

## **Glossary**

### **Bioaccumulation**

The process by which the concentrations of some toxic chemicals gradually increase in living tissue, such as in plants, fish, or people as they breathe contaminated air, drink contaminated water, or eat contaminated food.

### **Bioremediation**

A process that uses microorganisms to change toxic compounds into non-toxic ones.

### **The Clean Water Act**

A federal law of 1977 enforced by U.S. EPA. A key provision is that "any person responsible for the discharge of a pollutant or pollutants into any waters of the United States from any point source must apply for and obtain a permit." This is reflected by the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), through which the permits are issued by Regional Water Quality Control Boards. Permits are now being required for storm water runoff from cities and other locations.

### **Stabilization**

Changing active organic matter in sludge into inert, harmless material. The term also refers to physical activities such as compacting and capping at sites that limits the further spread of contamination without actual reduction of toxicity.

### **Green water**

water replenishing soil moisture, evaporating from soil, plant and other surfaces, and transpired by plants. In nature the global average amount of rainfall becoming green water is about 60%. Of the green water about 55% falls on forests, 25% on grasslands and about 20% on crops. We can increase green water productivity by rainwater harvesting, increased infiltration and runoff

collection. Green water cannot be piped or drunk (cannot be sold) and is therefore generally ignored by water management authorities but it is crucial to plants in both nature and agriculture and needs careful management as an important part of the global water cycle.