

Rapid development depleting groundwater

The UAE has one of the highest per capita water consumption rates in the world, an official report from the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, said.

The document, *State of Environment Report for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi*, which was unveiled yesterday, said rapid social and economic development in Abu Dhabi

over the past four decades has led to water scarcity and groundwater depletion.

The report said the agriculture and forestry sectors use the bulk of available water and unplanned and uncontrolled groundwater withdrawals now total more than 2.5 billion cubic metres per year.

“As a result, groundwater levels and quality are declin-

ing in many areas,” the report says. The report added the current situation creates potential for pollution, especially nitrates from the extensive use of inorganic fertilisers.

“Pilot studies are currently being carried out to study whether it is feasible to replace inorganic farming with organic farming. Such a change will curb pollution.” (Wam)

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