

Season's Greetings

Joyeuses Fêtes

Frohe Festtage

“This year on World Water Day [22nd March 2009], we call attention to the waters that cross borders and link us together. Whether we live upstream or downstream, we are all in the same boat.”

www.unwater.org/worldwaterday

Foto: Almut Gerhardt

oekotoxzentrum
centre ecotox



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The world's 263 transboundary lake and river basins include the territory of 145 countries and cover nearly half of the Earth's land surface. Great reservoirs of freshwater also move silently below our borders in underground aquifers. There is enough freshwater to meet everyone's needs, but water is not evenly distributed and often not appropriately managed. Many countries already face increasing water scarcity. In some areas, the availability of good quality freshwater has been reduced due to pollution from human waste, industry and agriculture. Since 1900, half of the world's wetlands, our principal source of renewable freshwater, have been lost. Climate change will certainly have an impact on the supply of freshwater in many regions. With every country seeking to satisfy its water needs from limited water resources, some foresee a future filled with conflict. But history shows that cooperation, not conflict, is the most common response to transboundary water management issues. Over the last 60 years there have been more than 300 international water agreements and only 37 cases of reported violence between states over water. We need to continue to nurture the opportunities for cooperation that transboundary water management can provide. We share the responsibility for managing the world's transboundary waters for current and future generations.

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frost pattern on a window (Foto: Almut Gerhardt)