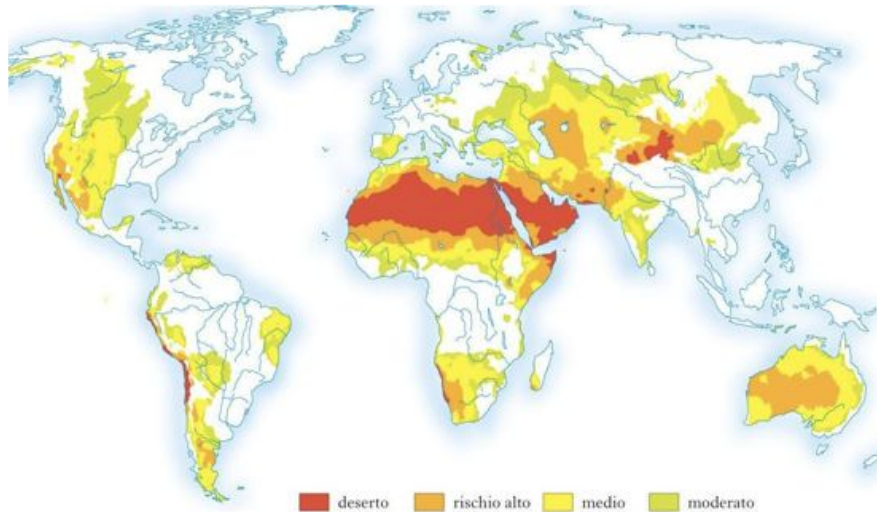


HOW TO SAVE WATER-STARVED CITIES

Advices about saving water-starved cities



Brian Richter



WHAT CAN THIRSTY CITIES DO TO SECURE A WATERY FUTURE?

A new study, led by Brian Richter of the Nature Conservancy, suggests that the key to replenish city water supplies, is by forming urban-rural partnerships designed to decrease regional consumption.

In fact, thanks to this partnerships with agriculture, water users can reduce water consumption on farms, thereby freeing up additional water supply for urban use.



Agricultural irrigation accounts for the vast majority of water consumption.



At the same time, city residents certainly contribute to the situation, since they're the ones consuming most (perhaps two-thirds) of the food produced in the countryside.



A shared problem deserves a shared solution.

This is a reality that governments and cities must face immediately.



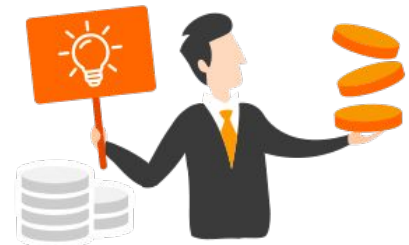
There are a number of ways farmers can reduce the amount of water they use for agriculture, just to mention some:



changing crop types or eliminating “low-value” farming.



But the cost of these efforts is so great, and the payoff so far away, because farmers can't implement them on their own. If cities provided farmers with funding (or incentives or compensation) to change their ways, both sides could enhance their water supplies.



With an effective water partnership, farmers would spend less on irrigation, and cities, in turn, would save money on the cost of farm goods. Meanwhile, of course, both sides preserve water supplies for the future.

The researchers estimate that even a 15 to 20 percent decrease in agricultural water consumption could free up as much water as cities and industries use today.



This project has obtained good results in San Diego in fact the city compensated regional farmers for agricultural water conservation, with the free water being transferred to a canal running into the city.

