

HWG Unit 6 SG 1 Part 2

The “ Middle East”

III. Bodies of Water

- A. Seas – The Mediterranean & the Red Seas bound the north and northeast coasts of Africa
 - a. The Mediterranean and Red Seas are connected by the Suez Canal, a major construction venture by the occupying British Empire from 1859 – 1869.
 - (1) It is the 2nd most important canal in the world for trade. What is the first? the Panama Canal



- 2. The Arabian Sea - southeast of the Arabian peninsula
- 3. Dead Sea - (lowest elevation on Earth at 1,412 ft. below sea level).
 - a. Besides its high salinity, another unusual feature is the discharge of asphalt from deep seeps in the ground



- **B. Gulfs & Other**

- **1. The Persian Gulf is located mainly between the Arabian peninsula & Iran.**

- **a. It is one of the world's largest single sources of crude oil.**

- **b. It is also important strategically to the militaries of the various countries that are on its shores.**

- 2. Strait of Hormuz is the only passage into and out of the Persian Gulf.
 - a. It creates a “choke point” where whoever controls the entrance, controls the economies of the oil rich countries who rely on ocean tankers to trade their petroleum.
- 3. Gulf of Oman



IRAN

Strait of Hormuz

Sea Lanes

OMAN

Persian Gulf

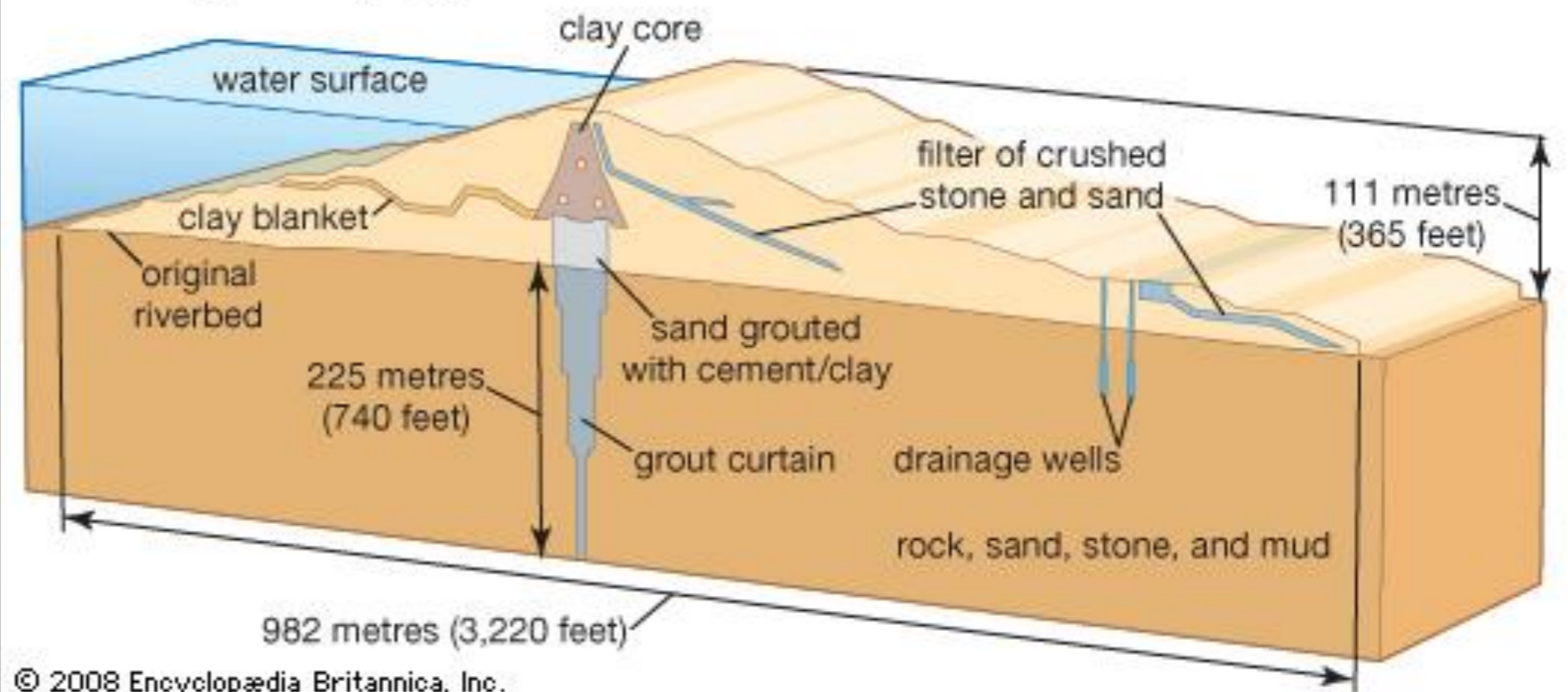
U.A.E.

Gulf of Oman

- 4. Lake Nasser - created by the Aswan High Dam.
 - a. The dam was built for many reasons:
 - (1) To control the yearly spring flooding when high-waters wiped out crops.
 - (2) To deal with droughts in low-water years.
 - b. The dam through helping to control flooding and droughts, helped increase agricultural production downstream. However, the dam also blocks the very sediment that is deposited after flooding. This has caused an increase in artificial fertilizer use and because the flood plain is not being replenished with new soil as it is also being eroded, the Nile delta is sinking.



Aswan High Dam, Egypt



- c. The lake has caused the water table in the area to rise closer to the surface causing drainage issues where crops are irrigated. This has caused swamplands to form increasing the incidence of malaria. (irrigation - artificial ways to water the land).
- D. The creation of Lake Nasser has caused many people to be forcibly relocated and flood archaeological sites. Some had to be relocated (Temple of Abu Simbel).

The Temple of Abu Simbel at Lake Nassar



- C. Rivers
 - 1. Tigris & Euphrates River System forms the only major river system in SW Asia.
 - a. They both begin in the mountains of the Anatolian peninsula.
 - b. They cross an extensive alluvial (flood) plain in central Iraq.
 - c. They combine at their end to form the Shatt al-Arab River that then flows into the Persian Gulf.



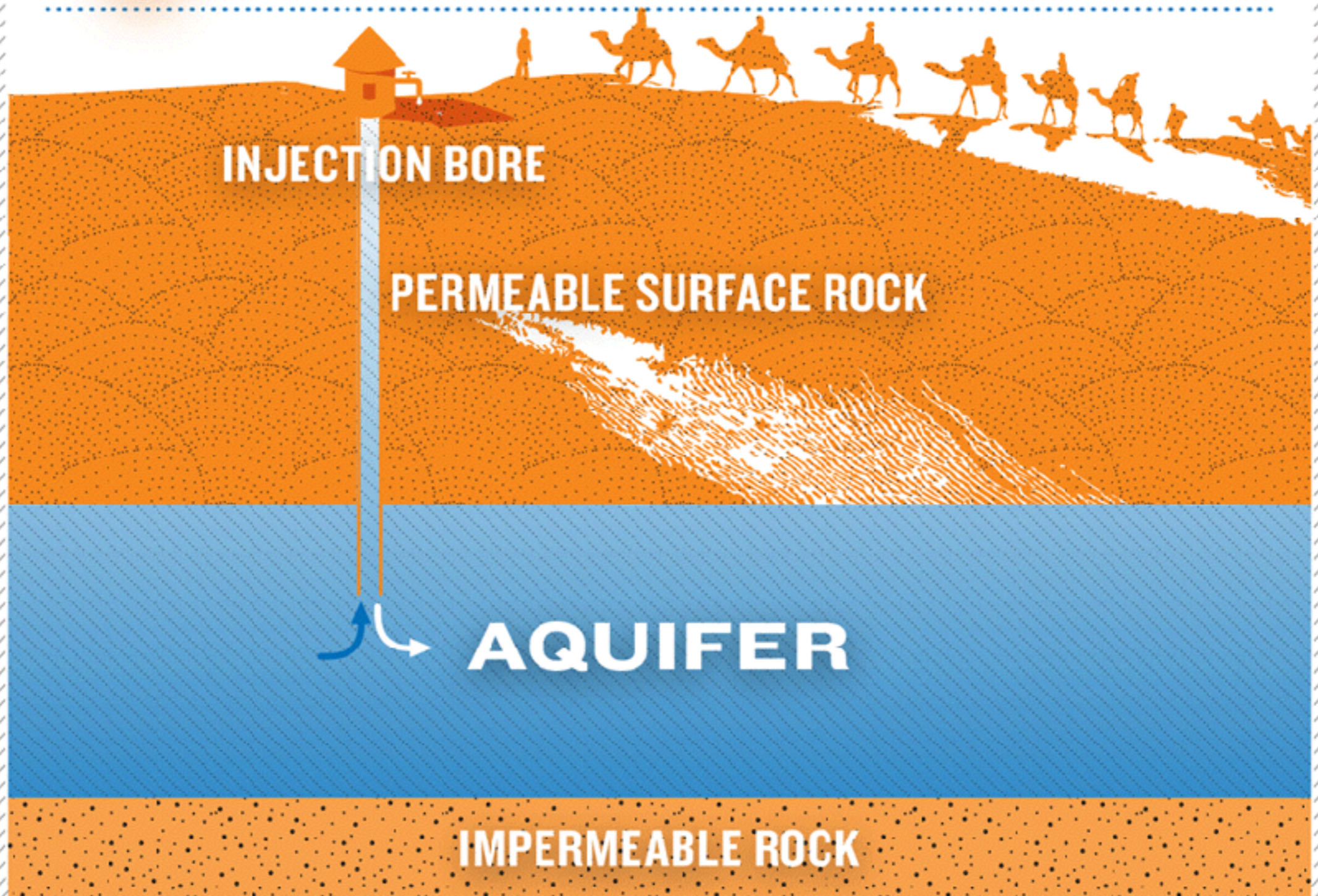
- 2. Jordan River forms the boundary between Israel, Jordan, & Syria.
 - a. The Dead Sea & the Sea of Galilee are along its course
- 3. The Nile River provides water for drinking & agriculture for the 82 million people of Egypt. The Nile Delta & flood plain of Egypt is 3,053 people/square miles of arable (farmable) land.
 - a. Almost all of Egypt's population lives along the Nile River.





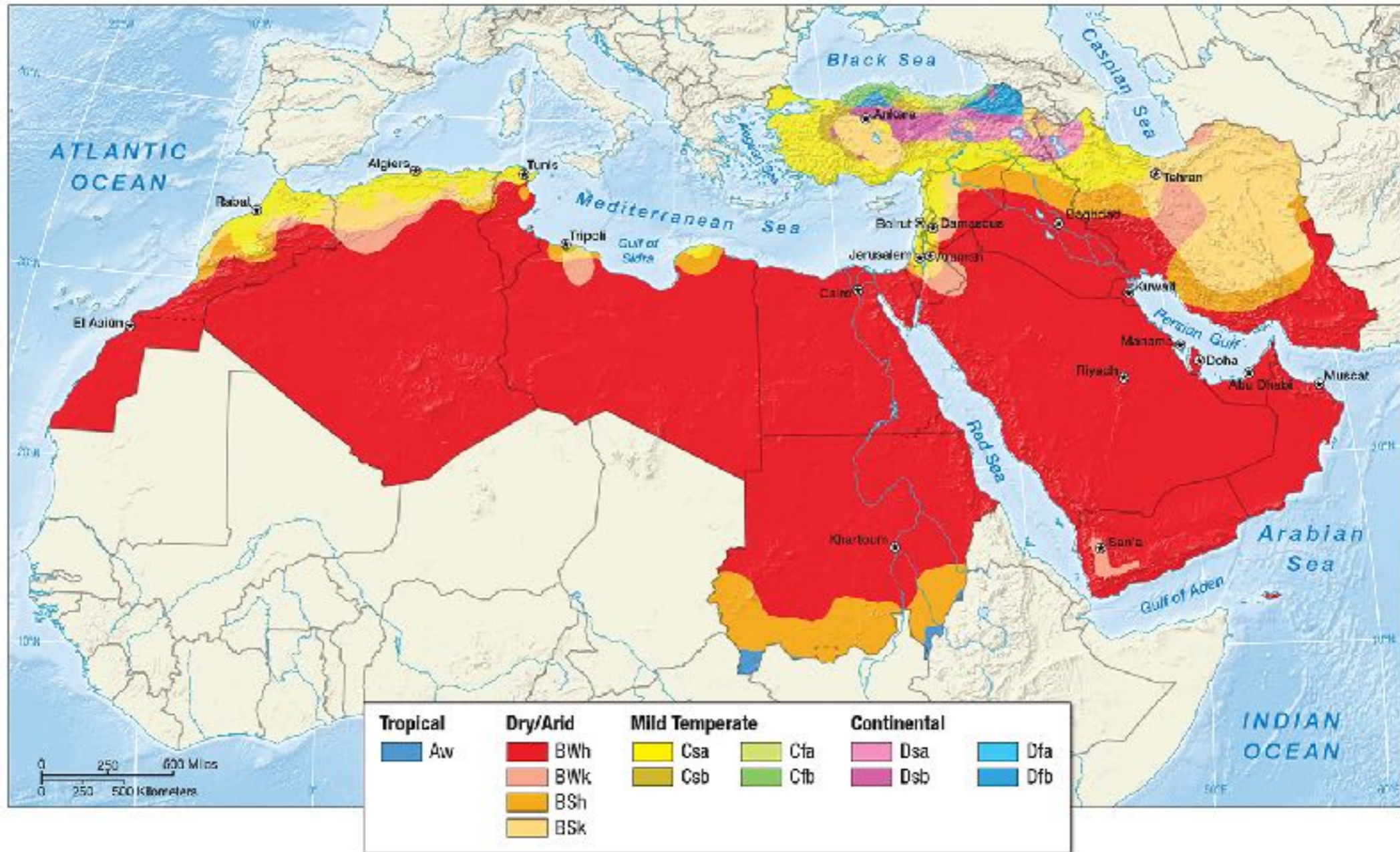
- **D. Water resources are scarce in North Africa**
- **1. Underground aquifers are the main source of water. Major issues:**
- **a. Polluted agricultural chemical runoff (fertilizers & pesticides) contaminating the water.**
- **b. Aquifers are replenished by rainfall, which is very small annually.**
- **(1) Removal of groundwater by a growing population is occurring faster than it can be replenished.**
- **c. The rock layers that hold the water are often contaminated by crude oil (petroleum)**
- **d. Drilling wells is very expensive because the groundwater can be as far 6000 ft. below the surface.**

HOW THE AQUIFER WORKS

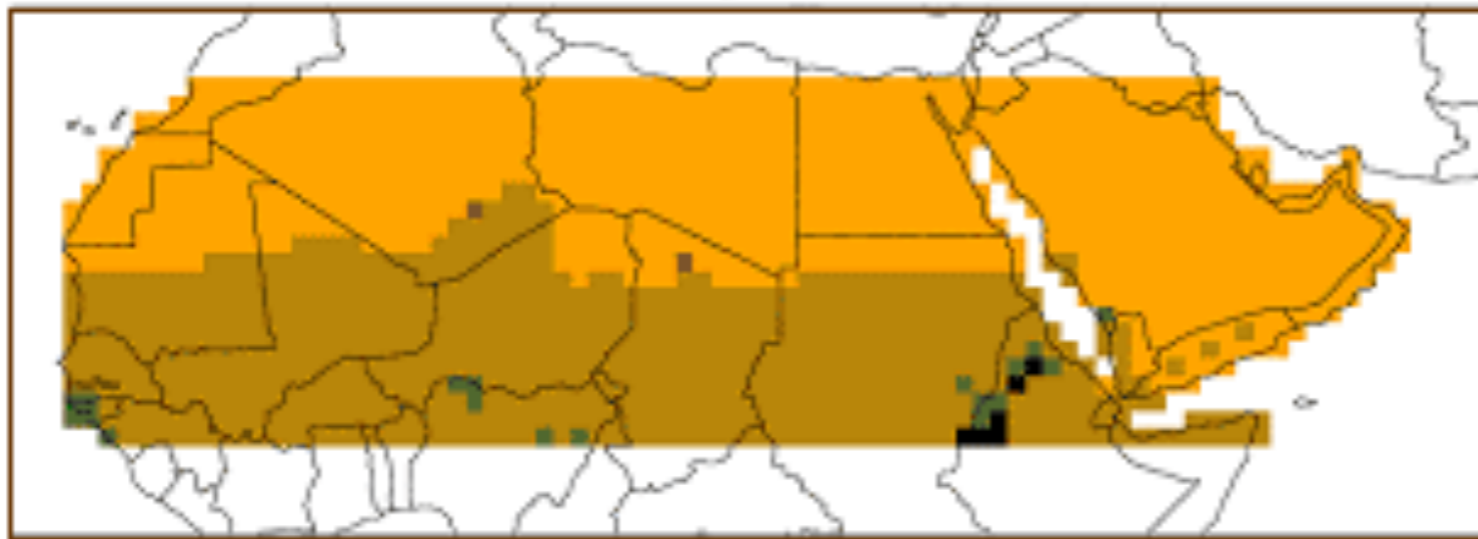


IV. Climate

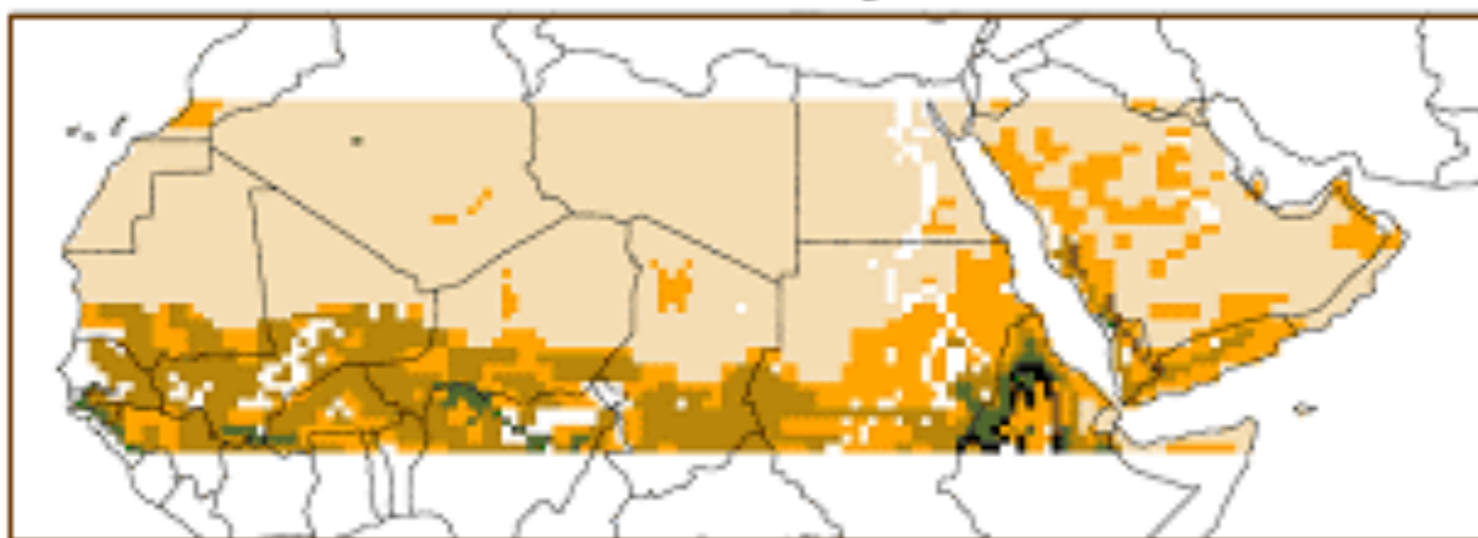
- IV. Climate - Arid climates dominate with little to no rain year-round in many areas.
 - A. Prior to 5000 years this area was not as arid as it is today. People moved to the river valleys where the earliest human civilizations began (Nile River; Tigris-Euphrates Rivers AKA the “Fertile Crescent.”)
 - 1. The Sahara Desert is dominated by high pressure due to its latitude at about _____ of the equator.




6000 years ago



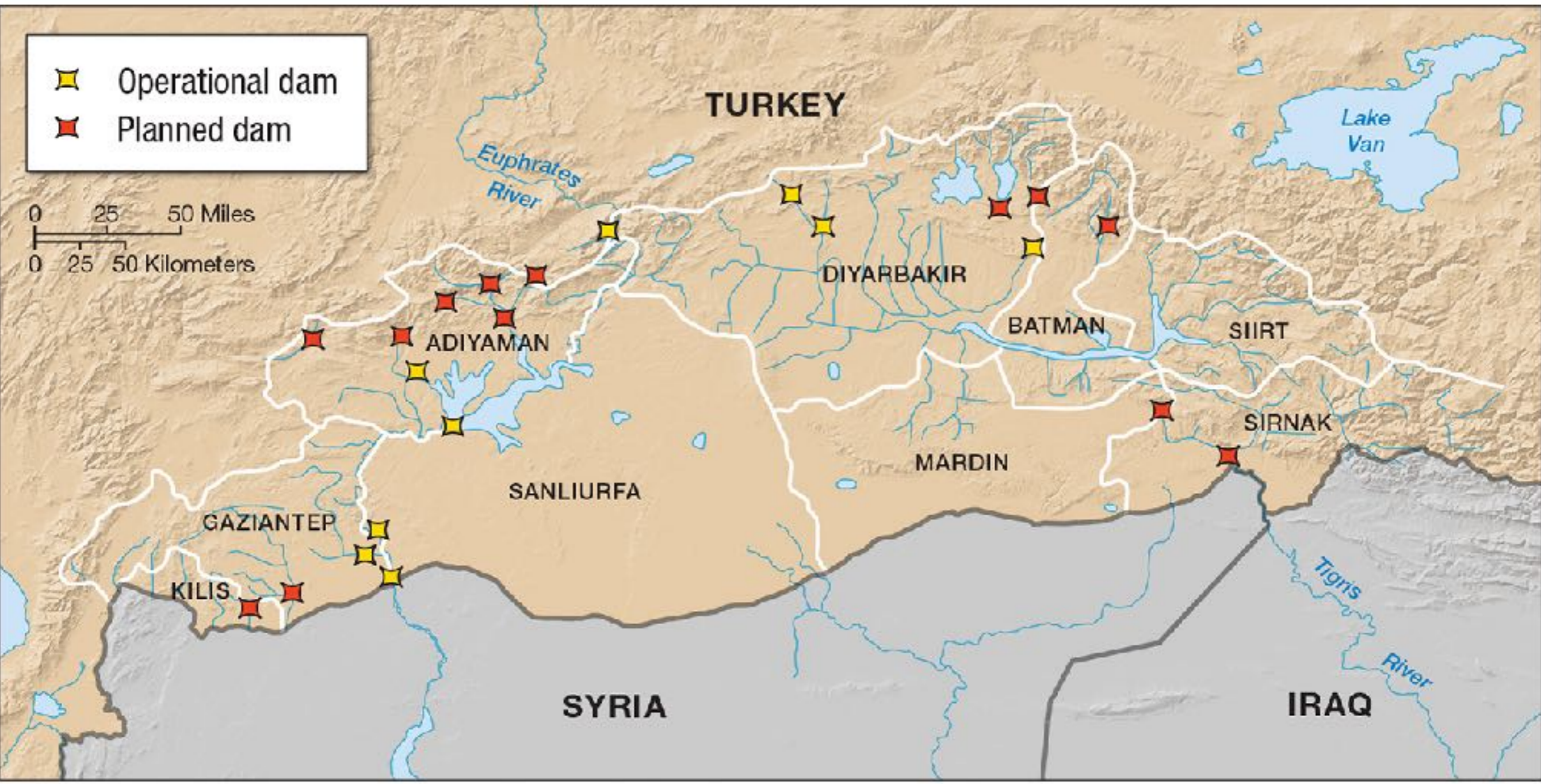
Today



-  Desert
-  Steppe
-  Savanna
-  Xerophytic woods
-  Tropical deciduous
-  Tropical evergreen

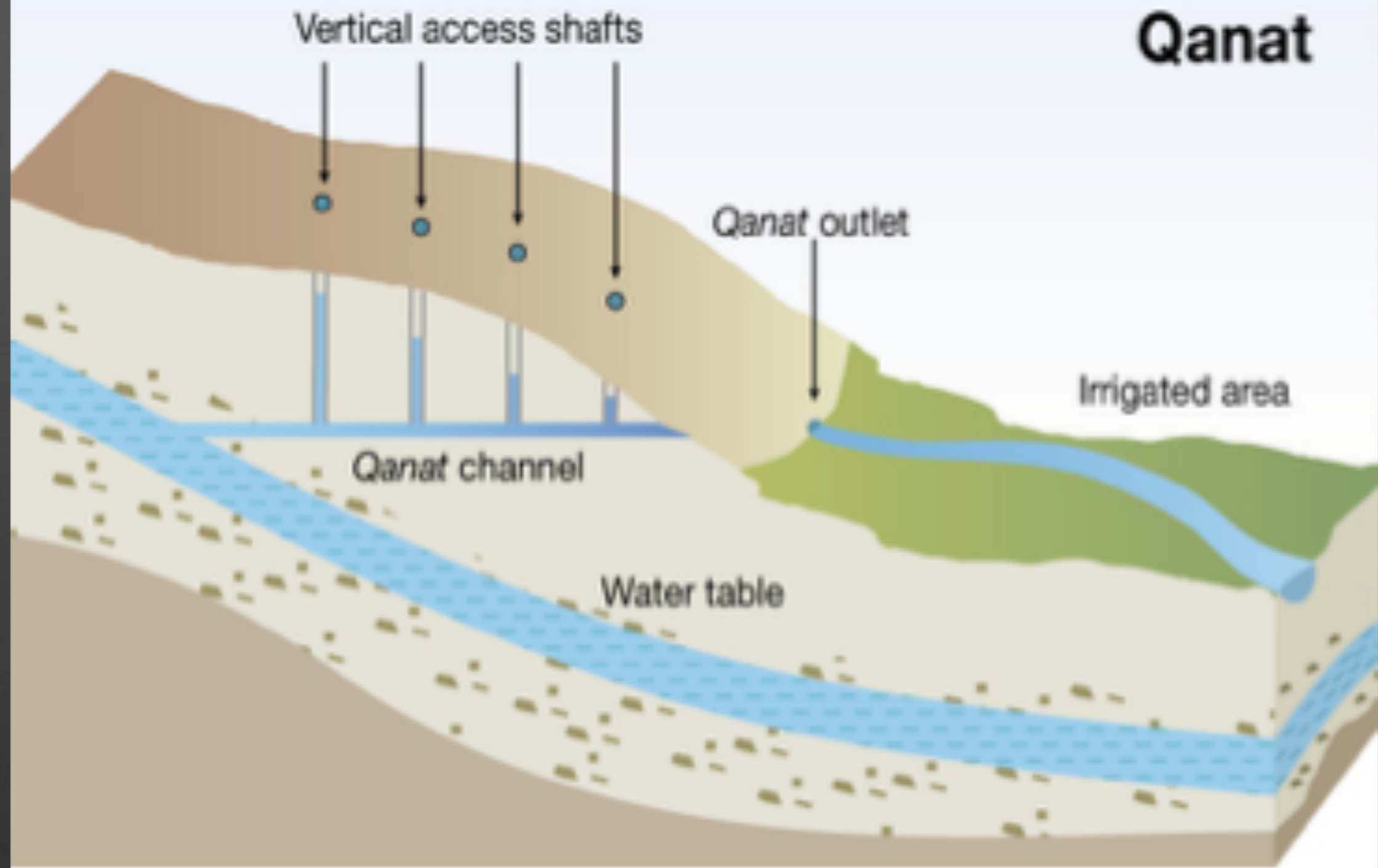
V. Natural Resources

- A. Water resources are scarce
 - 1. Most rivers are fed from meltwater at their sources in the mountains. Annual flooding in the spring is important for agriculture in the region.
 - 2. Many of these rivers pass through more than one country, so conflicts can arise when rivers are polluted or dammed upriver.
 - a. Development of the upper Tigris & Euphrates Rivers in Turkey has caused political issues with Iraq.



- 3. Qanat - is a gently sloping underground channel used to transport water from an aquifer or well to the surface for drinking & irrigation.
 - a. First developed in present-day Iran around 2,700 years ago & the oldest at that age is still in use today.

Qanat



- **B. Oil resources are abundant in the region.**
 - **1. Petroleum began millions of years ago as tiny ocean plants and animals.**
 - **2. 20% of the world's crude oil supplies are found in Saudi Arabia.**



- **C. Agriculture – due to the increasing population in the Middle East food sources are important and have been for the thousands of years this land has been inhabited.**
 - **1. Two of the earliest human civilizations arose in this region: Egyptian along the Nile River valley and Sumerian along the Tigris-Euphrates Rivers in present day Iraq (Mesopotamia).**

- 2. The Neolithic Revolution arose in this region specifically the area known as “the Fertile Crescent.” This area stretched from Iraq into Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, and Israel.
 - a. The [Neolithic Revolution](#) began in this area about 10,000 years ago with experimentation in growing wheat and barley as well as the domestication of animals such as cattle sheep and goats.
 - b. This caused humans who were mainly nomadic (followed herds of animals from winter to summer feeding grounds) to create farming settlements where water was available later becoming the first cities and civilizations.





- 3. A kibbutz is a communal farm in Israel.
 - a. Communal farms were more successful than individually-owned farms due to the harsh environment of the region and its political instability.
- 4. Dry land agriculture does not use irrigation, but a winter wet season is necessary.

VII. Environmental Issues

- A. Water scarcity in the region is the same as that of North Africa.
- B. Reforestation is a process of reforesting areas that have been deforested.
 - 1. The “Cedars of God” in Lebanon is one of the last areas where extensive forest one thrived.
 - a. Under the rule of the Ottoman empire the cedar forests were almost all cut down.
 - b. Today they are protected.
- C. Afforestation is a process of creating forests or “green belts” to stop desertification

