

Sustainable Water: *Global Sustainable Water Management*

Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this.

But due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, every year millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

Water scarcity, poor water quality and inadequate sanitation negatively impact **food** security, livelihood choices and educational opportunities for poor families across the world. Drought afflicts some of the world's poorest countries, worsening hunger and malnutrition.

By 2050, at least one in four people is likely to live in a country affected by chronic or recurring shortages of fresh water.

Facts and figures

- ¥ 1.7 billion people have gained access to safe drinking water since 1990, but 884 million people are still without.
- ¥ 2.6 billion people lack access to basic sanitation services, such as toilets or latrines.
- ¥ Each day, an average of 5,000 children die due to preventable water and sanitation-related diseases.
- ¥ Hydropower is the most important and widely-used renewable source of energy, representing 19 per cent of total electricity production worldwide.
- ¥ Approximately 70 per cent of all available water is used for irrigation.
- ¥ Floods account for 15 per cent of all deaths related to natural disasters.

Background information:

As water becomes scarcer, the need to manage water properly to preserve and reuse what we have becomes increasingly important. From rivers drying up to contaminated wells to civil engineering disasters, mismanagement of water resources is already negatively impacting our stock of freshwater. Without proper global oversight and cooperation, the world might run out of fresh water at a dangerously fast rate. This discussion incorporates a wide range of considerations—economic, moral, and political. On the economic end, we will be facing questions such as water privatization. Is it necessarily moral to give the power to provide a community water, an essential resource, to a private companies? On the political side, we will have to deal with determining what is proper and fair in distributing rights to say, a river. Resource scarcity leads to conflict over resources, and water is no exception. Whether the solutions and laws governing water are set up properly or not may determine the scale and intensity of water wars in the future. These extend from regional levels—entire nations fighting over rights over a river—to more hidden struggles and tensions, such as how income and wealth are factored into access to water. Will only the wealthy have access?

Questions You Should Consider

1. Is your MUN country experiencing water shortages or water pollution?
2. How does your MUN country recycle and clean its waste water?
3. What are your MUN country's major sources of fresh water? Do you share these sources (rivers, lakes, aquifers) with other countries?
4. Who owns and distributes the water in your MUN country?
5. Is potable water the responsibility of governments or should it be privatized?
6. Where are some of the world's major fresh water problems occurring?
7. What are some solutions to these problems that your MUN country would support?
8. Who would be responsible to implement these solutions (make sure they happen)?

There are many solutions and angles to approach this issue from. Solutions might include, for instance, mandatory caps or limits on water usage, wastewater cleaning and recycling, seawater desalination, rainwater harvesting, dam creation or prohibitions, or better protection of environmental resources. The impacts of this discussion are enormous. Water is important itself, but issues such as global food security, prevention of future resource-driven conflict, and a fundamental rethinking of the markets as a tool for resource distribution need to be discussed, setting the stage for a lively and engaging debate. Your committee's task is to create resolutions that will address these issues both globally as well as in specific regions.

Your Task

Your task is to research and gather information on this topic and your country's relationship to this topic so you can help resolve the issues related to this topic from your country's perspective. You will be a diplomat representing your country and negotiating solutions that your country can support.

Go to the following link to begin your research:

<http://www.un.org/en/sustainablefuture/water.shtml> Follow links from this site and search for other sites by looking for links with your **country's name** and **sustainable water** as key words.