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Desertification

Desertification is one of the main issues of the century, but do you know the causes, the effects and the probable solutions of this issue?

Bibliography:

United Nations: www.unccd.int

Eden Foundation: www.eden-foundation.org/project/desertif.html

<http://membres.lycos.fr//desertification>

USGS: <http://pubs.usgs.gov/gip/deserts/desertification>

<http://www.csf-desertification.org/desertification>

http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/cida_ind.nsf

<http://www.evsc-virginia.edu>

Synthesis:

Desertification is when desert spreads into neighbouring areas. The most often quoted area where desertification is a concern is the Sahel region of Africa. However, China also has a big issue with this, and 110 countries in the world are threatened by desertification and drought.

There are many causes of desertification:

-Physical causes like global warming which causes less precipitation, there is also wind or water erosion.

-Human causes like deforestation, agricultural practises, or the increased-population.

Because of deforestation, fertility of soil is reduced a lot, and no vegetation can grow. Storms are more frequent and a lot of sand comes from the desert.

Owing to the decrease of precipitation underground reserves are in very bad levels.

All these consequences are dramatic for people who suffer from starvation, but also for fauna and flora. In fact, it has been noted that biodiversity decreased.

There are some solutions to reduce this issue.

For example plant trees in dune may reduce wind, stop deforestation and replant trees, or use ways of irrigation, but drawing indiscriminately on underground reserves can lead to a lowering of the water table. So irrigation is only a temporary solution.

There are also a lot of International conventions to combat desertification, and some laws are set up to combat the desert.

But, sometimes is too late to stop the desert growing.

Key-words

A breaking point: there is no possibility to resolve the issue when you have passed the breaking point

Biodiversity: the existence of a large number of different kinds of animals and plants which make a balanced environment.

Deforestation: the act of cutting down or burning the trees in an area.

Drought: when during a long period there is no water in a region

Dust: when you sweep you put dust away/ small particles when the soil is dry

Global warming: the increase in temperature of the earth's atmosphere that is caused by the increase of particular gases, especially carbon dioxide.

Hardy-perennial plant: living for two years or more

Hurricane: (noun) a violent storm with very strong winds, especially in the western Atlantic ocean

Over-exploitation

Over-grazing: when there is too much cow/sheep eating grass

Sand: a substance that consists of very small fine grains of rock. Sand is on beaches, in deserts etc...

Soil: the top layer of the earth in which plants, trees, etc...grow.

Starvation: when people suffered of food lack

Storm: very bad weather with strong winds.

To warn: to advise to be careful

Water table: underground water resources

Yearly-annual plant: any plant that grows and dies within one year or season

Questions:

1. How much is it for surrendering concerned soil?
2. How much is it for rehabilitating this soil?
3. Farther local repercussions, what can be global repercussions of desertification?
 - i. Indication: wind- ballet
4. What are the consequences of this dust in the wind?
5. Do you know what the “Green fence” is? Can you define that?
6. What are consequences of the disappearance of trees and shrubs on biodiversity?
7. What are consequences of the disappearance of trees and shrubs on human activity?
8. Do you know how many people could be supplied with the water used by one club golf?
9. Have you a swimming pool at home?
10. Do you ever go to a club golf?
11. Can you give us other examples of water waste?
12. What do you think about this kind of activities?
13. How can you explain economic waste?
14. Can you try to place the two more threatened areas of the world?
15. Have you an idea of the number of country threatened by desertification and drought?
16. Are you surprised by this number?
17. What are the main desertification causes in Africa?
18. What could be the consequences if arable land disappeared?
19. Are you afraid by dust storm?
20. Do you know what countries are threatened by dust storms?
21. What is the speed of wind in a desert?
22. What are the consequences of deforestation for the soil?
23. What are the characteristics of fauna and flora in desert?
24. What are the consequences of desertification for this biodiversity?
25. What is the principal cause of rain decrease in African countries?
26. What can be a consequence on the different types of plants due to overexploitation?
27. What is the species to replant on eroded zones?
28. Why did you choose it?
29. What is the implication on topsoil?
30. What is the rate of forest in Spain nowadays?
31. Why is there deforestation in Spain?
32. What is the solution versus desertification in Europe?
33. Is it a temporary or sustainable solution and why?
34. By how many square km is the desert growing per month in China?
35. How many meters are the dunes advanced every year?
36. Who can be the actors of battle against desertification?
37. What is the proportion of the earth’s dry land affected by desertification?
38. What is the surface of earth’s dry land affected by desertification?
39. How many people are affected by desertification?
40. Do you have an idea concerning the number of death per day due to desertification?

Report:

We did principally our researches on the web, we pointed up three parts:

- causes
- consequences
- solutions

We found a lot of documents about different places in the world (Sahel, China, Spain). We divided the reading; everyone read documents and wrote questions and synthesis. To finish we discuss all together and correct different works.

For the restitution, we thought making snakes and ladders. But due to a lack of time, we finally choose to do quiz which can produce discussion.

Thanks to our subject, we have realized we minimize this issue.

During the class, we had difficulties to concentrate our efforts during the documents reading. So our time was reduced in order to produce our topic.