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DIAM SPECIAL FEATURE



## Meeting the Growing Demand for Water

# Water production rises by 5% in 2018



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### PERCEPTION OF THE LIFELINE

'If we do not apply solutions to deal with water scarcity, there will be heavy burdens on future generations'. This statement was written on the front of the Shura magazine in its 33rd issue released in February. The magazine discussed the water security and rationalisation of water use in a dialogue session with the participation of eight government and private bodies and civil society. The magazine stated that this dialogue included three sessions during which nine papers were presented by eight different parties. Among these papers, one policy paper on 'Achieving water security in the sultanate' was presented by Eng Abdulaziz bin Saeed al Shethani, director general of planning and asset management, Public Authority for Water.

The water is one of the most important issues that should be the topic of talks and interest for the councils. Diam recognises this importance as it makes continuous efforts to achieve water security through its policy of producing water and ensuring its access to the community through desalination plants as the main source of water. The authority aims to further reduce reliance on wells and underground sources of water because it is a source of depletion due to Oman's location within the areas that suffer from the lack of rains.

It is therefore imperative for us as individuals and society to recognise the efforts made to make the lifeline sustainable by standards and high quality that requires preservation and appreciation of these efforts as a national duty. Our media's responsibility is to educate the community about the importance of the rationalisation of water consumption and raise awareness towards this moral and religious responsibility.



Diam has set a long-term strategy for Oman's water sector, which aims to achieve a coverage of 98 per cent of the sultanate's population by 2040. In order to meet the growing water demand in the country, Diam continues to provide and develop its services as a world-class institution, which is focused on achieving higher operational efficiency and developing available physical and human resources.

With its water desalination plants and underground wells,

Diam is a major source to meet water requirements of customers in the country.

As per its strategic future plans, Diam aims to reduce dependence on wells for water production and increase water supply through desalination plants. Confirming this trend, the available data showed that the share of wells in total water production decreased from 14.2 per cent in 2017 to 13.6 per cent in 2018. On the other hand, the share of desalination plants in total water production rose from

85.8 per cent in 2017 to 86.4 per cent in 2018. This trend clearly confirms the success of Oman's water security plans with reducing dependence on wells and increasing availability of desalination plants.

The large desalination plants are connected to the main transport system for the most comprehensive feeding. The water is transported through the system linking the stations to cover the densely populated areas in the north of Oman, which are fed from Al Ghubra, Sohar and Barka stations or water transport systems, which are not connected to the main network of desalination plants.

Total water production from desalination plants last year increased to 315.1mn cubic meters compared to 2017 production. The contribution of wells to total water production stood at 13.6 per cent last year. In 2018, the Public Authority for Water produced 49.4mn cubic meters of well water, which contributed effectively during the stopping periods of desalination plants. The well water is used only after ensuring its quality and compliance with the Omani specifications. Small wells are exploited in feeding remote areas, which are not connected to the main network.

In cooperation with other government agencies, Diam is

working on establishing a water purification plant near Wadi Yizha dam in Muscat Governorate to benefit from and use the water in the dam.

Total volumes of water entering the Diam networks from desalination plants and wells increased by five per cent in 2018 to 364.5mn cubic meters compared to 347.6mn cubic meters in 2017.

### Desalination plants

Desalination plants are the strategic choice for the provision of potable water of high quality and efficiency. Water is currently being produced from the existing stations and the new stations are being constructed. The new stations have been studied in accordance with the coming phase and the existing stations.

In terms of production capacities, Muscat governorate has a production capacity of 191,000 cubic meters of water per day, desalination plant in Sohar is working to produce 150,000 cubic meters per day and water desalination capacities in Barka stood at 595,000 cubic meters of per day. Additionally, water production in South Al Batinah, interior parts of Muscat governorate and in the province of south east stood at 130,000 cubic meters per day.

In addition to the current

desalination system, there are more desalination plants, which will cover future water demand. One of the most prominent new plants is Quriyat desalination plant with a production capacity of 200,000 cubic meters per day, which started operations last year.

In 2018, the commercial operation of a fourth desalination plant in Barka with a capacity of 281,000 cubic meters per day was started. The commercial operation of a new desalination plant in Sohar (production capacity of 250,000 cubic meters per day) was also started last year.

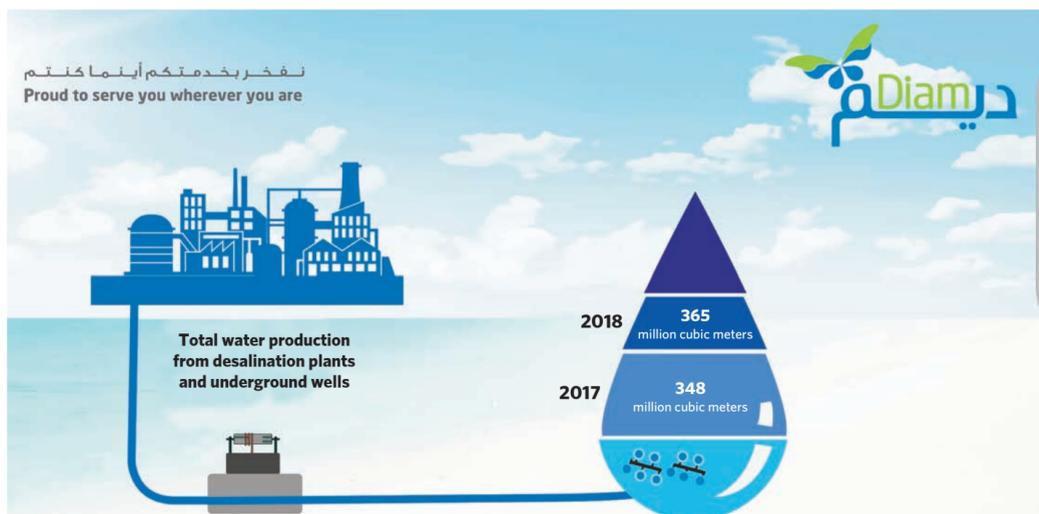
Diam has also established a number of small desalination plants to service remote areas. Total increased water production in 2018 amounted to 13mn cubic meters compared to 15.2mn cubic meters in 2017.

These water plants are distributed across the seven governorates in the sultanate. The authority is also purchasing production capacities from some of the small plants operated by Rural Areas Electricity Company and has entered into a short-term contract for the

purchase of a quantity of water produced by the subsidiary of Majis Industrial Services Company in Sohar.

### Wells

Diam also provides a percentage of drinking water through wells. In 2018, wells contributed for 13.6 per cent of total water entering the system. The quantity of water produced from wells last year stood at 49.4mn cubic meters. The main network feeds the main link, but some wells are used to feed networks of remote areas and pumping stations of tankers to areas not connected to the system. Diam continues to extend its networks to these areas and expects in near future to be fed through the main network, which feeds from desalination plants. These wells are distributed to various regions of the sultanate.



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