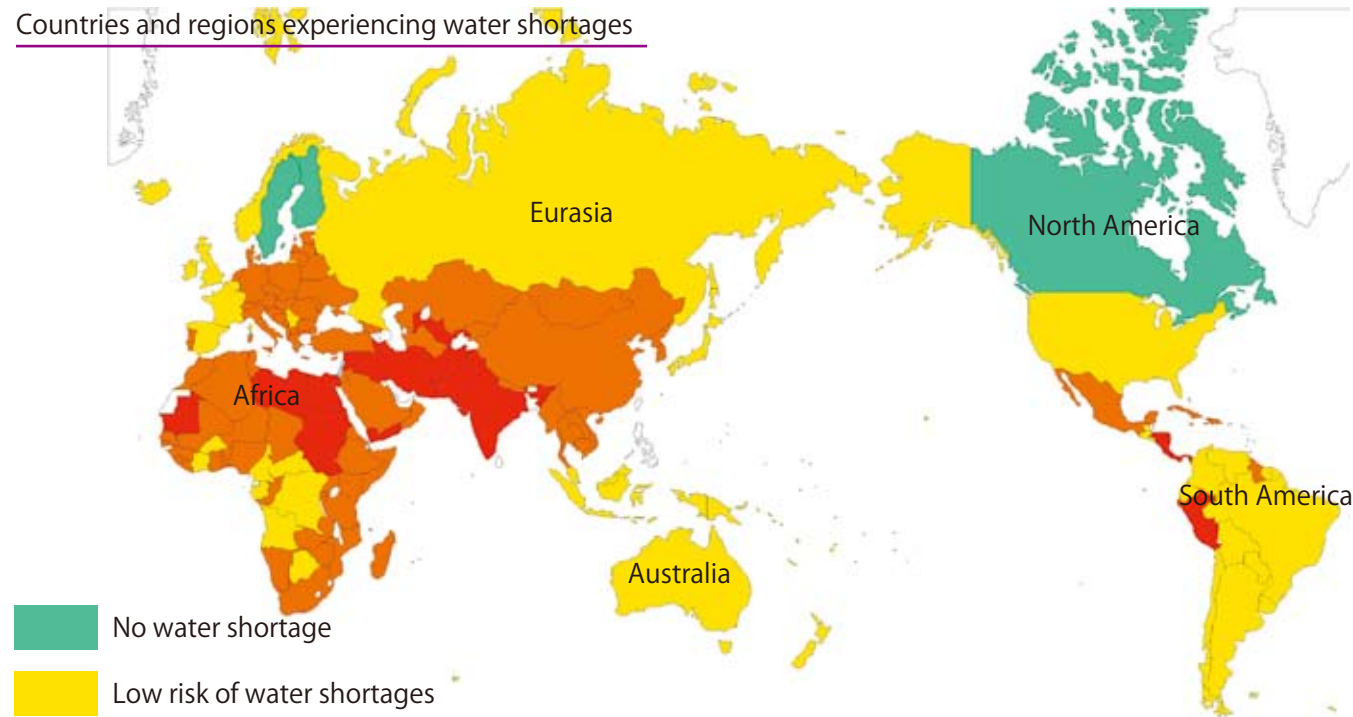




There are water shortages occurring around the world.

Countries and regions experiencing water shortages



- No water shortage
- Low risk of water shortages
- Moderate risk of water shortages
- High risk of water shortages
- No data available

Source: Stockholm Environment Institute

Water shortages around the world are part of a complex problem with many causes, including warming temperatures, growing demand to support the world's growing population and industrial development, and involve a number of issues, including water pollution.



World water shortage

Many of the world's people—approximately 2 billion people—cannot get safe drinking water and nearly 4 billion people do not have access to drinking water in their homes. In some parts of Africa, women and children have to travel five hours to carry 20 liters of water home. However, the typical city family with 4 members in a developed country consumes an average of 640 liters of water a day.

Nearly 97 percent of the world's water is seawater, which is not fit for drinking. A mere 0.02% percent of the world's water can be used for our needs, such as drinking, farming and industry. If demand for water continues to increase at the current pace, there are countries and regions that will experience water shortages. Some experts predict that by 2025 globally two out of three people will suffer from water shortages.

Water is in the air we breathe and through humidity and vapors travels through the whole earth and its atmosphere. So why now there is not enough of water in the world? And why is water becoming polluted? What should we do about this?



Let's think about the water cycle and talk about how we should use water better.

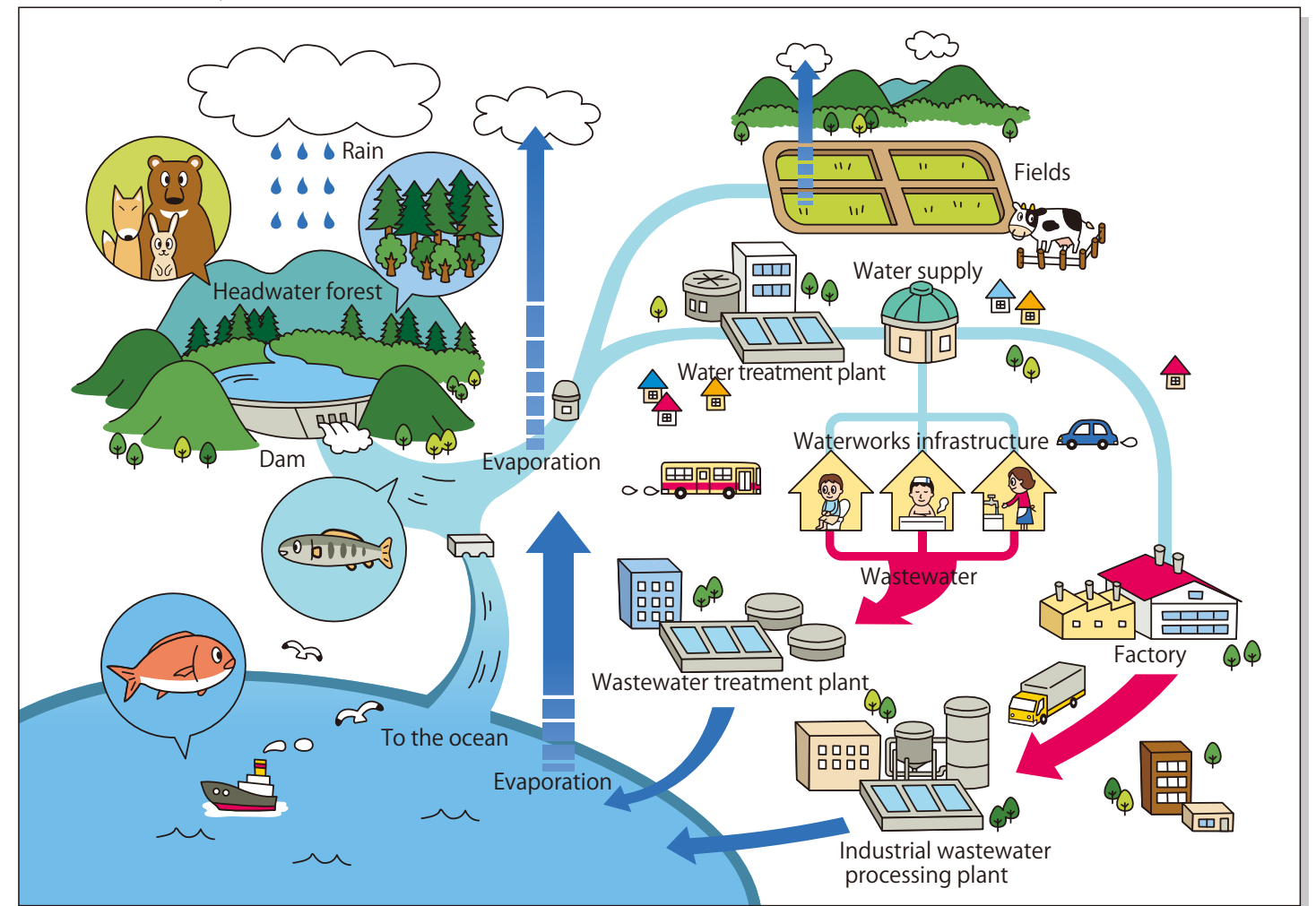
Major causes of water pollution include the following:

- Wastewater from people using too much detergent or soap in their homes
- Illegal dumping of waste or industrial waste polluting rivers
- Air pollution dirtying water through snow or rain
- Industrial wastewater polluting groundwater, rivers or the ocean
- Oil or wastewater emitted from ships polluting the ocean
- Pesticide from farming

If water is polluted somewhere during the water cycle then people can no longer drink it with peace of mind.



The water cycle as it involves the environment and society



For more about waste please see p.14.