Eat less meat. Agriculture is the biggest user of freshwater supplies and meat is the most water-intensive food. Support organizations providing safely managed sanitation and drinking water. Be aware of your water footprint in the food and products you consume. Advocate for sound freshwater ecosystem management by reducing pesticide and fertilizer use.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Buy locally produced products that take environmental conditions into account.

WHERE DOES OUR FRESHWATER COME FROM?

- WETLANDS
- AQUIFERS
- RIVERS
- LAKES

WHAT DO WE NEED FRESHWATER FOR?

- DRINKING
- BATHING AND RECREATION
- GROWING FOOD
- SUSTAINING BIODIVERSITY INCLUDING FISHERIES
- MANUFACTURING AND INDUSTRY
- KEEPING OUR FRESHWATER FRESH

UnEnvironment estimates that rivers in Latin America, Asia and Africa face pollution threats in various forms: Pathogenic pollution in around one-third of all rivers. Organic pollution in one-seventh of all rivers. Moderate salinity pollution in one-tenth of all rivers.

ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 6: ENSURE AVAILABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF WATER AND SANITATION FOR ALL

Freshwater makes up only 2.5% of all water. Freshwater quality is under threat because of poor water quality: Increasing food and energy production. Resource extraction. Infrastructure development. Threatens human health. Reduces the suitability of water for food and energy production. Decreases biodiversity. Pollution (pathogenic or organic). Natural disasters. Climate change (leading to saltwater intrusion).

Did you know?

- Freshwater makes up only 2.5% of all water.
- Waterborne diseases such as diarrhea are a leading cause of mortality, particularly in children.
- 2.5 billion people living in urban or rural areas lack access to safe sanitation services such as toilets and latrines.
- 2.4 billion people (nearly one in three) lack access to basic sanitation such as toilets and latrines.
- 80% of wastewater goes into water bodies untreated.
- Every year 1.8 billion people are exposed to contaminated drinking water.
- 1.6 million cases of diarrhea are caused by polluted water.
- 1.0 million children die from diarrheal diseases annually due to polluted water.
- Pollution (pathogenic or organic) is the most common cause of freshwater pollution.
- 2.5 billion people lack access to safe drinking water.
- 2.5 billion people lack access to sanitation services such as toilets and latrines.

POOR WATER QUALITY:

- Pathogenic pollution in around one-third of all rivers.
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