Today, a vast portion of the Aral Sea in Kazakhstan has become a graveyard for ships and fishing boats known as the Aralkum Desert. The once great sea has almost vanished after decades of being drained for intensive irrigation. That is what drives Dr. David Mulla and other researchers at the University of Minnesota as they work tirelessly to change the way people from Kazakhstan to California protect and conserve water. “If it takes me the rest of my life, I’m going to solve this,” says Mulla.

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