Libya (Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah)

Last updated: 31-01-2004

Location and area

Libya is a nation of northern Africa, bordered to the north by the Mediterranean Sea, to the east by Egypt, to the southeast by Sudan, to the south by Chad and Niger, to the west by Algeria, and to the northwest by Tunisia. The area of Libya Africa, is 1,759,540 km^2. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Topography

About 95 % of Libya is made up of barren, rock-strewn plains and sand seas, with two small areas of hills rising to about 900 m in the northwest and northeast. In the south the land rises to the Tibesti mountain range along the Chad border. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Climate

The climate in Libya is extremely hot and arid. Desert and sub-desert regions have hardly any precipitation. On the coast the annual rainfall total rarely exceeds 380 mm. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Land use

Most of Libya is either devoid of vegetation or supports only sparse growth. Date palms and olive and orange trees grow in the scattered oases, and junipers and mastic trees are found in the higher elevations. Most of the arable land and pasture of Libya is in Tripolitania in the northwest. Cultivation in the eastern and southern regions is sporadic and dependent on rainfall. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Wetlands

Mauro et al. (2001) and Cremaschi (2001) report on the presence of a large green oasis with several lakes and swamps of interdune corridors of the ergs in the valley of the Wadi Tanezzuft during the most of the Holocene. A dramatic drop in precipitation and consequent drought happened shortly after 5000 y. BP., leading to a disappearance of most wetland areas.

Peatlands

According to the interpreted World Soil Map (Van Engelen & Huting 2002) no histosols and no gley soils exist in Lybia.

Still to be checked:

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Schulz, E. 1980. Zur Vegetation der östlichen zentralen Sahara und zu ihrer Entwicklung im Holozän. Würzburger Geogr. Arb. 51. 194 p.
13 Messak Settafet, (25o21´N, 11o26´E), ca, 1100 m, Libya. Pollen, macrorests.
Schulz, E. 1987. Holocene vegetation in the Tadrart Acacus, The pollen record of two ceramic sites. In: Barich B. (ed.) Archaeology and environment in the Libyan Sahara. BAR. Internat. series. Cambridge. 368, 313-326. 12 Dj Acacus. Ti-n-Torha (25o16´N,10o36´E), Ouan Muhuggiag (24o50´N,10o26´E), ca. 9oo m, Libya.Pollen, macrorests.
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