**Water management, agriculture and aquaculture**

Besides water-borne diseases like the diarrhoeal diseases that are directly caused by direct contact with polluted water, vector-borne diseases are indirectly caused by water through insect that breed in water and are carriers of diseases like malaria, dengue etc. Any water source can be a breeding site for mosquito's that transport deadly diseases to people. That is why when water resources are near people and/or used by people these vectors should always be taken into consideration.

In the early days of the organisation the fight against malaria was one of WHO main activities. Vector control is one aspect of this fight. The main way to fight malaria vectors was the use of insecticides. The more preventive approach of water resource management was only very sporadically used. From the 1970s onwards and especially in the 1990s the fight against vector related diseases became a priority for the WHO governing bodies. With this priority also came a different approach in which more attention was given to the relation between these diseases and water.

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**Agriculture and aquaculture/Waste water treatment and use**

Water plays an important role in agriculture and aquaculture; great quantities of water are needed for both activities essential for food production. If this water is not properly managed however, it can be an important source of ill-health. Agriculture and aquaculture also have a link to sanitation as waste water can be very valuable in irrigation if properly treated.

The water used in agriculture and aquaculture has to be of sufficient quality not to be damaging for human health. Unclean water can be both directly damaging to agricultural workers as well as to others through the food the water is used for.

In many countries and cultures waste water and solid waste from humans and animals is the most important fertilizer used in agriculture and aquaculture. Of course this is a very valuable way of waste disposal. However, it also entails health risks if these fertilizers are not handled and treated in a good way.

For all these aspects WHO has developed guidelines in order for all potential causes for ill-health can be addressed in water resource management. Besides that it promotes a combined strategy of the provision of safe water resources, active surveillance, health education, vector control and personal hygiene.