

U.N. issues report on world water supplies

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The United Nation's World Water Development Report says nearly 20 percent of the Earth's population lacks access to safe drinking water.

The report released Thursday says water-borne diseases killed more than 3 million people during 2002 and blames failed policies, a lack of resources and environmental changes for the problem.

The study calls for better leadership if a goal of halving the proportion of people without proper access to safe water by 2015 is to be achieved, the BBC reported.

The findings of what's called the most comprehensive assessment to date of the world's freshwater supplies will be outlined next week during the World Water Forum in Mexico.

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