

Global threat to food supply as water wells dry up, warns top environment expert (6 July 2013)

well [n]

a deep hole in the ground from which people take water

water table [n]

the level below the ground where there is water

contain [vt]

if something contains something else, it has that thing inside it or as part of it

overpumping [n]

the extraction of groundwater in excess of supply to a basin or aquifer, resulting in depletion of water resources

replenish [vt]

to put new supplies into something, or to fill something again

aquifer [n]

a layer of rock or soil that can absorb and hold water

deplete [vt, usually passive] > depletion [n]

to reduce the amount of something that is present or available

collision [n]

an accident in which two or more people or vehicles hit each other while moving in different directions

a strong disagreement between two people or between opposing ideas, opinions, etc; the meeting of two things that are very different

arrest [vt]

to stop something happening or to make it happen more slowly

(if something arrests you or arrests your attention, you notice it because it is interesting or unusual)

mesh [vi]

if two ideas or things mesh, they fit together very well

if two parts of an engine or machine mesh, they fit closely together and connect with each other

irrigate [vt] (> irrigation [n])

to supply land or crops with water

hydrology [n] (> hydrological [adj])

the scientific study of the properties, distribution, and effects of water on the earth's surface, in the soil and underlying rocks, and in the atmosphere

basket case [n]

a country with many severe economic and social problems that are likely to continue for a long time

rarity [n]

the quality of being rare

be a rarity = to not happen or exist very often

adverse [adj] (> adversely [adv])

not good or favourable

shallow [adj]

measuring only a short distance from the top to the bottom

precarious [adj]

a precarious situation or state is one which may very easily or quickly become worse

thrive [vi]

to become very successful or very strong and healthy

southwards [adv]

towards the south

recharge [vt]

to put a new supply of electricity into a battery

to refresh, restore or revitalise

precipitous [adj] (> precipitously [adv])

very sudden

(happening or done too quickly, and not thought about carefully)

on the verge of doing something [idiom]

almost doing or experiencing something