

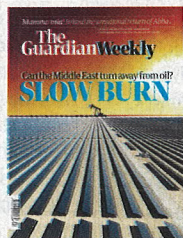
The Gulf's oil dilemma, a royal slowdown, and Abba bounce back

Few regions on Earth are more central to hopes of reining in global temperature increases than the Middle East. Financed by the west's insatiable demand for fossil fuels, cities filled with air-conditioned skyscrapers and shopping malls have risen from the desert. It's not surprising that Gulf monarchies made rich and powerful by oil have paid little heed to thoughts of an economic transition to renewables, even though the region is warming at twice the rate of the rest of the world. But, asks our diplomatic editor Patrick Wintour, could the long-term view be about to change?
The big story [Page 10](#) →

It's been a tough year for Queen Elizabeth. The 95-year-old British monarch lost her husband Prince Philip in April and her absence from Cop26 on doctor's orders has focused attention on how the royal family will adapt if she has to withdraw further from public life.

Also, as a Franco-British row over fishing rights flared up, Simon Tisdall explains why the dispute may be more about politics than pollock on both sides.
Spotlight [Page 18](#) →

When the Swedish pop group Abba made their final, bickering public appearance on British TV in 1982, few could have foreseen the global phenomenon that the band would subsequently become. Now, almost 40 years later, Benny, Björn, Agnetha and Frida are back with a new album and an "immersive live experience" to boot. Alexis Petridis gets the inside track on one of pop's most sensational reformations.
Gimme Gimme Gimme [Page 40](#) →



On the cover

Demand for Middle Eastern oil is not expected to peak until 2040 - but the International Energy Association's Net Zero by 2050 report proposed oil demand fall from 88m barrels a day in 2020, to 24 mb/d in 2050. It argued that the Gulf has key elements needed to switch to renewables: capital, sun and large tracts of vacant land.
Photograph: Veronika Z Gaudet/Alamy; AP



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