**WATER IS LIFE**

Water is the natural resource we all know very well. One cannot live without it. We know it’s many forms - rain, snow, ice, hail, vapour, fog. Yet, water is the natural resource we least understand. How does water get into the clouds? What happens when it reaches the Earth? Why is there sometimes too much and other times too little of it? And, most important, is there enough water for all the plants, and all the animals, and all the people? Water covers nearly three fourths of the Earth, most being sea water. But seawater contains salts, including those that are harmful to most land plants and animals. Still, it is from the salty seas and oceans that most of our fresh water comes - no longer salty and armful. Water moves from clouds to land and back to the ocean in a never-ending cycle. Ocean water evaporates into at- 18 mosphere leaving salts behind, and moves across the Earth as water vapour. Water in lakes and rivers also evaporates and rises into the air. Having cooled in the air the water vapour condenses and falls to the Earth as rain, hail or snow, depending on region, climate, season and topography. This part of the cycle is very important because man can use water stored in the atmosphere only when it falls to the land. Every year about 450,000 cubic kilometres of water evaporates from the oceans and about 61,000 cubic kilometres from land sources. Water is an unchanging and ever renewing, resource, but its distribution on the surface of the globe varies greatly -

there is either too little or too much water. Many problems are caused by too much water when we do not need it or too little when we want it. No natural resource on our planet has so many uses as water. We need water to support our lives, to grow our crops, to water our stock, to power our industries and for many

other purposes.

Our water needs are great and they continue to grow. Agriculture requires great quantities of water to provide food and raw materials for industry; industry consumes not less water than agriculture. Per capita (на человека) use of water is increasing rapidly in the world. There is plenty of water on the Earth. Man's activity is accelerating the process of water pollution, the amount of fresh water available to use is decreasing rapidly. Measures must be taken against waste of water and pollution of water. We have to improve methods of irrigation in order to use water more efficiently.

**Water**

Every day 25.000 people die as a result of bad water management. Some two thirds of the world's opulation is without clean water - and as a result diarrhoea kills 4.600.000 children under five every year. Only a tiny fraction of the water, which covers the Earth, is of use to humanity: 97% is salt water, filling the oceans and seas. Of the remainder, 99% is out of reach - frozen up in icecaps and glaciers, or buried deep underground. We depend on what is left - in rivers, lakes and accessible aquifers - to quench our thirst, wash away our wastes, water our crops and, increasingly, to power our industries. In most parts of the world, this limited supply is overstrained. Industrial wastes, sewage and agricultural run-off overload rivers and lakes with chemicals, wastes and nutrients, and poison water supplies. "Acid rain" - often caused by power station

emissions thousands of kilometres away - sets off a chain reaction, which kills life in vulnerable lakes and rivers. Sediments from eroded land silt up dams, rivers and hydroelectric schemes. Where water sources are shared by more than one country, these problems are compounded. One country's waste disposal unit

may be another's drinking water. Deforestation upstream may cause floods or shortage downstream, while a country's hydroelectric, irrigation and public water projects may cut off its neighbour's supply. About 40% of the world's population depends on water from a neighbouring country. Of over 200 river systems shared by two or more countries, several have already caused international conflict - and as the world grows thirstier these tensions increase.