

October 06 2010 | Last updated 2 minutes ago

# gulfnews.com

## Gulf | Oman

### Omani residents warned to conserve water

Demand for water has become much higher than the supply in Oman

By Sunil K. Vaidya, Bureau Chief

Published: 13:44 October 5, 2010



Oman gets 1.3 billion cubic metres of renewable water but consumption is 1.7 billion cubic metres.

Image Credit: AFP

[Share this article](#)

Muscat: Residents in Oman have been urged to save every drop of water that they can, as demand has become much higher than supply.

"We need to use water efficiently," Dr Saif Al Shaqsi, Director-General for Water at the Regional Municipality and Water Resources, told *Gulf News* at the two-day long Muscat Green Day Conference at the Grand Hyatt Muscat.

The two-day Muscat Green Days Conference was organised by the German University of Technology in Oman (GUtech) with Sesam Business Consultants.

The doctor, who presented an Integrated Water Management Strategy to the delegates, stressed that demand for water has been increasing recently, but that supply has remained the same.

As a result, the government are looking at alternative water resources like desalination plants.

Dr Al Shaqsi asked residents in Oman to be careful in their day-to-day use of water. "Also," he added. "We need to adopt modern irrigation methods that demand less use of water." He revealed that currently 92 per cent of renewable water resources are being used up by the agricultural industry.

"We get 1.3 billion cubic metres of renewable water but consumption is 1.7 billion," he said, adding that the government needs to invest heavily in a desalination plant.

Dr Al Shaqsi also believes that more awareness is needed in order to preserve this natural resource for future generations.

"People think we are water rich," he said. "That's not true. Oman is below the water poverty line."

Heavy rain fall recently, during two tropical cyclones, has prompted the authorities to consider saving rain water for future use. Oman's average annual rainfall is 100mm but cyclones in 2007 and earlier this year have lead to above average levels.

The government has already begun harnessing rain water, especially in urban areas like Muscat. "We're building dams in Muscat to store water that comes from catchments areas during the rain," Dr Al Shaqsi explained. "We'd like to preserve at least 80 per cent of the rain water for future use."

The Conference is part of a series in the UAE, Qatar and Oman, bringing leaders and pioneers together to discuss and lecture on sustainable strategies for long term growth and conservation of resources.