

The problem of drought in cape town

Environment



Cape Town is one of the most populated cities in South Africa and is the legislative capital, located in the south-western corner of the country at the foot of Table Mountain. The Cape Town drought was caused by many different things such as agricultural strain, socio-economic, meteorological and hydrological. All of these things combined created the strenuous three years prolonged drought. There is great importance for water in Cape Town as there is a growing population and both tourists and residents need water to use in their everyday lives. Water is a fundamental thing in our everyday lives it becomes immensely life-threatening when there is a shortage.

The Cape Town drought resulted in the loss of 37, 000 jobs and an estimated 50, 000 people being pushed below the poverty line due to job losses, inflation and increases in the price of food and water, all basic things needed to live. Since the drought, many people have not been able to wash their hands leading to diseases spreading such as listeriosis. In South Africa and especially Cape Town many people are suffering from the largest listeriosis break out on record. At least 820 people have been affected and 82 have died, according to data from the National Institute for Communicable Diseases. According to a study conducted at the time by Australian psychologists, the rates of suicide and “ self-harm” jumped 8 per cent after the drought and during the drought. Events like drought have a severe impact on the mental health of those suffering. However Mental Illness, it’s not a condition that gets prioritised during a drought as physical health always comes first.

The agricultural areas and the hydrosphere were highly impacted by the drought as farmers got poorer and there was less and less availability for

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water supplies. There have been longlasting effects on the environment such as the plants and wildlife not being able to repair themselves. Many of fauna's habitats have been affected by the drought, their food has gone dry. As expected the environment overall has suffered from the drought. The drought did not have catastrophic impacts on the ecosystems of protected areas. Only a few species of animals were affected. Big protected areas, such as the Kruger National Park, experienced lower herbivore fatality than in past droughts. Livestock losses were greater for owners of small herds, and goat herds have adapted to the drought more than cattle. There have been long-term changes to vegetation, while links between such changes and negative socio-economic impacts have not been well studied.

There are many cases of cause and effects associated with the Cape town drought. Most revolving around what water generally provides us with. Many people have been driven to poverty because of water prices, food prices and unemployment, all things of which have decreased the standard of the economy. When drought occurred water prices rose tremendously and this made a difference not only to the already poor but also the more wealthy. In this situation, everyone was affected although some worse than others. The prices of food and natural produce also rose, because many farmers were not planting as much plantation, and couldn't afford water and their land was dry. This had a huge impact on the economy and its overall health. It takes 70 litres of water to produce 1 apple, in comparison to the water amount per person of 100 litres. If somebody wanted to have an average meal of a hamburger and chips, the hamburger would take 2400 litres to produce and the chips 185, both measurements higher than the daily allowance per

person in June 2017. These two things lead to poverty. Many people in the economy were also left without jobs because companies could not afford to pay them this has impacted the poverty in Cape Town. Analysts from the time estimated ' that the water crisis will cost some 300, 000 jobs in agriculture and tens of thousands more in the service, hospitality and food sectors."

To conclude the Cape Town drought was caused by many different things such as agricultural strain, socio-economic, meteorological and hydrological. Water is such a fundamental thing in our everyday lives it becomes immensely life-threatening when there is a shortage. Since the drought, the economies usual standard has been lowered and many people now live in poverty and also fear that it will happen again. There have been longlasting effects on the environment such as the plants and wildlife not being able to repair themselves. The 2015-2018 Cape Town drought immensely affected many aspects of life such as the people, the environment and the overall economy