

La vie en rose

On this Saturday of May, I want to give myself a moment of sweetness on the edge of a lake. So I take the boat from the Island of Gorée where I live towards Dakar, then a taxi towards the Lac Rose an hour away.

Fear: the "lac rose" is no more. No more romantic thoughts. It's time for reality.

It is no longer pink... because the micro-algae that generate this color are not present today. Soon they won't be any more... the drought sets in and the lake diminishes.

"As the desert moves on, life goes out." France Gall sang to us.

On the other hand, the salt present in the water at the level of 380gr/litre (the rate is higher than in the Dead Sea) continues to feed most of West Africa.

The salt convicts are the women: for years, they have been breaking the salt crust on the bottom of the lake to extract the "white gold" and load it into the boats. Because of the high concentration of salt, many of them carrying a child have had miscarriages. **The "lac rose" makes sterile.**

Today, their task is no less: they unload the boats in buckets of 25 kg each, under a blinding sun. An empty bucket: a shell placed there as a reminder. We get paid by the bucket here; they can expect to earn 1.5 euros for their daily work.