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FACTBOX-Water everywhere, but not clean enough to drink

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(This story is part of a features package on water issued on Sept. 18) Sept 18 (Reuters) - Following are some facts about strains on world freshwater supplies:

OVERVIEW

- * One billion people, about a sixth of humanity, lack access to safe drinking water, according to U.N. data. And one in three people live in regions with water scarcity.
- * Agriculture absorbs 74 percent of all water taken by humans from rivers, lakes, aquifers and wetlands against 18 percent for industry and 8 percent for municipalities. Demand for water is rocketing with a rising population.
- * In many places, 30-40 percent or more of water is lost because of leaks in pipes and canals and illegal tapping.
- * Some say the issue is management: "There is enough land, water and human capacity to produce enough food for a growing population over the next 50 years, so in this sense the world is not 'running out' of water," a U.N.-backed study by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) said in August.

DRINK AND HEALTH

- * Governments set a Millennium Goal in 2000 of halving the proportion of people with no access to safe drinking water by 2015. The goal is within reach, according to a 2006 U.N. review, but the world is lagging in a linked goal of better sanitation.
- * Diarrhoea and malaria, the main water-related diseases, killed 1.8 million and 1.3 million people respectively in 2002, almost all of them children under the age of 5.
- * Achieving the 2015 drinking water goal will require \$10-\$30 billion extra a year on top of amounts already spent.

AGRICULTURE

- * The amount of water needed for crop production will rise 60-90 percent by 2050, to 11,000-13,500 cubic km from 7,200 cubic km today, depending on factors including population growth and crop yields, according to the IWMI report.
- * A calorie of food needs about a litre of water to produce -- typical food consumption is 3,000 calories a day per person, or 3,000 litres of water. A kilo of grain takes 500-4,000 litres, a kilo of industrially produced meat is 10,000 litres.

* Rising production of biofuels -- from crops such as maize, soybeans or sugarcane -- could complicate efforts to feed the world and may add strains to irrigation.

* Emissions of greenhouse gases, widely blamed on burning fossil fuels, are likely to raise world temperatures and bring more floods, droughts and erosion, most experts say. Some areas might benefit from longer growing seasons.

* To ease water shortages, the IWMI report urges putting the focus on improving rainfed farming in poor regions. Collecting rain from rooftops or simple pumps to raise water from rivers, for instance, could help millions in sub-Saharan Africa.

* Recycling can help. Water in the Colorado River in the United States, for instance, can be used perhaps seven times -- by hydropower dams, by towns, or by farmers.

INDUSTRY

* Industry can often cut its water demand by 40-90 percent, given proper incentives, according to U.N. data.

* Only about 25 percent of the world's dams are involved in producing hydropower. Europe uses 75 percent of its hydropower potential, while Africa has developed just 7 percent.

(Sources: International Water Management Institute

<http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/>; U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization

<http://www.fao.org/>; UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization)

http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/facts_figures/mdgs.shtml;

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change <http://www.ipcc.ch/>)

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