

GLOSSARY

Absolute Territorial Integrity of Rivers	The idea that any environmental damage done to a river is the responsibility of the nation that caused the harm, regardless of where the consequences cause problems. This ideal implies that nations should respect their downstream neighbors.
Absolute Territorial Sovereignty of Rivers	The idea that nations through which a river flows are not responsible for environmental damage done to the river beyond its borders. This ideal has been attacked by many legal scholars in favor of the “absolute integrity” ideal described above.
Accumulation	The process in which water pools in large bodies (like oceans, seas and lakes).
Acre-foot	In the water world, water is commonly measured in acre feet. One acre foot of water can fill one acre of land, approximately the size of a football field, 1 foot deep. An acre-foot contains 325,900 gallons of water, and can supply the annual indoor and outdoor needs of one to two urban households.
Aqueduct	A conduit for carrying a large quantity of flowing water, often over a river or hollow.
Aquifer	An underground layer that supplies water to wells and springs.
Basic Sanitation	The lowest-cost technology available that ensures a clean and healthful living environment at home and for neighbors.
Borehole water well	A deep hole drilled into the ground by machines that can cut through rock.
Brackish Water	Saltier than freshwater but not as salty as saltwater. Not suitable for drinking, cooking bathing, or cleaning.
Canal	An artificial waterway for navigation, draining, or irrigating land.
Causeways	Raised roads across water or wet ground.
Chlorine	Chlorine is a highly efficient disinfectant, and it is added to public water supplies to kill disease-causing bacteria that the water or its transport pipes might contain.
Cholera	Intestinal infection caused by contaminated water or food.
Clean Water Act	A set of US federal laws passed in 1972 and amended in 1977 with the purpose of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters.
Clear-cutting	In forestry, clear-cutting is when all or many of the trees in an area are cut down. When done without care, it can lead to increased sedimentation in water that would be otherwise potable.
Climate Change	Any change in global temperatures and precipitation over time due to natural variability or to human activity. Water availability, quality and stream flows are sensitive to changes in temperature and precipitation, and changes in the world climate in recent years have led to decreases in all three.

Commodity	An economic good that is subject to exchange or exploitation within a market.
Condensation	The process in which water vapor (a gas) in the air turns into liquid water. Condensing water forms clouds in the sky. Water drops that form on the outside of a glass of icy water are condensed water.
Conservation	The protection, preservation, management, or restoration of wildlife and of natural resources such as forests, soil, and water.
Dam	A barrier constructed to contain the flow of water or to keep out the sea.
Dehydration	Excessive loss of water from the body or from an organ or body part, as from illness or fluid deprivation.
Desalination	The process of removing salt from sea water to make it usable.
Diarrhea	The passage loose or liquid stools, usually a symptom of gastrointestinal infection caused by a variety of bacterial, viral and parasitic organisms. Infection is spread through contaminated food or drinking-water, or from person to person as a result of poor hygiene.
Drought	A long period of abnormally low rainfall, especially one that adversely affects growing or living conditions.
Dry Toilets	Toilets that operate without water. "Dry" toilets are becoming increasingly common in homes, and are now made to both be sanitary and environment-friendly.
Dysentery	Infection of the intestines marked by severe diarrhea.
Economic Development	Economic growth a country experiences that also contributes to the political, social, and economic well-being of the country's people.
Erosion	The wearing away of the earth's surface by any natural process.
Evaporation	The process in which liquid water becomes water vapor (a gas). Water vaporizes from the surfaces of oceans and lakes, from the surface of the land, and from melts in snow fields.
Externalities	Benefits or costs of economic activity that affect anyone or anything other than those people involved in the activity. An example would be negative environmental effects stemming from the construction of a factory.
Filter	A device that removes something from whatever passes through it (ie water filter removes impurities from the water supply).
Freshwater	Water that is not salty. 30% of earth's water is fresh but nearly all of it is locked in glaciers or underground glaciers, rivers, lakes.
Glacier	A slowly moving mass of ice.
Globalization	The process by which the world's countries and markets have become increasingly connected and interdependent.
Groundwater	Water that collects or flows beneath the Earth's surface, filling the porous spaces in soil, sediment, and rocks. Groundwater originates from rain and from melting snow and ice and is the source of water

	for aquifers, springs, and wells.
Human Development Index (HDI)	A statistic introduced by the UNDP in 1990 that combines measures of life expectancy, education, and income in order to measure the developmental progress of a nation.
Hurricane	A tropical cyclone, very commonly seen over the Western Atlantic ocean.
Hydro-electric	Of or relating to or used in the production of electricity by waterpower
Hydropolitics	Politics that govern the distribution of water and/or water resources. Compared to politics in many arenas, hydropolitics have historically yielded relatively peaceful compromises.
Hygiene	Conditions and practices that serve to promote or preserve health.
Industrialization	The process by which the world's people and economy have become increasingly reliant on industrial processes for obtaining their goods and services.
International Customary Law	General, informal agreements that are assumed to be true when disputing international water laws.
Irrigation	To supply (dry land) with water by means of ditches, pipes, or streams; water artificially.
Latrine	A communal toilet of a type often used in a camp or barracks.
Lesser Developed Countries (LDCs)	Also commonly called developing countries, this term refers to countries that have not achieved the Western ideals of democracy, free markets, and industrialized economies.
Levee	An embankment that is built in order to prevent a river from overflowing.
Malaria	A vector-borne infectious disease and one of the World Health Organization's main concerns, malaria was responsible for about 881,000 deaths in 2006.
Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC)	Generating energy by using the difference between shallower and deeper ocean waters to run a heat engine.
Pastoralist	Agricultural practice concerned with livestock. Often pastoralists are nomadic as they follow food and water sources for their animals.
Potable Water	Water suitable for drinking.

Poverty cycle	An explanation for why poor nations remain poor unless outside factors allow them to break out of the cycle. In its simplest form, the three recurring parts of the poverty cycle are lack of income, lack of education, and low productivity.
Precipitation	The process in which water (in the form of rain, snow, sleet, or hail) falls from clouds in the sky.
Privatization	When the private sector (private companies) participate in the provision of water resources, services, and sanitation.
Rainwater harvesting	The gathering and storing of rainwater.
Riparian	Of, pertaining to, or bordering a river. For example, a riparian nation is a nation through which a river flows.
Saltwater	Seawater, oceans. Not usable for drinking, cooking, bathing, cleaning. Counts for 70% of the water on earth
Scarcity	The limited availability of a good. As goods become scarce, competition for them increases.
Subsurface Runoff	Rain, snow melt, or other water that flows in underground streams, drains, or sewers.
Surface Runoff	Rain, snow melt, or other water that flows in surface streams, rivers, or canals.
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)	A document adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948 that outlines basic human rights and affirms the UN's role in working to provide them for all the world's citizens.
Transboundary aquifers	Any body or source of water that borders or provides water for multiple countries. The resources that come from these aquifers are typically the coveted goods in international water-based conflicts.
Transnational Corporations (TNCs)	A company or enterprise with entities in more than one country that adhere to coherent policies and a common strategy.
Transpiration	The process in which some water within plants evaporates into the atmosphere. Water is first absorbed by the plant's roots, then later exits by evaporating through pores in the plant.
Trawling	A type of fishing that involves dragging a large net behind a boat and capturing fish in bulk. Although effective, trawling can cause damage to ocean ecosystems and sea beds.
Tsunami	A large sea wave, especially those produced by submarine earth movement or volcanic eruption.

Typhoid	Serious infection marked by intestinal inflammation and ulceration; caused by <i>Salmonella typhosa</i> ingested with food or water
UN Convention on International Watercourses	A convention adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1997 that provides recommendations regarding the governance of transboundary aquifers and contested water resources.
UN Development Programme (UNDP)	The United Nations' global development network. Recently, the UNDP established the Millennium Development Goals, one of which is to halve the percentage of world citizens with no access to adequate water and sanitation by 2015.
United Nations	An international organization founded in 1945 after the Second World War by 51 countries committed to maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among nations, and promoting social progress.
Wastewater	Any water that has been adversely affected by human influence.
Water and Sanitation Hygiene (WASH)	One of the most prevalent health problems in the developing world is gaining proper access to WASH. Without WASH, sustainable development is impossible.
Water Cycle	The cycle of evaporation and condensation that controls the distribution of the earth's water as it evaporates from bodies of water, condenses, precipitates, and returns to those bodies of water.
Water Footprint	The total volume of water that is needed to produce the goods and services consumed by a person or group of people.
Water Rights	The idea that access to basic water resources is a human right.
Water Security	Sustainable access to sufficient amounts of water that is acceptably sanitary for dietary consumption and other necessities.
Water Stress	Water stress occurs when the demand for water exceeds the available amount during a certain period or when poor quality restricts its use. This can lead to political and physical conflicts, although history indicates that these disputes are often handled peacefully.
Waterborne Diseases	Diseases directly spread through water. Water-related illnesses can be acquired due to a lack of water for good hygiene, lack of sanitation, or increasing insect populations that breed in water and then spread disease.
World Bank	An international financial institution that provides loans to developing country governments to build schools and health centers, provide water and electricity, fight disease, and protect the environment.
World Commission on Dams (WCD)	An independent, international commission made up of many different stakeholders meant to assess the pros and cons associated with the construction of large dams worldwide.
World Health Organization (WHO)	A global health organization created by UN member countries in 1948, the WHO is the leading global authority on public health.

World Water Council (WWC)	A government and NGO network started in 1996 that deals with water policy and other water issues.
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Sources

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