

# Land Governance, Natural Resources and Climate Change in the Arab Region



# الاراضي العربيّة ادارة

## Arab Land Initiative

**Coordination and collaboration**

**Knowledge**

**Capacities**

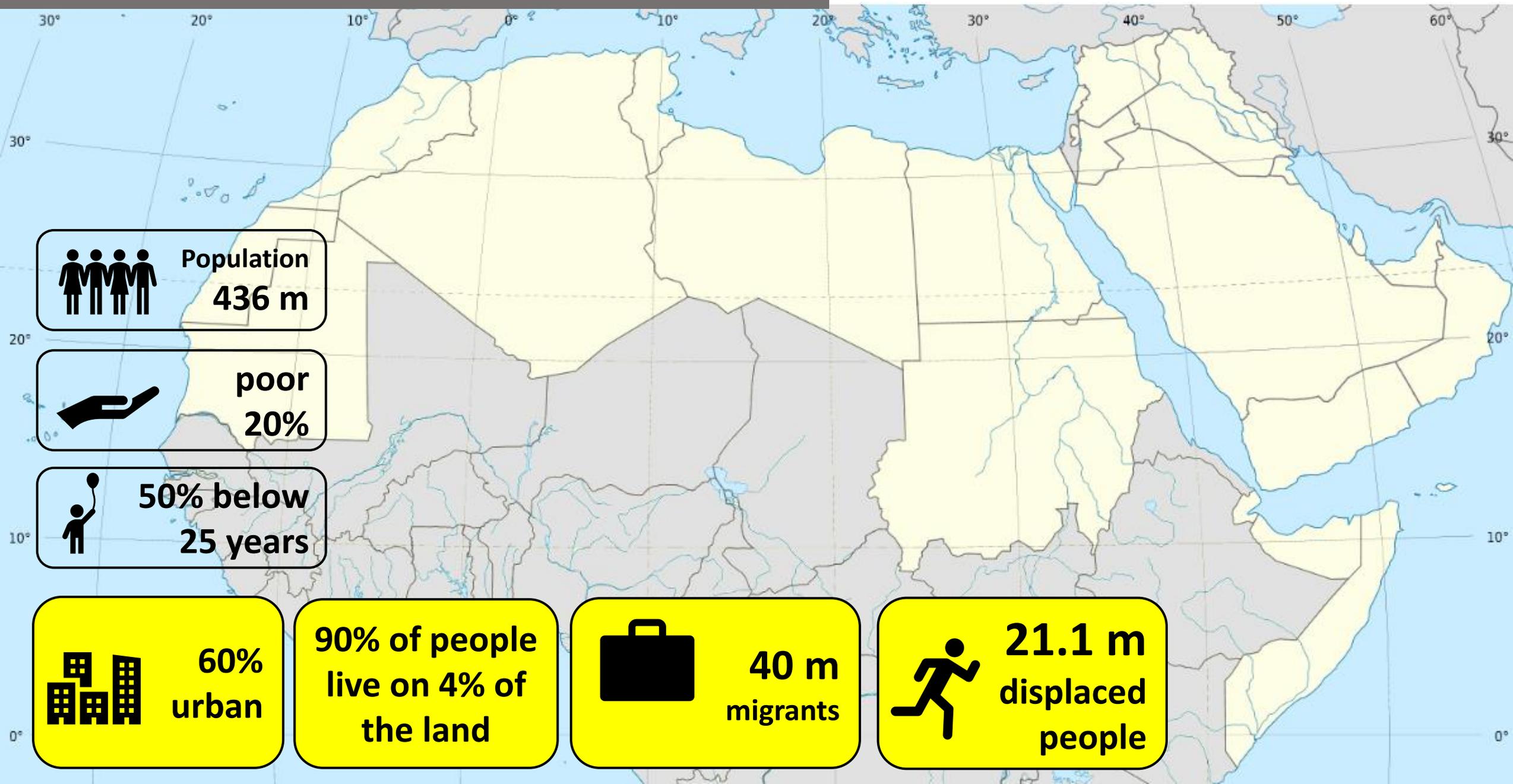
**Country interventions**



**LAND GOVERNANCE, NATURAL  
RESOURCES AND CLIMATE CHANGE  
IN THE ARAB REGION**

*SECURING LAND AND PROPERTY RIGHTS FOR ALL*

# The context



 Population  
436 m

 poor  
20%

 50% below  
25 years

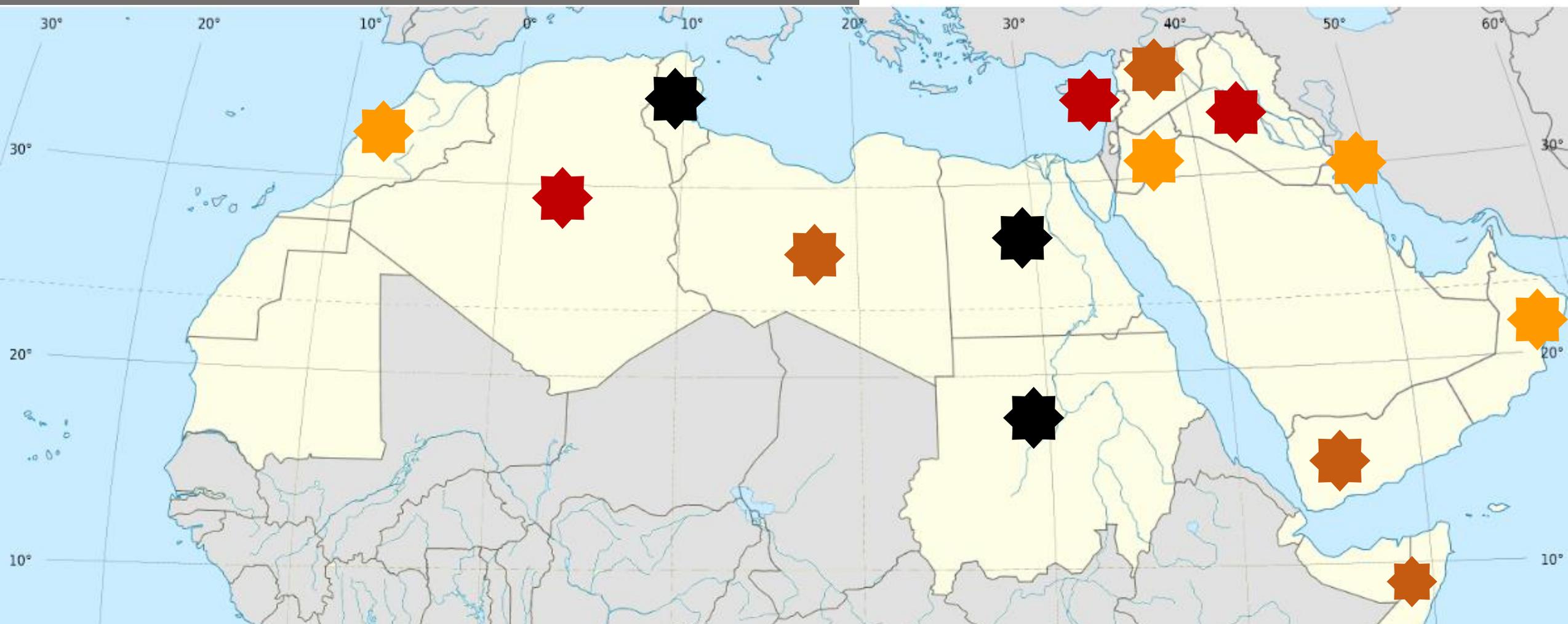
 60%  
urban

90% of people  
live on 4% of  
the land

 40 m  
migrants

 21.1 m  
displaced  
people

# The context



*Since 2011*

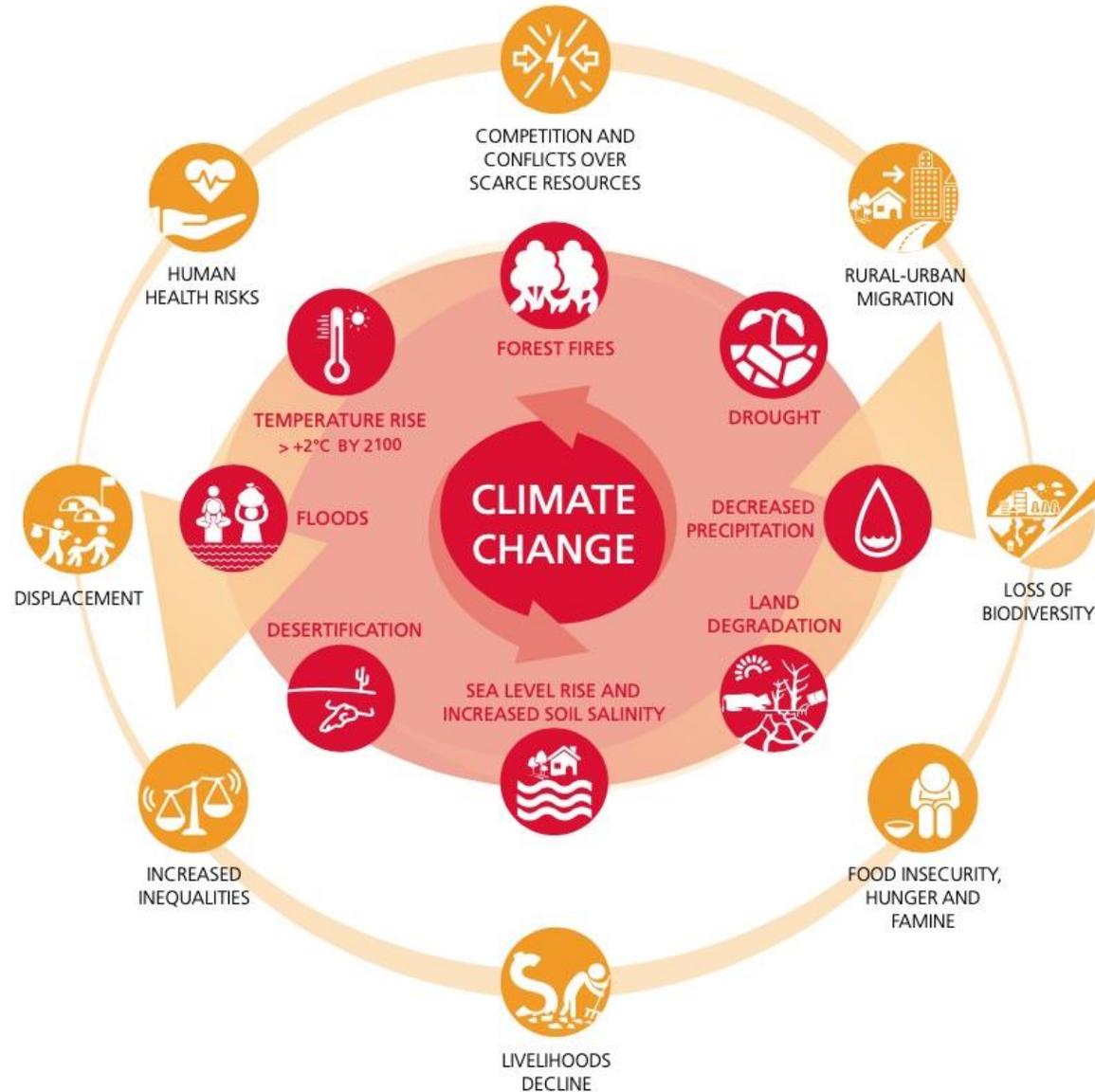
 Revolution	 Major protests
 War	 Protests and gov. changes

**76% utilization of fresh water resources**  
(global 7%)

**Most water scarce region**  
Fresh water scarcity is a major issue in 18 out of 22 countries

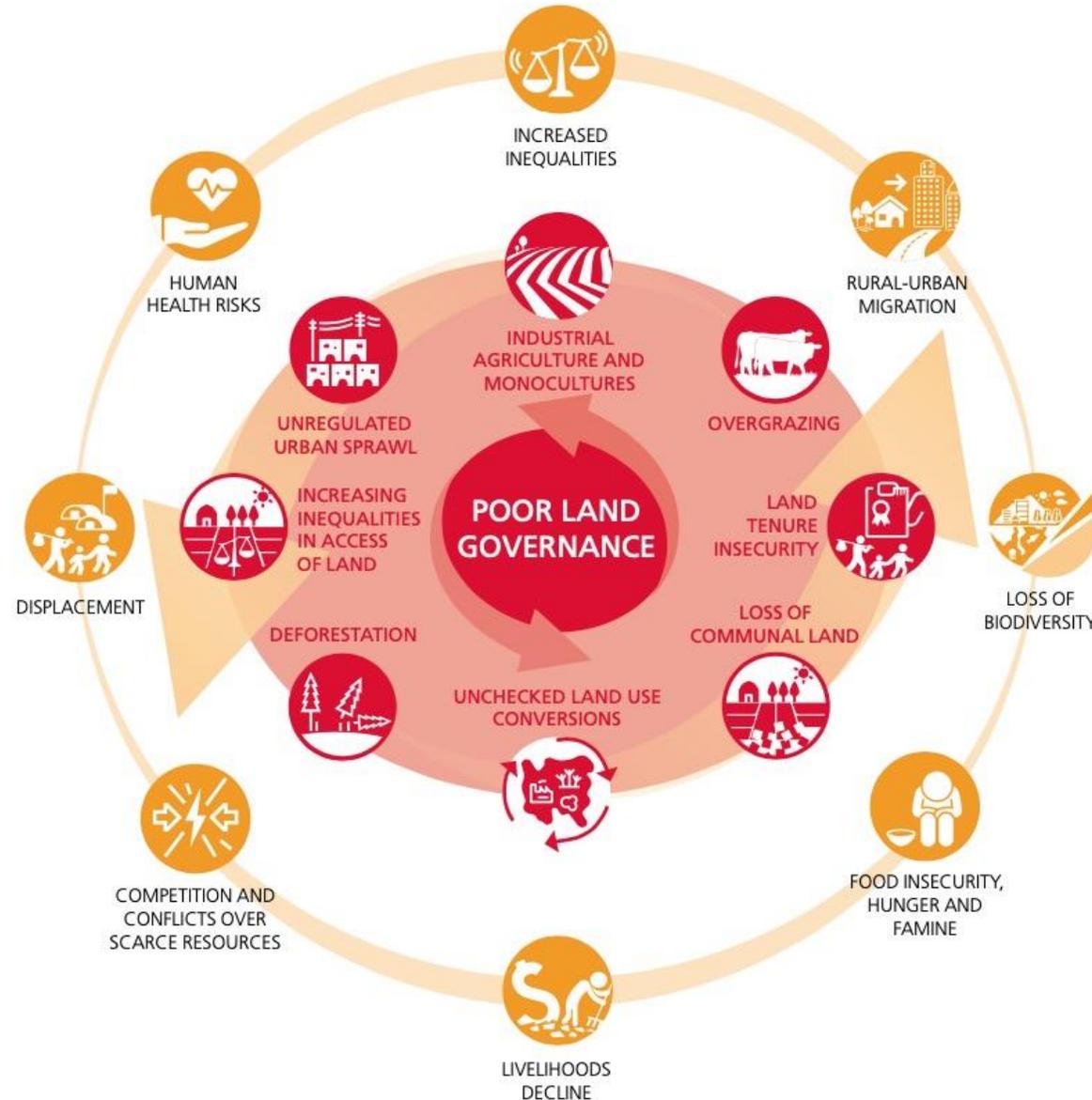
**Desertification and land degradation**

# Manifestation of **climate change** in the Arab region and impact on people



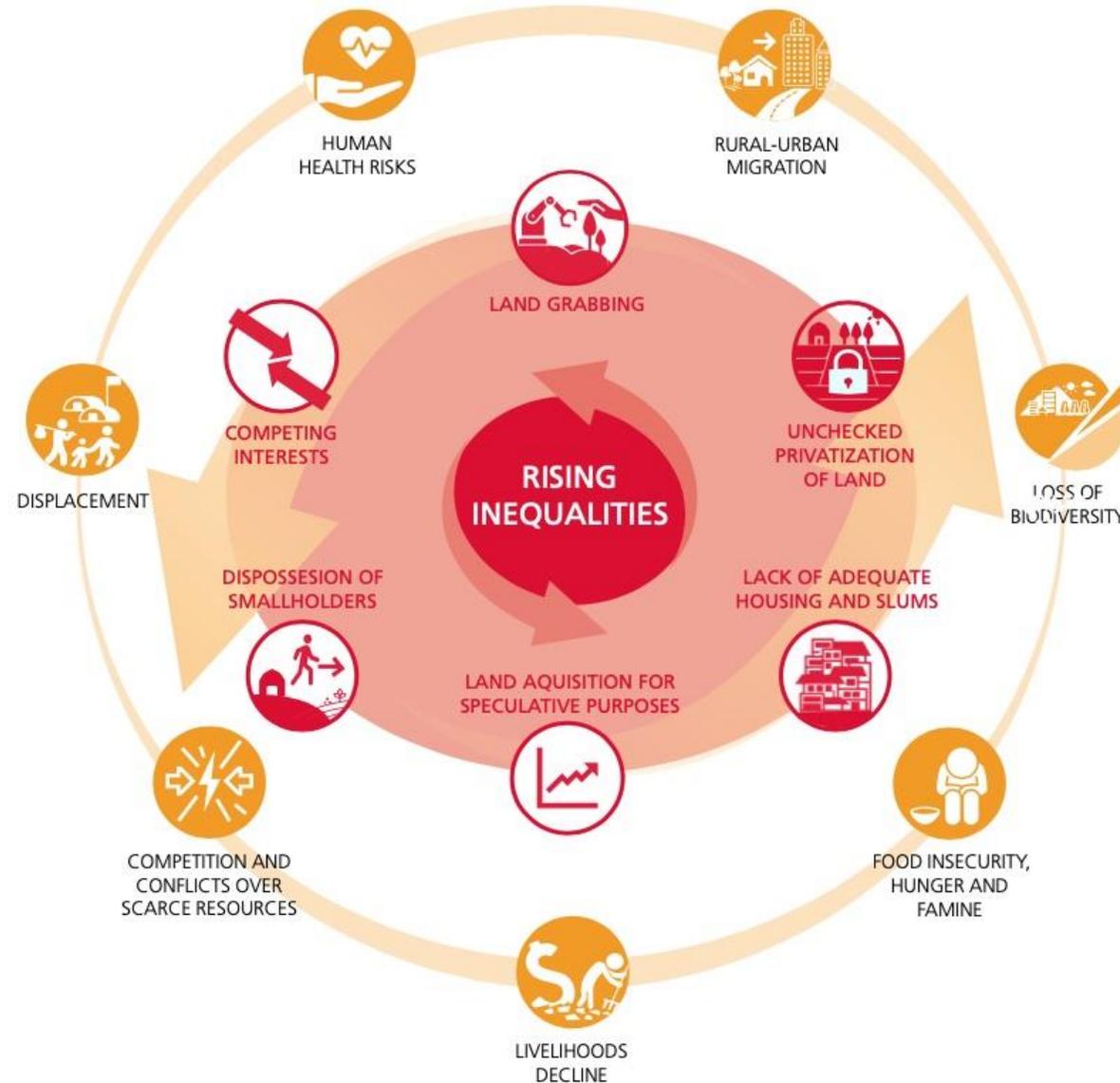
■ Manifestations of climate change  
■ Impact of climate change on people

# Manifestation of **poor land governance** in the Arab region and impact on people



■ Manifestations of poor land governance  
■ Impact of poor land governance on people

# Manifestation of the **rise of inequalities** in the Arab region and impact on people



■ Manifestations of rising inequalities  
■ Impact of rising inequalities on people

# Key challenges related to Land, Natural Resources and Climate Change in the Arab Region

1. Land degradation
2. Land use and resource based-conflicts
3. Land dispossessions and displacements
4. Chaotic urbanization

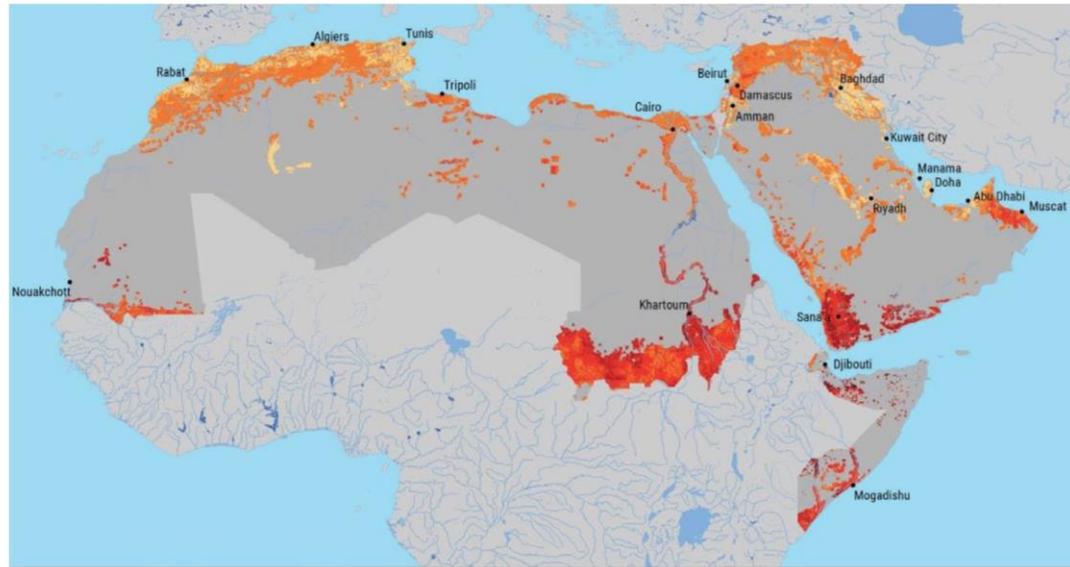
# 1. Land degradation and disruption of agrarian and pastoral systems



Drivers of land degradation in the Arab region

- Land degradation is undermining rural and nomadic livelihoods.
- Climate variations, land fragmentation, and the enclosure of the commons are forcing herders into smaller areas and accelerating their degradation due to over grazing.
- Land abandonment, due to social unrest and economic factors, is accelerating land degradation and susceptibility to climatic factors in many countries.

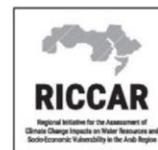
## 2. Land use and resource based-conflicts in pastoral areas



AGRICULTURE: WATER AVAILABLE FOR CROPS

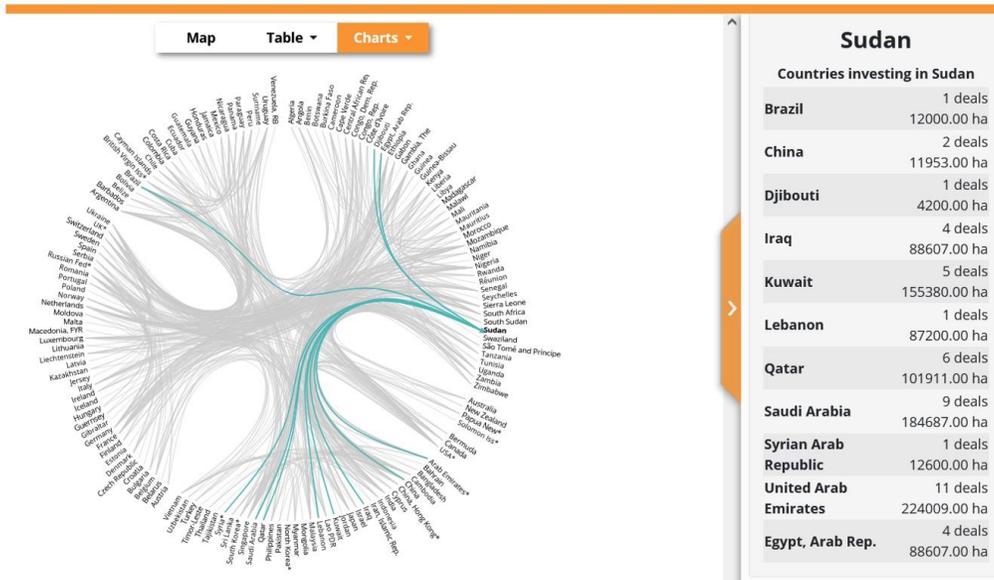
VULNERABILITY: RCP8.5 END-CENTURY (2081-2100)

### Legend



- Climate change is amplifying resource-based conflicts in countries where pastoralism is still a main source of livelihoods (like Djibouti, Somalia and Sudan).
- Reduced rainfall and seasonal changes are affecting the calendars and routes of herders are leading farmers to expand and fence-off their cultivated lands and abandon older cultivation practices that relied on their exchange with herders.

# 3. Land dispossession and development-induced displacements



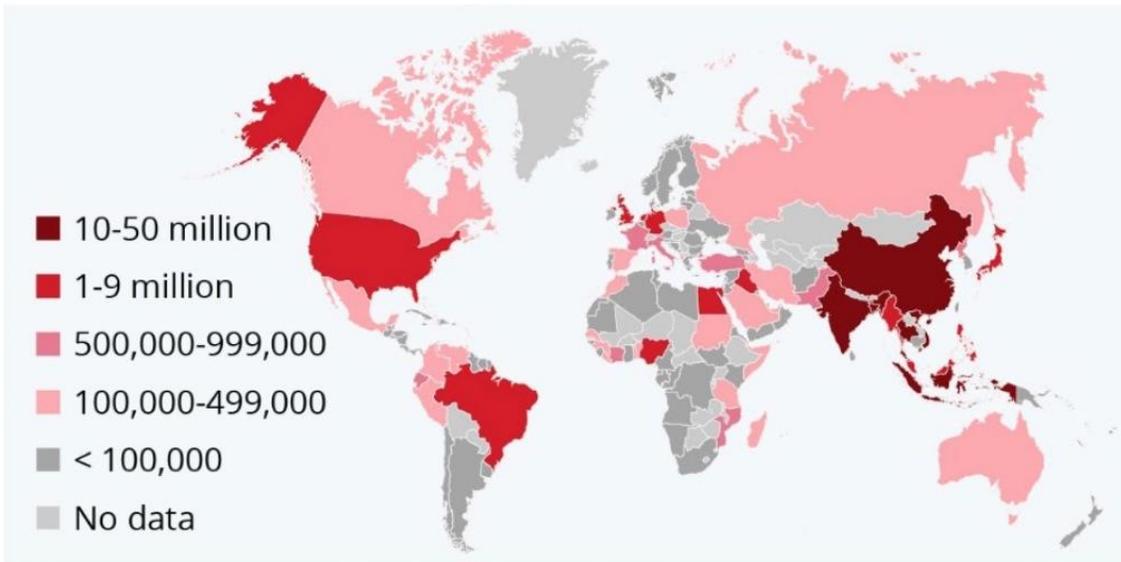
**SUDAN: 97 % of investors in large scale land deals (total more than 1 million ha) are from Arab countries**

Source: LandMatrix (Sudan)

<https://landmatrix.org/charts/web-of-transnational-deals>

- Unjust land policies and land governance systems.
- Rise of neoliberal policies and the growing power of the transnational and financial actors in the economy.
- Expansion of commercial farmlands, infrastructure projects and extractive industries.
- ‘Green grabbing’ where governments are facilitating land enclosure.

## 4. Chaotic urbanization including in climatic sensitive zones



Countries where most people are affected by rising sea levels (\*assuming a rise in sea levels of 50-70 cm (2°C temperature increase/not taking into account ice sheet instability).

Source: Statista, 2020.

- **Most vulnerable cities are those that lack basic urban services. Most vulnerable social groups are the urban poor, refugees, and rural migrants living in high-risk areas.**
- **Poor housing quality in coastal zones exposes the inhabitants of these areas to risks of Sea Level Rise, floods, and storms.**
- **Affluent groups also built private houses and resorts in areas prone to natural hazards. Yet enjoy tenure security.**

# Recommendations to address key challenges related to land, natural resources and climate change in the Arab region

- 1. How to address the critical relationship between land degradation, climate change, and the disruption of agrarian and pastoralists systems?**
- 2. How to address the criticality of natural resource-based conflicts in pastoral areas in the Arab region?**
- 3. How to protect vulnerable social groups from development induced displacements and secure their right to land and adequate housing? How to protect land and people in contexts of rapid urban growth and climate change hazards?**

# Recommendations related to land degradation and agrarian and pastoralists systems

- Promote **participatory land governance** to deal with land fragmentation by encouraging collective ownership, joint land use arrangements and recovering traditional systems.
- Foster **agroecological approaches**, support small farmers, protect land tenancy rights, and encourage land cooperatives.
- Support the **sustainable management of rangelands** and protect pastoralist land tenure rights to increase land productivity, halt rangeland and forest degradation, and protect rural and pastoral livelihoods against climate change effects.

# Recommendations related to natural-resource based conflicts in pastoral areas

- **Map, demarcate, protect and regulate pastoral corridors (*merhal*) to maintain herders' mobility and reduce their tension with farmers.**
- **Place these corridors within a broader **land use planning and policy** framework that recognize, legitimize, and institutionalize the right of the diverse land users to access and benefit from available resources.**
  - Regulate corridors access and rationalize their land uses
  - Strengthen the capacities of “tribal” institutions and civic unions and establish recognizable local entities to protect the rangelands
  - Embrace land policies that recognize herders' traditional knowledge and rights

# Recommendations related to securing the right of vulnerable social groups to land and housing

- **Develop compensation and resettlement schemes**, when relocation is unavoidable, that recognize the customary, formal and informal land rights of vulnerable groups and that are negotiated and accepted by the affected population.
  - Ensure that new housing projects are planned in safe areas and close to the previous homes and sources of livelihoods.
  - Adopt fit-for purposes land approaches to document land rights in unsurveyed areas.
- **Recognize the land rights continuum** in land redistribution schemes and encourage and support land cooperatives to improve the land tenure security of smallholders in contexts dominated by large-scale landholders.

# Recommendations related to protecting land and people from chaotic urbanization

- **Put in place integrated land use plans** to guide urban expansion away from significant landscapes, natural sites, and productive lands.
- **Identify climate-sensitive areas** (areas prone to sea level rise, flooding and fires) and restrict and regulated their land uses.
- Develop **planning directives and legal** instruments to regulate land uses, protect natural sites of high significance and guide urban expansion; and enforce these directives.
- Implement **preventive and proactive measures** to protect exposed areas against possible natural hazards.
- **Raise people's awareness** of climate-sensitive areas to reduce their exposure to risks of natural hazards.

- **Set targets and commit to the LDN, SDGs, and VGGTs**
- **Ensure public engagement in the decision-making process at the community level**
- **Put in place effective environmental and social safeguards systems**
- **Develop legal and institutional frameworks that foster social inclusion and justice in the resolution of disputes on land and natural resources**
- **Embrace multi-level governance and ensure effective coordination and coherence of plans and objectives at all levels**
- **Promote knowledge sharing by build committed in-country and cross-country partnerships**