

South-to-north water diversion benefits 50 mln Chinese

More than 50 million people in northern China have benefited from a massive water diversion project that pumps water from the Yangtze River in the south to the draught-prone north, authorities announced Thursday.

Since coming into operation in late 2014, the middle route of the south-to-north water diversion project has transferred 9.6 billion cubic meters of water, benefiting 53.1 million people as on Wednesday, according to the Office of the South-to-North Water Diversion Project Construction Commission of the State Council.

The middle route of the project carries water through canals and pipes from Danjiangkou reservoir in central China's Hubei Province to the cities of Beijing and Tianjin, and the provinces of Hebei and Henan.

The project has supplied 2.6 billion cubic meters of water to Beijing, serving 11 million people.

Currently about 70 percent of Beijing's water supply comes from the project. The city's per capita water resources have increased from 100 to 150 cubic meters. Previously the city's water supply came mainly from underground water.

Officials with the office said as a result of the project, underground water levels have started to rise in some areas suffering from over exploitation in Beijing and Tianjin.

The project has also helped improve the agricultural production and river and lake environments by supplying water to farmland and rivers.