

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF DESERTIFICATION IN THE SAHEL

After reading the Causes and Effects of Desertification of the Sahel article, please identify and explain 3–4 causes of desertification and 3–4 effects of desertification and record your answers in the chart below.

Causes of Desertification	Effects of Desertification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change: brings on more extended periods of drought making it difficult for the land to support vegetation. • Unsustainable farming practices: Farmers are growing cash crops that are not suited to the environment and thus deplete soil of its nutrients faster and they do not practice crop rotation also wearing out the soil at a rapid pace. • Overgrazing: Herders increase the size of their herds over time with the result being there are too many animals and not enough grassland to support them causing all of the grasses to disappear. • Deforestation: The need for firewood and farmland motivates people of the Sahel to cut down trees decreasing the amount of vegetation in the Sahel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetation is damaged or destroyed: by drought, overgrazing, deforestation, and unsustainable farming practices. • Soil becomes infertile: damage and destruction of vegetation means that there are no roots to hold soil in place and thus it is blown away before it can recover making it impossible to grow crops and other vegetation. • Water scarcity: continued drought makes the availability of water very limited. This threatens human, animals, and plants in the Sahel. • Poverty and Starvation: with no rain and unproductive land, it is very difficult for people to meet their basic needs. They cannot grow food they need to survive and lack skills for other jobs. • Migration: Many people continue to be forced to migrate from the Sahel because they cannot survive the current conditions caused by desertification.