

The Next Big Environmental David-and-Goliath Trial by William Langewiesche P. 226

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P. 236

• **THE WHITE HOUSE'S
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P. 116 BY ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.

• **THE GASPING AMAZON**

P. 272 BY ALEX SHOUMATOFF

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P. 122 BY CHARLES C. MANN

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P. 266 BY MICHAEL SHNAYERSON

*"The conservation of
natural resources is the fundamental problem.
Unless we solve that problem it
will avail us little to solve all others."*

—THEODORE ROOSEVELT

PLUS:

P. 299
UNSEEN OSCAR-PARTY PHOTOS
P. 108
THE PRIVATE-EQUITY EXPLOSION
P. 188
THE KISSINGER PRESIDENCY

For more pictures
and video of Knut, the
three-month-old polar-
bear cub, go to VF.com.

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The Future's Farmer **DR. CARL N. HODGES**

FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN,
THE SEAWATER FOUNDATION.

Atmospheric physicist Dr. Carl Hodges is tired of the bickering over who is responsible for climate change—he wants to focus on seizing opportunities and implementing solutions. “We can stop sea-level rise,” Hodges, 70, says bluntly. It started with a moment of clarity in 1972 while walking along an estuary on Mexico’s Sonoran Coast. It is not, he concluded, about extracting—through desalinization—freshwater from the sea, which requires great energy, but using the nourishment the seawater provides, just as estuaries have for millennia. Thirty-five years and \$30 million later, Hodges is realizing his epiphany through the Seawater Foundation, founded in 1977, which enables seawater farms armed with the right seeds and elementary science to literally green the desert by simply drawing saltwater inland.

As his farms grow, draining more water from the rising oceans, Hodges’s math shows that if seawater-irrigated agriculture developed at the same rate that traditional irrigated agriculture did from 1950 to 2003 we could stop sea-level rise in less than 15 years.

Photographed by Gasper Tringale on the banks of the Rio Nenninger, a man-made seawater river on the coast of the Sea of Cortez near Bahia Kino, Sonora, Mexico.