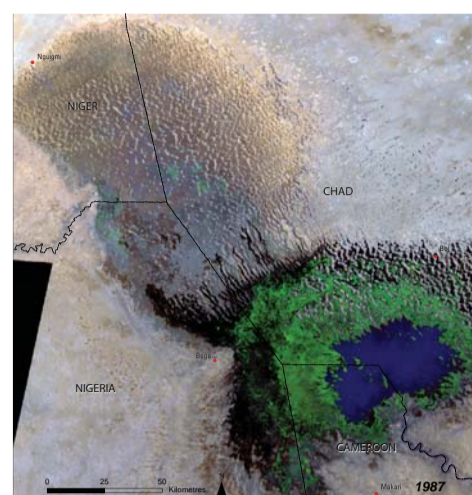


DRYING UP OF LAKE CHAD



Lake Chad

Over the last 30 years Lake Chad in central Africa has shrunk to one twentieth its former size. A recent study attributes the 30 per cent loss of lake area between the decades of 1956-1965 and 1966-1975 primarily to long term climate variability. The study shows only five per cent of the lake area lost during this period resulted from water management practices. Between the 1960s and the 1990s the study shows a further 45 per cent loss of the lake's surface area. During this time period half of the loss is attributed to a continued decrease in precipitation; the remaining half is due to a large increase in irrigated agriculture.

