



For More Information

Contact: Ann Seamonds  
978-887-9959  
[seamonds@seamonds.com](mailto:seamonds@seamonds.com)

### **GLOBAL WATER CRISIS PROMOTES DESALINATION BOOM International Desalination Association Releases Latest Statistics**

**TOPSFIELD, MA, Oct. 16, 2008** – Worldwide growth in the use of desalination to produce a reliable supply of drinking water rose sharply over the past year indicating that desalination technologies are being used more than ever to address the global thirst for new sources of potable water, according to new statistics released today by the International Desalination Association (IDA).

According to the 2008-2009 edition of IDA's *Desalination Yearbook*, published by Global Water Intelligence, the amount of global contracted (planned) capacity grew by 43 percent in 2007, or 6.8 million cubic meters per day (m<sup>3</sup>/d), up from 4.7 million m<sup>3</sup>/d in total contracted capacity in 2006. This increase of 2.1 million m<sup>3</sup>/d is enough to supply potable water to more than 50 million people.

IDA reports that this growth trend has continued in 2008. During the first six months of this year alone, newly contracted capacity has increased by an additional 39%.

As of June 30, 2008, the cumulative contracted capacity of desalination plants around the world stood at 62.8 million m<sup>3</sup>/d. Sixty-two percent of the newly contracted capacity is seawater desalination, with brackish water desalination representing another 12.2 million m<sup>3</sup>/d. Wastewater applications of desalination technologies for water reuse is growing fast, currently representing 5 percent of total capacity.

The *2008-2009 Desalination Yearbook* – which is based on data collected by Global Water Intelligence's DesalData unit in association with the International Desalination Association – also reports that the number of contracted desalination plants worldwide totalled 13,869 as of June 30, 2008, up from 13,080 the prior year. A comprehensive Global Desalination Market Snapshot is available on IDA's online press room at [www.idadesal.org](http://www.idadesal.org).

“Water is becoming an increasingly precious commodity in many parts of the world. The newly released statistics indicate that desalination is playing an increasingly important role in addressing the global thirst for new water resources. In fact, for many communities, desalination provides the only reliable source of potable water,” said Patricia Burke, Secretary General of the International Desalination Association.

Burke cited statistics from WHO, the World Health Organization, which estimates that approximately 20 percent of the world's population live in countries where water is scarce or where people have not been able to access the resources available.

The *Desalination Yearbook* also shows that plants are now being built on a new massive scale. Currently, the largest single desalination plant in operation is the 456,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d plant serving Fujairah in the United Arab Emirates. However, there are five other plants with capacities in excess of 500,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d now under construction in the Middle East region. The largest of these is the 880,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d Shoaiba 3 unit in Saudi Arabia. Later this year, the first 1,000,000 m<sup>3</sup>/d plant is expected to be commissioned in Saudi Arabia.

While not approaching this magnitude, large-scale desalination facilities are also being planned in the United States. For example, the recently approved Carlsbad, California desalination facility will be the largest desalination plant in the Western Hemisphere, providing 50 million gallons (189.3 m<sup>3</sup>/day) of high quality drinking water per day.

Christopher Gasson, publisher of Global Water Intelligence, commented, "If you have a fast growing population and limited natural water resources, sooner or later you are going to have to turn to the sea, and with climate change, it seems that 'sooner' means 'now'.

"The industry has made dramatic improvement in its energy consumption in recent years, and it has also aggressively addressed environmental concerns about the impact of desalination on marine life. This has helped open environmentally-conscious markets such as Australia, Spain and now the United States to large scale desalination.

"If we see another dry winter in the Rockies, California will be the next market to take off. China is also on the verge of a very large expansion of its desalination capacity. Credit crunch or no credit crunch – people need water."

Copies of the IDA *Desalination Yearbook 2008-2009* are available to IDA members or can be obtained directly from Global Water Intelligence. The data in the report is collected by GWI DesalData and represents *the 21st IDA Worldwide Desalting Plant Inventory*. For more details about IDA membership, contact IDA at [info@idadesal.org](mailto:info@idadesal.org). To purchase copies of the *Yearbook*, contact Global Water Intelligence at [mh@globalwaterwaterintel.com](mailto:mh@globalwaterwaterintel.com).

### **About Global Water Intelligence (GWI)**

Global Water Intelligence ([www.globalwaterintel.com](http://www.globalwaterintel.com)) is a monthly journal providing analysis and strategic data on the international water market. The publication boasts a network of specialist water and financial journalists, based in-country with access to exclusive regional data. GWI has established itself as the market-leading publication for developers, suppliers, financiers, governments, utilities and municipalities seeking information and analysis on water projects with an element of private sector participation. For more information, contact Christopher Gasson, Publisher, Global Water Intelligence, by phone at +44 1865 204208 or by email at [cg@globalwaterintel.com](mailto:cg@globalwaterintel.com).

### **About IDA**

The International Desalination Association ([www.idadesal.org](http://www.idadesal.org)) is a non-profit association of over 2,000 members in 58 countries. The membership is comprised of scientists, end-users, engineers, consultants and researchers from governments, corporations and academia. IDA is associated with the United Nations as part of a growing international network of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

