



Rare Rain in the Sahara Desert

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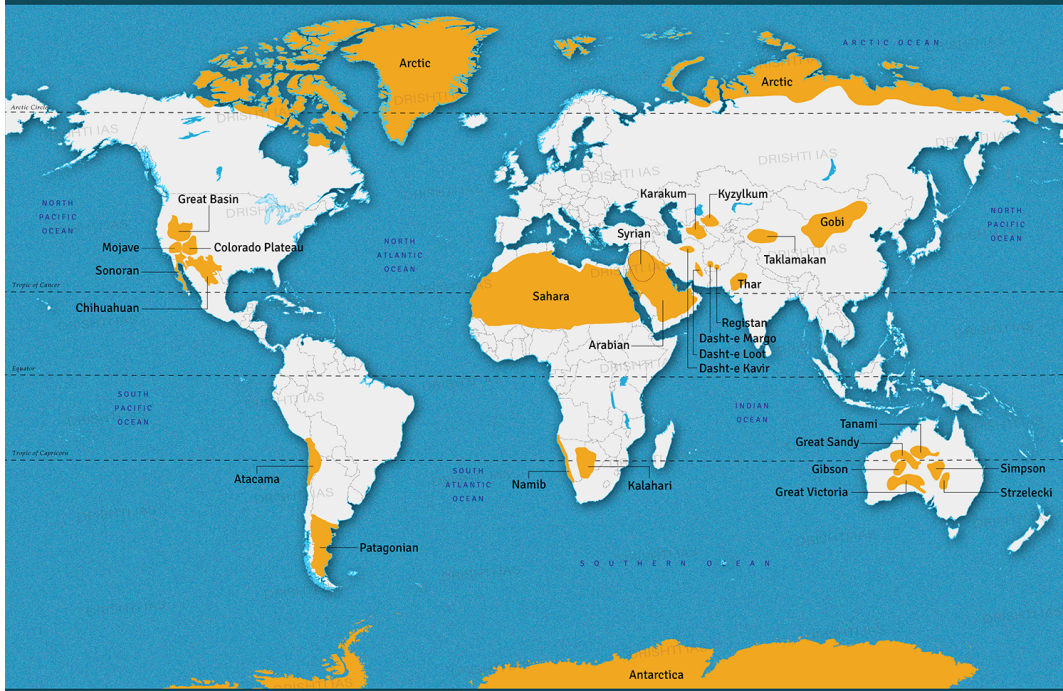
Recently, a rare **deluge of rainfall** has **flooded** palm trees and [sand dunes](#) of the [Sahara desert in Morocco](#).

- The rain was triggered by the **northward shift** of the [Intertropical Convergence Zone \(ITCZ\)](#), which has moved further north than usual, resulting in **equatorial-like downpours** in the Sahara.
 - ITCZ has produced a powerful [extratropical cyclone](#) that swept through northwestern Africa.
 - An extra-tropical cyclone is a **low-pressure system** which develops in latitudes **outside the tropics** which can bring heavy rainfall.
- Repositioning of ITCZ may be linked to **record-high ocean temperatures** and [climate change](#).
- **Sahara Desert:** It is the **world's largest hot desert** having a **length of approximately 4,800 km** and a maximum **width of 1,800 km**.
 - It occupies about **31%** of the entire **African continent**.
 - It stretches among **11 North African nations** including Algeria, Egypt, Mali, Morocco, Western Sahara, Tunisia, Chad, Libya, Mauritania, Niger, and Sudan.

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DESERTS IN THE WORLD



FACTS

- The largest hot desert in the world – Sahara (northern Africa), reaches temperatures of up to 50°C during the day.
- The Gobi desert in Asia and the polar deserts of the Antarctic and Arctic, which are the world's largest, are always cold.
- Chile's Atacama desert is the driest in the world (after Antarctica) having parts that receive < 2 mm of precipitation/year.
- Namib Desert (Southern Africa) is believed to be as old as 55 million years; the oldest desert in the world.
- Thar Desert (India) is believed to be the most civilised desert in the world due to having roads, infrastructure and human settlements dating back to thousands of years (about 50,000 years old).



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