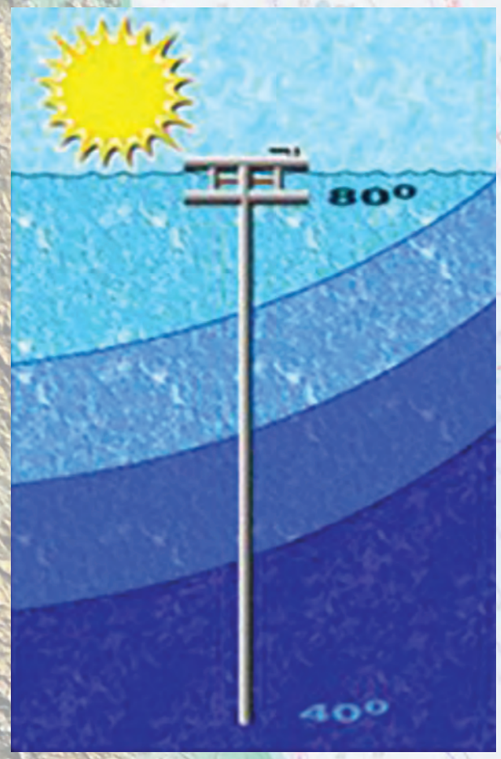
Water from the Gulf of Oman...

Ocean Thermal Energy (OTE)
The basic technology known as Ocean Thermal Energy Conversion (OTEC) is a 100-year old idea, long brushed aside during the years of fossil fuel abundance. It is now under active development in five or more countries and could eventually make the oceans a significant source of both economical and sustainable power.

More than 300 times what the world now consumes in electricity is available from the solar energy that is constantly renewed in the upper layers of the tropical oceans. This takes place throughout the equatorial zone and generally about 20 degrees north and south of the equator where most of the world's population lives.

AquaMarine Transportation Ltd (AMTL) is an engineering consultancy in water related development, which has been reaching out in tropical seas to deliver drinking water that can be developed by new technologies such as OTEC (above) or can be delivered economically by flexible barges or water-bags, sometimes known as VLFBs (very large flexible barges).




A 30,000m³ Very Large Flexible Barge (VLFB) under tow

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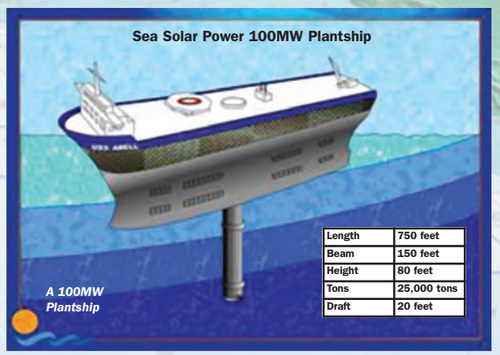
On land, the once abundance of water such as the River Indus and the underground channels of the Iranian *qanat* system is increasingly the focus of disputes and the search for new systems of management. In the case of Indus, these problems first came to a head in 1947 at the time of Partition of India and Pakistan. The solution at that time was construction of massive dams and canals to achieve equitable distribution of water for the cultivation of the principal economic crops such as rice and cotton. Today almost every drop of water that issues from the Himalayas is often used many times before it reaches the sea.

In Iran, only 40 to 50 years ago the water issuing from the *qanat* system was estimated by the Plan Organisation of Iran to have been equivalent to the discharge of the River Nile. Sadly this is no longer the case because extraction has been exceeding production from rainfall and these underground systems. In Libya, extraction of water from deep wells in the deserts of the south just in the last 20 years is already lowering the water table in neighbouring countries to the extent that the need for 'transborder compensation' is now being recognised.


Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan al Nahayan
Source: Falconry as Sport 1976-1339



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Some of the issues touched on above seem to send out warning signals that 'water wars' could very easily be encountered not far away in the future because people almost all the world over need natural sources of water for growing food. This gives meaning to the concept of 'sustainable development' and 'sustainable water use'.

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