Calls for Peaceful Resolution to Dispute With Tanzania Over Lake**

Malawi, LILONGWE — Foreign Affairs Minister Ephraim Mganga Chiume on August 1 said Malawi wants to resolve its border dispute with Tanzania through peaceful means, although he insisted that agreements in the past all indicate that the entire lake is Malawi's.

Speaking to reporters at the Central Office of Information in the capital, Lilongwe, Chiume said the border between the two countries was delineated at the edge of the eastern shore of Lake Malawi, also known as Lake Nyasa, under the 1890 Heligoland Treaty signed by Germany and Great Britain. At that time, Malawi was a British colony and Tanzania a German colony.

The Tanzanian government, appealing to international common law, believes that the border should run through the middle of Lake Malawi, he said.

“It is Malawi's position that the principle which Tanzania depends upon applies only where there is no treaty. It does not apply in this case because the border was clearly and specifically defined in a treaty,” Chiume added.

Last week, Tanzanian Foreign Affairs Minister Benard Mzembe warned that further oil exploration in the lake would jeopardize talks between the two sides and create a possible security threat.

There have been reports on social networking sites of troop movements on the Tanzanian side of the lake, although Tanzanian authorities deny this.

The tension between the two countries has affected local livelihoods, with some fishermen now unable to fish.

The Citizen, an online Tanzanian newspaper, quoted Professor Mwesiga Baregu, a lecturer at St. Augustine University in Tanzania, as warning that “both countries should not be drawn into military action because the consequence of doing so is very dire not only to Tanzania and Malawi but for the entire SADC (Southern Africa Development Community) region.”

He said if negotiations with the Malawian government do not bear fruit, the government should take the issue before the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Other observers have advised Malawi and Tanzania to involve the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) as well as the African Union to resolve the conflict.

The most recent dispute between the two countries is widely believed to have started in 2011, when Malawi awarded a gas and oil exploration contract to UK-based Surestream Petroleum.

Tanzania wants an end to oil exploration in the lake, as well as part ownership of the water body.

It is not the first territorial dispute over the lake; between 1967 up to 1968 the Malawi-Tanzania boundary was publicly disputed. The issue still has not been fully resolved.

Further talks between the two countries are scheduled to take place in the town of Mzuzu, in northern Malawi.

“Malawi Calls for Peaceful Resolution to Dispute With Tanzania Over Lake”, 08/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/malawi-calls-peaceful-resolution-dispute-tanzania-over-lake_23769

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Delhi Sets Requirements for Spending on Water, Sanitation**

NEW DELHI, India — The Delhi government on July 31 made it mandatory for all senators in the Delhi state assembly to spend at least \$179,000 USD of their annual budgets on water and sanitation work.

Out of the total annual allocation of \$715,00 USD, it will now be mandatory to give \$179,000 USD to the state-owned Delhi Jal (Water) Board (DJB) for water and sanitation works. Only a few designated areas like the Delhi Cantonment are exempt.

The remaining funds will be released by the urban development department for approved projects, based on the recommendations of the area legislator

Both parliament members and various state legislators across India get money each year under the MLA funding program to develop their local areas through projects that local bodies can complete in one or two years.

Projects that can be carried out under this program include construction of school buildings and community halls, public toilets, cremation facilities, tube wells and water tanks.

The Delhi cabinet also gave in-principle approval for making rainwater harvesting mandatory in the Indian capital. The DJB has been asked to finalize the procedures.

According to a government notification, if the plot size of a building is more than 200 square meters, permission to draw groundwater through tubewells or borewells will be subject to the owner installing a rainwater harvesting system.

This reversal on rainwater harvesting comes nearly two months after Delhi State Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit acknowledged that the previous program had not been successful, 10 years after it was launched with much fanfare.

With the city's groundwater levels falling consistently and surface sources restricted, she said it was necessary to ease the processes under which rainwater harvesting structures could be set up and that the government would have to make monitoring more stringent.

An official of the Delhi Jal Board added: “As a result of continuous extraction, groundwater levels in India, as well as in Delhi, have gone down. Delhi is facing a crisis of water, and its groundwater is under serious threat because of illegal and irrational extraction.”

“During the rainy season, the Yamuna [River] gets a huge amount of floodwater that simply flows away. But if stored, it can be vital for the city,” the official said.

“Delhi Sets Requirements for Spending on Water, Sanitation”, 06/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/delhi-sets-requirements-spending-water-sanitation_23724

BACK TO TOP

❖ Droughts Bring Climate Change Home to Nepali Farmers

CHITWAN, Nepal, Aug 6 2012 (IPS) - Farmers in this fertile central district of south Nepal are convinced that an intense drought between May and early July that destroyed their maize crops is the result of climate change.

“Last year my farms produced over 20 quintals of maize, but this time I could barely harvest one quintal,” 60-year-old farmer Padmakanta Poudel told IPS in the remote Jutpani village of the district.

Poudel explained that his family had taken bank a loan of over 500 dollars to invest on his maize farm. The money was spent on hiring a tractor to till the farm, the labour to sow the seeds as well as inputs such as fertilizers.

For a poor farmer in Nepal a 500-dollar loan is substantial and repayable only at harvest time. “We lost all our money and will have to pay back our debts. I pray that my rice crops will not also be destroyed,” Poudel said.

Padma Puri’s situation is worse. “I am only a tenant farmer, but I have to repay everything after this disaster,” says this 58-year-old female farmer who could barely produce 20 kg of maize this year and is faced with mounting debts.

Farmers speaking with IPS in Chitwan said that they now realise that this is the climate change they have been hearing about over radio and television.

“I had heard about climate change (Jal Wayu Paribartan in the Nepali language) but I didn’t know we would be affected by it so badly,” says Ram Chandra Chepang from the village of Shaktikhor.

Chepang’s farms produced barely 50 kg of maize compared to three quintals last year, enabling him to buy enough food to last six months. Now he is desperately looking for a job as daily wage labourer to repay money borrowed for farm inputs from a local moneylender.

Nepal has a history of droughts but the intensity increased this year, say government experts. They, however, are yet to make scientific measurements of the intensity.

Evidence of climate change in Nepal is seen in temperatures rising by about one-tenth of a degree annually, receding glaciers and snow line and volatile monsoonal rains.

While scientists are still trying to link these changes to factors such as production of greenhouse gases and deforestation, Nepal’s farmers are coping on their own with dwindling water supply, flash floods and landslides.

Chitwan, a major producer of maize, has suffered a 70 percent loss of the crop due to late arrival of the monsoons this year, according to assessments by the government's Agricultural Services Office (ASO) at Ratna, 300 km west of national capital Kathmandu.

"Maize farmers have been devastated and they feel this is a direct impact of climate change, ASO's Ganesh Shrestha told IPS.

The 'Crop Situation Report' for July 2012, produced jointly by the ministry of agriculture, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and World Food Programme had warned that the delay in monsoon, combined with insufficient pre-monsoon rainfall, would adversely affect maize and summer vegetables.

According to the joint report, the hill and mountain belts, where rain-fed agriculture is predominant, would be hit worst. While the monsoon revived somewhat late July, it is too late to save the maize crops.

"The situation was worrisome when we visited the rain-fed areas in the Terai (fertile southern plains) and we saw that the maize had been completely destroyed. This was a surprisingly intensive drought," said Navaraj Pradhan, ecosystem adaptation analyst from the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Kathmandu.

ICIMOD is currently conducting a study on climate change impacts on food security in the entire Indo Gangetic plains. This region includes thickly populated areas like India's Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, Nepal's Terai and Bangladesh's basin area.

There can be two droughts in a year without causing too much damage, but when there is drought intensity that can destroy maize, even in irrigated areas, according to ICIMOD experts.

With such unpredictability of weather patterns growing in the country, there is need now for planned adaptation.

"Until now most farmers have been using autonomous adaptation and that is not sustainable when drought intensity is growing," Jit Narayan Sah, technical officer and researcher from the Nepal Agricultural Research Centre (NARC), told IPS.

Sah explained that autonomous adaptation in Nepal are short term solutions like channeling waters from nearby rivers, using composting, using green manure and indigenous methods to control pests.

Experts believe that planned adaptation must include comprehensive research that leads to action with agricultural policy reforms and integrate that in the farming system by working closely with the farmers.

While there is growing awareness among farmers on the effects of climate change, their coping strategy is weak.

“There are no experts telling the farmers what to do during such situations and there are also no policies or programmes guiding them,” said a Nepali agricultural expert from an international NGO who cannot be named because he works closely with the government.

The expert said there was a need to build awareness among farmers on “extreme-events”. Telling them the causes is not enough but they need to be given options and guidance along with an increase infrastructure such as irrigation.

For now, farmers are trying to make do with grossly inadequate tube wells.

“They are doing everything on their own. With natural water resources drying up, the farmers are even working with each other to build larger water storage,” says Sah.

Climate change adaptation may take a long time to implement in Nepal given that the country is still struggling to complete a peace process since 2006 when a decade of armed civil strife ended in the country.

“Climate change adaptation is not a top priority right now,” says Sah.

“Droughts Bring Climate Change Home to Nepali Farmers”, 06/08/2012, online at: http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/08/droughts-bring-climate-change-home-to-nepali-farmers/?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=6b72820232-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ Indian State Blames Nepal Releases for Floods

LUCKNOW (Deccan Herald) — Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday said water released by Nepal into rivers originating from there was the major cause of flood-like situation in the state. “The flood-like situation in the area on last Friday was because of the water released by Nepal into the rivers without informing and in order to find a permanent solution, the issue will be taken up with the neighbouring country. If required the Centre will be requested to play the role of intermediary,” said state minister for Irrigation, Shivpal Singh Yadav. Yadav took an aerial view of the affected areas. Release of water in Burrhi Rapti, Baan Ganga Kurra, Ghonghi rivers had adversely affected Naugarh, Shohratgarh, Itwa and Bansi areas of the state, he said. He added that joint projects in hydel power and using the water for irrigation purposes will be taken up with Nepal so as to ensure proper utilisation of surplus water. Yadav said the earlier Samajwadi Party government headed by Mulayam Singh Yadav had planned to start projects to improve power generation but the BSP government did no work in this regard, which has resulted in the present poor power scenario.

“Indian State Blames Nepal Releases for Floods”, 08/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/indian-state-blames-nepal-releases-floods_23775

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Hydel projects to continue on Ganga, says IITs**

Big hydel projects on river Ganga will continue despite opposition by Hindu religious groups and Save Ganga project will require Rs. 1,00,000 crore public investment, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have said.

A consortium of seven Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and three other leading universities in India has told the government that Ganga cannot be saved by just closing down existing and upcoming hydel projects.

"Environmental flows, as determined through analysis of geological, ecological, socio-economic and cultural functions of the river systems, shall be maintained in all tributaries and the main stems of the Ganga river irrespective of season and circumstances," Professor Vinod Tare of IIT Kanpur said in a presentation on the new approach to save Ganga to the government last week.

Tare is the coordinator of the project to prepare environment management plan for Ganga river Basin and his presentation is in wake of protests led by BJP's Uma Bharati and former IIT Kanpur professor GD Aggarwal against hydel projects on Ganga and its tributaries. The environment ministry has already set up a committee under B K Chaturvedi to allow projects without hampering environmental flow of the river for which IITs are providing crucial inputs.

To maintain the flows, the IITs have said 11 policy level interventions including regulation for minimum flow of water from hydel projects and their construction were required. "It required a sound water resource management," Tare said. The premier institutes have also said that there was a need of a policy for policy framework for sustainable use of water, restoration of existing water bodies and soil conservation.

But, the IITs believe that these policies will fall apart if there isn't an overarching law --- Ganga River Basin Act --- to ensure long term implementation of basin environment management plan. "We are already working on a new law for Ganga," said a senior environment ministry official.

Under the new management plan, the IITs have suggested to divide the Ganga river basin --- covering around 60 % of India's population --- into nine clusters based on unique topography and environmental concerns.

The nine clusters include river Yamuna from Delhi till Etawah in Uttar Pradesh and several of Ganga's tributaries from Uttarakhand to West Bengal --- such as Ramganga, Kali and Mandakini, Chambal, Ken and Betwa.

Implementing such a gigantic plan expected to cost additional Rs. one lakh crore will not be easy without a coordinated efforts of the all the state governments and stakeholders. It will also require, the IITs say, enormous scientific work to gauge impacts on river Ganga which have been missing.

“Hydel projects to continue on Ganga, says IITs”, 06/08/2012, online at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Hydel-projects-to-continue-on-Ganga-says-IITs/Article1-909244.aspx>

BACK TO TOP

❖ Munificently treading water

NEW DELHI — Reciprocity is the first principle of diplomacy, and India has walked the extra mile to befriend neighbors, as underscored by its record on land and water disputes. Yet today, India lives in the world's most-troubled neighborhood.

India's generosity on land issues has been well documented. It includes its acceptance of Burmese sovereignty over the Kabaw Valley in 1953, its surrender of British-inherited extraterritorial rights in Tibet in 1954, its giving back of the strategic Haji Pir Pass to Pakistan after the 1965 war, and its similar return of territorial gains plus 93,000 prisoners after the 1971 war that led to East Pakistan's secession as Bangladesh.

Less well known is India's generosity on shared river waters, although it is now reeling under a growing water crisis.

The world's most generous water-sharing pact is the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, under which India agreed to set aside 80.52 percent of the waters of the six-river Indus system for Pakistan, keeping for itself just the remaining 19.48 percent share. Both in terms of the sharing ratio as well as the total quantum of waters reserved for a downstream state, this treaty's munificence is unsurpassed in scale in the annals of international water treaties.

Indeed, the volume of water earmarked for Pakistan is more than 90 times greater than the 1.85 billion cubic meters the U.S. is required to release for Mexico under the 1944 U.S.-Mexico Water Treaty.

This unparalleled water generosity, however, only invited trouble for India. Within five years of the Indus treaty, Pakistan launched its second war against India to grab the rest of the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir before India had recovered from its humiliating rout in 1962 at the hands of the Chinese. In the first war soon after its creation in 1947, Pakistan seized more than one-third of the original princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

India's 1996 Ganges river treaty with Bangladesh guarantees minimum cross-border flows in the dry season — a new principle in international water law. In fact, the treaty equally divides the dry-season

downstream Ganges flows between the two countries, while in other seasons when the total Ganges flows average more than 71.48 billion cubic meters per year, Bangladesh's share is larger than India's.

Today, Pakistan expects eternal Indian munificence on water even as its military establishment continues to export terror. Yet, with all the water flowing downstream under the treaty, the same question must haunt the Pakistani generals as Lady Macbeth in William Shakespeare's Macbeth: "Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?"

In 2010, Pakistan filed a case with the International Court of Arbitration to halt India's construction of a modest-size, 330-megawatt Kishenganga hydropower plant. Even as India last fall suspended work on the project in response to the arbitration proceedings, Pakistan has fast-tracked its own three-times-larger, Chinese-aided hydropower project at a nearby border site on the same stream, apparently to gain priority right on river-water use under the doctrine of prior appropriation.

Meanwhile, India's portion of the Indus basin — according to the 2030 Water Resources Group, an international consortium of private-sector companies and institutions — confronts a massive 52 percent deficit between water supply and demand.

The Ganges treaty's allocations to Bangladesh, while not comparable to the cross-border flows under the Indus treaty, are much larger than the combined allocations set out in the world's other inter-country water accords signed since the 1990s, including the Jordan-Israel water arrangements, the Komati River sharing between South Africa and Swaziland, and the Lebanese-Syrian agreements over the Orontes and El-Kabir rivers.

Because of the Ganges precedent, Bangladesh now is pressing India to similarly reserve by treaty half of the flows of another but smaller river — the Teesta. And New Delhi seems ready to oblige.

Under the Indian Constitution, water is a provincial issue, not a federal matter. Yet Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has sought to strong-arm a reluctant West Bengal state into accepting a Teesta River treaty on terms dictated by New Delhi.

The fact is that unlike Bangladesh, India is already a seriously water-stressed country. Whereas the annual per-capita water availability in Bangladesh averages 8,252 cubic meters, it has fallen to a paltry 1,560 cubic meters in India.

Lost in such big-hearted diplomacy is the fact that a parched and thirsty India is downriver from China, which, far from wanting to emulate India's Indus- or Ganges-style water munificence, rejects the very concept of water sharing.

Instead, the Chinese construction of upstream dams on international rivers such as the Mekong, Salween, Brahmaputra, Arun, Sutlej, Indus, Irtysh, Illy and Amur shows that Beijing is increasingly bent on unilateral actions, impervious to the concerns of downstream nations.

Over the next decade, as if to underscore the strategic importance it gives to controlling water resources, China plans to build more large dams than the U.S. or India has managed in its entire history.

By seeking to have its hand on Asia's water tap through an extensive upstream infrastructure, China challenges India's interests more than any other country's.

Although a number of nations stretching from Afghanistan to Vietnam receive waters from the Tibetan Plateau, India's direct dependency on Tibetan waters is greater than that of any other country. With about a dozen important rivers flowing in from the Tibetan Himalayan region, India gets almost one-third of all its yearly water supplies of 1,911 billion cubic meters from Tibet, according to the latest U.N. data.

Against this background, it is fair to ask: Is India condemned to perpetual generosity toward its neighbors?

This question has assumed added urgency because India has started throwing money around as part of its newly unveiled aid diplomacy — \$1 billion in aid to Bangladesh, one-fifth as grant; \$500 million to Myanmar; \$300 million to Sri Lanka; \$140 million to the Maldives; and hundreds of millions of dollars in new aid to Afghanistan and Nepal. If pursued with wishful thinking, such aid generosity is likely to meet the same fate as water munificence.

Generosity in diplomacy can yield rich dividends if it is part of a strategically geared outreach designed to ameliorate the regional-security situation so that India can play a larger global role. But if it is not anchored in the fundamentals of international relations — including reciprocity and leverage building — India risks accentuating its tyranny of geography, even as it is left holding the bag.

“Munificently treading water”, 10/08/2012, online at: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/text/eo20120810bc.html>

BACK TO TOP

❖ One Billion Without Sanitation Services in South Asia

NEW DELHI ([The Indian Express](#)) — In South Asia, a billion people do not use improved sanitation facilities and 700 million practice open defecation, compromising on their dignity, as countries struggle to provide drinking water and sanitation to their citizens, Media Scrapbook has revealed. Media Scrapbook, published by WashMedia-South Asia, a representative body of journalists from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, working on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), was launched at the National Press Club, reports the Daily Times. Despite these conditions and several high-level political commitments at different forums to reverse the situation, governments in South Asia have been unable to provide these fundamental services, Media Scrapbook said. According to members of the regional group, the single and most important development challenge in South Asia is to end the sanitation and hygiene crisis and promote dignified lives, reduce preventable deaths, improve gender equality, contribute to the disposable income of the poor and safeguard the environment. Governments in South Asia during the 4th South Asian Conference on Sanitation recognised that sanitation in South Asia was at a crisis point.

“One Billion Without Sanitation Services in South Asia”, 09/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/one-billion-without-sanitation-services-south-asia_23807

BACK TO TOP

❖ Pakistan Releases \$63 Million USD to Complete Kachhi Canal

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The Pakistani government has decided to fast-track work on the long awaited Kachhi Canal project in Balochistan province, which has been stalled by official apathy and violence involving militants in the region.

Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf last week directed the Finance Ministry to immediately release \$63 million USD to complete the 500-kilometer canal.

The project would irrigate more than 283,000 hectares of land, allowing the province to draw its share of water from the Indus River irrigation system. Some of the land to be irrigated is part of the 20,000-square-kilometer Kachhi plains, one of the world's hottest inhabited areas, where summer temperatures soar to an average of 50 degrees Celsius.

The canal, with a discharge capacity of nearly 170,000 liters per second, will have 1,500 kilometers of distributaries to transfer the water from the main canal to fields.

It is being carried out in three phases, starting with construction of the 402-kilometer main canal in Punjab and Balochistan provinces. In the second phase, the canal will be extended into Bolan and Naseerabad districts, and the third phase includes a distribution network of over 785 kilometers in Bolan, Naseerabad and Jhal Magsi districts.

The first phase was supposed to have been completed by June 2007, but was marred by violence. Twenty-two men, including engineers and technicians working on the project, were kidnapped by militants during a raid on a camp at the project site in November 2006. The kidnappers also burned nine tractors and a bulldozer.

The project site at some places was also mined, and in November 2011 engineers working on the project narrowly escaped in a bomb blast.

Now, the main canal is expected to be finished in December.

“Pakistan Releases \$63 Million USD to Complete Kachhi Canal”, 10/08/2012, online at:
http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/pakistan-releases-63-million-usd-complete-kachhi-canal_23815

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Asia, U.S. facing water extraction crisis**

Regions of Asia, the Middle East and parts of the U.S. corn belt are dangerously over-exploiting their underground water supplies.

Heavily-populated regions of Asia, the arid Middle East and parts of the U.S. corn belt are dangerously over-exploiting their underground water supplies, according to a study published on Wednesday in the journal Nature.

"The countries that are overusing groundwater most significantly are the United States, India, China, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Mexico, and the highest number of people that are impacted by this live in India and China," Canadian hydrologist Tom Gleeson told AFP.

"Over a quarter of the world's population live in these regions where groundwater is being overused," he said in a phone interview.

Many places are rapidly pumping out "fossil" water, or water that was laid down sometimes thousands of years ago and cannot be replaced on a human timescale.

Seeking a yardstick of sustainability, the study creates a measure called the groundwater footprint.

It calculates the area of land sustained by extracted water and compares this to the size of the aquifer beneath.

The global groundwater footprint is a whopping 3.5 times the size of the world's aquifers, the study found.

However, this stress is accounted for by a small number of countries.

For instance, in the South Caspian region of northern Iran, the footprint is 98 times the size of the aquifer; in the Upper Ganges in India and Pakistan, it is 54; while in the US High Plains, the figure is nine.

"Humans are over-exploiting groundwater in many large aquifers that are crucial to agriculture, especially in North America and Asia," said Gleeson.

"Irrigation for agriculture is largely causing the problem but it is already impacting in some regions the ability to use groundwater for irrigation, so it is almost like a self-reinforcing problem."

The study aims at adding a new analytical tool to help policymakers cope with the world's intensifying water problems.

In March, the UN warned in its Fourth World Water Report that water problems in many parts of the world were chronic, and without a crackdown on wastage would worsen as demand for food rises and climate change intensifies.

By 2050, agricultural use of water will rise by nearly 20 percent, on the basis of current farming methods, to meet food demands from a population set to rise from 7 billion today more than 9 billion.

Gleeson, a specialist at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, used a computer model in collaboration with scientists at Utrecht University in the Netherlands and crunched national statistics on water use. The next step will be to use satellite data, which should be a more reliable source, he said.

Water from surface sources — rivers and lakes — is well documented, but use of aquifers is poorly understood.

According to the UN report, extraction from aquifers has tripled in the past 50 years and now accounts for nearly half of all drinking water today. But how this use breaks down in finer detail, notably its impact on the watersheds that feed rivers, is less well known.

“Asia, U.S. facing water extraction crisis”, 08/08/2012, online at: <http://www.mnn.com/your-home/organic-farming-gardening/stories/asia-us-facing-water-extraction-crisis>

BACK TO TOP

❖ International Activists Demand Action on Human Right to Water

new york, ny, united states — Marking the two-year anniversary of the UN General Assembly declaration making water and sanitation basic human rights, a coalition of 15 international non-governmental organizations submitted a letter to UN member states last week calling for more concrete action on the issue.

“This human right is yet to be fully implemented,” the letter states. “As members of the global water justice movement, we are deeply concerned to see little progress being made towards the full implementation of this right.”

In the current global economic downturn, as “governments aggressively pursue false solutions to the environmental and economic crises, the situation will only deepen the water injustices that our organizations and communities have been fighting for decades,” they said.

The 15 NGOs include Food and Water Watch, the Blue Planet Project, People’s Coalition for the Right to Water in Indonesia, Food and Water Europe, National Alliance of People’s Movement of India and the Council of Canadians.

Together they have developed a series of reports concerning the plight of the water and sanitation human right in Colombia, the Palestinian Territories, Ecuador, Indonesia, the United States, Argentina, India, Canada, and several European nations.

WaterAid senior policy analyst Tom Slaymaker was quoted by IPS as saying it is too soon to know whether the international community has failed at implementing the right, “but two years on we have not yet seen the sort of step change in effort needed to reverse the historical neglect of water and, more particularly, sanitation in international development cooperation.”

Slaymaker cited the achievements of second High Level Meeting of Sanitation and Water for All Partnership in Washington DC last April. He said the meeting was a positive sign of growing political involvement.

“But the resulting government commitments to get countries off-track to achieve the sanitation MDG back on track to meet the target in 2015 need to be backed up with the required financial resources to make progressive realization of the human right to water and sanitation a reality,” he warned.

Although no member state voted against making water and sanitation a basic human right, 41 countries, mostly from the developed world, and a few African nations abstained, while 122 voted for the measure.

However, the coalition letter pointed to the efforts of the Rio+20 sustainable development conference as evidence that there is a “full and unquestioned consensus among UN Member States regarding the human right to water and sanitation.”

“We are therefore demanding the full implementation of this vital human right, and remedies to the tremendous obstacles we are facing in all of our regions,” it continued.

It suggests the UN follow recommendations the coalition has made in its recent reports.

“International Activists Demand Action on Human Right to Water”, 06/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/international-activists-demand-action-human-right-water_23725

BACK TO TOP

❖ One of Beijing's Water Sources May Be Contaminated, Juma River Turns White

BEIJING, China — The Fangshan water authority in Beijing is investigating a report that one of the capital's sources of drinking water may be polluted.

An environmental blog in China said the Juma River has turned "white," which signals severe pollution upstream, China Daily reported on August 3.

The pollution might have come from nearby Hebei province, according to the water authority. The authority sampled water from different parts of the river as part of its investigation.

Additionally, the water authority has promised to continue checking the problem over the next two days. There is sterilization equipment in all nearby villages, and affected regions are provided with emergency-use water. More than 340 wells in 181 villages are reported to be affected.

Fangshan District is situated in the southwest, 38 kilometers from downtown Beijing. The district has many rivers and lakes -- the Juma, Dashihe, Yongding and Xiaoqing River run through the district, assuring abundant water resources.

Beijing has suffered chronic water pollution for years. Discharge of sewage, residential and industrial waste, contribute to the problem, as does growth in the capital's population, even as the city has tried to keep up by building new sewage treatment plants.

Meanwhile, residents in areas worst hit by recent rainstorms may be at risk of infectious disease from contaminated drinking water. In the districts of Fangshan, Fengtai, Tongzhou and Mentougou, residents will continue to run the risk of infectious disease if they drink contaminated water, according a press release from the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) last week.

The supply for nearly a million residents in the four districts may be affected, according to the Beijing Morning Post.

"Among the five worst-hit areas, drinking water from wells has been badly affected, and some waterworks were also submerged during the rain," said a CDC media officer. He added that many waterworks have been restored and they are testing the water quality at the sites.

"The government lacks an effective emergency plan to deal with heavy disasters," said Zhang Junfeng, founder of Happy Water Journeys, a non-governmental water resource watchdog.

"It's been over 10 days since the rainstorm. If there were such a plan, the drinking water safety problems should have been resolved, and not still be in the 'testing' phase," Zhang said.

"One of Beijing's Water Sources May Be Contaminated, Juma River Turns White", 06/08/2012, online at:
http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/one-beijing-s-water-sources-may-be-contaminated-juma-river-turns-white_23723

BACK TO TOP

❖ Chinese Desal Capacity Increasing

BEIJING (Filtration Separation) — Research and Markets Ltd has released the China Seawater Desalination Industry Report (2012 Edition). As of the end of 2011, China's seawater desalination capacity reached 660 kilotons per day, and will hit 2.2-2.6 million tons per day in 2015. In recent years, global collaboration in the water treatment engineering field has expanded the Chinese seawater desalination market. This has included Veolia Water, which entered the Chinese water treatment market early in 1997 and now has over 15 projects in China, mainly in Tianjin, Shanghai, Beijing, Shandong and Shaanxi. ProMinent started in the Chinese seawater desalination market in 2001, and has now six completed seawater desalination projects. Israel Desalination Enterprises (IDE) Technologies entered the Chinese market in 2007 and has constructed one plant in Tianjin. Hyflux arrived in 2009 and has now set up the Tianjin Dagang Seawater Desalination Plant. Aqualyng began the construction of a plant in 2010 and now has the desalination project in Tangshan, Hebei.

“Chinese Desal Capacity Increasing”, 09/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/chinese-desal-capacity-increasing_23793

BACK TO TOP

❖ China Firms Are Front Runners for Ethiopian Water Pipeline Contract

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Two Chinese state companies are the leading contenders for a water pipeline relocation project in Ethiopia.

China Geo-engineering Corporation and China Gezhouba Group Company Ltdhav both submitted offers to the Addis Ababa Water and Sewerage Authority (AAWSA), the country's largest water utility. The bidding results will be announced shortly, the utility's general manager, Assegid Getacew, said this week.

AAWSA is relocating 9 kilometers of a water pipeline from Megenagna to Mexico to pave way for the construction of a railway line by another Chinese construction firm, China Railway Group Limited.

The light rail line, part of the 30-kilometer network being undertaken by Ethiopian Railway Corporation with funding from the Export and Import Bank of China, runs from Ayat to Torhailoch.

According to Seyoum Brehanu, AAWSA Development and Expansion Project officer, water consumers will be supplied with water from a reservoir near Gurd Shola until the pipeline relocation is completed early next year.

“We formed a steering committee to complete the relocation as fast as possible,” Seyoum said.

A committee with members from the Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo), Ethio Telecom, Ethiopian Railway Corporation (ERC) and AAWSA, is expected to hand down a final decision on the bids.

If it is picked, China Geo-Engineering Corporation will have won its second major water sector expansion project in Ethiopia in less than one year.

The company won a contract to drill 26 wells in September, as part of Addis Ababa's plan to drill 46 boreholes to increase the city's water supply by an additional 140,000 cubic meters a day.

The borehole project is funded by the Chinese government and the World Bank.

“China Firms Are Front Runners for Ethiopian Water Pipeline Contract”, 10/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/china-firms-are-front-runners-ethiopian-water-pipeline-contract_23813

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Haikui affects 6 mln people, destroys thousands of houses**

BEIJING, Aug. 9 (Xinhua) -- More than 6 million people had been affected by Typhoon Haikui in four provinces as of 8 a.m. Thursday, the country's flood control authority said.

Typhoon Haikui, which made landfall early Wednesday morning in east China's Zhejiang province, has destroyed 7,561 houses and 388,180 hectares of cropland in Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Anhui provinces, and Shanghai, according to a statement on the website of the State Flood Control and Drought Relief Headquarters.

At 8 a.m., the water level on Taihu Lake, China's second-biggest freshwater lake, stood at 3.59 meters, 0.09 meter over the alert level, while many rivers in Zhejiang were also flowing above the danger mark, according to the statement.

The typhoon, which had been downgraded to a severe tropical storm as of 4 p.m. Wednesday, was located in the city of Chizhou in Anhui province at noon, the National Meteorological Center said.

Water levels in some rivers in Anhui will continue to rise as Haikui is forecast to hover over the southern parts of the province over the next two days.

“Haikui affects 6 mln people, destroys thousands of houses”, 09/08/2012, online at:
http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/china/2012-08/09/c_131773813.htm?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=fe1690b1e4-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ Reservoir collapse leaves 10 dead

An 180,000-cubic-meter reservoir in rural Zhoushan, Zhejiang province, collapsed at dawn on Friday, killing at least 10 people and injuring 27 others.

The 10 victims killed included six females and four males. Seven of them are older than 74, and one is a 12-year-old child, according to an official statement from the local government. The oldest victim is 87. It also said that at least 80 local families have suffered as a result of the disaster.

The collapse — believed by some to be a result of Typhoon Haikui, which brought torrential rain to the area — flooded coastal Shenjiakeng village with water and silt, submerging a large area and damaging at least a third of the homes there.

"Most of the houses are made from stones and clay, which was very easily washed away by floods," said Chen Fu, chief of the Zhoushan firefighting branch, speaking at the site during a phone interview with the local radio station, about six hours after the collapse.

Chen said most rescues of the took place within an hour of the collapse.

The local government has provided no information about the number of missing people, or the population of the village, or the definite cause of the collapse.

"To find the missing is our first priority, and we will spare no efforts to save the injured," said Zhu Jun, spokesman of Daishan county, which administers the village.

Sitting on the north of Zhoushan, the fishing and shipping hub of the highly industrialized Yangtze River Delta, Shenjiakeng village is largely populated by migrant workers from other cities who work at ship-manufacturing companies.

Officials said the fact that many migrant workers lived in the village has "added to the difficulties of locating and identifying the missing".

As Typhoon Haikui lashed Zhejiang province on Tuesday and Wednesday, the village was one of the most heavily hit places, receiving 270 mm of rainfall.

But Zhu, the spokesman, said it is too early to make a connection between the typhoon and the collapse.

Some netizens who claimed to be residents of the village wrote on Sina Weibo, one of the most popular micro-blogging websites in China, that the reservoir has been in disrepair for years.

They said no people or organizations have claimed the reservoir, a 28.5-meter-high rainwater-collecting clay structure, as their property.

As the reservoir has leaked several times, local residents have reported the situation to government departments, but got no response.

In another development, Typhoon Haikui has left six people dead and forced more than 2.17 million people to be moved in four provincial-level regions in East China, Xinhua News Agency cited the Ministry of Civil Affairs as saying on Friday.

In Anhui province, Haikui killed three people and affected nearly 2.17 million residents, as well as destroyed more than 2,400 houses, the ministry said in a report.

In Shanghai, the typhoon killed two people and affected 361,000 others, the ministry said, adding that more than 50 houses were destroyed.

The typhoon also killed one person and forced 126,000 others to be evacuated in Jiangsu province, as well as forced nearly 1.55 million people in Zhejiang to move, according to the ministry.

Haikui, the 11th typhoon of the year, is the third typhoon to hit China's eastern coast in a week after the storms Saola and Damrey hit the region over the weekend.

Though no casualties have been reported in Jiangxi province so far, the Nanchang Railway Bureau said that as the typhoon moved westward, 12 trains running on the Anhui-Jiangxi Railway have been stranded by floods. Work to repair the damage is under way.

“Reservoir collapse leaves 10 dead”, 11/08/2012, online at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2012-08/11/content_15664493.htm

BACK TO TOP

❖ Thai Villagers Launch Another Attempt to Stop Mekong Dam

Bangkok, thailand — In another attempt to block Laos' construction of the controversial \$3.6 billion USD Xayaburi Dam on the Mekong River, a group of 37 Thai villagers on August 7 filed a lawsuit in Administrative Court to block state-run electricity company Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (Egat) from buying hydropower from the dam.

Egat is expected to buy most of the electricity produced by the dam.

Several environmental organizations assisted the villagers with the filing, including Living River Siam and Thai People's Network of Eight Mekong Provinces.

"Egat signed a contract without the process of consulting or giving information to stakeholders," Teerapong Pomun, a member of Living River Siam, was quoted by the Bangkok Post as saying.

"The dam's construction in Laos will cause an impact in Thailand, and Thai authorities have not taken any action required by the constitution to study the impact."

Thailand's constitution requires that independently created impact studies and public consultations be carried out for any activity that could harm the environment, and it gives citizens the right to sue state enterprises if these measures are not taken.

The Thai villagers' lawsuit actually sues five state enterprises. Egat's legal affairs department was not aware of any lawsuit early on August 7, saying "We haven't been informed that the NGO will file a lawsuit against Egat. However, in the event that we are sued by the NGO with respect to this matter, we are ready to make any clarification to the court."

This is the second such action in a matter of weeks to halt construction of the dam.

As already reported by OOSKANews, the local Rivers Coalition in Cambodia sent a letter to Thai Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra on July 27 asking Thailand and Laos to order the Ch Karnchang, the Thai company building the dam, to stop all construction activities at the site until a study of the dam's impact on the environment is completed.

The group said the leaders should wait for the results of the Mekong River Commission study. The study will examine the trans-boundary impact of the Mekong mainstream dams, including their effects on communities along the river from Laos to Vietnam's Mekong Delta.

Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam have agreed in principle to hold further consultation meetings, but these have not been scheduled. The Rivers Coalition urged the Thai and Lao governments to respect the 1995 Mekong Agreement for full public consultation, especially for those living on the Mekong River and the Tonle Sap River.

“Thai Villagers Launch Another Attempt to Stop Mekong Dam”, 08/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/thai-villagers-launch-another-attempt-stop-mekong-dam_23784

BACK TO TOP

❖ Thai Lawsuit Threatens to Derail Laos Plans for Mekong River Dam

A group of Thai villagers moved to block a state-run company from buying electricity generated by a hydropower dam in Laos in a bid to halt the \$3.6 billion project on the Mekong River that is opposed by downstream nations.

The 37 villagers filed a lawsuit in the Administrative Court today to cancel an agreement for the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand to buy almost all the power from the 1,285-megawatt dam. Ch. Karnchang Pcl (CK), PTT Pcl and Electricity Generating Pcl (EGCO) are among major shareholders of Xayaburi Power Co., the dam's operator.

“EGAT signed a contract without the process of consulting or giving information to stakeholders,” said Teerapong Pomun, a member of Living River Siam, one of the groups that assisted the villagers. “The dam construction in Laos will cause an impact in Thailand, and Thai authorities have not done any activity according to the constitution to study the impact.”

The case threatens to derail a project that Laos is depending on to bolster the smallest economy in the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations. Since 2006, Thailand's Administrative Court has blocked EGAT's plans for an initial public offering, halted 76 government-approved industrial projects and delayed a sale of high-speed mobile-phone licenses.

Thailand's constitution prohibits projects or activities that may harm the environment without public consultation, impact studies and opinions from independent organizations. It also gives people the right to sue state enterprises.

EGAT Targeted

The villagers filed the lawsuit against five Thai government entities including EGAT, according to documents distributed to reporters at the court by the Thai People's Network of Eight Mekong Provinces, an activist group.

“We haven’t been informed that the NGO will file a lawsuit against EGAT,” EGAT’s legal affairs bureau said in an e-mailed statement today. “However, in the event that we are sued by the NGO with respect to this matter, we are ready to make any clarification to the court.”

Laos, a landlocked nation of 6 million people bordering China, plans to expand its generating capacity and sell electricity to its neighbors. Xayaburi’s approval may clear the way for seven other dams that Laos plans to build on the Mekong.

“I don’t think Vietnam or China want to buy power from Xayaburi dam because it’s too far and it would cost a lot to build a power line,” Teerapong said. “Thailand is the only country that would be a buyer.”

Rice, Fish

Hydropower’s contribution to the Laos government’s revenue will more than double to 1 percent of gross domestic product compared with two years ago, according to the World Bank. The pipeline of hydropower and mining projects combined with increased electricity demand in neighboring countries will probably keep economic growth at 8 percent a year through 2015, the International Monetary Fund said in a report last year.

Vietnam has recommended a 10-year delay for all hydropower projects on the Mekong, which winds through Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia from its source in China’s Tibetan plateau. About 60 million people depend on the river and its tributaries for food, water and transportation, according to the Mekong River Commission. Neighboring countries are concerned the dam will disrupt fisheries and rice production.

Laos has aimed to convince its neighbors by showing them studies it commissioned from Compagnie Nationale du Rhône and Switzerland-based Poyry Energy AG. CNR recommended additional studies to improve the project, the company said on Aug. 2.

The issue of sediment transport “is one of the most important for the Xayaburi dam,” the company said. Solutions “need to be developed and their costs evaluated,” it said.

Hillary Clinton

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton pushed for more studies on the dam during a visit to Laos last month, the first by the top U.S. diplomat in 57 years. Laotian Prime Minister Thongsing Thammavong assured Clinton that the Xayaburi project wouldn't proceed without approval from neighboring countries, according to a State Department official who wasn't authorized to speak on the record.

Ch. Karnchang, Thailand's third-biggest construction company by market value, owns a 50 percent stake in Xayaburi, according to a presentation on its website. PTT (PTT), Thailand's biggest company, has a 25 percent stake and Electricity Generating owns 12.5 percent.

"Thai Lawsuit Threatens to Derail Laos Plans for Mekong River Dam", 07/08/2012, online at:
<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-08-07/thai-lawsuit-threatens-to-derail-laos-plans-for-mekong-river-dam>

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Cambodian PM warns of floods as water begins to rise**

PHNOM PENH, Aug. 8 (Xinhua) -- Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen on Wednesday appealed to residents living along Mekong River to be vigilant over possible floods later this month or next month.

"In the Year of the Dragon, the water has never been small, it is always big. These days, water has begun to rise," he said during the inauguration ceremony of a 128-kilometer China-funded national road No. 62 in Kampong Thom province.

The premier said that he had ordered the suspension to the rehabilitation of roads, bridges and irrigation system at some areas along Mekong River, to be forecast that they will be submerged by flooding this year.

"If we continue constructing those roads and bridges, when the flood comes, those roads and bridges will be destroyed again, so it will be a waste of money," he said, adding that the construction will be resumed after the flooding period.

Meanwhile, he advised authorities and residents along Mekong River to prepare high grounds in case of flooding.

He also appealed to mass media, especially radios and televisions, to broadly report information relevant to weather in order to enable rural people to know about it in advance so that they can prepare for it.

The floods hit Cambodia between August and October last year, killing at least 250 people and affecting other 1.4 million people.

"Cambodian PM warns of floods as water begins to rise", 09/08/2012, online at: http://www.asean-china-center.org/english/2012-08/09/c_131773382.htm?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=fe1690b1e4-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ ADB, World Bank Open Offices in Myanmar

MYANMAR, YANGON (The Myanmar Times) — One small office at Yangon’s Inya Lake Hotel is now home to two of the biggest names in international banking: the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. It makes “cents” for new Myanmar. All jokes aside, it signals the country has taken a very large step forward. As World Bank vice president for East Asia and the Pacific region, Pamela Cox, said during a press conference to open the office on August 1, Myanmar was in a period of transition. “[Myanmar] is engaged in a triple transition. It is moving away from a military-style of government to something more open and democratic, it is establishing peace over conflict and an open market economy is replacing a closed one. We are here to say that the World Bank backs this transition,” she said. There is also a palpable sense of joie de vivre in the air. During a 40-minute interview with The Myanmar Times on 1 August, Mr Kunio Senga, director general for the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) Southeast Asia Department, repeated the following statement at least four times: “There is a lot to do.”

“ADB, World Bank Open Offices in Myanmar”, 06/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/adb-world-bank-open-offices-myanmar_23734

BACK TO TOP

❖ UN Announces Details of North Korean Food Aid Program

new yorK, united states — The UN World Food Program on August 3 announced details of its food aid program for victims of the devastating floods that swept through North Korea this month.

It will provide rations of 400 grams of maize per day for 14 days. The announcement did not say when the program would start.

Heavy rains and a typhoon caused extensive flooding in the country, killing 170 people. Four hundred people are still missing, and 212,200 are displaced.

More than 65,000 hectares of farmland have been submerged, with 45,000 hectares completely destroyed, according to UN and the nation's official Korean Central News Agency reports.

The announcement came after the international organization sent a survey team, which included Red Cross and other non-governmental organization representatives, at the end of July to determine damages. The team was invited by the North Korean government.

The group found stable crops like corn, soybean and rice fields all destroyed, Christopher de Bono, the United Nations' Children's Fund (UNICEF) chief of communications for East Asia and the Pacific, wrote in an e-mail last week.

The survey team also found a significant need for clean drinking water, as the floods wiped out water systems and contaminated wells. This raised concerns that the current death toll could skyrocket as a result of the spread of water-borne diseases.

"Drinking water is a critical issue with the water systems having been taken out of action, and there's obviously a danger of water-borne diseases if things are not done to improve the situation," Francis Markus, a spokesman for the International Federation of Red Cross East Asia, was quoted as saying in Beijing.

The UN found, based on official North Korean figures, that at least 50,000 families in six particularly hard-hit counties would require water purification tablets or some other source of safe water.

As a result, UNICEF put in an order for some 10 million decontaminating tablets, along with other necessary tools.

Earlier this summer, before the heavy rains began, the nation was experiencing a drought and was concerned that it would worsen already critically low food supplies. Now many of those same fields are inundated and the crops have been completely lost.

“UN Announces Details of North Korean Food Aid Program”, 06/08/2012, online at: http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/un-announces-details-north-korean-food-aid-program_23727

BACK TO TOP

❖ US Military Base in Tajikistan Could Nix Controversial Roghun Dam?

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan — The controversial Roghun hydroelectric plant in Tajikistan could be shelved after talks with the United States on the possible establishment of a military base in the country.

With the United States now considering a base in Tajikistan, “it is impossible to rule out a possibility that Roghun could become ‘loose change’ in this issue,” Tajikistan's Asia-plus newspaper said in a recent editorial.

The newspaper notes that there have been large-scale dismissals of workers at the construction site. “What is the reason for that? Has Uzbekistan, which opposes the Roghun hydroelectric project more than other countries, managed, with the aid of the World Bank, to put the heat on Dushanbe and force it to suspend all works on the site,” the paper asked, adding that it is “no secret” that the actions of the World Bank depend largely on the wishes of the United States, its largest shareholder.

US Representative Dan Burton, chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Europe and Eurasia subcommittee, said last month that a congressional delegation he recently led to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan in July had raised the possibility of putting US military bases in Kyrgyzstan and also “in a neighboring country,” which Russian media have identified as Tajikistan.

The House subcommittee held a comprehensive hearing on US engagement in Central Asia on July 24. Assistant Secretary of State for Central and South Asian Affairs Robert Blake told the committee members that with regard to the Roghun Dam project, “the United States has had a long-standing policy to support the World Bank process.”

“The World Bank is funding two feasibility studies to assess the technical, economic, environmental, and social impact of the proposed Roghun Dam. We continue to encourage the government of Tajikistan to fully cooperate with the World Bank and not to move forward with construction or river diversion for the Dam until the completion of the feasibility studies,” he said.

The Roghun Dam is to be built on the Vakhsh River, a tributary of the Amu Darya, which runs 2,400 kilometers through Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

The Uzbek government has raised concerns that completion of the Roghun project could decrease water supplies downstream.

“US Military Base in Tajikistan Could Nix Controversial Roghun Dam?”, 09/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/us-military-base-tajikistan-could-nix-controversial-roghun-dam_23790

BACK TO TOP

❖ EU Approves \$98.7 Million USD Nigerian Water, Sanitation Aid

ABUJA (Vanguard) — The European Union, EU has approved the sum of Euro 80 million (about Naira16 billion) to finance the implementation of the second phase of the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Project, WSSSRP II in the six EU focal States, namely, Anambra, Cross River, Jigawa, Kano, Osun and Yobe. The project aims at consolidating the achievements of the first phase of the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Reform Project ,WSSSRP, with a view to addressing the remaining fundamental weakness of the Nigerian water and sanitation sector which is inadequate legal and institutional framework at both the federal and state levels. WSSSRP II intends to sustain the improvements on water governance made under the first phase of the project in the Federal Ministry of Water Resources and in the six focal States through the provision of technical assistance and capacity development to ministries and agencies responsible for water resources, water and sanitation services delivery at federal level and in the States. The project will also implement the construction and rehabilitation of water and sanitation facilities in the six States as a contribution for Nigeria to achieve water and health related MDGs.

“EU Approves \$98.7 Million USD Nigerian Water, Sanitation Aid”,08/08/2012, online at:http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/eu-approves-987-million-usd-nigerian-water-sanitation-aid_23773

BACK TO TOP

❖ **North Korea famine not imminent but flood impact not yet clear-UN**

BEIJING, Aug 9 (Reuters) - Impoverished North Korea is a long way from famine levels that killed hundreds of thousands in the 1990s but it won't be until late next month that a full assessment of food levels after recent floods is possible, a U.N. official said on Thursday.

North Korea's state media says the death toll from flooding between late June and the end of July has reached at least 169, with some 400 people missing and 212,200 homeless.

The floods have washed away 65,280 hectares of farmland, with more than 1,400 educational, healthcare and factory buildings also collapsed or damaged, North Korea says.

"Fortunately we are really quite far away from the situation in the mid-1990s," said Claudia von Roehl, the U.N. World Food Programme's (WFP) representative in North Korea.

"But we should always be aware there is a very chronic and severe problem in the nutrition of the population and in particular the very monotonous diet which basically is composed of maize and rice, carbohydrates, and lacking very significantly in proteins and fats," she told reporters in Beijing.

North Korea suffered famine in the 1990s that killed an estimated million people and has continued to endure chronic food shortages, which many experts say reflect systemic failings in the reclusive country's heavily centralised economic system, which has sapped farmers' productivity.

Since then, North Korea's agricultural sector has become increasingly vulnerable to floods and drought as a result of widespread deforestation.

Von Roehl said the United Nations will conduct a full-scale food assessment for the malnourished North next month.

"It is too early to assess the exact damage which has been inflicted by the torrential rains on agricultural production," von Roehl said.

"We will do this in an assessment at the end of September where we will have a full assessment of the main harvest."

The floods follow a period of drought and are certain to lift food prices, which are already rising sharply.

The WFP is now helping feed 100,000 people in the worst-hit counties and, while it remains worried about disease outbreaks, they are yet to see any evidence, von Roehl said.

U.N. agencies say access to North Korea has improved during the most recent flooding, indicating the country wants to ease its traditional isolation at least temporarily.

Still, it remains one of the world's most reclusive states, even after young leader Kim Jong-un inherited dynastic power from his father Kim Jong-il, who died in December.

Von Roehl said she was not in a position to comment on whether Kim plans reforming the economy.

"We have also heard about these recent developments; we have read about them. But I will be in a much better position to give you some concrete and verified information later this year," she said, referring to their September food assessment.

"Part of the mission will be having very detailed meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture and then I think we will be in better position to tell you something verified." (Editing by Paul Tait)

"North Korea famine not imminent but flood impact not yet clear-UN", 09/08/2012, online at:
http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/north-korea-famine-not-imminent-but-flood-impact-not-yet-clear-un/?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=fe1690b1e4-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ Qatar's Pearl GTL highlights industry water issues

Qatar's latest high-tech gas plant highlights water as the main problem and the key stake in industrial processes in the Middle East. No matter how large the resources, without proper water management, countries are doomed both ways : either they simply can't exploit resources, or they will destroy their environment doing so.

Booming economies in the Middle East have many problems to tackle to achieve sustainable development. The most fundamental one is water management. The industrial capacity to manage water efficiently was proven paramount, when Shell and Veolia Water built a consortium designed to create the most advanced gas plant in Ras Laffan, Qatar, in 2003, for Qatar Petroleum. The project reveals and symbolizes how water is central for any industrial project in the Persian Gulf, within the project or outside the fence.

Maplecroft, a British risk analysis consultancy firm, released its Water Stress Index, early 2011. Bahrain comes in first, with Qatar close behind. These countries find water management as the key point of their development, with this simple equation : no water, no economy. Pearl GTL, Qatar's state-of-the-art Gas Production Plant, highlights the complexity and centrality of water management, at every level of the economy. Beyond the obvious use of water for agriculture and drinking, water is crucial in industrial applications, such as gas production.

"Qatar is striving to meet western-level ecological standards in its development. A 'dirty water output' is therefore not an option", says a Qatari official. "Not only would it be ecologically and socially irresponsible to dump polluted water back into nature, but economically unsound. Water in Qatar is scarce as it is : it's essential we preserve it and use it wisely."

A closed circuit, called Zero Liquid Discharge, was therefore chosen, despite the huge complexity of the project. 20 different treatment steps are necessary, along with hydraulic collection facilities exceeding 15 000 cubic meters per hour. Numerous parameters must be monitored to meet such industrial standards : hydrogen potential, nitrate concentration and conductivity are just a few of them.

Industrial water processes are double-edged, and a problem in itself. They strain the environment as water enters the plant, and no longer irrigates its natural environment; and, if improperly treated, it can cause severe ecological damage after leaving the premises. Not only can the water carry pollution out of the plant, but differences in temperature can drastically impact wildlife on a formerly-colder stream. And in between, which is to say within the plant, it is no simpler to manage. It faces 4 problems : scaling (deposits on structures which damage or raise energy consumption), corroding (premature aging of facilities), bacteria (causing microbiological infections to spread and later

contaminate) and disposal (reverting the water back to a composition close to its original one).

Finding a business partner suitable to create this high-standard gas production plant was hard, but feasible, as many companies already operating in the area have the necessary expertise. But raising the bar by making the plant hydraulically efficient complicated the process dramatically. The project had to be carried out by Shell and a partner company capable of creating, from scratch, a hydraulically efficient plant in a land where there is no water. Qatar had to turn a company which simultaneously the technical know-how, the engineering capacity and the ecological and social mindset necessary to such a demanding achievement.

It took Veolia outstanding credentials to land the deal. The company argued that it had, in recent years, become an expert of high-grade hydraulic installations in extreme conditions, with proof of what it claimed.

12 different streams enter the premises, in 8 different locations, reaching a 2200 ton/hour volume capacity for the internal cycles. In addition, the circuit is complicated by the fact that the plant doesn't use only one type of water, but five. According to its intended use, the water has to be constantly monitored to stay within certain boundaries. Cooling water, raw water and irrigation water don't have, for example, the same flowrate, conductivity or pH. Therefore the water circuits must be perfectly isolated from one another. The number of different technologies to achieve this is hard to reach : sweet and sour CPI separators (Corrugated Plate Interceptors - a device designed to separate oil and water), heat exchangers (water circuits loading taking heat from other circuits and then cooling down in basins), flocculation units (which add a chemical to water to make sediments regroup), 3-pass reverse osmosis (filtering water by pressuring it through a membrane), UV irrigation water treatment, and many others. The entire hydraulic circuit therefore contains no fewer than 20 different treatment steps.

A lower-grade hydraulic system could have been considered but would have induced 2 major problems. First of all, sweet water is so scarce in Qatar (almost all of its water comes from desalination) that a slight amount of pollution would cause comparatively huge damage to the environment. And second, the North Dome field, the gigantic natural gas reserve located North of the peninsula makes Qatar the 3rd largest producer in the world. It therefore needs state-of-the-art premises in order to operate and exploit its resources properly. Doha has already positioned itself among the world leaders in sports with massive investments in soccer, as a financial stronghold with strong economic ties throughout the world.

With its capacity to solve the hydraulic puzzle in Pearl GTL, it positions itself at the tip of industrial innovation and environmental sophistication. And given that the operator in charge of hydraulics in Pearl GTL, Veolia Water, has a philosophy of making each installation more advanced than the last one, the next country, whichever it is, to build such installations will set new standards in the

developing region. With such industrial water management installations operating in the region, Qatar is now able to sustainably support its developing economy and perhaps, if it continues on its course, take leadership in the region.

“Qatar's Pearl GTL highlights industry water issues”, 08/08/2012, online at:
http://www.ecofriendnews.com/environmental_article11208.html

BACK TO TOP

WWW.ORSAM.ORG.TR

❖ The economic cost of increased temperatures

Study: Warming episodes hurt poor countries and limit long-term growth.

Even temporary rises in local temperatures significantly damage long-term economic growth in the world's developing nations, according to a new study co-authored by an MIT economist.

Looking at weather data over the last half-century, the study finds that every 1-degree-Celsius increase in a poor country, over the course of a given year, reduces its economic growth by about 1.3 percentage points. However, this only applies to the world's developing nations; wealthier countries do not appear to be affected by the variations in temperature.

“Higher temperatures lead to substantially lower economic growth in poor countries,” says Ben Olken, a professor of economics at MIT, who helped conduct the research. And while it's relatively straightforward to see how droughts and hot weather might hurt agriculture, the study indicates that hot spells have much wider economic effects.

“What we're suggesting is that it's much broader than [agriculture],” Olken adds. “It affects investment, political stability and industrial output.”

Varied effects on economies

The paper, “Temperature Shocks and Economic Growth: Evidence from the Last Half Century,” was [published this summer](#) in the *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*. Along with Olken, the authors are Melissa Dell PhD '12, of Harvard University, who was a PhD candidate in MIT's Department of Economics when the paper was produced, and Ben Jones PhD '03, an economist at Northwestern University.

The study first gained public attention as a working paper in 2008. It collects temperature and economic-output data for each country in the world, in every year from 1950 through 2003, and analyzes the relationship between them. “We couldn't believe no one had done it before, but we weren't really sure we'd find anything at all,” Olken says.

By looking at economic data by type of activity, not just aggregate output, the researchers concluded there are a variety of “channels” through which weather shocks hurt economic production — by slowing down workers, commerce, and perhaps even capital investment.

“If you think about people working in factories on a 105-degree day with no air conditioning, you can see how it makes a difference,” Olken says.

One consequence of this, borne out in the data, is that the higher temperatures in a given year affect not only a country's economic activity at the time, but its growth prospects far into the future; by the numbers, growth lagged following hot years.

To see why, Olken suggests, first think of a dry year for vegetables in your backyard garden: The bad weather would hurt the plants, but if the weather is reasonable the following year, the backyard crop would return to its normal level. Now contrast that with problems that affect, say, industrial and technological development, and capital investment; temperature shocks limiting those activities can compound over time.

"If you think about economic growth, you build on where you were last year," Olken explains. For longer-term industrial or technological projects, he adds, "If it's that kind of activity that's lost, then it affects the country's long-run growth rate, [and it's] not a one-off hit."

Political change in the weather

Olken, Dell and Jones also integrated data about forms of government into the study, and found that temperature shocks are associated with an increase in political instability. A 1-degree-Celsius rise in a given year, they found, raises the probability of "irregular leader transitions," such as coups, by 3.1 percentage points in poor countries. In turn, the authors write, "poor economic performance and political instability are likely mutually reinforcing."

Olivier Deschenes, an economist at the University of California at Santa Barbara, calls the study "an important finding because most of the prior research on the economic impacts of climate change have focused on a few sectors of the economy, predominantly the agricultural sector." By contrast, he notes, the broader finding of the current paper matters "because the growth rate is a key measure of the economic success of a nation and the standard of living of its population."

Deschenes, who also conducts research on the economic and health effects of temperature changes, suggests that the "next step" for scholars "is to identify adaptation strategies that can moderate the negative impacts of global climate change in the coming decades."

As Olken observes, the study does not try to account for all the possible problems that could be generated by long-term climate change, such as rising oceans, floods or increased storms. Still, he adds, the paper does suggest some general points about the economic impact of a warming atmosphere. It is vital, he says, to "think about the heterogeneity of the impact between the poor and rich countries" when leaders and policymakers map out the problems the world may confront in the future.

"The impacts of these things are going to be worse for the countries that have the least ability to

adapt to it,” he adds. “[We] want to think that through for the implications for future inequality. It’s a double whammy.”

“The economic cost of increased temperatures”, 07/08/2012, online at: http://web.mit.edu/newsoffice/2012/the-economic-cost-of-increased-temperatures-0807.html?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=7f4017b9e1-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email#.UCIBmzjqI30.twitter

BACK TO TOP

❖ **World over-using underground water reserves for agriculture**

(Reuters) - The world is depleting underground water reserves faster than they can be replenished due to over-exploitation, according to scientists in Canada and the Netherlands.

The researchers, from McGill University in Montreal and Utrecht University in the Netherlands, combined groundwater usage data from around the globe with computer models of underground water resources to come up with a measure of water usage relative to supply.

That measure shows the groundwater footprint - the area above ground that relies on water from underground sources - is about 3.5 times bigger than the aquifers themselves.

The research suggests about 1.7 billion people, mostly in Asia, are living in areas where underground water reserves and the ecosystems that rely on them are under threat, they said.

Tom Gleeson from McGill, who led the study, said the results are "sobering", showing that people are over-using groundwater in a number of regions in Asia and North America.

Over 99 percent of the world's fresh and unfrozen water sits underground, and he suggests this huge reservoir that could be crucial for the world's growing population, if managed properly.

The study, published in the journal Nature, found that 80 percent of the world's aquifers are being used sustainably but this is offset by heavy over-exploitation in a few key areas.

Those areas included western Mexico, the High Plains and California's Central Valley in the United States, Saudi Arabia, Iran, northern India and parts of northern [China](#).

"CRITICAL TO AGRICULTURE"

"The relatively few aquifers that are being heavily exploited are unfortunately critical to agriculture in a number of different countries," Gleeson told Reuters. "So even though the number is relatively small, these are critical resources that need better management."

Previous research has shown that it takes about 140 liters of water to grow the beans that go into one cup of coffee, whether they are cultivated in arid Ethiopia or the Colombian rain forest.

"The effect of this water use on the supply of available water will be very different," the researchers wrote. "Until now, there has been no way of quantifying the impact of such agricultural groundwater use in any consistent, global way."

Gleeson said limits on water extraction, more efficient irrigation and the promotion of different diets, with less or no meat, could make these water resources more sustainable.

Water sitting in underground aquifers was the subject of research by British researchers published in April that mapped huge reserves sitting under large parts of Africa that could provide a buffer against the effects of climate change, if used sustainably.

A team from the British Geological Survey and University College London estimated that reserves of groundwater across Africa are about 100 times the amount found on the continent's surface.

Some of the largest reserves are under the driest North African countries like Libya, Algeria, Egypt and Sudan, but some schemes to exploit them are not sustainable.

The biggest is Libya's \$25 billion Great Manmade River project, built by the regime of slain dictator Muammar Gaddafi to supply cities including Tripoli, Benghazi and Sirte with an estimated 6.5 million cubic meters of water a day.

The network of pipes and boreholes is sucking water out of the ground that was deposited in the rocks under the Sahara an estimated 40,000 years ago, but is not being replenished.

It is unclear how long this water source will last, with estimates ranging between 60 and 100 years.

“World over-using underground water reserves for agriculture”, 08/08/2012, online at:

http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/08/08/us-science-environment-water-idUSBRE87713B20120808?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=7f4017b9e1-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ EBRD Provides \$2.5 Million USD for Kara-Balta Water Supply

Kyrgyzstan, KARA-BALTA (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development) — The EBRD is investing \$2.5 million USD to help improve the supply of water to about 40,000 people living in the city of Kara-Balta, which is one of the largest industrial and transport hubs in the northern part of the Kyrgyz Republic. With the Bank’s support the Kara-Balta Water Company will carry out significant rehabilitation and modernisation of water and wastewater networks – pump upgrades, installation of household/bulk meters and chlorination equipment. This will enable the water supply and wastewater services to meet local requirements and to move towards achieving full compliance with EU standards. The project will be financed by a \$2.5 million USD loan to Kara-Balta Water Company and grant funds of \$3.7 million USD from the EBRD Shareholder Special Fund. Additional grants of \$1.6 million USD from the EBRD will be used to support project implementation and to provide technical assistance to strengthen operational and financial sustainability of the Kara-Balta Water Company.

“EBRD Provides \$2.5 Million USD for Kara-Balta Water Supply”, 06/08/2012, online at:

http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/ebrd-provides-25-million-usd-kara-balta-water-supply_23732

BACK TO TOP

❖ Bulgarian Engineer Calls for Replacing 75 Percent of Sofia Infrastructure

SOFIA (Focus Information Agency) — Seventy-five percent of water-supply system in Sofia should be replaced, Bulgarian Water Association President engineer Ivan Ivanov said in an interview with FOCUS News Agency. "While I was working with Sofiyska Voda (Sofia Water), I had an opportunity to find out what the situation in Sofia is and it is worrying. All asbestos cement pipes should be replaced and there are a lot of them in Bulgaria. I suppose the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works has more accurate information about their number and condition. This information was collected in the past two or three years," said the expert. According to him sufficient attention is paid to the water sector in Bulgaria. "Since the beginning of the year, a lot of processes have been underway and the reform has started; it is at its beginning. To a great extent one of the reasons is that Deputy Minister Dobromir Simidchiev is one of the best water and sewerage experts in Bulgaria and he is focused on the reform," said engineer Ivan Ivanov. According to the Bulgarian Water Association, the water management in Bulgaria should be centralized in an agency or a directorate in a ministry. The Association notes only one ministry should be responsible for all water resources, problems and water and sewerage system. Currently seven ministries are in charge of the sector. In this situation even if there is will to carry out changes, it takes time to put all changes to the vote in all seven ministries, the parliament and so on and often until the change in question takes place, a government is already in power, a new person comes and there is no reform in the end, he said.

"Bulgarian Engineer Calls for Replacing 75 Percent of Sofia Infrastructure", 09/08/2012, online at:
http://www.ooskanews.com/daily-water-briefing/bulgarian-engineer-calls-replacing-75-percent-sofia-infrastructure_23800

BACK TO TOP

❖ Rising food prices threaten hunger for millions

LONDON (AlertNet) – Rising prices for corn, soy and wheat threaten millions more people in developing countries with hunger at a time when the world is grappling with a record number of food-related emergencies, aid group Oxfam warned on Thursday.

The [charity said in a briefing](#) that the world produces enough food for its 7 billion people, but hunger persists because the global food system is "fatally flawed".

Oxfam urged this weekend's global hunger meeting in London, convened by British Prime Minister David Cameron, to kick start reforms that tackle the "scandal" of the world's 900 million or so hungry people.

"For millions of people who are currently struggling to get by, rising food prices could spell disaster," Max Lawson, Oxfam's head of policy, said in a statement. "We need urgent action to help the worst-affected countries build their food reserves and put in place social safety-nets to enable people to weather this storm."

The aid agency singled out restive Yemen as a particularly vulnerable country, because it is heavily dependent on food imports, including 90 percent of its wheat. With 10 million Yemenis already going hungry and 267,000 children at risk of death from malnutrition, families are resorting to extreme ways of coping, such as marrying off young daughters to cut the number of mouths to feed, Oxfam said.

Rising global food prices could pile more pressure on an overstretched humanitarian system, which is already struggling to cope with food crises in the Sahel region of West Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Afghanistan, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Yemen, it added.

The United States' worst drought in six decades has severely damaged corn and soy crops, and both dry spells and floods in Central Asia threaten wheat harvests in Russia and Kazakhstan, and maize in

Ukraine, hiking futures prices for those food commodities on international markets by between 30 and 50 percent, Oxfam said.

On Thursday, the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) said its [food price index climbed 6 percent in July](#) after three months of decline, driven by a surge in grain and sugar prices. Maize jumped by almost 23 percent in July and wheat 19 percent.

'OBSCENE WASTE'

Oxfam noted in its briefing that meat, milk and egg prices are likely to rise in developing countries, because soy and corn are important animal feed stocks. Poor people in Mexico and Central America, where maize is a staple food, could be affected, and bread will become more expensive in North Africa because wheat prices tend to follow maize prices, it predicted.

But as rising global prices can take months to filter through to people's daily lives, it is still too early to know exactly how the latest increases will play out, Oxfam said. One difference from the last major food price crisis of 2007-2008 is that fuel costs and rice prices are lower, it added.

Much will depend on how policy makers - especially those in G20 countries - react, the charity said.

The briefing listed actions that could be taken to prevent the world's hunger situation getting worse.

"We must stop the obscene waste of food, including burning it as biodiesel in our trucks and cars," Oxfam recommended. The call to reduce the use of food crops for biofuels echoes recent proposals by other experts, including the head of the [International Food Policy Research Institute](#).

Oxfam also said the world must tackle climate change, land-grabs and speculation. "We must build up our food stocks and kick-start good investment again in smallholder farmers and in resilient, sustainable agriculture," it urged.

OLYMPIC HOPES

Last week, Britain's Department for International Development (DFID) said the London hunger event on August 12 - the closing day of the Olympic Games - will challenge global leaders to step up efforts to improve nutrition and reduce the rate of stunting among the world's poorest children by the next Olympics in 2016. The event is being co-hosted by Michel Temer, vice president of Brazil, where the next Games take place.

The London conference will identify pioneering ways to tackle malnutrition and bring in new champions to support the global "Scaling up Nutrition" (SUN) movement, [DFID said on its website](#).

A new global target to reduce the number of stunted children by 40 percent, or 70 million, by 2025 has been agreed by the World Health Assembly, it noted.

Charity [Save the Children](#) said last month that more children survived past their fifth birthday and attended school at the end of the 2000s than a decade before, but a rise in acute malnutrition could undermine those unprecedented gains.

"Hunger claims the lives of 300 children every hour. The Olympic (hunger) summit offers real hope that this could change," the agency's chief executive Justin Forsyth said in a [statement ahead of the event](#).

"It won't end the growing crisis right away - but if it can agree a target to reduce child malnutrition and set out a clear ambition for 2013 - when Britain hosts the G8 - it could be the most impressive Olympic legacy ever."

"Rising food prices threaten hunger for millions", Oxfam, 09/08/2012, online at:
http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/rising-food-prices-threaten-hunger-for-millions-oxfam/?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=fe1690b1e4-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ **Drought conditions affect 20,000 farmers**

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka, Aug. 7 (UPI) -- Drought conditions in Sri Lanka have hit more than 20,000 farmers and destroyed 16,000 acres of rice fields in the Indian Ocean island nation, officials said.

The government has allocated 3.7 billion rupees, or \$28 million, to provide relief to those affected, but Disaster Management Minister Mahinda Amaraweera said additional allocations would be needed as drought conditions are engulfing more areas in the affected north-central and northwestern provinces, Colombo Page reported.

Current plans call for providing farmers in the five drought-affected districts chemical fertilizer and seeds free of cost for the next sowing season in addition giving financial help to each farmer family.

Separately, Sri Lankan President [Mahinda Rajapaksa](#) instructed authorities to take immediate steps to prevent deforestation of areas sustaining natural water bodies and build reservoirs for agriculture in the hill country, Colombo Page reported. He asked them to take stern action against those destroying resources through timber smuggling or involved in animal poaching.

Sri Lanka recently received a \$ 64.9 million loan from the Export-Import Bank of the United States to finance construction of three water supply systems.

“Drought conditions affect 20,000 farmers”, 07/08/2012, online at: http://www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2012/08/07/Drought-conditions-affect-20000-farmers/UPI-23271344315027/?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=b613cfa6b6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ Rice Hoard Offers World Respite as Food Costs Surge: Commodities

At a time when droughts are driving corn and soybeans to all-time highs, farmers are set to reap a record rice crop and [Thailand](#) is building the biggest stockpile in at least five decades, helping avoid a global food crisis.

The largest exporting nation bought 11 million metric tons as of July, enough to supply the six biggest importers, Commerce Ministry data show. As corn farmers from the U.S. to Ukraine endure drought, paddy fields will yield 1.1 million tons more milled grain, the [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) predicts. Benchmark 5-percent Thai [white rice](#) will drop 14 percent to \$480 a ton by Dec. 31, according to the median of 10 estimates from traders and analysts surveyed by Bloomberg.

Thailand plans to sell stockpiles through the yearend for export and local use, Commerce Minister Boonsong Teriyapirom said Aug. 1. Photographer: Dario Pignatelli/Bloomberg

Shipments of the staple for half the world will expand 2.6 percent to a record in 2012-2013, the USDA predicts. Those exports combined with Thailand's stockpiles, which may be cut to clear space for the next harvest, are a buffer against grain reserves seen at the lowest in at least five years. Cheaper rice may contain [global food costs](#) the [United Nations](#) predicts will rebound, ending a retreat to a 21-month low in June.

“Rice is the only bright spot which is keeping us away from a global food crisis,” said [Abdolreza Abbassian](#), a senior economist at the UN's Food & Agriculture Organization in [Rome](#). “The corn situation is very worrisome, while with wheat, the overall supply situation is still adequate.”

Chicago Board

Rough-rice futures rose 5.9 percent to \$15.745 per 100 pounds on the Chicago Board of Trade this year, trailing corn's 24 percent surge, the 30 percent rally in soybeans and wheat's 38 percent advance to a four-year high. The MSCI All-Country World Index of equities climbed 7.6 percent, while Treasuries returned 2.4 percent, a Bank of America Corp. index shows.

Thailand's reserves expanded after Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra began a policy in October of buying from farmers at above-market rates to boost rural incomes. Stockpiles may reach 12.1 million tons in 2012-2013, according to the USDA. The country may need to sell some inventory before the next crop is gathered in October and November, said [Concepcion Calpe](#), a senior economist at the FAO. Thailand was the biggest shipper in the year to December with 10.6 million tons, or 30 percent of world trade, according to the International Grains Council.

Global production will expand 0.2 percent to 465.1 million tons in 2012-2013, a third consecutive record, as output reaches all-time highs in countries from [China](#) to Thailand to [Vietnam](#), the USDA estimates. World reserves may touch 102 million tons by the end of the season, the most in at least five years, according to the London-based IGC.

Grain Reserves

That compares with an 11 percent drop in corn stockpiles and a 7.6 percent contraction in wheat inventories, the IGC said in a report July 26. Combined grain reserves will decline 7.9 percent to 337 million tons, the lowest since at least 2009.

The dry weather that's destroying corn, wheat and [soybean crops](#) and driving prices higher may extend to rice. The monsoon in [India](#), which accounts for more than 70 percent of rainfall in the second-largest rice grower, has been 18 percent below the 50-year average since June 1, according to the [India Meteorological Department](#). Farm Minister [Sharad Pawar](#) said the country may be facing a drought that's worse than in 1972, the Indian Express reported, citing his comments on Aug. 4.

The shortage of rain is similar to 2002, when India's rice output fell 23 percent, Espirito Santo Investment Bank Research said in a July 30 report. The government may restrict exports of the grain as well as wheat, sugar and cotton to ensure domestic supply, according to Espirito Santo. The USDA is predicting a 3.3 percent decline in the country's production to 100 million tons, and Food Minister K.V. Thomas said July 26 the government will refrain from banning shipments of food grains for now.

Climate Prediction

It is increasingly likely that the [El Nino weather pattern](#), which can bring dry weather to parts of [Asia](#), will develop this quarter, the U.S. Climate Prediction Center said July 30. That may curb the availability of water for irrigation used in the [Philippines](#) and [Indonesia](#). Harvests contracted in both countries in 2009-2010, the last time El Nino occurred.

The FAO said yesterday that India's crop will shrink this year after the monsoon faltered even as the worldwide harvest expands to a record, according a quarterly market analysis. There's a growing probability of an El Nino, the FAO said.

Higher prices for other grains may spur more rice buying, with consumption already forecast by the USDA to increase 1.6 percent to a record next year. Slower economic growth may do little to curb consumption, which has only retreated seven times in the past half century. The global economy will expand 3.5 percent this year, from 3.9 percent in 2011, the [International Monetary Fund](#) predicted last month.

Worst Drought

Global food-import costs will reach \$1.24 trillion this year, 5 percent below last year's record, the FAO forecast in May before grains rallied as the U.S. endured its worst drought since 1956. The group's index of 55 food items is 15 percent below the record reached in February 2011. Surging prices triggered more than 60 riots worldwide from 2007 to 2009, the U.S. State Department estimates.

Thailand plans to sell stockpiles through the yearend for export and local use, Commerce Minister Boonsong Teriyapirom said Aug. 1. The government has spent almost 258 billion baht (\$8.2 billion) on the program, the state-run Bank for Agriculture & Agricultural Cooperatives said July 17. Boonsong said yesterday the government plans to extend purchases for another year and buy as much as 18 million tons of rough rice, while also targeting exports to other countries.

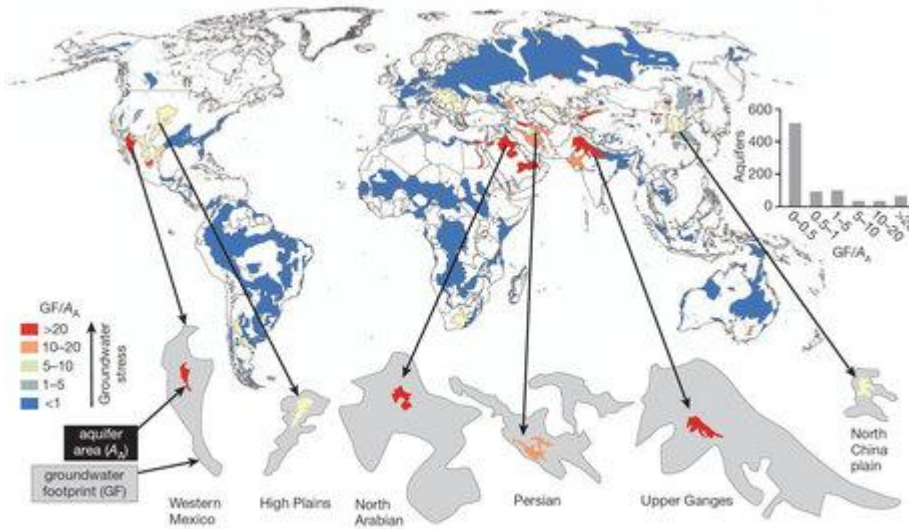
While the strategy raised farmer incomes in Thailand, it has made the grain less attractive in export markets. Thai prices would need to drop by at least \$100 a ton to compete with Vietnam and India, said [Rakesh Singh](#), a New Delhi-based trader at [Emms International Ltd. \(EMSI\)](#) Thai exports may gain 23 percent to 8 million tons in 2012-2013, according to USDA data.

"We're sitting on a ticking time bomb," said Jac Luyendijk, the chief executive officer at Swiss Agri Trading SA, which handles about 600,000 tons of rice a year. "If India keeps on exporting and Thailand releases more stocks than we anticipate, over the next three to five months we could see prices drop below \$400."

"Rice Hoard Offers World Respite as Food Costs Surge: Commodities", 07/08/2012, online at: http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-08-06/rice-hoard-offers-world-respite-as-food-costs-surge-commodities.html?utm_source=Circle+of+Blue+WaterNews+%26+Alerts&utm_campaign=b613cfa6b6-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email

BACK TO TOP

❖ Here's Where Farms Are Sucking The Planet Dry



This map is disturbing, once you understand it. It's a new attempt to visualize an old problem — the shrinking of underground water reserves, in most cases because farmers are [pumping out](#) water to irrigate their crops.

The map itself isn't hard to grasp. The colored areas show the world's largest aquifers — areas which hold deposits of groundwater. The blue ones are doing fine; more rainfall is flowing into them than is being pumped out of them for homes or irrigating fields. As a result, these aquifers can continue to play a vital role in the environment. (Water in most aquifers doesn't just sit there. It flows slowly, underground, and ends up sustaining rivers and lakes and all the creatures who live there.)

The aquifers that are painted red, orange, or yellow, meanwhile, are being drained rapidly. How rapidly? That brings us to the complicated part of this graphic.

See those large grey shapes, below the map? Each one is a magnified reflection of an over-exploited aquifer. The amount of magnification represents the amount of water that people are currently pumping out of that aquifer, compared to the rate of natural replenishment. [Tom Gleeson](#), at Montreal's McGill University, and [Ludovicus P. H. van Beek](#), at Utrecht University, in the Netherlands, created this graphic for an [article](#) they published in this week's issue of the journal *Nature*.

They call those magnified shapes the "groundwater footprint" of each aquifer's exploitation. The footprint of the Upper Ganges aquifer, for instance, is 54 times bigger than the aquifer itself. Think about that footprint this way: It's the size, on a map, of the area that would be required to catch

enough rainfall to replenish that aquifer and make up for all the water currently being pumped out of it.

Some of these aquifers are being exploited at a stunning rate, but what's truly alarming is how many people depend on that over-exploitation for their food. These aquifers include the Upper Ganges, covering densely populated areas of northern India and Pakistan, and the North China plain, which is the heart of corn-growing in that country. The aquifer of Western Mexico has become a large source of fruit and vegetable production for the U.S.

The High Plains aquifer in the United States, meanwhile, is having a particularly bad year. Farmers are pumping even more than usual, because of the [drought](#) afflicting this part of the country, and it is getting less replenishment from rainfall. So water levels in the aquifer are falling even faster, leaving less water for the region's rivers, birds, and fish.

This can't go on forever. Already, many farmers are being forced to dig deeper wells to get at that water. But bigger changes are on the way: New irrigation technologies that use water much efficiently; a shift to different crops that demand less water; and in some areas, they'll just have to stop using those underground stores of water altogether.

“Here's Where Farms Are Sucking The Planet Dry”, 08/08/2012, online at:
<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2012/08/08/158417396/heres-where-farms-are-sucking-the-planet-dry>

BACK TO TOP