



Expanding Land

The Omo Delta

The Omo Delta is located at the north end of Lake Turkana, a large closed-basin lake located primarily in Kenya. The Omo River provides the majority of the lake's water. The 1973 image shows the delta entirely within the boundaries of Ethiopia. By the time the 2005 - 2006 image was acquired the southern most point of the delta was roughly 12 km to the south and had crossed the Ethiopia-Kenya border.

While the relative contribution of several causes is uncertain, reduced lake levels and an increase in sediment inflow are believed to be the primary causes. Decreased rainfall, increased upstream diversion of water and increased

evaporation due to higher temperatures all likely contribute to the lower lake levels. Soil disturbance for agriculture has increased erosion and increased the inflow of sediment to the lake. The fact that the delta now falls in two countries has complicated its management.

The increasing area of the delta has provided new land for the 20 000 Dassanech people — traditional inhabitants of the delta. Primarily pastoralists the Dassanech also grow millet, maize, and beans on the delta. In the fall of 2006 severe flooding killed around 100 Dassanech and destroyed houses, crops, and infrastructure.