

Example

1. Прочтите текст и передайте его содержание на английском языке. Время подготовки - 15 минут.

Future of Irrigation

It is almost certain that the land area of the world improved by irrigation will continue to increase because the practice is one of the most important means of reclaiming and improving agricultural lands. Modern irrigation systems use reservoirs, tanks, and wells to supply water for crops. Reservoirs include aquifers, basins that collect snowmelt, lakes, and basins created by dams. Canals or pipelines carry the water from reservoirs to fields. Canals and pipelines, just like the ancient Roman aqueducts, often rely on the force of gravity. Pumps may also move water from reservoirs to fields.

During the twentieth century, the amount of irrigated land in the world doubled. An estimated 18 percent of the world's cropland is now irrigated. This expansion has occurred mainly in Asia, Africa, and South America. Even desert ecosystems like those in Jordan use irrigation. Jordan uses a variety of irrigation techniques with groundwater from wells and aquifers. To help meet the world's demand for food, more farmland and more irrigation may be needed. Many experts fear that the expanding use of irrigation in some areas will deplete aquifers, reducing the amount of freshwater available for drinking and hygiene.

The Aral Sea, in Central Asia, has been almost completely emptied by irrigation. In 1918, it was decided that the two rivers that fed the Aral Sea, the Amu Darya and the Syr Darya, would be diverted to irrigate crops of cotton, melons, and citrus in the deserts of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Canals were poorly built, and much of the water went to waste. Before large-scale agriculture was introduced in the 1940s, the Aral Sea had an area of 68,000 square kilometers (26,255 square miles). Today, the Aral Sea is three separate lakes, with a combined area of fewer than 17,000 square kilometers (3,861 square miles).

The Aral Sea ecosystem has been nearly eliminated. The areas once-thriving fishery has been destroyed. Huge fishing vessels now sit abandoned in the middle of the salty desert. Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are working with environmental organizations to preserve what is left of the Aral Sea while still allowing farmers to irrigate their crops.