

Addressing the Water Shortage in Beijing: Increasing Water Use Efficiency in Domestic Sector

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Abstract : Beijing, the capital city of China, is running out of water. The water resource per capita in Beijing is only 106 cubic meter, accounts for 5% of the country's average level and less than 2% of the world average level. The tension between water supply and demand is extremely serious. For one hand, the surface and ground water have been over-exploited during the last decades; for the other hand, water demand keep increasing as the result of population and economic growth. There is a massive gap between water supply and demand. This paper will focus on addressing the water shortage in Beijing city by increasing water use efficiency in domestic sector. First, we will emphasize on the changing structure of water supply and demand in Beijing under the economic development and restructure during the last decade. Second, by analyzing the water use efficiency in agriculture, industry and domestic sectors in Beijing, we identify that the key determinant for addressing the water crisis is to increase the water use efficiency in domestic sector. Third, this article will explore the two primary causes for the water use inefficiency in Beijing: The ineffective water pricing policy and the poor water education and communication policy. Finally, policy recommendation will offered to improve the water use efficiency in domestic sector by making and implementing an effective water pricing policy and people-engaged water education and communication policy.

Keywords : Beijing, water use efficiency, domestic sector, water pricing policy, water education policy

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