

Mapping Areas Affected by Soil Erosion and Desertification in Egypt

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Abstract:

Egypt has total area of about one million square kilometers, under arid and hyper arid climatic conditions, of which only a small portion (3% of total area) is agriculturally productive. The country is endowed with 4 main agro-ecological zones having specific attributes of resources base, climatic features, terrain and geographic characteristics, land use patterns and socio-economic implications. Since significant variations in the environmental characteristics are apparent in each agro-ecological zone, the active factors and processes of desertification, and their impacts are necessarily variable.

Creating a new development map requires surveying and assessing the resources, comparative advantages, and clusters of economic activities representing competitive potentials, which various districts and localities. The aim of such a developmental map would be to redistribute the population from the excessively high density areas (The Nile Valley) to strategically important but low density areas (notably Sinai, the Red Sea, the western Desert).

It is of interest to note that baseline data, essential for proper monitoring of programmes and projects and its contributions to combat desertification in Egypt, are already available. Mapping areas affected by soil erosion and some other desertification causes will be presented in this paper.