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Italy's largest river experiencing drought – 20th June, 2022

Level 4

Europe is experiencing water shortages. A region in Italy has its worst drought for 70 years. This is because of almost no rainfall in the past four months and less snow in winter. The water level of Italy's largest river, the Po, is three metres lower than average. This has fully exposed a World War II shipwreck. If it doesn't rain soon, there'll be a serious water shortage. This will mean water rationing. Farmers will have problems finding water for irrigation.

The River Po gets much of its water from a lake in the Alps. The lake has had its lowest water levels since 1946. High temperatures are making things worse. A farmer from a rural town near Milan said she is expecting a "disastrous" and "catastrophic" year. She added: "We believe that there will be a drop in wheat productivity by at least 20 per cent." The Po Valley will see a 30 to 40% fall in fruit and vegetable production.

Level 5

Europe is experiencing water shortages. One region in northern Italy has its worst drought for 70 years. It has seen little rainfall in the past four months. This year's snowfall was 70 per cent lower. The water level of Italy's largest river, the Po, is three metres lower than average. A lot of the riverbed has dried up and people can walk across the mud. This has fully exposed a World War II shipwreck. Authorities are worried that if it doesn't rain soon, there'll be a serious water shortage. This will mean rationing, and farmers will have problems finding water to irrigate crops.

Authorities said the water shortages are unprecedented. The River Po gets much of its water from a lake in the Italian Alps. The lake has had its lowest water levels since 1946. Higher-than-average temperatures and a mini heat wave are making things worse. A farmer from a rural town near Milan said she is expecting a "disastrous year". She said high temperatures and no rain will be "catastrophic." She added: "We believe that there will be a drop in wheat productivity by at least 20 per cent." The Po Valley will see a 30 to 40% reduction in fruit and vegetable production.

Level 6

Large swathes of Europe are experiencing droughts and water shortages. One region is experiencing its worst drought for 70 years. The area, in northern Italy, has had hardly any rainfall in the past four months. This year's snowfall was 70 per cent lower. This has caused the River Po, Italy's largest, to be three metres lower than average. A lot of the riverbed has dried up and people can walk across the mud. In one part, the declining water level has fully exposed a World War II shipwreck. Authorities are concerned that if it doesn't rain soon, there'll be a serious water shortage. This means water will be rationed for drinking. Farmers will also have problems finding water to irrigate their crops.

A spokesperson from Italy's Po Basin Authority said the water shortages are unprecedented. The river gets much of its water from Lake Maggiore in the Italian Alps. The lake is seeing its lowest water level since 1946. Problems are being exacerbated by higher-than-average temperatures and a mini heat wave. A farmer from the tiny rural town of Guastalla, 150 km southeast of Milan, said she is expecting a "disastrous year". She said: "With such high temperatures and with no rain...the situation is catastrophic." She added: "We believe that there will be a drop in wheat productivity by at least 20 per cent due to the lack of rain." The Po Valley will see a 30 to 40% reduction in fruit and vegetable production.