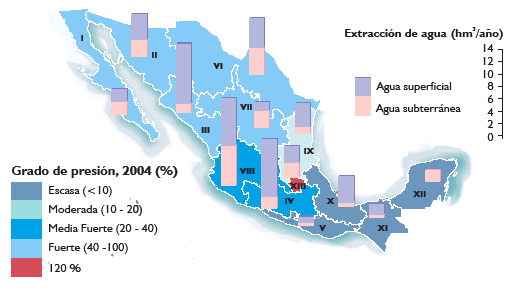
Water Scarcity and Stress in Mexico

[Water resources](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_resource) in many parts of [Mexico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexico) are under stress, especially in the arid northwest and central regions where most of the population lives and most of the economic activities are located. The country has put in place a system of water resources management that includes both central (federal) and decentralized (basin and local) institutions.



Water is a natural resource that is distributed disproportionately in Mexico, a country which is 31% arid, 36% semi-arid and 33% sub-humid. The average annual precipitation is 780 millimeters and the annual volume of water is 1630 cubic kilometers, 27% of which drains into rivers, the deepest of which are located in the southeast. By contrast, only 19% drains into the northern and central regions, which make up more than half of the country. Similar situations occur with underground water.

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| **PRINCIPAL HYDROLOGICAL BASINS AFFECTED BY WATER POLLUTION, 1985** | | | | | |
| BASIN | SURFACE AREA | POPULATION | VOLUME OF RESIDUAL WATER | BIOCHEMICAL DEMAND FOR OXYGEN | | | | |
|  | Km2 | Inhabitants | 106 cubic meters/year | ORGANIC LOAD tons/year | % URBAN | % INDUSTRIAL | |
| LERMA | 129,632 | 11,344,467 | 536 | 350,946 | 33 | 67 |
| PANUCO | 67,872 | 17,751,888 | 1407 | 632,535 | 47 | 53 |
| SAN JUAN | 32,678 | 29,992,920 | 296 | 116,076 | 42 | 58 |
| BALSAS | 111,300 | 7,280,632 | 258 | 120,666 | 36 | 64 |
| BLANCO | 2,738 | 828,674 | 162 | 116,511 | 6 | 94 |



The cutzamala system is one of the solutions to this problem.