



WATER SCARCITY

Water scarcity is the lack of safe, clean water in any geographic area for human, animal and environmental use. In many places, there may be water available, but there are little resources (money and ability) to bring it home, which makes it very expensive. This can be called **economic water scarcity**. On the other hand, there could be **physical scarcity**, which means there is no water at all (or just not enough). The main cause of water scarcity is low and irregular rainfall.

The other causes of water scarcity are varied. Some are natural and others are a result of human activity. Some of the causes are:

POPULATION GROWTH

The main cause of growing water scarcity is the increase in demand resulting from population increase.

FOOD PRODUCTION

An increase in population, means a need for more food production. Live stock and crops require large amounts of water to produce food for human consumption.

LAND USE

Trees help prevent excessive evaporation of water. They also enrich and condition the climate. This means the destruction of forests by fire, logging and farming has exposed soil moisture and water bodies to the sun's intense heat, leaving them to dry out.

URBANISATION

Cities are growing and expanding more than ever before. Cities also tend to hold more people than towns and villages. This means there is an increased need to take care of sewage, cleaning, construction and manufacturing.

WATER QUALITY

Pollution of water supplies reduces the availability of water for use. Water, air and land pollution together contribute to the reduction of water quality.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Is altering patterns of weather and water around the world, causing shortages and droughts in some areas and floods in others.

WATER USE & DEMAND

Many people incorrectly believe that there is plenty of water in the world and that the only problem is getting it to the right place at the right time. The mismanagement of water over the past two centuries has severely depleted water supply and degraded water quality.



WATER SCARCITY

List three impacts of water scarcity around the world that concern you.

- _____
- _____
- _____

One out of every three people is affected by water scarcity. Water researchers believe that the problem is getting worse with problems like urbanisation, population growth, food production and destruction of vegetation. What do you imagine life will be like in 2050, if water is continued to be used in the same way? _____

Many of the items below are produced and traded worldwide. If you buy or use these products, you may be using goods that are produced using water from countries other than your own. Research the amount of water that is needed to produce each item.

How much water does it take to...	
Manufacture a new car?	
Make one kilogram of plastic?	
Produce one tonne of steel?	
Make one kilogram of cotton?	
Grow and produce one loaf of bread?	
Grow and produce one chicken?	
Grow and produce one orange?	
Provide adequate water for one dairy cow?	