

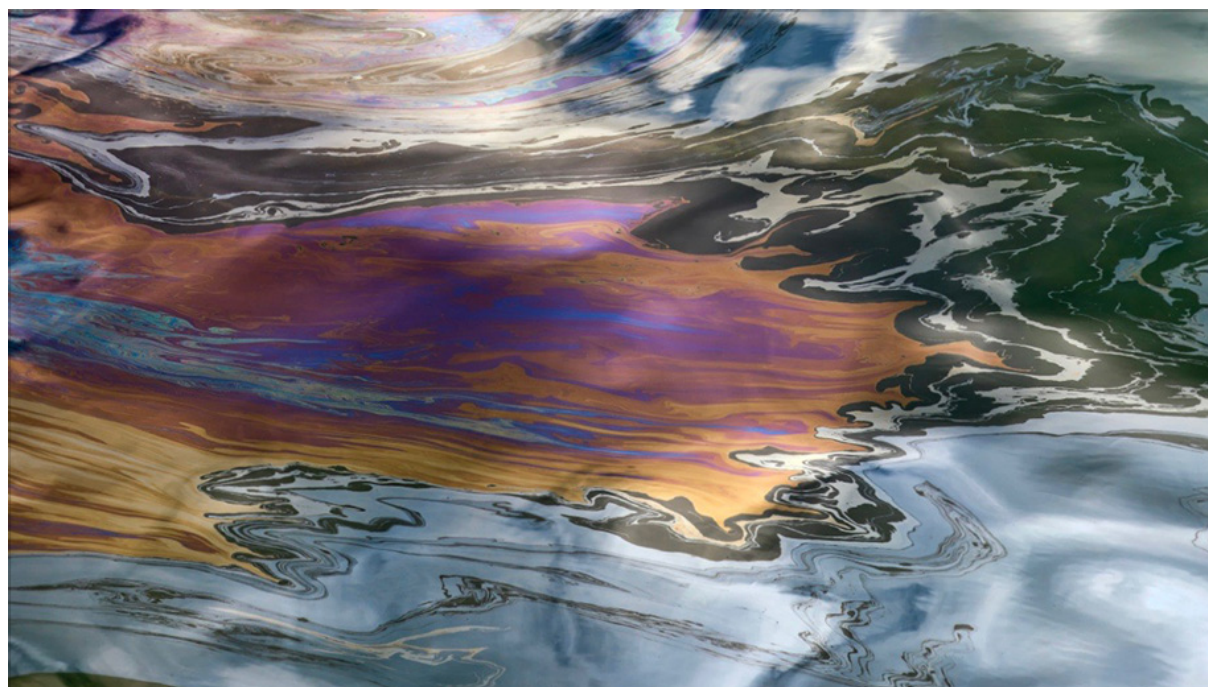
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Saudi thirst for water is creating a toxic brine problem

沙特海水淡化工业引发了毒盐水问题

Saudi Arabia isn't just the world's top crude oil exporter. It's also the biggest producer of a toxic effluent that's the byproduct of slaking the desert kingdom's thirst for water.

沙特阿拉伯不仅是世界上最大的原油出口国，也是最大的有毒废水制造国。沙特阿拉伯是一座沙漠王国，而这些废水是其解决缺水问题时产生的“副产品”。

United Nations scientists warned that desalination is creating huge volumes of chemical-laced brine that risks contaminating food chains if left untreated. The problem is most acute in the Middle East and North Africa, which account for two-thirds of the world's water contaminated by energy-intensive desalination plants.

联合国科学家警告说，海水淡化会产生大量带有化学物质的盐水，如果不加以处理，这种盐水就可能有污染食物链的风险。这个问题在中东和北非最为严重。全世界来源于能源密集型海水淡化工厂的污水中，有三分之二来自中东和北非。

Desalination is an industrial process that uses heat and pressure to make seawater fit for human consumption. For every liter of potable water produced, the UN estimates about 1.5 liters of liquid polluted with chlorine and copper are created. When pumped back into the ocean, the toxic brine depletes oxygen and impacts organisms along the food chain.

海水淡化是一种利用热量和压强使海水变得适合人类饮用的工业流程。据联合国估计，每生产一升饮用水，就会产生约 1.5 升被氯和铜污染的液体。当这些有毒浓盐水被泵回海洋，会消耗海水中的氧气，并影响食物链上的生物。

Saudi Arabia's desalination plants produce about 31.5 million cubic meters of contaminated water each day. That volume of liquid is equivalent to about 20 million barrels of oil a day, or, double the amount of crude it currently produces. The Kingdom is tendering seven desalination projects as it tries to alleviate the impacts of depleted aquifers.

沙特阿拉伯的海水淡化工厂每天都会产生约 3150 万立方米的污水。这个体积的液体相当于约 2000 万桶石油，或者沙特阿拉伯目前每日开采的原油量的两倍。为了减轻枯竭的地下蓄水区带来的影响，沙特阿拉伯还在提议七个海水淡化项目。

Other countries have successfully used the brine to cultivate forage shrubs, though at the cost of land salinization. "There is a need to translate such research and convert an environmental problem into an economic opportunity," said Manzoor Qadir, the UN institute's assistant director. "This is particularly important in countries producing large volumes of brine with relatively low efficiencies, such as Saudi Arabia, U.A.E., Kuwait and Qatar."

其他国家已成功利用盐水种植了饲用灌木，虽然这么做是以土地盐碱化为代价的。联合国机构的助理主管满祖尔·卡迪尔说道：“我们需要去实践这种研究，并把现存的环境问题转化为商机。对于因较低能效产生大量浓盐水的国家，比如沙特阿拉伯、阿联酋、科威特和卡塔尔，这种做法尤为重要。”

——文章来源 / 彭博社

重点词汇

toxic/'tɒksɪk/

adj. 有毒的；引起中毒的

- toxic gases

brine/braɪn/

n. (用于腌制食物的) 盐水

- olives in brine

crude/kruːd/

adj./n. 未加工的；原油

- crude metal

effluent/'efluənt/

n. 废水，污水

byproduct/'baɪprɒdʌkt/

n. 副产品；不好的后果

- When burnt, plastic produces dangerous byproducts.

slake one's thirst

解渴

slake : v. 解渴，满足

- slake your thirst with a drink 喝一杯解解渴

desalination/,diː,sæli'neɪʃn/

n. 海水淡化

- The country desalinates sea water to produce fresh water for drinking. (v.)

lace/leɪs/

v. 带有，掺有

- chemical-laced waters

contaminate/kən'tæmɪneɪt/

v. 污染；弄脏

- Much of the coast has been contaminated by nuclear waste.

if left untreated

如若不处理 / 不治疗

- It can lead to death if left untreated.

acute/ə'kjuːt/

adj. 十分严重的；剧烈的

- She felt acute embarrassment.
- acute stomach pains

potable/'poutəbl/

adj. 适宜饮用的

- clean and safe to drink
- drinking water = potable water

chlorine/'klɔːrɪn/

n. 氯，氯气

- the chlorine in the swimming pool

copper/'kɒ:pər/

n. 铜

deplete/dɪ'pli:t/

v. 消耗；耗费（资源、金钱、精力等）

- deplete the earth's natural resources
- The illness depletes your energy.

cubic meter

立方米

- cube /kjuːb/: n. 小方块，立方体
- cubic centimeter: 立方厘米

barrel/'bærəl/

n. 桶（石油计量单位，相当于 120 到 159 升）

- Oil prices fell to \$9 a barrel.

tender/'tendər/

v. 提议，提出

- She tendered a proposal.

alleviate/ə'li:vieɪt/

v. 减轻；缓和

- = ease
- to alleviate suffering
- to alleviate the problem

aquifer/'ækwɪfər/

n. （岩石或土壤的）含水层，蓄水层

forage shrub

饲料用的灌木，灌木类饲草

- forage grass

land salinization

土地盐碱化，土地盐渍化