

US Water Crisis Develops: Lessons for Water Management in New Zealand

Wellington, 24 January 2012. The United States' issues around water supplies and quality have interesting parallels here in New Zealand. International expert and commentator, Robert Glennon will tour New Zealand between 1 and 9 February discussing what he describes as the tragedy – and irony – of water management in America.

He suggests provocative market-based solutions which could resonate here in New Zealand while emphasising that water is 'the overlooked resource'.

Funded by an AGMARDT grant¹, and supported by Water New Zealand and The Royal Society of New Zealand, Professor Glennon will deliver three free public lectures in Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch, and will meet with academics, officials, scientists and others interested in water issues during his visit.

Author of widely acclaimed book, *Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What To Do About It*, Professor Glennon will reveal the heady extravagances and everyday waste of water that he says 'is sucking the US dry'. He'll talk about the Vegas Strip, faux snow in Atlanta, super-sized bathrooms and mega-farms, billion-dollar water deals and big time politics and personalities.

He'll tell listeners that America's water woes will worsen before they get better because the US is slow to change its ways and says, as importantly, water is the overlooked resource. He notes Washington's love affair with biofuels will turn to heartbreak once the US realises that thousands of litres of water are needed to produce just one litre of fuel.

Robert Glennon will argue that America must make some hard choices – and his answer is the introduction of a provocative market-based system that values water as a commodity and a fundamental human right.

His answers to America's problems have a global context, and will resonate with issues around water here in New Zealand.

Robert Glennon is a Professor of Law and Public Policy in the Rogers College of Law at Arizona University.

Author of two widely acclaimed books, he is the recipient of two National Science Foundation grants, serves as Water Policy Advisor to Pima County, Arizona, is a member of American Rivers' Science and Technical Advisory Committee and is a commentator and analyst for various television and radio programmes in the US. He is also an occasional blogger in *The Huffington Post*².

¹ The Agricultural and Marketing Research and Development Trust, better known as AGMARDT, aims to foster and encourage innovative ideas, research capability and potential leaders within the agricultural, horticultural and forestry sectors. Its mission is to enhance New Zealand's international pre-eminence and competitive advantage in the production, processing and marketing of high quality, and increasingly higher value, agri-food and fibre products. Each year, AGMARDT invests around \$2.5 million into developing world-class capacity and capability within the agribusiness sector.

² <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-glennon>

Robert Glennon is an international speaker on water issues, and has published pieces in the Washington Post, Bloomberg and the Arizona Republic. He has been guest on numerous radio and television shows as well.

Public lectures

Hamilton

Wednesday 1 February 6.00pm

Concert Chamber, Gallagher Academy of Performing Arts, University of Waikato

Wellington

Wednesday 8 February 6 pm

Victoria University, Rutherford House Lecture Theatre 1, Pipitea Campus, Wellington

Christchurch

Thursday 9 February 6.00 pm

University of Canterbury, Lecture Theatre C1

Interviews/contacts

Professor Glennon will be available for interview.

For further information or interview please contact:

- Brent.clothier@plantandfood.co.nz , or
- Murray.gibb@waternz.org.nz

Books

Unquenchable: America's Water Crisis and What To Do About It (Washington DC, Island Press 2009)

- Recipient of Rachel Carson Book Award for Reporting on the Environment, Society of Environmental Journalists (2010)
- Honourable mention, Trout Unlimited's list of 11 *Must-Have-Books* ever published on the environment (2010)

Water Follies: Groundwater Pumping and the Fate of America's Fresh Waters (Washington, DC, Island Press, 2002)

- Over 150 published reviews, including the *New York Review of Books*, *The Washington Post* and was *The Scientific American* featured book of the month January 2003

Sponsors

Professor Glennon's visit is generously sponsored through a grant from AGMARDT - with additional support from Water New Zealand and The Royal Society of New Zealand.