

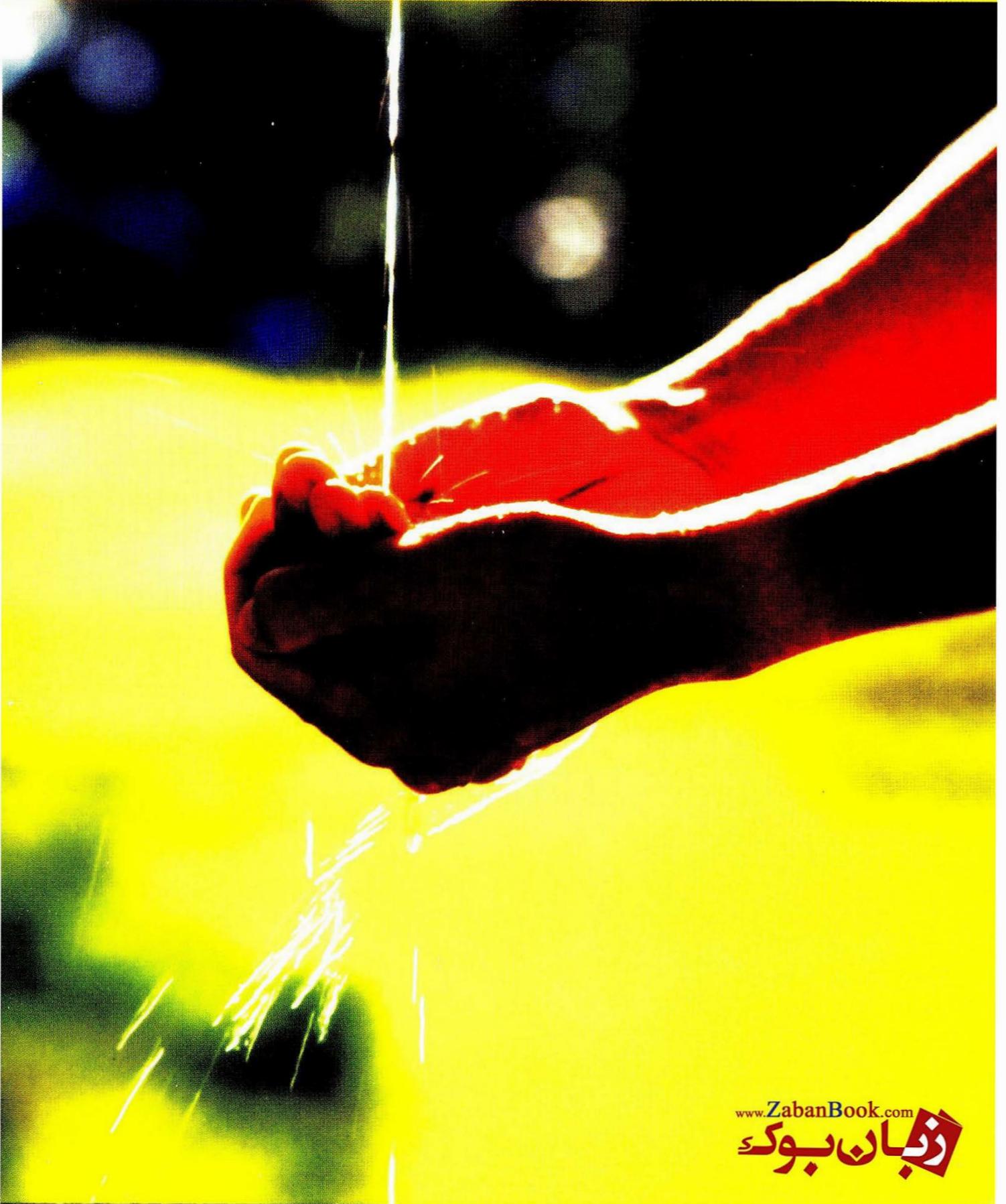


PENGUIN ACTIVE READING

LEVEL 2

# Water for Life

Bernard Smith





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Bernard Smith

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&  
Audio Disk



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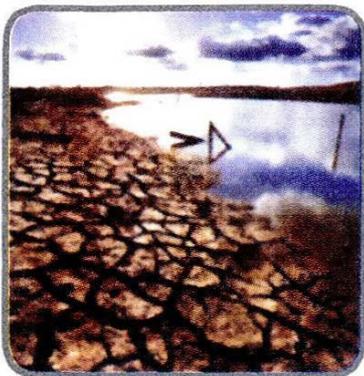
**1.1 What's the book about?**

**1 Discuss these questions.**

- a You drink and cook with water every day. Where does it come from?
- b Why is water important for life?

**2 Look at these pictures and the words below them.**

- a What are these words in your language?



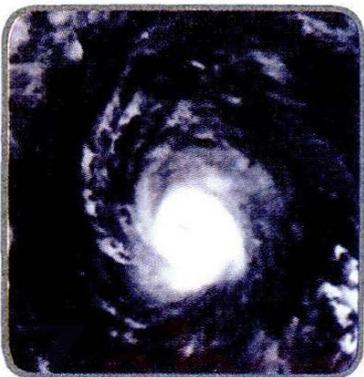
*drought*



*flood*



*ice, iceberg*



*hurricane, typhoon*



*waves*



*pollute, pollution*

- b Talk about two of the pictures. How are these dangerous to people?

**3 What other 'water words' do you know?**

**1.2 What's first?**

The first chapter is about 'Problems with Water'. How many problems can you think of before you read? Write notes in your notebook.

# Problems with Water

*Some people say that there will be big problems in the future. Countries will fight about water.*

**W**ater. We drink it. We cook with it. We wash with it. We can't live without it. It gives life to everything – to people, animals and **plants**. It is everywhere: in the seas, in the rivers, in the **air** and in our food. Most of us don't think about it very much. Water is there for us, in our kitchens and in our bathrooms, every day.

But it is not there for everybody, and our world is changing fast. We have to think very carefully about water, and about our use of it.

## ● The world's weather

So what is happening? Cars, planes, **factories** and city life are making the world warmer every year. The air is warmer; our seas are warmer. This is **causing** changes to the weather round the world. Some cold countries are getting warmer. Some hot countries are getting hotter. Rainfall is changing everywhere.

## ● Hurricanes and floods

In many countries, the warm air brings more rain and causes floods every year. Warmer air above warmer seas takes more water up into the air. This can cause hurricanes and typhoons. They begin over the seas and move quickly. When they get to **land**, they can be very big. Strong winds and heavy rainfall hit cities. They often cause big waves at sea too. When these waves hit the land, there are bad floods. People die.

**plant** /plɑ:nt/ (n/v) Trees and flowers are *plants*. You *plant* a tree when you put it in the ground.

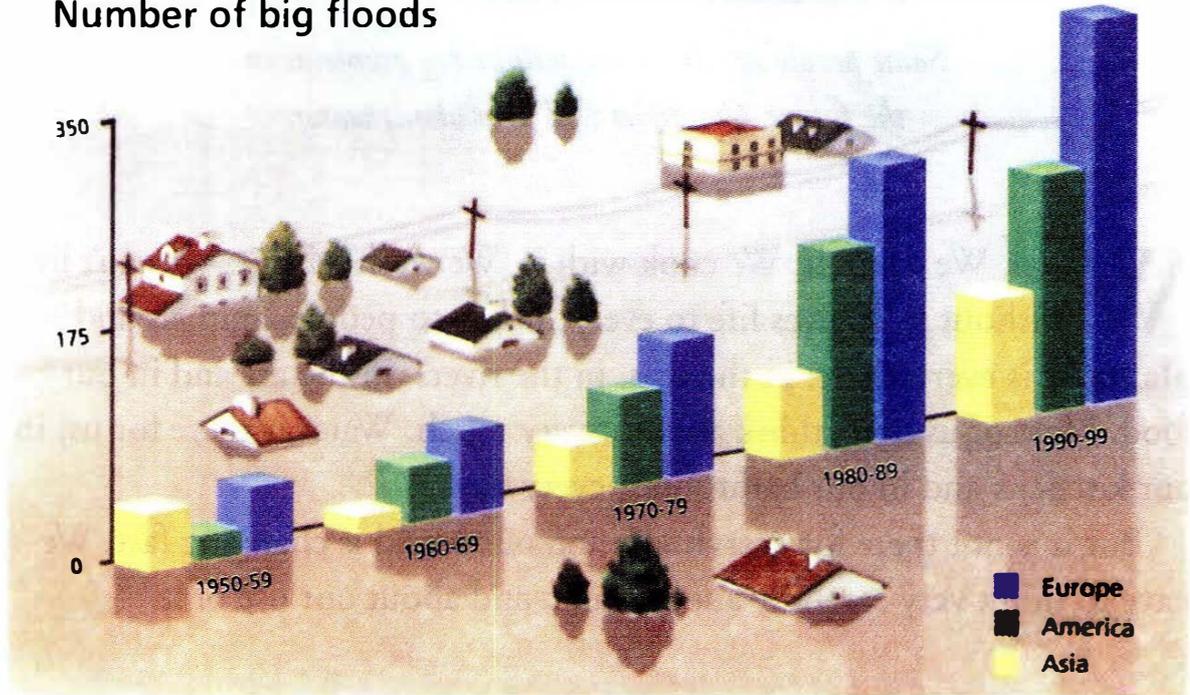
**air** /eə/ (n) Birds fly in the *air*. We can't live without it.

**factory** /'fæktəri/ (n) A *factory* is a big building. People make things in it.

**cause** /kɔ:z/ (v/n) When you *cause* something, it happens.

**land** /lænd/ (n) We have to swim in the sea, but we can walk on *land*.

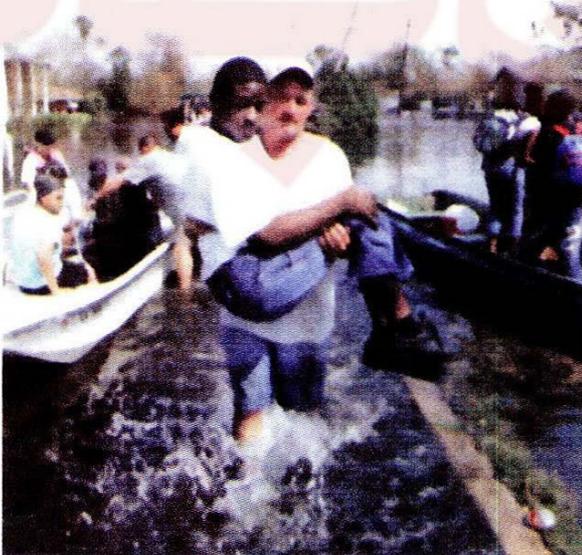
**Number of big floods**



*Year after year, there are more floods.*

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in the United States and flooded 80% of the city. In some places the water was 6 metres high. More than 1,800 people died.

Every year, more of Bangladesh is under water in the summer. In



*Hurricane Katrina floods New Orleans.*

1988, more than 3,000 people died in big floods, and 3,000,000 people lost their homes. In 1991, nearly 140,000 people died when 4.5 metre waves hit the land. Some places are now under water all the time, and a lot of people die from **diseases**. This flood water is dirty, of course, and it goes into the ground water. There is water everywhere, but the Bangladeshis can't drink it.

**disease** /di'zi:z/ (n) A disease makes you ill. It can also kill you.



*A boat pulls an iceberg. It's difficult, slow and expensive.*

### ● Rain from clouds

What other answers are there to the problem of fresh water? In some countries, when there is a bad drought, they try to make rain. They fly aeroplanes with **chemicals** above clouds. When the chemicals fall into the clouds, they sometimes make rain. But first, you need clouds, and often there are no clouds in the sky. Also, it is expensive and does not always work.



*Chemicals fall into the clouds and make rain.*

**chemicals** /'kemɪkəlz/ (n pl) *Chemicals* can clean dirty water or make plants bigger and stronger.

### ● Fresh water from the sea

You can, of course, take the salt out of sea water. This is not a new idea; it is more than fifty years old. It needs a large factory. Salt water from the sea goes in and fresh water comes out. The salt goes back into the sea. There are about 7,500 of these factories in the world today and people are building more in many countries. There are a lot of them in north African countries, but 60% are in the Middle East – a quarter of them in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia has the biggest factory; it can make 580,000,000 litres of fresh water every day. 70% of the country's fresh water comes from these factories.

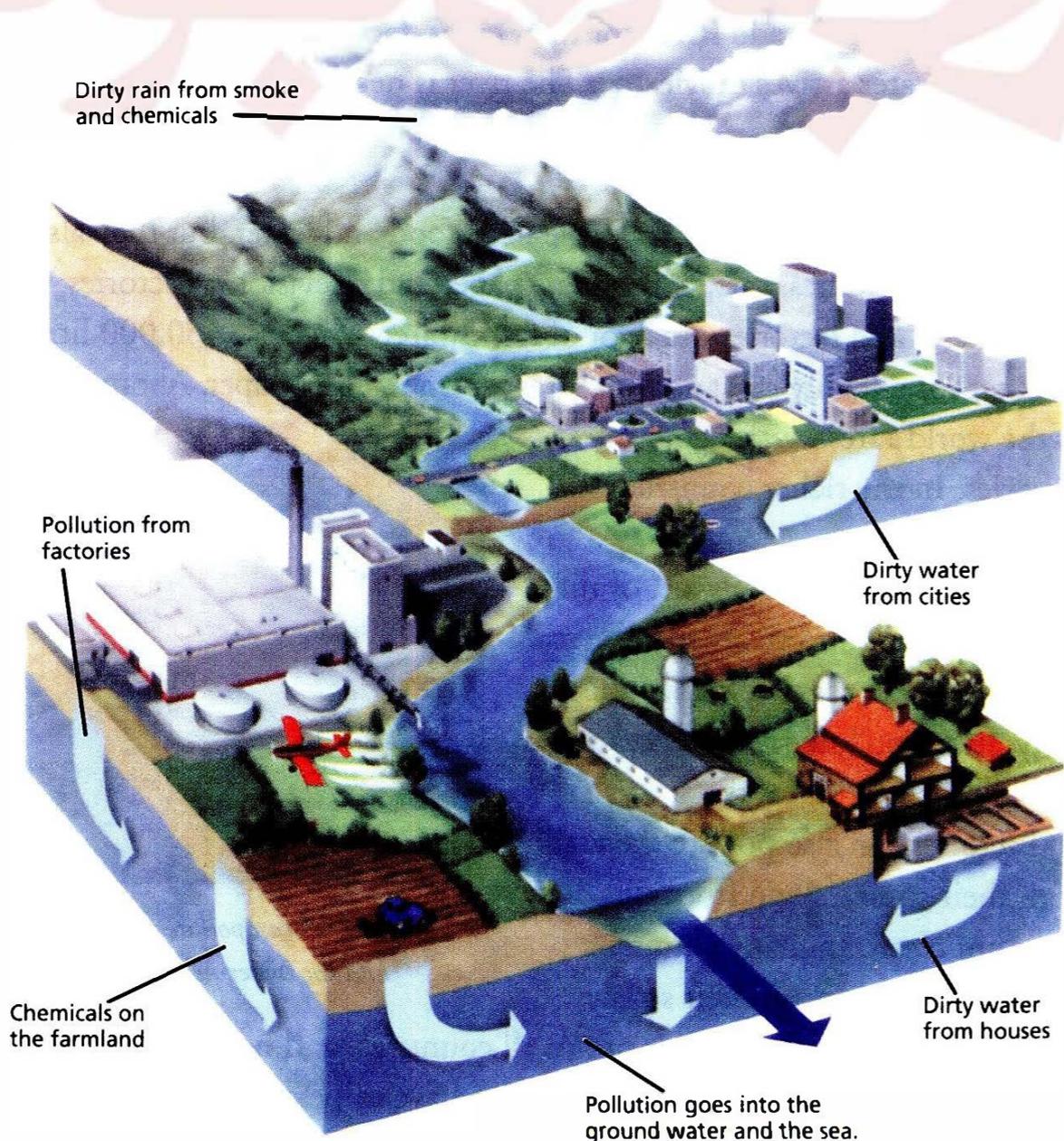
Australia has plans for a big, new factory too. It will make 500,000,000 litres of fresh water a day. It is expensive, but in some countries it is a good answer to the problem. The best answer for all of us is, of course: use your fresh water carefully.



*This factory in Kuwait makes fresh water from sea water.*

## ● Pollution everywhere

But in most countries the biggest problem with pollution is from farms. The farmers put a lot of chemicals on the land. These chemicals make the plants bigger and stronger, and people have more food. But the chemicals go down into the ground water. The rain also washes the chemicals into the rivers. They pollute the water and kill the fish. There are chemicals from farmland in 90% of the rivers in Europe.



*Pollution comes from cities, farms and factories.*

- 1 You are going to write about China's water problems for a magazine. Look at the photos. One is of a place in the Himalayas in 1968. The other is the same place now. How are they different?



- 2 Now read these notes.

China - BIG country  
(1,400,000,000 people) - getting bigger

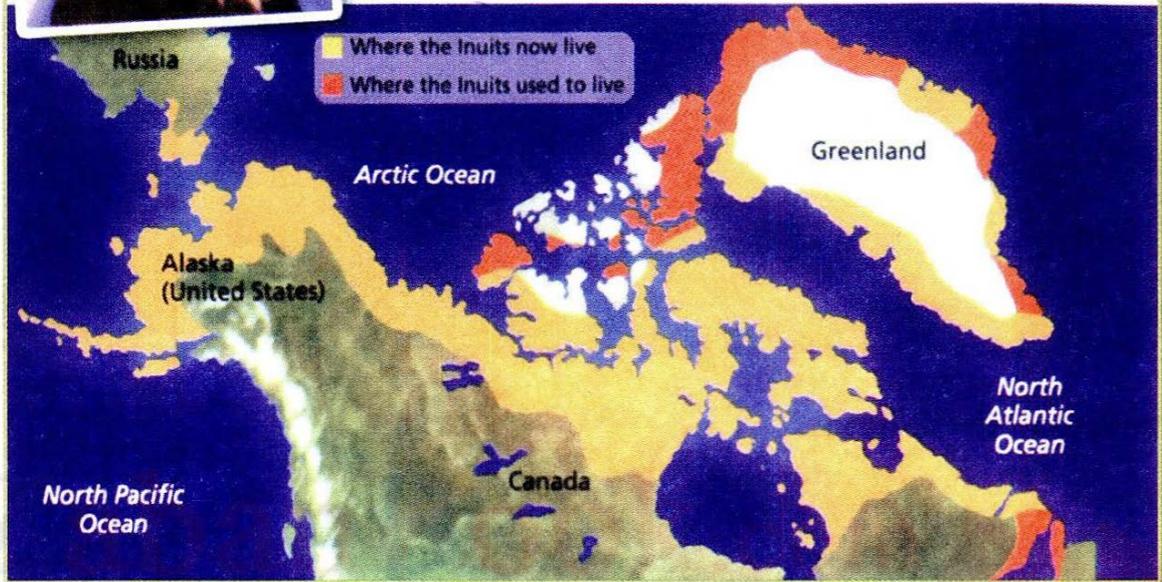
Nearly half of fresh water from  
Himalayas (mountains)  
Ice and snow melts in spring - water  
runs into Yellow and Yangtze rivers  
- for cities and farms

Winters warmer - 7% more ice melting  
each year  
In future (50 years?)  
little ice and snow - problems

- 3 Write your story.



The Arctic is a very cold place, but people live there. Some of these people are Inuit. There are about 160,000 Inuit in Alaska, the north of Canada and Greenland.



**1** Work with three or four other students. Discuss these questions and find answers in books or on the Internet.

Three large rectangular boxes with dashed borders, intended for drawing answers to the questions.

- a What do Inuit live in, now and in the past? How did they build houses from ice? Draw one.
- b What do Inuit eat? Where do they get their food? Draw one of their foods.
- c What are the names of Inuit boats? Draw one.

## 2 The Inuit people are having problems.

a Read this letter from an Inuit to a newspaper.

To the people of the world!

The Inuit people in the Arctic are having a lot of problems, and *you* are causing them. In Greenland and Canada, we live very near the sea ice. We catch our food on it. When I was a boy, the sea ice came every November. Today, it comes two or three months later. The weather is changing and the ice melts quickly. The sea is flooding the land. Some of our villages are now under the sea.

We have to walk on the ice when we catch animals and fish for our food. But the ice is often thinner and weaker now and **this is very dangerous**. Some of our men **fell through the ice into the water last year and died**.

Everything is changing. Why is this happening to us? It is because your cities, your cars, your aeroplanes and your factories are making the world's air warmer. You are changing the weather of our world. You are talking about your problems in fifty years. We are having the problems NOW. It has to stop. You have to do something before it is too late.

*Paul Karetak*

Paul Karetak  
Iqaluit, Nunavut, Canada

b Have this conversation.

**Student A**

You work for the newspaper. You want to write more in your paper about the Inuit and their life. Talk to the Inuit man and his family about his people and their problems.

**Students B-E**

You are the Inuit man and his family. Answer the questions.

- 3 **John Day lived for three years with the Inuit people in Greenland. He also walked across the Arctic. He is a very interesting man and has an exciting life.**

He is living for a time in a town near you. You would like him to come to your school with pictures of the Inuit and his walks, and talk to everybody. Write a letter to him.

## A LONG COLD WALK FOR JOHN



- 4 **John is going to come to your school. Make a poster (with pictures) about his visit. Put the place and the time on it, and something about John and his interesting life.**

# Water for Life

Bernard Smith

British English

*Original*

Water. We drink it. We cook with it. We wash with it. We can't live without it. Most of us don't think about it much. But it is not there for everybody, and our world is changing fast. We have to think very carefully about water, and about our use of it.

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