

Press release

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Water Footprint: key for sustainable development and water security

Acapulco, March 21st 2017: The book 'Water Footprint in Mexico: analysis and perspectives'¹ was launched today at the [XXIV Annual Congress of the Mexican Hydraulics Association](#).

This book was published by the [Mexican Institute of Water Technology \(IMTA\)](#)² as part of an initiative to stimulate debate on wise water use in Mexico and to raise awareness that water governance is an essential ingredient for the country's development.

The water footprint is an indicator of the impact of human consumption on hydrological systems. It arises from the recognition that such impact can be related to the international trade of goods and services and indicates the total volume of fresh water used, directly or indirectly, to produce a product. Its analysis shows the 'hidden' use of water along the entire production chain and helps identify how and where the consumption of goods in one place impacts upon water resources from elsewhere. In doing so, it expands our understanding of water issues and solutions.

The water footprint encompasses four dimensions: time, place, color and volume. It is green when it refers to rain water, blue in case of surface and ground water and grey when related to the volume required by receiving water bodies to assimilate pollution. The total water footprint is the sum of the green, blue and grey water footprints, and can be calculated for a product, process, industry, consumer, basin, state or country. It helps society better understand water scarcity and pollution and is increasingly being used in different latitudes to improve integrated water management.

Interest in the water footprint has grown in Mexico in recent years. The book draws on that interest by presenting a series of case studies that describe how a variety of sectors can reduce their environmental impact by analysing the sustainability of their water footprint. It provides examples of challenges related to human water appropriation and insights that support progress towards efficient water use and effective water management.

In the book, Dr. Felipe I. Arreguín Cortés, IMTA's General Director, states: "Ensuring Mexico's water security and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals to 2030 and beyond, requires a paradigm shift in the way we manage water, and a better understanding of water related challenges."

The foreword is written by Professor Arjen Hoekstra, founder of the water footprint concept, and Dr. Ashok Chapagain, Science Director of the [Water Footprint Network](#)³, two of the best-known voices on the subject worldwide.

Dr. Christopher Briggs, Executive Director of the Water Footprint Network, said: "This publication provides valuable insights for everyone wishing to reduce their impact on the world's increasingly

scarce water resources. We applaud IMTA for publishing it and hope that it will serve as an inspiration for others to ensure that their water use is fair, efficient and sustainable. In doing so, they can help lay the foundations for sustainable development”.

Notes:

- (1) ‘Water Footprint in Mexico: analysis and perspectives’ is an open source publication and can be downloaded at: <https://www.imta.gob.mx/biblioteca/download/?key=962781>
- (2) IMTA is a federal public organisation and research center, coordinated by the Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources (Semarnat). Its main objective is to carry out research, develop, adapt and transfer technology, provide technological services and prepare qualified human resources for the management, conservation and rehabilitation of water in order to contribute to the sustainable development of the country.
- (3) Water Footprint Network is an international non-profit foundation that provides science-based, practical solutions and strategic insights that empower companies, governments, individuals and small-scale producers to transform the way we use and share fresh water within earth’s limits. IMTA is a partner of the Water Footprint Network.

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