



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

NOTE FOR THE PRESS

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NEW JOURNAL ON WATER AND HEALTH LAUNCHED BY WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION AND INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSOCIATION

The World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Water Association (IWA) have joined forces to launch a new professional publication: the *Journal of Water and Health*. The new Journal is designed to bring up-to-date information on water and health issues to government officials and professionals whose work affects people's access to water and sanitation. It fills a much needed gap.

The Journal will feature high-quality research and practice across the full range of challenges to harnessing water for health – including health concerns and disease prevention associated with water supply and sanitation and with water resources management - in developing and developed countries alike. It will deal with diseases associated with microbial and chemical hazards and insect vectors; and will span aspects of science, policy and practice.

Water, sanitation and hygiene-related illnesses¹ are estimated to cause 7% of the total global burden of disease and 5.6% of the global total of deaths – with much of this suffering occurring in children in developing countries. 1.1 billion people world-wide still do not have access to improved sources of drinking water, while 2.4 billion people do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities. Progress towards universal access to healthy drinking water and adequate sanitation has stagnated over the last decade.

The first issue of the new Journal is being issued in conjunction with the Third World Water Forum, being held in Kyoto, Japan, from 15-22 March 2003.

"The International Water Association is delighted to collaborate with WHO in launching this new and very important journal. *Journal of Water and Health* responds to the unprecedented demand from our members in both developed and developing countries for a publication that focuses on the critical link between water and health - one of the truly significant challenges facing communities worldwide over the coming decades," said Paul Reiter, Executive Director of IWA.

"This is a critical element of our efforts to achieve the UN's Millennium Development Goals, which commit us to reducing by half the proportion of people without access to improved water and

¹ diarrhoea, malaria, Japanese encephalitis, schistosomiasis, trachoma, ascariasis, trichuriasis and hookworm disease

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sanitation by 2015," said Dr David Nabarro, WHO Executive Director for Healthy Environments. "Wider dissemination of key research findings and best practice will help professionals around the world to be more effective – whether they are working with local communities or national authorities."

IWA and WHO will also provide several hundred copies of this issue of the Journal free of charge to selected outlets in developing countries.

The Journal's Editorial Board contains a who's who of the world's foremost authorities on water and sanitation².

For further information and for subscriptions visit www.iwapublishing.com or email: publications@iwap.co.uk.

For further information please contact Mr Gregory Hartl, Communications Adviser for Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments, WHO, Geneva. Tel: (+41 22) 791 4458; Fax: (+41 22) 791 4725; E-mail: hartlg@who.int. All WHO Press Releases; Fact Sheets and Features as well as other WHO information can be obtained on Internet on the WHO home page: <http://www.who.int>.

² For a list of the Editorial Board members, please see www.iwapublishing.com