

Torkil Jønch Clausen

Water, sustainability and food in a global perspective

WASAG

Today two thirds of the world's population experience water scarcity at least for a month every year, and 80% of all wastewater goes untreated into rivers and oceans. With business as usual, it is estimated that we shall need 40% more water by mid-century. Climate change, and increased climate variability and extremes, aggravate the situation.

With 70% of all water is diverted for agricultural use, agriculture and food security is at the heart of the challenge. With additional two billion mouths to feed, food demand is estimated to increase by 50% by 2050.

Can we close the gap? The answer is: yes, we can! With a third of all food produced being lost or wasted in the chain from field to fork we can start there, saving a lot of water and energy in the process. With focus on the circular economy, wastewater becomes a resource to be reused for food and energy production, and changed production and consumption patterns lead to more 'nutrition per drop'. Closing the gap will require accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, not 'just' the water Goal 6, but by managing water as a connector across the water and food related goals and targets through innovative public-private partnerships.