Lake Chad in a 2001 satellite image, with the actual lake in blue. The lake has shrunk by 95% since the 1960s.\textsuperscript{[4][5]}

Drought is a normal, recurring feature of the climate in most parts of the world. It is among the earliest documented climatic events, present in the Epic of Gilgamesh and tied to the biblical story of Joseph’s arrival in and the later Exodus from Ancient Egypt.\textsuperscript{[6]}

Hunter-gatherer migrations in 9,500BC Chile have been linked to the phenomenon, as has the \textsuperscript{[7]} exodus of early man out of Africa and into the rest of the world around 135,000 years ago.\textsuperscript{[8]} Modern peoples can effectively mitigate much of the impact of drought through irrigation and crop rotation. Failure to develop adequate drought mitigation strategies carries a grave human cost in the modern era, exacerbated by ever-increasing population densities. Recurring droughts leading to desertification in the Horn of Africa have created grave ecological catastrophes, prompting massive food shortages, still recurring. To the north-west of the Horn, the Darfur conflict in neighboring Sudan, also affecting Chad, was fueled by decades of drought; combination of drought, desertification and overpopulation are among the causes of the Darfur conflict, because the Arab Baggara nomads searching for water have to take their livestock further south, to land mainly occupied by non-Arab farming peoples.\textsuperscript{[9]}

According to a UN climate report, the Himalayan glaciers that are the sources of Asia’s biggest rivers - Ganges, Indus, Brahmaputra, Yangtze, Mekong, Salween and Yellow - could disappear by 2035 due to global warming.\textsuperscript{[10]} Approximately 2.4 billion people live in the drainage basin of the Himalayan rivers.\textsuperscript{[11]} India, China, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar could experience floods followed by droughts in coming decades. Drought in India affecting the Ganges is of particular concern, as it provides drinking water and agricultural irrigation for more than 500 million people.\textsuperscript{[12][13][14]} The west coast of North America, which gets much of its water from glaciers in mountain ranges such as the Rocky Mountains and Sierra Nevada, also would be affected.\textsuperscript{[15][16]}

In 2005, parts of the Amazon basin experienced the worst drought in 100 years.\textsuperscript{[17][18]} A 23 July 2006 article reported Woods Hole Research Center results showing that the forest in its present form could survive only three years of drought.\textsuperscript{[19][20]} Scientists at the Brazilian National Institute of Amazonian Research argue in the article that this drought response, coupled with the effects of deforestation on regional climate, are pushing the rainforest towards a "tipping point" where it would irreversibly start to die. It concludes