Fresh Water and the Environment

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ABSTRACT The escalation in the population and the quest for continued development is leading to conflicting pressures on water resources. Such resources are the ultimate recipient of pollution from various socio-economic activities associated with urbanization, agriculture, mining and clearing of native vegetation. This makes water supply and health perhaps the most important issue for the larger proportion of the global population. Paradoxically, the demand for "Sustainable management" and increasing global population require more potable water from a declining available water base. The effectiveness of water management will depend in large measure as the hydrological education of the general public. Water is an essential factor in a large number of productive activities, of which one of the most important is the production of food by irrigation. This activity accounts for two-thirds of the water resources used by humanity. A supply of drinking water and sanitation in urban centers are crucial for preserving human health. Since each watershed or river basin's system has developed gradually and has grown up according to the yearly distribution and fluctuations of rainfall, any redistribution of water by means of pipes, as if it were gas or electricity, is a journey in to the unknown. This is because it destroys the results of the work of shaping the climate, however transitory it might be. Water consumption has increased in the recent past with spread of irrigation and industries by increasing the dumping into large lakes and seas which cannot be cleaned. This is the price we pass on the future generations, a comfortable attitude but an unacceptable one.