

Forum: The United Nation 4<sup>th</sup> committee of the General Assembly

Topic: Preventing the commercial usage of groundwater resources in LEDCs

Position: Deputy Chair of the GA 4

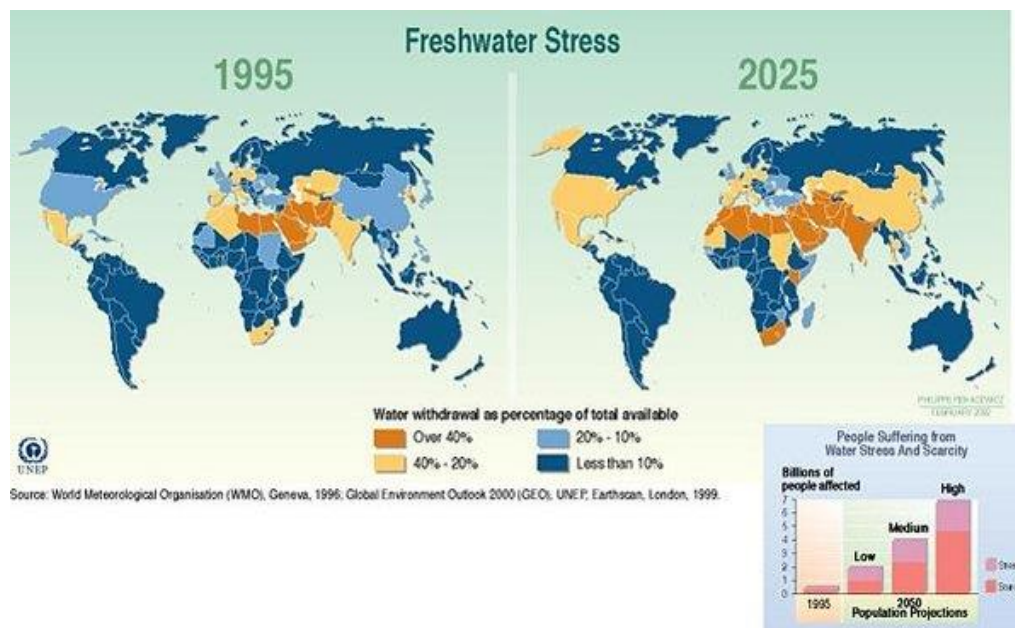
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### Description of the problem:

Water is an essential aspect in maintaining life, it always was and it always will be an important source for our life.

The commercial use of water is a big area; from water for human consumption e.g. drinking and hygiene over industrial use e.g. generating power, agriculture and food processing.

1.1 billion people do not have access to fresh water. 2.4 billion do not have appropriate sanitary facilities. As all other resources groundwater is divided unequal.



[http://b.static.trunity.net/files/116901\\_117000/116934/599px-25-waterstress-worldM.jpg](http://b.static.trunity.net/files/116901_117000/116934/599px-25-waterstress-worldM.jpg)

Among the countries likely to run short of water in the next 25 years are Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Nigeria and Peru. Parts of other large countries like China already face chronic water problems.

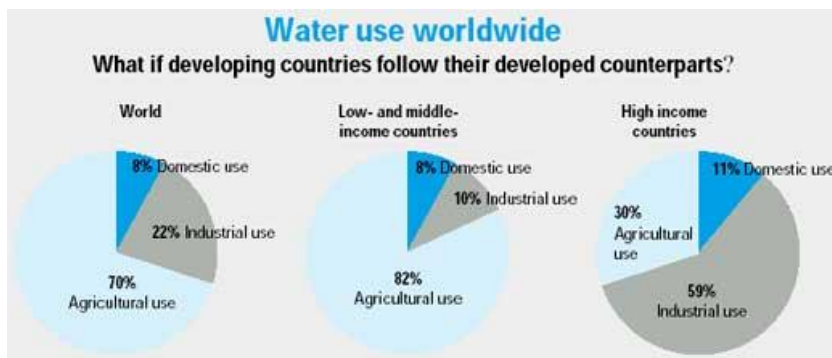
Shortage of ground water is not only a problem of LEDCs, also countries like Spain, USA etc. suffer from it just as well.

**Background information:**

In July 2010 Resolution 64/292 of the United Nations General Assembly determined that the access to fresh water and sanitary facilities is a human right.

Groundwater is a very important source of freshwater, making up 97 percent of the world's accessible freshwater reserves. And it is a limited resource.

The worldwide use of water in LEDCs and MEDCs:



<http://www.cseindia.org/dte-supplement/industry20040215/agriculture.htm>

Agriculture companies and farmers rely on groundwater.

Meanwhile, some water consuming industries harm their surrounding areas as severely as weather conditions such as drought would.

Processing polluted water with heavy metals, chemicals/ chemical waste, oil and other toxins is extremely difficult and expensive and overstrains the abilities of many LEDCs.

Some big companies buy the groundwater resources from a country, which often leads to worse living conditions for the inhabitants, especially concerning water costs.

This can have serious consequences for the local agriculture, often the most important branch of employment. Local farmers can no longer irrigate their plants, because they cannot afford the high prices for water with the effect that they cannot stay in business any longer. This leads to a growing dissatisfaction of the local inhabitants; this happened e.g. in India, Oman, Pakistan or the US. 5% of the groundwater resources are owned by



<http://rt.com/news/167012-coca-cola-factory-closed-india/>

commercial companies such as Nestle or Coca Cola. This gives them immense power on the local and global market.

**Kommentar [j1]:**

*What has the UN done so far?*

GA: Resolution 64/292: human rights water and sanitation

HRC: Resolution A/HRC/RES/18/1

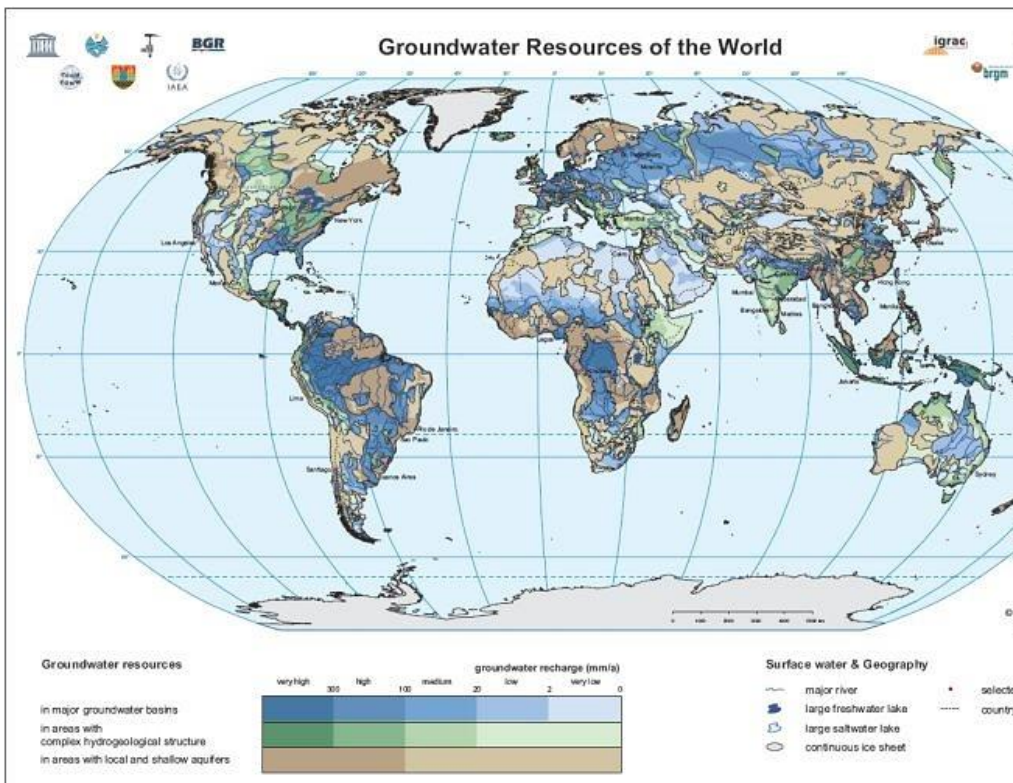
WHO: Resolution 64/24

ECOSOC: General Comment No. 15

Article I.1 states that "The human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights".

Ban Ki-moon:

"The children who have no clean water to drink, the women who fear for their safety, and the young people who have no chance to receive a decent education have a right to better, and we have a responsibility to do better. All people have the right to safe drinking water, sanitation, shelter and basic services."

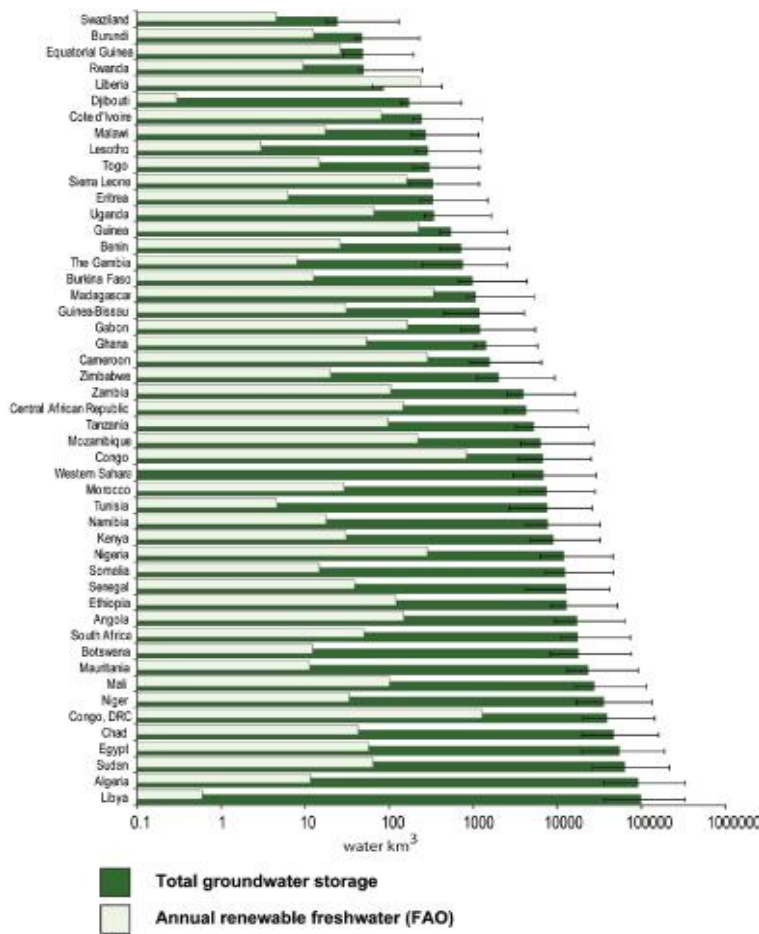


<http://12.000.scripts.mit.edu/mission2014/solutions/modernized-irrigation>

**Interesting facts:**

- Average distance that women in Africa and Asia walk to collect water is 6 km
- Average water use ranges from 200-300 litres a person a day in most countries in Europe to less than 10 litres in countries such as Mozambique. People lacking access to improved water in developing countries consume far less, partly because they have to carry it over long distances and water is heavy.
  - Australia 1000 litres
  - European 200- 300 litres
  - US American 300- 400 litres
- People living in the slums of Jakarta, Manila and Nairobi pay 5 to 10 times more for water than those living in high-income areas in those same cities and more than consumers in London or New York.
- Accumulation in water of heavy metals and some organic pollutants can lead to cancer, reproductive abnormalities and other more severe health effects
  - Every year 5 million people die of diseases that can be directly linked to unclean water

**Interesting diagram for African delegates:**



[http://cdn.iopscience.com/images/17489326/7/2/024009/Full/erl422683f2\\_online.jpg](http://cdn.iopscience.com/images/17489326/7/2/024009/Full/erl422683f2_online.jpg)

**Questions for the delegates:**

- Why is your country interested in the issue? To what extent is your country directly affected or involved?
- What about the groundwater resources in your country?
- What about the general access to water in your country?
- What about the usage of water in your country? And by whom?
- What has your government done so far to respect the access to water as a human right?
- Facing the future, what are the steps your country is planning to take?

**Useful links:**

<http://www.iawq.org.uk/Industrial-Commercial-Water.html>

<http://www.eoearth.org/view/article/152861/>

<http://www.unep.org/>

[http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human\\_right\\_to\\_water.shtml](http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/human_right_to_water.shtml)

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/water/>

<http://www.worldwatercouncil.org/>

<http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/al816e/al816e00.pdf>

[http://www.who.int/water\\_sanitation\\_health/resourcesquality/en/groundwater11.pdf](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/resourcesquality/en/groundwater11.pdf)

[http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Brochure%20Anglais%20agriculture%20et%20eau\\_North%20Africa%20Quarterly%20Analytical.pdf](http://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/Brochure%20Anglais%20agriculture%20et%20eau_North%20Africa%20Quarterly%20Analytical.pdf)

[http://www.gwp.org/Global/The%20Challenge/Resource%20material/Perspectives%20Paper\\_Groundwater\\_web.pdf](http://www.gwp.org/Global/The%20Challenge/Resource%20material/Perspectives%20Paper_Groundwater_web.pdf)