

## Sahara shrinking as Sahel spreads, snow sorties strike south

“Sahara desert and surrounding regions are greening due to increasing rainfall,” National Geographic conceded in mid-2009 (<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/07/090731-green-sahara.html>). Unmentioned were inconvenient earlier forecasts that had claimed “man-made global warming” would make droughts more frequent and severe, turn crop-growing unviable and worsen famines. (McCarthy, Michael, “Climate Change: time for action”, The Independent, 3 December 2005, <http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change-time-for-action-517911.html> - source: GWP Foundation). The U.N.'s outlook for the people in the Sahel was bleak. (Integrated Regional Information Networks, “Sahel: Backgrounder on the Sahel, West Africa’s poorest region”, 2 June 2008, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,IRIN,,CPV,,4847bb8f0,0.html> - source: GWP Foundation).

Last year (2017), scientists confirmed the greening trend, having seen proof of “a change to heavy seasonal rainfall” in the arid Sahel, *south* of the Sahara and stretching West-East across the continent over to Sudan's savanna. (<https://www.express.co.uk/news/world/828144/Climate-change-Africa-Sahel-Sahara-region-monsoon-rainfall-drought>).

*North* of the Sahara, over roughly the same time frame, snow reports have become more frequent: 2012 saw first snow in 112 years freak camels around Cairo (elev. 75') (<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/cairo-snow-egyptian-capital-sees-2923418>). Dec. 14, 2013 over 4” snow hit Jerusalem (elev. 2,474'), heaviest for the *month* in 60 years and tie for a usual *winter's* total ([https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/capital-weather-gang/wp/2013/12/12/unusual-december-snowstorm-strikes-middle-east-jerusalem-shutdown/?utm\\_term=.a2a713958c18](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/capital-weather-gang/wp/2013/12/12/unusual-december-snowstorm-strikes-middle-east-jerusalem-shutdown/?utm_term=.a2a713958c18)), then Feb. 20, 2015, just 14 months later, brought a whopping ~14” (<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2015/02/20/israel-snow/23729595/>)!

Algeria's "Gateway to the Sahara" Ain Sefra (elev. 3,537') got a snow dusting Dec. 19, 2016, the first since a traffic-stopping half-hour blizzard Feb. 18, 1979 (*NB: the same day Old Forge tied NY state's -52F all-time low, first set Feb. 9, 1934*), just weeks later (01/20/2017) **over 3 feet** buried the town (<http://metro.co.uk/2017/01/21/sahara-desert-hit-by-biggest-snowfall-in-living-memory-6395965/>) and Jan. 7, 2018 up to 40cm/15.7” blanketed its dunes (<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/africa/sahara-desert-snow-storm-climate-algeria-ain-sefra-africa-weather-latest-a8149226.html>).