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Water Expo & Forum: How Conserving Earth's most Precious Resource is Good for the Planet and for Business

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- With demand for fresh water across MENA set to surge, it's time to consider the challenges and opportunities ahead
- Water Expo & Forum to play key role in helping industries navigate and adapt to a changing marketplace
- Exhibition to showcase the very latest technologies for tackling water scarcity, recycling and desalination, while Forum will cover consumer demand, sustainability, trade and economic challenges

5th October 2020, Abu Dhabi, UAE: Taking place during World Future Energy Summit 2021, the ninth edition of the Water Expo & Forum will be the most comprehensive event of its kind in the MENA region. Hosted and organised by Reed Exhibitions, experts in combining face-to-face, data and digital tools, the Water Expo & Forum will allow attendees to access and experience the event via a platform of their choice: whether on the exhibition floor or in a virtual meeting.

With an exhibition highlighting the newest, most advanced scientific and engineering solutions, it will address age-old water-related problems such as excess demand, production, treatment, distribution and re-use/recycling.

As one of the driest parts of planet Earth, the Middle East faces a unique set of problems and challenges, especially, as the Middle East Institute reports, demand for freshwater is projected to outstrip supply¹. Population growth, socioeconomic development and associated rises in average income levels are all adding enormous pressure to an already fragile supply infrastructure.

This is backed up by the Arab Forum for Environment and Development (AFED), which suggests that total water demand in the MENA region could grow by about 58 percent between 2010 and 2050². Also, according to the IEA Word Energy Outlook to 2040, production of desalinated seawater in the Middle East is predicted to increase almost fourteen-fold, with a concerted shift towards membrane-based desalination in both policy development and sustainable infrastructure planning.

Grant Tuchten, Group Event Director for the World Future Energy Summit, said that the event will provide a crucial focal point for the industry. The exhibition and forum is where we will see firsthand the scientific advancements that have been made by the water industry's greatest minds," he remarked.

"It's where we will discover innovative solutions, not only to methods for replenishing natural water sources for future water security, but also to help the industry become more efficient and sustainable. The expo and forum will be extremely relevant in providing a platform for business and knowledge exchange, and I eagerly look forward to seeing the positive impact it will undoubtedly provide."

Unforeseen world events can have devastating effects on the world's water supplies, with the recent global health crisis resulting in more frequent hand washing which, in turn, is estimated by the United Nations to mean an increase in water usage from nine litres per person each day to 12 litres.³ This is before other essential water consumption is taken into consideration, such as cleaning, laundry and food washing.

The Water Expo & Forum's exhibition will bring visitors face-to-face with the technology that will tackle such problems in the future, showcased by the very engineers and scientists behind their development. The companies exhibiting are at the forefront of the global fight to ensure security of clean water supply, while minimising impact on the environment, and will be demonstrating the very latest advancements from around the world. Desalination systems, waste-water treatment and processing, storage and industrial solutions to some of the world's most pressing issues will be presented for all via scale models, interactive digital displays and video presentations that detail current projects and daring infrastructures that might appear to be science fiction but are grounded in reality.

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The technologies and engineering marvels on display have been developed to tackle increasing pressures on water resources and reduce the impacts that industrial processes have on the natural world. Abu Dhabi, for instance, is pioneering the use of reverse osmosis in the desalination process, which removes salt from seawater by forcing it through a semi-permeable membrane – a process that is significantly less hungry for energy and results in less waste.

There are many other projects gathering pace throughout the Middle East and the UAE capital's new Taweelah plant is expected to have a capacity of 909,200 cubic meters of water per day. It will be 44 percent larger than the world's current largest reverse osmosis plant, and will open in Q4 2022. This is in addition to other similar facilities in Dubai, Sharjah, Oman and Saudi Arabia.⁴

Naturally the Water Expo & Forum will address consumer demand and sustainable water desalination, but it will also delve into issues surrounding commerce, trade, economic challenges and the use of renewable energy in water supply systems. The forum will gather together many of the world's leading experts to present the latest thinking and industrial advancements in water security and management, as well as ways in which to mitigate present and future threats to supplies, including education through which a reduction in demand is achievable.

One of the event's many exhibitors is the Andritz Group, which provides an enormous range of products and services across many industries, including desalination. Uwe Haider is the Managing Director FZCO and says that the Water Expo & Forum will be extremely important platform for service providers and users alike.

"Now more than ever, we must all strive to do more with less, where water is concerned," he said, "and we look forward to sharing our success and future plans with the very people who need the specialist technologies we continue to develop for industrial clients around the world. Water security is an urgent matter, but it is not an impossible task to deal with and Andritz understands that success lies in the availability of customised, often bespoke solutions. Only by meeting and speaking with the professionals involved in planning water supply networks can we make mutual progress, which is why this event is so important."

Topics covered by the Water Forum are also likely to include new consumption trends, water resilience, emergency response and continuity, asset management, automation and smart water, increasing water re-use, decarbonisation of water production, water conservation programmes and water efficient food production.

The Water Expo & Forum will take place at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), from 5-7 April 2021.

- 1. https://www.mei.edu/publications/climate-change-middle-east-faces-water-crisis
- 2. http://www.afedonline.org/en/reports/details/water
- 3. https://www.utilities-me.com/comment/15416-water-security-an-urgent-priority-during-pandemics-and-exceptional-times
- 4. https://www.utilities-me.com/news/15070-gcc-countries-are-leading-the-world-in-desalination-with-around-40-of-the-total-world-desalinated-water

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