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Global water scarcity  
CAWMA

## [We Are "Globally" Running Dry](#)

*Scientists claim we should rather fear water shortages instead of food shortages*

Direct consumption and agricultural uses of water, together with other industrial purposes, have recently become more and more worrying in quantitative terms. While people generally worry they will eventually come to lack food, in fact the water that provides it should be their main source of concern.

Many millennia have passed since man first began to use water for other purposes than drinking. About 8.000 years ago, the discovery of irrigation had influenced mankind's behavior, diet and migrations. Today, on a rough average, people drink approximately 2 liters of water per day. But if all the water that is involved in providing their food (irrigation, animals etc.) is considered, this amount may scale up to 3.000 liters each day. Peaks of this value are registered in rich countries, where meat consumption (which is by far more water-demanding than grain) is higher. Western America, Southern Europe and even China, because of its high population, suffer from severe water problems. Simultaneously, a growing number of regions steadily shape-shift into arid deserts.

In the meanwhile, world's population is increasing very fast and it's soon to reach the 7 billion figure. As this happens, more food is required, thus more water to provide it and quench the world's thirst, agricultural and industrial needs (clothing or jewelry industries require lots of water, not to mention that cheaper products demand higher quantities of the liquid). Today, the farming process is responsible for approximately 70% of the human water usage.

According to the World Bank, the global need for water doubles on an average of 21 years. As rough estimations provide an astonishing figure of 9 billion people by the year 2050, it is obvious that the water supply cannot keep pace with the demands this population will require. And the situation looks even grimmer as the depletion of groundwater supplies, the salination of the land and the increasing impurity of the surface water supplies (natural or caused by pollution, since 95% of the cities in the world dump raw sewage in their water) are taken into consideration. Global warming also affects the water supplies by causing the surface water to evaporate.

Unfortunately, this phenomenon is not yet given proper attention. When referring to water shortages, people normally tend to think of a local matter, possibly related to a village or a town, when in fact, this is a global problem that affects entire countries to a certain extent. The World Bank estimates that 80 countries are confronting with economy and health-threatening water shortages, while more than 2 billion people (over 30% of the planet's population) lack access to clean water or sanitation.

Fixing the leaks and a more intelligent irrigation process would reduce water wastage by 70%, but worldwide thriftiness, shifting to less thirsty crops, as well as land desalination could also prove a big help. Currently, the calls for thrift generally remain unanswered and ignored. It is often explained that investments in new water schemes are not economical, so it should not come as a surprise that, more often than not, the idea of water replacing oil as the next reason for international wars is being circulated.