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Scientific study may surprise you

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Where is the clearest water in the world?

Here's an answer that you cannot yet correctly Google. A presumption that seemed logical until this year was that the clearest water in the world was prepared by careful purification in the laboratory, but it ain't so.

Turns out, the clearest water, that is the water that attenuates the least amount of ultraviolet (UV) light per foot in the world is in nature - in the South Pacific, near Easter Island. Incredibly, recent measurements there (Morel et al. 2007) reveal attenuation coefficients below those currently listed for pure H₂O. The previously known, clearest natural waters came from an ice-covered lake in Antarctica (Vincent et al. 1998), but in that location contaminating compounds from sediments are nearer than in the newly explored marine waters.

Rather than simply being a Guinness Book of World Records curiosity, this result has considerable implications for both biology and chemistry in aquatic environments. In particular, these new measurements show that high-energy ultraviolet light capable of causing photochemical transformation and damage to DNA and other biomolecules penetrates pure water much more effectively than previously thought. Time to update the standard references.

The full version of this abbreviated summary of an article in the flagship journal of the American Society of Limnology and Oceanography (ASLO) can be found by clicking [here](#). ASLO fosters a diverse, international scientific community that creates, integrates and communicates knowledge across the full spectrum of aquatic sciences, advances public awareness and education about aquatic resources and research, and promotes scientific stewardship of aquatic resources for the public interest. Its products and activities are directed toward these ends. Further information about ASLO is available on its [Web site](#).