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Bottled water 'a waste of money'



Cheaper and better for the environment, says the WWF

By Claire Doole in Geneva

Research commissioned by a Swiss-based conservation group indicates that bottled water is often no healthier or safer to drink than tap water.

The World Wide Fund for Nature argues strongly that bottled water is not only environmentally unfriendly but also a waste of money

The research by the University of Geneva shows that bottled water sells for up to 1,000 times the price of tap water, but that the quality is often no better.

In 50% of cases the only difference is that bottled water has added minerals and salts, which do not actually mean the water is healthier.

Furthermore, some bottled waters are exactly the same standard as tap water, without being as energy efficient.

Uphill battle

Tap water comes from underground pipes, while the manufacture, distribution and disposal of bottled water requires much more energy and fuel.

While the WWF does acknowledge that bottled water is generally safer in areas where tap water is contaminated, it says boiling or filtering local water is a cheaper and more sustainable alternative.

The long-term solution, it argues, is to clean up municipal water supplies.

But in the meantime, the conservationists are fighting an uphill battle.

The bottled water market is booming. It is the fastest growing drinks industry in the world and shows no signs of drying up.



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