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Water Statistics Presented at Stockholm Conference

World Water Week recently concluded in Stockholm, Sweden. The yearly program, which began nearly 20 years ago, is an annual meeting place for water experts, practitioners, decision-makers and leaders to better understand and address the planet's most urgent water-related issues and seek solutions.

The organizers, Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), also prepare updated global and regional water-related statistics for all attendees in the hopes of detecting emerging trends and isolating patterns that may impact world water supplies.

The following are some of the most current - and unusual - statistics presented:

- A child born in the developed world uses as much as 50 percent more water than a child born in the developing world
- Less than one percent of the world's freshwater is readily accessible for human use
- The amount of water being used around the world has tripled in the past 50 years
- The amount of water used by 2025 will increase by 50 percent in developing countries and 18 percent in developed countries
- The countries that are the five largest water users in volume are: India, China, the U.S., Pakistan and Japan
- In the next 20 years, nearly one-half of the people in the world will be living in areas of "high water stress," meaning water is either scarce, unsanitary or that delivery infrastructure is lacking.

"Water sewage concerns were also discussed," says Klaus Reichardt, founder and chief executive officer (CEO) of Waterless Company, Inc.

"Chemicals such as pesticides, flame retardants, steroids and hormones

from birth-control pills have resulted in 'gender-bender' fish in rivers and lakes all over the world. This is a rather new development."

Reichardt adds that the annual gathering is not designed specifically to highlight water challenges around the world, as it is to find solutions.

"It always highlights what has been accomplished and examples of proper water stewardship," he says. "And the Queen of Sweden awards prizes to young scientists to encourage their continued interest in water-related issues."