

Protect the soil

- While constructing your house, don't uproot the trees as far as possible. Plant the disturbed areas with a fast growing native ground cover.
- Grow different types of ornamental plants, herbs and trees in your garden. Grow grass in the open areas which will bind the soil and prevent its erosion.
- Make compost from your kitchen waste and use it for your kitchen-garden or flower-pots.
- Do not irrigate the plants using a strong flow of water, as it would wash off the soil.
- Better use sprinkling irrigation.
- Use green manure and mulch in the garden and kitchen-garden which will protect the soil.
- If you own agricultural fields, do not over-irrigate your fields without proper drainage to prevent water logging and salinisation.
- Use mixed cropping so that some specific soil nutrients do not get depleted.

■ DESERTIFICATION

Desertification is a process whereby the productive potential of arid or semiarid lands falls by ten percent or more. Moderate desertification is 10-25% drop in productivity, severe desertification causes 25-50% drop while very severe desertification results in more than 50% drop in productivity and usually creates huge gullies and sand dunes. Desertification leads to the conversion of rangelands or irrigated croplands to desert like conditions in which agricultural productivity falls. Desertification is characterized by devegetation and loss of vegetal cover, depletion of groundwater, salinization and severe soil erosion. Desertification is not the literal invasion of desert into a non-desert area. It includes degradation of the ecosystems within as well as outside the natural deserts. The Sonoran and Chihuahuan deserts are about a million years old, yet they have become more barren during the last 100 years. So, further desertification has taken place within the desert.

Overgrazing is the major cause of desertification worldwide. Other factors that cause desertification include urbanization, climate change, overuse of groundwater, deforestation, natural disasters, and tillage practices in agriculture that make soils more vulnerable to wind.

1. Overgrazing

Animal grazing is a huge problem for many areas that are starting to become desert biomes. If there are too many animals that are overgrazing in certain spots, it makes it difficult for the plants to grow back, which hurts the biome and makes it lose its former green glory.

2.

Deforestation is one of the leading human induced issues that lead to **desertification**. ... This process can result in soil degradation meaning the soil eventually turns to dust and the nutrients in the soil are deteriorating making the soil unusable causing **desertification** overtime.

3. Farming Practices

Some farmers do not know how to use the land effectively. They may essentially strip the land of everything that it has before moving on to another plot of land.

By stripping the **soil of its nutrients**, desertification becomes more of a reality for the area that is being used for farming.

4. Excessive Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides

The use of excessive amounts of fertilizers and pesticides to maximize their crop yields in the short term often leads to significant damages for the soil.

In the long run, this may turn from arable into arid land over time, and it will no longer be suitable for farming purposes after a few years of excessive farming since the soil has been damaged too much over time.

5. Climate Change

Climate change plays a huge role in desertification. As the days get warmer and periods of drought become more frequent, desertification becomes more and more eminent.