

Beijing Wanted the Winter Olympics. All It Needed Was Snow.

The environmentally unfriendly secret of winter sports is that many competitions take place on artificial snow. China's water-scarce capital had to go to enormous lengths to make enough of it.

The New York Times, By Matthew Futterman and Raymond Zhong

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Task 1 Complete the words below in the correct gaps

BEIJING — China did not move mountains to host the But it flooded a dried riverbed, diverted water from a key reservoir that supplies Beijing and resettled hundreds of farmers and their families, all to feed one of the most extensive snow-making operations in the history of the Games.

This is what happens when the International Olympic Committee decides to bring the Winter Games to a place almost completely lacking in one of the main ingredients for winter sports:

..... What's more, Beijing and its nearby mountains did not have that much water to make the artificial kind, either.

Machine-made snow has played a major in winter sports for decades, even in snowier places like Norway, and Colorado. In Beijing's version of the Winter Games, the competitions will for the first time almost entirely on artificial snow, necessitating an Olympic snow-making and water-management operation of enormous scale, and foreshadowing the reality of snow sports everywhere as the planet

take place role 2022 Winter Olympics warms Switzerland snow

Task 2 Replace the highlighted words with their synonyms

Beijing officials insist that snow production for the Games will not strain local water supplies, which have struggled to keep pace with the city's demands. But China's **herculean**/..... investments in snow making are part of larger efforts to turn the **arid** /..... mountains near Beijing into a permanent ski and snowboard **hub**/....., a project that could face challenges as climate change upends patterns of rainfall and drought.

"You could not have winter sports now without **man-made** /..... snow," said Michael Mayr, the Asia manager of TechnoAlpin, the Italian company in charge of snow-making for the Beijing Games and at six previous Winter Olympics.

What sets Beijing apart from many of those past venues are its tight supplies of water, whether for snow making or for anything else. Over the past few decades, **rapid**/..... development has sapped Beijing's groundwater. July and August often bring heavy rains, but the city and nearby mountains get only **sprinkles of precipitation**/..... in the winter: less than 2.5 inches per season on average in recent decades, according to data from a weather station near the Olympic venues.



Task 3 Complete the gaps with suitable words

"There are and vegetation, but it is not like an Alpine forest: It is vegetation for a drier climate," he said. "It snows, but it is not enough for the competitions."

Before TechnoAlpin could install pumps and build more than 40 miles of pipe, at a cost of nearly \$60 million, Chinese officials first had to figure out how to enough water to the mountains.

How much water? Roughly one million cubic meters, according to TechnoAlpin, enough to fill 400 Olympic-size swimming pools. And that is just to start the More snow, and more water, will likely be needed as the competitions take place.

To gather it all, Chinese authorities have built pumping stations to carry from miles away.

Officials in Zhangjiakou — which is pronounced sort of like “jong jah coe” — have turned off irrigation across tens of thousands of acres to conserve groundwater, and resettled farmers who were living in what is now the Olympic competition area in high-rise apartments.

Modern China is no stranger to monumental water projects. Its biggest effort to ease Beijing’s water troubles began well before the Olympics: a colossal series of waterways that is trillions of gallons of water a year from the nation’s humid south to its north. Hundreds of thousands of villagers were relocated to make way for the canals. Water from the project accounted for a sixth of Beijing’s water supply in 2020.