

Forever Entwined: Water and Life

As the crew of Apollo 8, the first manned voyage to orbit the moon, flew into space, they glanced back and were met with the most wondrous sight that mankind has ever seen. Gleaming against the pitch black background was a deep-blue orb that united all the blossoms of life, triumphs of mankind, and hopes for the future. But without this distinctive blue hue, Earth would not be the vibrant life-giver that it is today, according to distinguished scientist Sylvia Earle, who stated simply: “No water, no life. No blue, no green.” Indeed, it is vital that we take care of our water now so that there may be more triumphs for mankind in the future.

Water covers approximately 71% of the Earth’s surface, and makes up about 60% of a human body. Given the immense importance of water, it is striking that water is so egregiously mismanaged and misused throughout the world. As a matter of fact, water is the most inadequately managed resources today. This negligence has and will continue to take its toll, causing hydrological poverty in many areas of the world, sparking conflicts and perhaps even wars in water-starved regions such as the Jordan basin, and killing millions entrapped in poverty in developing countries. 1.2 billion people lack regular access to clean water – and this is only the human story; flora and fauna have been deeply impacted by inadequate water as well.

The common misconception in the public is the false dichotomy between water conservation and economic growth. Yet, when correctly managed, water can be a valuable resource, both ecologically and economically. Gotthilf Hempel, a leader of a UN study on water, said that “the fight for water will be more dramatic than the fight for oil in the long run. For oil we have substitutes, for water we have none.” It is clear that we must take a stance on conserving water – and we can do it by decreasing the amount of water we waste. Using more efficient irrigation technology, such as drip irrigation and implementing soil moisture detectors, is one solution for

those in agriculture. Water-saving or waterless toilets, faucet aerators, and low water flow showerheads are other simple solutions that can save gallons of water per day in the average household and are both economically and ecologically beneficial. There are myriads of solutions available – we just need to take the initiative and use them.

Famous explorer Jacques Cousteau once said that “we forget that the water cycle and the life cycle are one.” Now, more than ever, we must not forget his words and work to preserve water for a better future. Now, more than ever, we must remember that water and life are entwined at their very cores, inseparable and indissolubly joined. Now, more than ever, we must take action to address critical water mismanagements and lead a revolution in sustainable water use for a brighter – and bluer – future.