

# Agricultural water management in Turkey and concept of virtual water

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## Abstract

Water is the vital component of life. Although it is a renewable source, it is a limited resource too. Water management encompasses the activities and services required for development, distribution and various uses of water resources. The basic target in agricultural water management is to prevent waste of water and to provide efficient water use in agriculture. Water is essential in production of all kind of goods and various amounts of water are used in production processes of goods and produces. The water used in production process of an agricultural or industrial goods or services is called “virtual water”. The concept of “virtual water” allows us to comprehend the role of water in production processes. With regard to available water resources, Turkey is classified as country experiencing water deficits and it is expected to be classified as water-poor country in the next decade. Therefore, Turkey should make a great effort in water resources planning and management. Since agricultural production is the greatest water consuming sector in Turkey, water saving should initially be planned in food production. There is a close relationship between virtual water transfer-trade and water resources management. Virtual water trade is a significant tool in efficient water resources management. The countries experiencing water deficits may not produce the goods and services requiring large amounts of water and export such products and transfer virtual water. In this way, water saving is provided in one hand and maximum outcomes are achieved per water unit on the other hand. In this study, agricultural water use of Turkey was briefly assessed and effects of virtual water trade on agricultural water management were discussed.

Key words: agriculture, water management, virtual water, Turkey

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