With its source in the glaciers of the Himalaya and Karakoram mountain ranges, the Indus River flows 1,980 miles to the Arabian Sea. River flow is the highest during the summer months as the snow melts and the summer monsoon arrives. About 70% of the area’s precipitation falls between July and September.

Sediment transported by the Indus has accumulated in an off-shore undersea fan, one of the largest sediment bodies on Earth. In the aerial image to the right, many tidal creeks penetrate the Indus’ delta plain along the Arabian Sea.

Since ancient times irrigation has supported agriculture during the drier months. The water of the Indus and the sediment it transports and deposits have supported agriculture for over 4,000 years in an area where water is generally scarce.

Definitions
An arid or desert area receives less than 10 inches of rain a year.
A semi-arid area receives between 10 and 20 inches of rain a year.