

UN warns action needed to thwart global water crisis

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NEW YORK — Leaders inside and outside the water development community need to work together to reform how water supplies are managed and to ensure equitable distribution of water resources; otherwise, widespread water shortages will result, the United Nations **warned** on March 12.

William Cosgrove, content coordinator of the UN's World Water Development report, *Water in a Changing World*, was quoted as saying at a March 12 press conference at UN headquarters that water development community leaders must work together to raise awareness about the challenges, and shape programs and policies which increase investment, change behaviors and meet growing demands in a sustainable manner.

According to the report, pollution, global warming and surging population growth are raising the specter of widespread water shortages in the not-so-distant future. Quick action is needed to avoid the real possibility that people in many parts of the world will face a life without reliable water-resource systems.

The report, compiled by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and 25 other agencies, is issued triennially. This year it will serve as the basis for discussions at the Fifth World Water Forum, set to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, from March 16-22.