

DUST STORMS – A DISASTER OR A BOON?

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ABSTRACT

When one thinks of dust storms what usually comes to mind is the destruction and damage they cause to all sorts of wildlife along the way. However, as difficult as it can be to believe, these storms can actually have positive environmental effects as well, and some species in fact need the disturbances that they cause in order to survive and even thrive. Not only this, but entire ecosystems and forests survive only due to the run-off particles that dust storms provide for them. Thus, by the end of this presentation, we will come to a better understanding of the idea of such dust storms and determine whether or not they are solely the 'apocalyptic' occurrences that society envisions them to be.

What's in a Dust Storm?

Arid regions

Low visibility

Fine dust particles

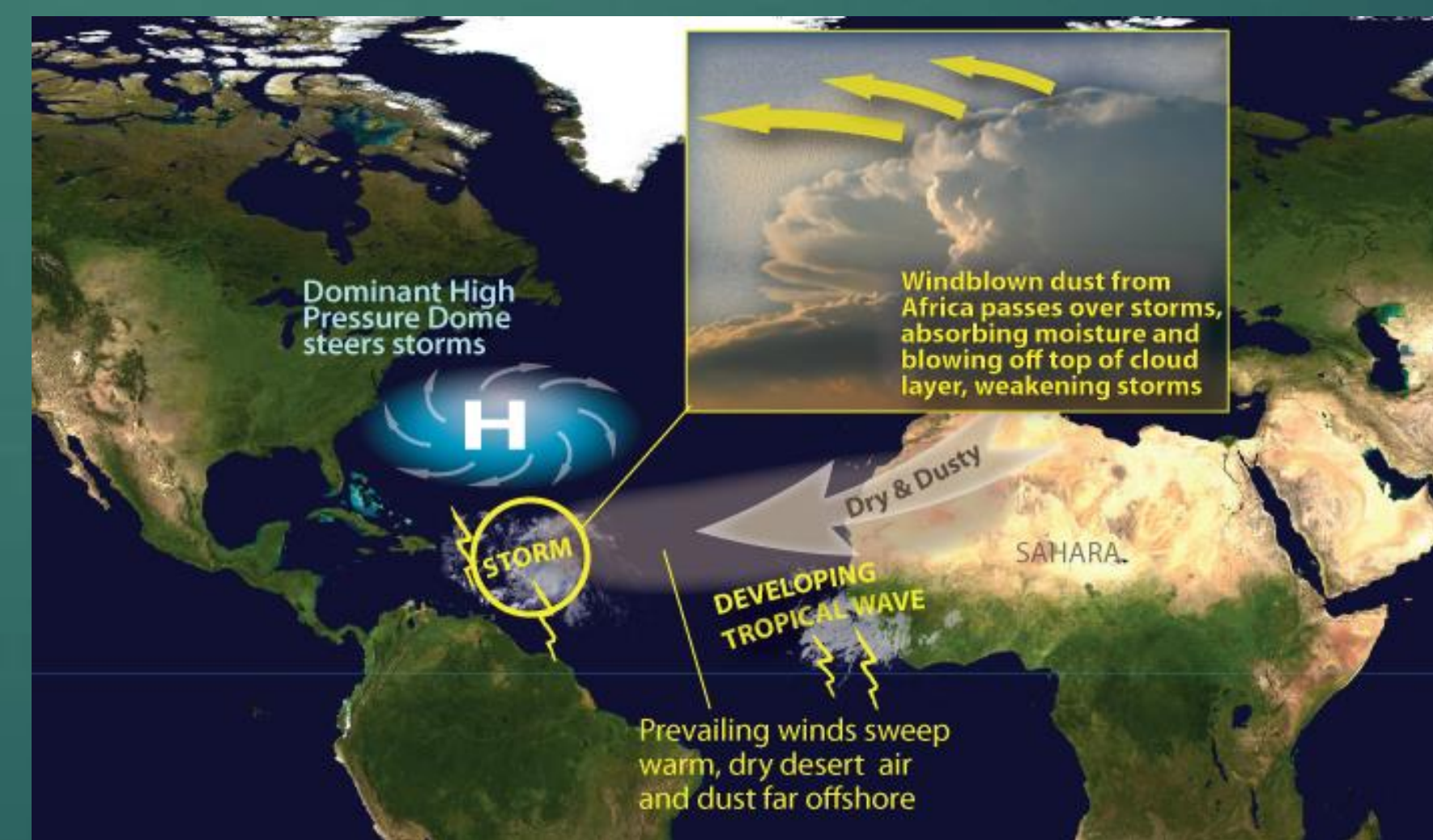
Saltation

Creeping

Suspension



<http://www.nasa.gov/content/goddard/nasa-satellite-reveals-how-much-saharan-dust-feeds-amazon-s-plants>



<http://www.almanac.com/sites/default/files/d6/saharan-dust-graphic-560.jpg>

Benefits of Dust Storms

THE DESERT THAT
CREATES A RAINFOREST...

DUST STORM NEGATIVES

Financial strain

Structural and physiological damage to plants and animals

Pathogen Transportation

FEEDS THE ATLANTIC...

AND PREVENTS HURRICANES

CONCLUSION

The amount of negative impacts of dust storms are staggering. However, these effects can be incredibly polarizing. As one part of the world is negatively affected, a totally different part of the world in fact needs dust storms to sustain themselves, making dust storms far more complicated than simple natural disasters.