

**The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics Issues a Press Release on the Occasion of
World Water Day, March 22
The Quantity of Water Purchased From the Israeli Water Company (Mekorot) for
Domestic Use in 2009 was 47.4 Million m³**

PCBS issued a press release on the occasion of World Water Day, March 22, presenting the main statistical data on key indicators related to water in the Palestinian Territory.

World Water Day 2010 will be celebrated by the UN to highlight issues concerning water quality, reflecting its importance alongside water quantity in water management.

The future of water resource management must be in the shared management of a large part of the water sources, but the fact is that water resource management in the Palestinian Territory is under Israeli occupation.

Palestinian Water Resources

The majority of Palestinian water resources are shared with one or more neighboring countries. There are five countries sharing in the Jordan River Basin: Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the Palestinian Territory, which has been the subject of lengthy negotiations which has lasted for decades.

The Theft of Arab and Palestinian Waters

In 1964, Israel began to use the waters of the Jordan River without taking into account the rights of the countries sharing in the Jordan River Basin, draining Lake Hula, and diverting the Jordan River. In 1967 Israel took control of the southern part of the Jordan River, to the detriment of Arab agricultural land along the sides of the river.

In 1978 Israel was able to control the waters of the Hasbani River, which feeds Lake Tiberias, and established settlements in the Palestinian Territory located directly above the water basins in the West Bank, especially in the Jordan Valley. Israel has prevented the Palestinians from accessing their additional water allotment which was established in the Oslo II agreement, amounting to 80 million m³.

Perhaps the strangest of these actions made by Israel is that, at a time when water is withdrawn from the Palestinian Territory to provide Israeli cities, Israel sells the surplus to the Palestinians. The preliminary data from the Palestinian Water Authority indicated that the amount of water purchased for domestic use from the Israeli Water Company (Mekorot) in 2009 amounted to 47.4 million m³ in the West Bank (excluding those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed by Israel in 1967). An additional issue is the excessive depletion of groundwater in the Palestinian Territory.

Source of Public Water Network and Connection to Public Water Network

The results of the Domestic Environment Survey 2009 showed that 88.4% of households in the Palestinian Territory live in housing units connected to a public water network, distributed as 84.5% in the West Bank and 95.8% in Gaza Strip. This indicates that there is an increase in the proportion of households living in housing units connected to the network, compared with 84.8% of households in 1999. The percentage of households in the Palestinian Territory in 2009 depending on household water wells reached 5.7% of households.

Water Quality

Data of the domestic environment survey 2009 revealed that 48.1% of the households in the Palestinian Territory consider the water quality as good. This percentage was higher in the West Bank at 72.2%, compared to Gaza Strip at 6.8%. In contrast 28.2% of Palestinian households (7.4% in the West Bank and 63.8% in Gaza Strip) consider the water to be of bad quality because of the high salinity in water and water pollution due to wastewater contamination.

Daily Allocation Per Capita of the Supplied Water For Domestic Use

According to the Water Statistics Report 2008 the annual available water quantity in the Palestinian Territory (excluding those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed by Israel in 1967) was 308.7 million m³. Data also show that the quantity of water supplied for domestic use in the Palestinian Territory was 185.5 million m³ in 2008, and that the daily allocation per capita of the supplied water for domestic use in the Palestinian Territory was 132.9 (liter/capita/day). It reached only 45.5 (liter/capita/day) in Jenin Governorate.

Connection of Economic Establishments and Health Care Centers to the Public Water Network

The results of the economic environment survey 2009 showed that 92.0% of the establishments in the Palestinian Territory obtained their water from the public water network; these establishments consumed about 3.1 million m³ of water.

In contrast, 96.6% of the health-care centers obtained their water from the public water network; these centers consumed about 208 thousand m³ of water.