

How to fix the global rice crisis

文章导读：2022 年 7 月，联合国五家机构发布的 2022《世界粮食安全和营养状况》报告显示，2021 年，全球受饥饿影响人数增加到 8.28 亿人，占世界人口的 9.8%。受地区冲突、气候冲击、新冠疫情和大规模公共债务负担的影响，多重粮食危机正在逼近。事实上，今年年初，在联合国粮食及农业组织、世界粮食计划署和欧洲联盟联合发布的《全球粮食危机报告》当中就已经指出，受多重因素影响，2021 年共有 53 个国家和地区接近 1.93 亿人遭遇严重粮食短缺，这一数字比前一年增加了 4000 万人之多，再度佐证了全球粮食问题的严峻态势。



【1】The world's most important crop is fueling diabetes and climate change

【1】世界上最重要的作物正在引发糖尿病和气候变化

【2】The green revolution was one of the greatest feats of human **ingenuity**¹. By promoting **higher-yielding**² varieties of wheat and, especially, rice, plant-breeders in India, Mexico and the Philippines helped China emerge from a famine and India avoid one. From 1965 to 1995 Asia's rice yields doubled and its poverty almost halved, even as its population soared³.

【2】绿色革命是人类智慧最伟大的壮举之一。印度、墨西哥和菲律宾的植物育种家通过推广高产小麦品种，尤其是水稻品种，帮助中国摆脱了饥荒，也帮印度避免了一个饥荒。从 1965 年到 1995 年，亚洲的水稻产量翻了一番，贫困人口几乎减半，尽管人口激增。

一、重点词汇

1. **Inguity** /ɪndʒəˈnuːəti/ n. 独创力; 聪明才智; 心灵手巧
2. **Higher-yielding** 高产
3. **Soar** /soːr/ 猛增; 翱翔; 高飞; 急升; 升空; 升腾; 高耸; (音乐) 升高, 增强

二、同义表达

1. 表达“某数据急剧增加”

(1) skyrocket (暴涨)

The cost of living in the city has **skyrocketed** in recent years.

近年来，这个城市的生活费用直线上升。

(2) surge (急剧上升)

There has been a **surge** in demand for electric cars in the past year.

去年，电动汽车的需求激增。

(3) soar (猛增)

The number of tourists visiting the country has **soared** in the past decade.

过去十年来，前往该国的游客数量激增。

(4) spike (急剧增加)

The number of COVID-19 cases has **spiked** in the past week.

过去一周，新冠肺炎病例数量激增。

(5) explode (爆发式增长)

The popularity of the new smartphone model has **exploded** in the market.

这种新型智能手机在市场上大受欢迎。

【3】Asia's vast rice market is a legacy of that **triumph**¹. The **starchy**² grain is the main source of **sustenance**³ for over half the world's population. Asians produce over 90% of rice and get more than a quarter of their calories from it. And demand for the crop is projected to soar, on the back of population growth in Asia and Africa, another big rice consumer. By one estimate, the world will need to produce almost a third more rice by 2050. Yet that looks increasingly hard—and in some ways **undesirable**⁴.

【3】亚洲巨大的大米市场是那次胜利的遗产。这种富含淀粉的谷物是世界上一半以上人口的主要食物来源。亚洲人生产超过 90% 的大米，并从中获得超过四分之一的卡路里。由于亚洲和非洲的人口增长，对这种作物的需求预计将飙升，而亚洲和非洲是另一个大米消费大国。据估计，到 2050 年，世界大米产量将增加近三分之一。然而，这看起来越来越困难——在某些方面是不可取的

一、重点词汇

1. **Triumph** /'traɪʌmf/ n. 胜利; 巨大成功; 重大成就; (巨大成功或胜利的) 心满意足; 狂喜; (成功的) 典范; 楷模 vi. 成功; 战胜; 打败
2. **Starch** /stɑ:rtʃ/ 淀粉; 玉米淀粉; 含淀粉
3. **Sustenance** /'sʌstənəns/ n. 食物; 生计; 支持
4. **Undesirable** /ˌʌndɪ'zʌərəb(ə)l/ adj. 不受欢迎的, 不良的, 不想要的 n. 不良分子, 不受欢迎的人

【4】Rice production is **spluttering**¹. Yields have increased by less than 1% a year over the past decade, much less than in the previous one. The greatest slowdowns were in South-East Asia, where Indonesia and the Philippines—together, home to 400m people—are already big importers. This has many explanations. Urbanization and industrialization have made labour and farmland **scarcer**². Excessive use of **pesticides**³, fertilizer and irrigation have poisoned and **depleted**⁴ soils and groundwater. But the biggest reason may be global warming.

【4】水稻产量正在下降。在过去的十年里，每年的收益增长不到 1%，远低于前一个十年。最大的减速发生在东南亚，加起来有 4 亿人口的印度尼西亚和菲律宾已经是较大的粮食进口国。对此有很多解释。城市化和工业化使得劳动力和耕地更加稀缺。过度使用农药、化肥和灌溉已经导致土壤和地下水中毒和枯竭。但最大的原因可能是全球变暖。

一、重点词汇

1. **Splutter** /'splʌtər/ v. 气急败坏地说，急促地说：发出呛咳声，发出噼啪声，下降
2. **Scarce** /skers/ adj. 缺乏的，不足的；稀有的，少见的
3. **Pesticides** /'pestɪsɪdɪz/ n. [农药] 农药；[农药] 杀虫剂（pesticide 的复数）
4. **Deplete** /drɪ'pli:t/ v. 大量减少，耗尽

二、同义表达

1. 表达“某数据急剧下降”

(1) plummet (暴跌)

The stock prices **plummeted** after the company announced poor earnings.

公司宣布收益不佳后，股价暴跌。

(2) plunge (急剧下降)

The temperature has **plunged** dramatically in the past few hours.

过去几小时气温急剧下降。

(3) nosedive (急剧下跌)

The company's profits have taken a **nosedive** in the past quarter.

该公司的利润在上个季度急剧下降。

(4) drop sharply (急剧下降)

The number of visitors to the museum has **dropped sharply** since the pandemic began.

自疫情开始以来，参观博物馆的人数急剧下降。

(5) collapse (崩盘，垮掉)

The housing market **collapsed** after the financial crisis.

金融危机后，房地产市场崩盘。

【5】Rice is particularly **susceptible**¹ to extreme conditions and is often grown in places where they are increasingly evident. Patchy **monsoon**² rains and drought last year in India, the world's biggest rice exporter, led to a reduced harvest and an export ban. **Devastating**³ floods in Pakistan, the fourth-biggest exporter, **wiped out**⁴ 15% of its rice harvest. Rising sea-levels are causing salt to seep into the Mekong **Delta**⁵, Vietnam's "rice bowl".

【5】水稻特别容易受到极端条件的影响，通常种植在极端条件日益明显的地方。去年，世界最大的大米出口国印度断断续续的季风降雨和干旱导致收成减少，并颁布了出口禁令。全球第四大大米出口国巴基斯坦遭遇毁灭性洪灾，损失了15%的大米收成。海平面上升导致盐渗入湄公河三角洲——越南的“饭碗”。

一、重点词汇

1. **Susceptible** /sə'septəb(ə)l/ adj. 易得病的，易受影响的；
2. **Monsoon** /,mɔ:n'su:n/ n. 季风；（印度等地的）雨季；季候风
3. **Devastating** /'devəstetɪŋ/ adj. 毁灭性的，极具破坏力的；令人极为震惊的；令人印象深刻的
4. **Wipe out** 消灭
5. **Delta** /'deltə/ 三角洲

二、同义表达

1.表达“易受某事影响”

(1) is highly vulnerable to

The elderly population **is highly vulnerable to** respiratory infections.

老年人极易感染呼吸道疾病。

(2) is predisposed to

Some individuals **are genetically predisposed to** certain diseases.

有些人天生易患某些疾病。

(3) is easily influenced by

Children **are easily influenced by** their peers.

孩子们很容易受到同龄人的影响。

(4) is prone to

His skin **is prone to** breakouts in hot weather.

他的皮肤在热天容易长痘

【6】 It gets worse. Rice is not merely a **casualty**¹ of climate change, but also a contributor to it. By starving soils of oxygen, **paddy**² cultivation encourages **methane**³-emitting bacteria. It is a bigger source of greenhouse gas than any food stuff except beef. Its emissions footprint is similar to that of aviation. If you count the **conversion**⁴ of forestland for rice paddy—the fate of much of Madagascar’s rainforest—that footprint is even bigger.

【6】 情况越来越糟。大米不仅是气候变化的牺牲品，也是气候变化的推动者。通过使土壤缺氧，水稻种植促进滋生了排放甲烷的细菌。它是比除牛肉以外的任何食品都更大的温室气体来源。它的排放足迹与航空类似。如果算上将林地转换为稻田——如马达加斯加大部分雨林的命运——那这一足迹就更大了。

一、重点词汇

1. **Casualty** /'kæʒuəlti/ n. 伤亡人员；受害者，毁坏物；急诊室，急救室；事故，灾难（主要用于保险中）
2. **Paddy** /'pædi/ n. 稻田；水田；发火；发怒
3. **Methan** 甲烷
4. **Conversion** /kən'veɜ: rɜ(ə)n/ n. 转变，转换；（宗教或信仰的）改变，归附；侵权行为，非法挪用（或侵吞）

二、同义表达

1.表达“情况越来越糟糕”

(1) is going from bad to worse

The company's financial situation **is going from bad to worse** with declining sales and increasing debt.

随着销售额的下降和债务的增加，公司的财务状况越来越糟。

(2) is deteriorating

The patient's health **is deteriorating** despite the medical treatment.

尽管进行了治疗，病人的健康状况仍在恶化。

(3) is going downhill

The quality of the product **is going downhill** due to cost-cutting measures.

由于削减成本的措施，产品的质量正在下降。

(4) is going awry ; awry /ə'raɪ/ adj. 脱离既定路线的；歪的 adv. 迷途地；歪

The plan **is going awry** due to unexpected challenges that have arisen.

由于出现了意想不到的挑战，计划正在走向失败

【7】This amounts to an **insidious**¹ feedback loop and, in all, a far more complicated set of problems than the food insecurity that **spurred**² the green revolution. Indeed, eating too much rice turns out to be bad for people as well as the climate. White rice is more fattening than bread or maize, and is not especially **nutritious**³. In South Asia rice-heavy diets have been linked to high rates of diabetes and **persistent**⁴ malnutrition.

【7】这就形成了一个潜在的反馈循环，总的来说，这是一组比引发绿色革命的粮食不安全问题复杂得多的问题。事实上，吃太多米饭不仅对人体有害，对气候也有害。白米比面包或玉米更容易使人发胖，而且没有特别的营养。在南亚，以大米为主的饮食与糖尿病和持续性营养不良的高发病率有关。

一、重点词汇

1. **Insidious** /ɪn'sɪdiəs/ adj. <正式>潜伏的，隐袭的；阴险的，狡猾的
2. **Spur** /spɜːr/ v. 激励，鼓励；促进，加速，刺激（某事发生）；引发
3. **Nutritious** /nu'trɪʃəs/ adj. 有营养的，营养丰富的
4. **Persistent** /pə'sɪstənt/ adj. 执意的，坚持不懈的；持续的，反复出现的；

【8】Policymakers need to increase rice yields, then, but more selectively than in the 1960s. In the places most suitable for rice cultivation, such as hot and sticky South-East Asia, faster adoption of new technologies, such as flood-resistant and more nutritious seeds, could provide a big productivity boost. **In tandem with**¹ improved practices, such as direct seeding of paddy, they could also shorten the growing cycle and reduce the amount of water required, mitigating environmental harm. Farmers have been slow to adopt such improvements, partly because of over generous subsidies that **shield**² them **from** the rice crisis. A better approach would make state support contingent on best practice. By encouraging crop insurance—a good idea in itself—governments could also help **reassure**³ farmers as they switch from old ways to new.

【8】因此，决策者需要提高水稻产量，但要比 20 世纪 60 年代更有选择性。在最适合种植水稻的地区，如炎热而潮湿的东南亚，更快地采用新技术，如抗洪水和更有营养的种子，可以大大提高生产力。与水稻直接播种等改进做法相结合，它们还可以缩短生长周期，减少所需水量，减轻对环境的危害。农民接受这些改进的速度很慢，部分原因是过度慷慨的补贴使他们免受大米危机的影响。一个更好的方法是让国家根据最佳的实践来提供帮助。通过鼓励农作物保险——这本身就是一个好主意——政府也可以在农民从旧方式转向新方式时帮助他们打消疑虑。

一、重点词汇

1. **In tandem with** 与...同时；tandem /'tændəm/ n. 双人自行车；串联工作组；adj. 纵列的

2. **Shield** /ʃi:ld/ n. 盾（牌）；防护物，保护人；盾形纹；v. 保护，保卫；遮挡；
3. **Reassure** /ri:ə'ʃʊr/ v. 使安心，使消除疑虑

【9】Governments need to **nudge**¹ producers and consumers **away from** rice. India and Indonesia are promoting **millet**², which is more nutritious and uses a lot less water. **Scrapping**³ subsidies that favour rice over other crops would make such efforts more effective. India, for example, **procures**⁴ rice from farmers, often at above-market rates, then distributes it as food aid. It should make its **interventions**⁵ more crop-agnostic, by replacing subsidies and free rice with income support for farmers and cash transfers for the poor. That would encourage farmers to choose the best crop for their local conditions—much of India's agricultural north-west would switch from rice to wheat overnight. Poor Indians would be free to choose a more balanced diet. Thereby, it would correct a market **skewed**⁶ towards environmental damage and poor health.

【9】政府需要督促生产者和消费者远离大米。印度和印度尼西亚正在推广小米，因为小米更有营养，而且用水量更少。取消对大米的补贴将使这些努力更有效。例如，印度通常以高于市场的价格从农民手中收购大米，然后作为粮食援助分发出去。政府应该通过对农民的收入支持和对穷人的现金转移来取代补贴和免费大米，从而使其干预措施与作物无关。这将鼓励农民根据当地情况选择最好的作物——印度西北部的大部分农业地区将在一夜之间从水稻转向小麦。贫穷的印度人可以自由选择更均衡的饮食。因此，它将纠正一个倾向于破坏环境和损害健康的市场。

一、重点词汇

1. **Nudge....away from** 推动.....远离;Nudge /nʌdʒ/ v. 用肘轻触（某人以引起注意）；轻推移动，推开；用胳膊肘挤开往前走；n. （肘部的）轻推，碰；说服
2. **Millet** /'mɪlɪt/ n. 小米，粟；稷，黍的子实；黍类
3. **Scrap** /skræp/ n. （纸、布等的）碎片，小块；丝毫，一丁点；废品，废弃材料（=scrap metal）；吃剩的东西，残羹剩饭（scraps）；v. （因不切实际而）放弃，抛弃（计划、体系）；
4. **Procure** /prə'kjʊr/ v. <正式>（设法）获得，取得；为（某人）拉皮条，给（某人）做淫媒；
5. **Intervention** /,ɪntər'venʃ(ə)n/n. 干预，介入；调停，斡旋；（为改善情况尤指病痛采取的）措施，做法
6. **Skew** /skju:/ v. 偏离，歪斜；歪曲，使有误差；使曲解，使存有偏见；

【10】Bringing about such change in Asia and beyond will be far harder than promoting new wonder seeds was. Farmers are almost everywhere a powerful **constituency**¹. Yet policymakers should get used to blending complicated economic and technological fixes in this way. Increasingly, it is what fighting climate change will **entail**². Sorting out the mounting crisis in the world's most important food stuff would be a good place to begin.

【10】在亚洲及其他地区实现这样的改变要比推广新的神奇种子困难得多。几乎在任何地方，农民都是一个强有力的支持者。然而，政策制定者应该习惯于以这种方式将复杂的经济和技术问题混合在一起。这越来越成为应对气候变化的必要条件。解决世界上最重要的粮食危机将是一个很好的开始。

一、重点词汇

1. **Constituency** /kən'stɪtʃuənsi/ n. 选区，选区的选民；支持者，顾客
2. **Entail** /ɪn'teɪl/ 需要；必要

