

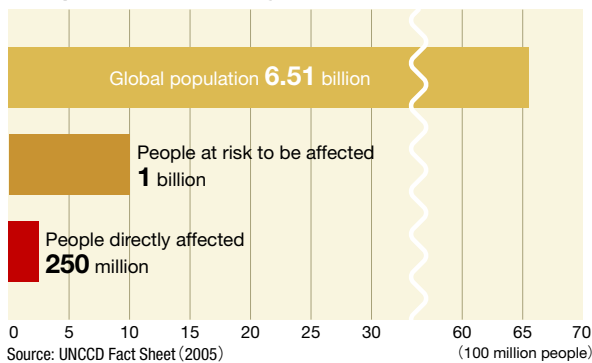
# What Impact Does Desertification Have?

Because people, who live in drylands, depend on the ecosystem services for their crops, livestock, commodities, fuel wood, etc., deterioration in ecosystem services by land degradation triggers further degradation of their livelihood and well-being.

Both short-term and long-term climatic variations create instability in the production of crops, forage, livestock, and also the water supply. Once a dryland ecosystem is damaged, even the removal of the cause cannot ensure full recovery of the ecosystem. The well-being of the population is trapped in a vicious spiral of decreased agricultural productivity and increased poverty.

Many African countries often have serious droughts. As the land which is basis for food production is degraded, local people have no choice but to exploit further natural resources such as forests and water. This leads to further land degradation to create a downward spiral.

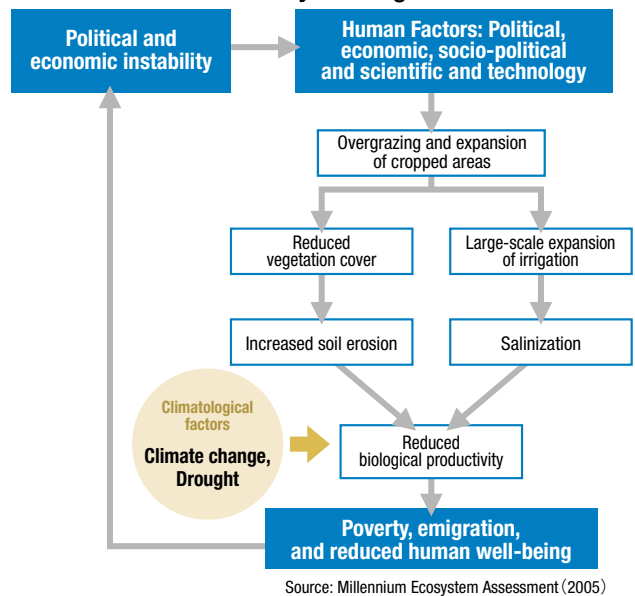
## ▼ Population Affected by Desertification



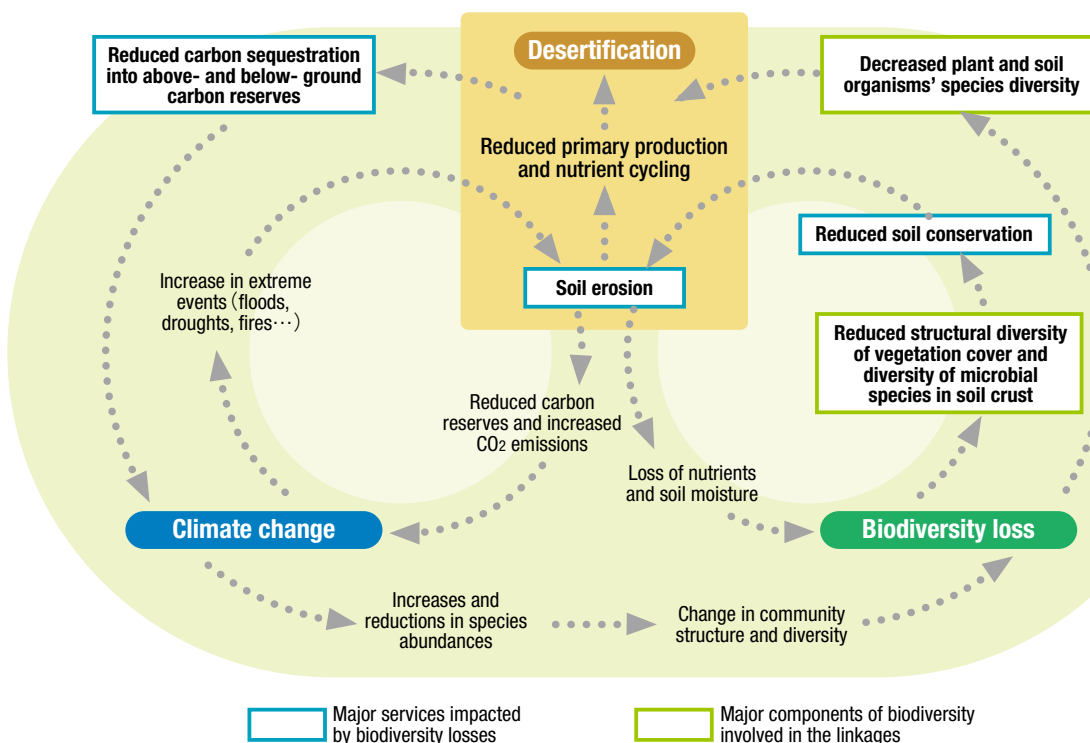
## ▼ Consequences of Desertification

- Undermining basis of food production
- Acceleration of poverty
- Population concentration in urban areas
- Increased refugees
- Loss of biodiversity
- Impact on climate change

## ▼ Human Activities and Dryland Degradation



## ▼ Linkages and Feedback Loops among Desertification, Global Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss



The left hand side of the figure shows the complex interaction between desertification, climate change and biodiversity loss. Desertification is not only the result of climate change, but also influences climate change by reducing carbon sequestration of vegetation and soil. Diversity in vegetation in dryland ecosystem supports livestock and wildlife as well as people through provision of food and fuel. This important function of biodiversity is being damaged as a result of desertification.

Source: Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005)