“Water Management in Canada with a Special Emphasis on Agriculture”

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Abstract

Canada is perceived to be a water-abundant country. Indeed, the sustainable per capita annual supply of water in Canada is approximately 100,000 m³ (compared to 400 m³ in Israel). Despite this abundance, Canada’s water resources face a number of challenges. These include climate change, deregulation of electricity markets, growth in intensive feedlot operations, ageing municipal infrastructures, increasing water demands (consumptive and nonconsumptive) and the introduction of exotic species. The potential importance of these challenges is magnified by an inefficient, fragmented and outdated regulatory environment. This paper considers these challenges, water regulations and the appropriate directions for reform with an emphasis being on reform of water pricing and other allocative mechanisms. Particular attention is paid to the relationship between water resources and Canada’s agricultural and agri-food sectors.

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