

Topic: Water footprint and virtual water trade in Switzerland and implications for environmental policies

The concepts of water footprint and virtual water trade address the fact that human production activities and consumption have direct and indirect impacts on both local and global freshwater systems. Hence, issues relating to water shortages and pollution can be better understood and addressed by considering production and supply chains as a whole from both the production and consumption perspectives.

The tasks of this thesis include: 1) to apply the concepts of water footprint and virtual water trade to investigate the water consumption patterns of individuals and the nation as a whole for Switzerland; 2) to analyze the food trade structure, partners and possible environmental impacts on both Switzerland and its major trade partners; 3) to address the importance and limitations of the concepts for raising the public and business awareness of water resources and environment sustainability.