Meeting the 'grand challenge' of a sustainable water supply

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Scientists and engineers must join together in a major new effort to educate the public and decision makers on a crisis in providing Earth's people with clean water that looms ahead in the 21st century. That's the focus of a comment article in the current edition of *Chemical & Engineering News*, the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society (ACS), the world's largest scientific society.

Bassam Z. Shakhashiri, Ph.D., David L. Sedlak, Ph.D., and Jerald L. Schnoor, Ph.D., explain that shortages of reliable supplies of fresh water will touch the lives people everywhere. "In the developed world, increasing demands for water—for cities, for industry, for agriculture and for the extraction of fossil fuels—are straining an already burdened system," the three noted scientists write. "In the developing world, nearly 1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation because of the absence of distribution systems for clean water."

Needed throughout the world, they state, is a new generation of sustainable water systems. These systems would include new technologies for recycling of municipal and industrial wastewater, more stringent standards for waterborne pollutants and other innovations. "Meeting this challenge requires the efforts of chemists, collaborating with engineers and other scientists and influencing decision makers," they say.

More information: "ACS Global Water Initiative: The Grand Challenge of Water," *Chemical & Engineering News*. cenm.ag/water2013