

Migrations and Desertification in China

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Status Quo of Desertification in China

Desertification area *2.64 million square km*
27.46% of total territory

Mostly distributed in 498 counties in 18 provinces, including Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Hebei, Ningxia, Shaanxi, Shanxi, etc. The area of desertified land as a result of wind erosion totals 1.839 million km², taking up 19.16% and 69.77% of the total territory and desertified land respectively and it is distributed in 13 provinces in northwest, north and northeast China. It thus forms a sandified zone, which is 4,500 km long east-to-west and 600 km wide north-to-south and stretches from Tarim Basin in the west to the Songnen Plain in the east. The area of desertified land as a result of water erosion totals 259,300 km², distributed mostly in the Loess Plateau in the upper and middle reaches of the Yellow River. The area of desertified land as a result of freezing and thawing totals 363,600 km², distributed mostly in the alpine zone of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. The area of salinized desertification land totals 173,700 km², distributed mainly in the oasis around Tarim Basin, the alluvial plain at the north foot of the Tianshan Mountain, Hetao Plain and Huabei Plain. In addition, another 104,900 km² of rocky desertification affected land is mainly distributed in 3 Provinces including Yunnan, Guizhou and Guangxi.

Causes of desertification

Climate change and human activities

1. Deforestation/removal of biomass for fuel
2. Over cultivation
3. Overgrazing
4. Mismanagement of water resources



Driving forces

Huge population

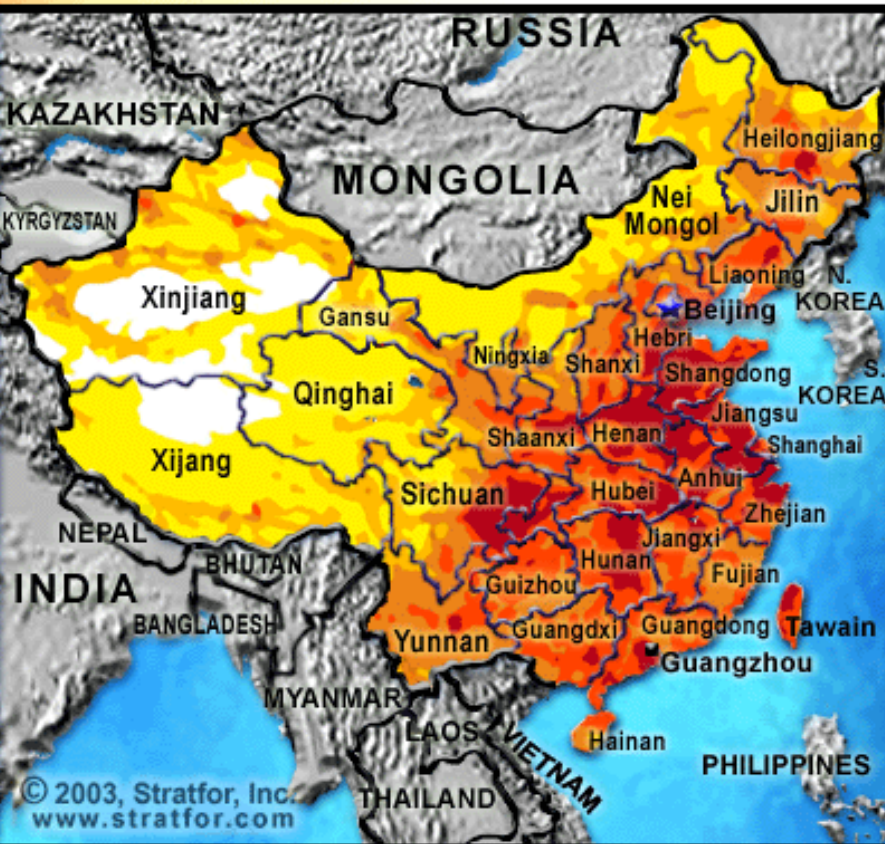
1,300,000,000

High human and animal density in desertified areas



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China's Population



Persons per square kilometer

0 1 10 100 200

Uninhabited



0 2.6 26 260 520

Persons per square mile

China's Population

- 1,246,871,951 (July 1999 est.)
 - Age Structure
 - 0 - 14 years : 26%
 - 15 - 64 years: 68%
 - 65 years and older: 6%
- Life Expectancy
 - Males: 68.57 years
 - Females: 71.48 years

Features of Migrations

From arid, semi arid areas to the sub-humid and humid areas

From rural places to cities

With government subsidies or without

For>

Mainly construction work, some have their own business, such as selling vegetables, fruits, etc.

Benefits or not?

Remittances back to home households

With training or education in cities, raising education level in source areas

Fewer job opportunities for urban people

Environmental and social pressures to target areas

Increased risk of desertification in migration targeted desertification prone areas

Responses

Birth control

New and clean energy sources

New income sources

Wellmanaged migrations

Trainings for migrants

New job opportunities in source areas, provided by desertification control programmes, such as the Beijin-Tianjin Programme, Grain for Green Programme, with remarkable achievements in both ecological rehabilitation and job creation

THANK YOU!

