

Hello Charles,

I'm most grateful you were able to spare the time to read my email.

I do agree with you that the link between the good work you do and industrial scale water conservation is not an immediate one. However it's also interesting to see how elaborate some of the future water sourcing schemes are becoming, the combined daily abstraction rates are truly eye-watering. So far I've been contacted by community campaign groups in Oxford, Wales and London. I've told them to propose alternative community led water conservation proposals pointing to better savings compared with new abstraction schemes. I think it's the only thing they can do to counteract the upheaval and upset these new water abstraction schemes are going to cause in the future. Some people are going to lose their houses.

The most bizarre one is the Thames river abstraction scheme which is intended to take 75K cubic meters a day during drought periods, from a single point (when the river is at its most stressed), and replace it with 100K cubic meters of trade effluent because there won't be enough water left to flow over the weirs. I would say by comparison, the potential for water conservation practical methods would produce 800K cubic meters per day savings if mostly simple water savings solutions were adopted across the capital's housing stock and industrial consumer base. I found most of the practical work is easy to train people to do; they don't need specialist skills, we could use this for social employment, it's not going to require behavioural changes for Londoners to make it happen.

I'm less sure since around 2/3rds of the savings is sewage, whether this in fact would have a negative effect on drainage, (i.e. fat bergs), and the ability for the effluent treatment plants to work efficiently with less fresh water; maybe they would have to pump fresh water in to aid the treatment process. Nevertheless, for roughly the same cost as this one scheme, it's possible to complete a water conservation route and branch study and implementation project for the whole of the Capital.

Surfers against sewage says:

"Unlike in England and Wales where nearly 100% of Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) are monitored, in Scotland under 4% of overflows are required to be monitored. This means the Scottish public are in the dark about the performance of the other 96% of overflows. Scottish record sewage dumps: 14,008 at least 113,230 hours."

I imagine this situation is something you are interested to see improved upon. It occurs to me that water conservation will significantly reduce the loading on water treatment plants, if industrial and domestic consumers play their part in reducing water consumption going down the plug-hole. This is the link between water conservation and your work.

*"I used to think that the top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought that 30 years of good science could address these problems. I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy. To deal with these, we need a cultural and spiritual transformation. And we scientists don't know how to do that." - **Gus Speth (former US Advisor on Climate)***

Kind regards

Matthew Middleton
The Water Conservationist

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Sent: Tuesday, December 12, 2023 at 11:19 AM

From: "Charles Millar" <Charles.Millar@sift.scot>

To: "Matthew Middleton" <matthew.middleton@mail.com>

Subject: RE: The Water Conservationist's Guide to the Forgotten Utility

Dear Matthew

Thank you for your interesting email. I am sure you are right about water stress.

However as SIFT only operates in the marine waters around Scotland, your campaign work is not core to our activities.

I wish you well with your work.

Kind regards

Charles Millar

Chief Executive Office