



**The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), and the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA)**

**Issue a joint Press Release on the Occasion of World Water Day; on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022**

Under the theme of "**Groundwater - Making the invisible visible**", the World celebrates the World Water Day 2022.

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), and the Palestinian Water Authority (PWA) issue a joint press release on the occasion of World Water Day; on March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2022. This year, World Water Day is celebrated under the theme of "**Groundwater – Making the invisible visible**", according to the announcement of the United Nations – Water.

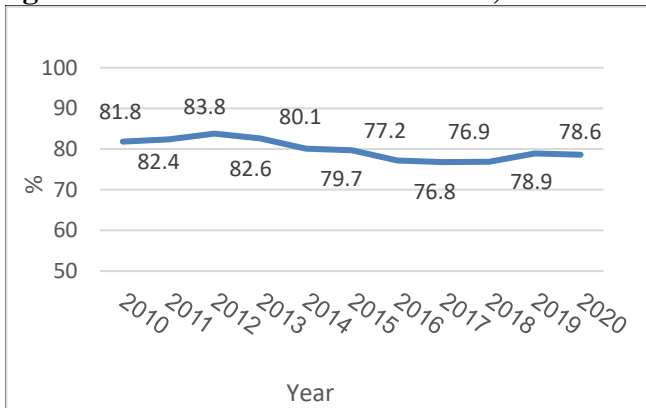
**79% of Available Water is from Groundwater**

Data showed that the percentage of the exploitation of surface and groundwater from available water during 2020 was high with an average of 79%.

It should be noted that Palestinians have been denied, by the Israeli occupation, to access and extract water from the Jordan River since 1967, which is estimated of about 250 MCM.

On the other hand, the quantity of water pumped from the Palestinian wells in the West Bank in 2020 was 108.8 MCM from Eastern Aquifer, Western Aquifer and North-Eastern Aquifer.

**Percentage of extracted surface and groundwater from available water, 2010-2020**



**20% of the Available Water in Palestine is Purchased from the Israeli Water Company "Mekorot"**

With scarce water and Israeli restrictions on access to resources, Palestinians are forced to purchase water from the Israeli water company "Mekorot". In 2020, they purchased 90.3 MCM, which represented 20% of the water available in Palestine (448.4 MCM). Additionally, 53.3 MCM of the water were produced from the Palestinian springs while 299.1 MCM are pumped from groundwater wells and 5.7 MCM desalinated drinking water, representing 1% of the available water.

As for water available to Palestinians that is unsuitable for human use due to the quantities of polluted water in Gaza Strip, it reached 201.8 MCM, whereas the quantities of water suitable for domestic use available to the Palestinians are only 246.6 MCM, including purchased and desalinated water.

**5.7 MCM desalinated drinking water**

The amount of desalinated drinking water in Gaza Strip was only 5.7 million m<sup>3</sup> in 2020. Moreover and according to the data of the Palestinian Water Authority, Palestine began producing quantities of desalinated water, where the percentage of which is expected to increase in the coming years; with the start of operating desalination plants in Gaza Strip. Thus, this percentage shall rise significantly with the implementation of the central desalination plant program.

**The daily allocation per capita from consumed water is less than the internationally recommended rate, and it is decreasing**

The daily allocation per capita from consumed water for domestic purposes is 84.2 liter/capita/day in Palestine: 82.4 (l/c/d) in the West Bank, while it is 86.6 (l/c/d) in Gaza Strip in 2020. By taking into account the increase of population, the high percentage of water pollution in Gaza Strip and calculating the quantities of water suitable for human use from the available quantities, the per capita share of fresh water is only 26.8 liters per day in Gaza Strip.



Taking into account the discrepancy of the daily allocation of consumed water per capita between the different governorates, achieving justice in the distribution among localities is one of the main challenges facing the State of Palestine due to the political situation it lives in that hinders the development of an integrated water system at the national level. It is worth noting that the average Palestinian water consumption per capita is still less than the minimum recommended level globally according to the standards of the World Health Organization, which is 100 liters per day. This is as a result of the Israeli control over more than 85% of the Palestinian water.

**More than 97% of the water pumped from the Coastal Aquifer does not meet the standards of the World Health Organization**

The amount of water extracted from the coastal aquifer was 190.5 million cubic meters (MCM) in Gaza Strip in 2020. However, this quantity is obtained via unsafe pumping that jeopardizes the sustainability of the source, as the basin sustainable yield should not exceed 50-60 MCM a year, where the groundwater level in the coastal aquifer reached 19 meters below sea level leading to the depletion of groundwater reserves, this led 97% of the water pumped from the coastal aquifer in Gaza Strip does not meet the water quality standards of the World Health Organization.

**Note:** Data mentioned in this press release excludes those parts of Jerusalem which were annexed by Israeli occupation in 1967.

**\* Sources:**

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics. 2022.  
Palestinian Water Authority, 2020. Water Information System. Unpublished data.

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