



**Q. Why is the world today confronted with a crisis of availability of and access to freshwater resources?**

**GS Paper I**

**(250 Words)**

**Answer:**

The world today faces a crisis of availability and access to freshwater resources due to a combination of natural and human-induced factors. This crisis has far-reaching consequences for ecosystems, societies, and economies.

**Here are some key points explaining this crisis:**

**Population Growth:** The global population is steadily increasing, leading to greater demand for freshwater for drinking, sanitation, and agriculture. This places immense pressure on existing water sources.

**Climate Change:** Climate change disrupts traditional precipitation patterns, causing more frequent and severe droughts, floods, and heatwaves. This exacerbates water scarcity issues, making it difficult to predict and manage water resources effectively.

**Water Pollution:** Pollution from industrial, agricultural, and urban activities contaminates freshwater sources, rendering them unsafe for consumption. Treating polluted water requires significant resources.

**Over-extraction:** Unsustainable groundwater pumping and over-extraction of surface water for agriculture and industry deplete aquifers and rivers faster than they can be replenished.

**Inefficient Water Use:** Wasteful irrigation practices and inefficient water use in agriculture and households contribute to water scarcity. Promoting water-efficient technologies and practices is crucial.

**Inequitable Distribution:** Water scarcity often disproportionately affects marginalized communities, exacerbating social and economic inequalities. Access to clean water becomes a critical human rights issue.

**Conflicts:** Competition for water resources can lead to conflicts at local, regional, and even international levels. Managing shared water bodies becomes a geopolitical challenge.



**Lack of Infrastructure:** Many regions lack the infrastructure needed to collect, store, and distribute freshwater effectively. Investment in water infrastructure is essential.

Addressing the crisis of freshwater availability and access requires concerted efforts at local, national, and global levels. Sustainable water management, conservation, pollution control, and equitable distribution are vital components of any solution to ensure that future generations have access to this essential resource.

