

# 3.1 Rural environment and land use

	Rural population			Rural population density	Land area thousands of sq. km	Land use					
	% of total		average annual % growth 1990–2003	people per sq. km of arable land 2002		Arable land		% of land area		Other land	
	1990	2003				1990	2002	Permanent cropland		1990	2002
Afghanistan	82	77	3.3	273	652	12.1	12.1	0.2	0.2	87.6	87.6
Albania	64	56	-1.3	307	27	21.1	21.1	4.6	4.4	74.3	74.5
Algeria	49	41	0.6	171	2,382	3.0	3.2	0.2	0.3	96.8	96.5
Angola	72	64	1.9	282	1,247	2.3	2.4	0.4	0.2	97.3	97.4
Argentina	13	11	-0.3	12	2,737	10.6	12.3	0.4	0.5	89.0	87.2
Armenia	33	33	-1.2	202	28	17.7	17.6	2.7	2.3	79.7	80.1
Australia	15	8	-3.5	3	7,682	6.2	6.3	0.0	0.0	93.7	93.7
Austria	33	32	0.2	188	83	17.2	16.8	1.0	0.9	81.8	82.3
Azerbaijan	46	48	1.4	220	83	18.1	21.6	3.5	2.7	78.5	75.7
Bangladesh	80	73	1.0	1,249	130	70.2	61.6	2.3	3.1	27.5	35.2
Belarus	34	30	-1.1	54	207	29.3	27.0	0.9	0.6	69.8	72.4
Belgium <sup>a</sup>	4	3	-2.4	36	33	23.3	24.9	0.5	0.7	76.2	74.4
Benin	66	55	1.5	144	111	14.6	23.1	0.9	2.4	84.5	74.6
Bolivia	44	36	0.5	109	1,084	1.9	2.7	0.1	0.2	97.9	97.1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	61	56	-1.2	231	51	16.6	19.5	2.9	1.9	80.5	78.7
Botswana	58	50	1.2	232	567	0.7	0.7	0.0	0.0	99.3	99.3
Brazil	25	17	-1.6	53	8,459	6.0	7.0	0.8	0.9	93.2	92.1
Bulgaria	34	32	-1.1	76	111	34.9	30.3	2.7	2.1	62.4	67.6
Burkina Faso	86	82	2.0	225	274	12.9	15.9	0.2	0.2	86.9	83.9
Burundi	94	90	1.8	648	26	36.2	38.4	14.0	14.2	49.8	47.4
Cambodia	87	81	2.0	292	177	20.9	21.0	0.6	0.6	78.5	78.4
Cameroon	60	49	0.9	131	465	12.8	12.8	2.6	2.6	84.6	84.6
Canada	23	21	0.0	14	9,221	5.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	95.0	95.0
Central African Republic	63	57	1.5	114	623	3.1	3.1	0.1	0.2	96.8	96.8
Chad	79	75	2.6	175	1,259	2.6	2.9	0.0	0.0	97.4	97.1
Chile	17	13	-0.3	108	749	3.7	2.6	0.3	0.4	95.9	96.9
China <sup>b</sup>	73	61	-0.3	559	9,327	13.3	15.3	0.8	1.2	85.9	83.5
Hong Kong, China	0	0	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Colombia	31	24	-0.3	459	1,039	3.2	2.2	1.6	1.5	95.2	96.3
Congo, Dem. Rep.	..	..	..	..	2,267	2.9	3.0	0.5	0.5	96.5	96.6
Congo, Rep.	44	33	0.8	642	342	0.5	0.6	0.1	0.1	99.4	99.3
Costa Rica	46	39	0.9	700	51	5.1	4.4	4.9	5.9	90.0	89.7
Côte d'Ivoire	60	55	2.1	296	318	7.6	9.7	11.0	11.9	81.4	78.3
Croatia	46	41	-1.4	126	56	21.7	26.1	2.0	2.3	76.3	71.6
Cuba	26	24	-0.2	103	110	29.6	24.3	7.4	10.2	63.0	65.5
Czech Republic	25	25	-0.1	84	77	..	39.7	..	3.1	..	57.2
Denmark	15	15	0.2	35	42	60.4	53.6	0.2	0.2	39.3	46.2
Dominican Republic	42	33	-0.2	263	48	21.7	22.7	9.3	10.3	69.0	67.0
Ecuador	45	36	0.1	286	277	5.8	5.9	4.8	4.9	89.4	89.2
Egypt, Arab Rep.	56	57	2.0	1,309	995	2.3	2.9	0.4	0.5	97.3	96.6
El Salvador	51	36	-0.7	365	21	26.5	31.9	12.5	12.1	60.9	56.1
Eritrea	84	80	2.2	691	101	..	5.0	..	0.0	..	95.0
Estonia	29	30	-0.7	68	42	26.7	14.5	0.4	0.4	72.9	85.1
Ethiopia	87	83	1.9	567	1,000	..	9.9	..	0.7	..	89.3
Finland	39	41	0.8	97	305	7.4	7.2	0.0	0.0	92.5	92.7
France	26	24	-0.2	78	550	32.7	33.5	2.2	2.1	65.1	64.4
Gabon	32	16	-2.5	69	258	1.1	1.3	0.6	0.7	98.2	98.1
Gambia, The	75	67	2.4	378	10	18.2	25.0	0.5	0.5	81.3	74.5
Georgia	45	43	-0.8	280	69	11.4	11.5	4.8	3.8	83.8	84.7
Germany	15	12	-1.3	85	349	34.3	33.8	1.3	0.6	64.4	65.6
Ghana	66	63	1.9	307	228	11.9	18.4	6.6	9.4	81.5	72.2
Greece	41	39	0.2	160	129	22.5	21.1	8.3	8.8	69.2	70.2
Guatemala	62	59	2.3	526	108	12.0	12.5	4.5	5.0	83.5	82.4
Guinea	77	71	1.9	616	246	3.0	3.7	2.0	2.6	95.0	93.7
Guinea-Bissau	76	66	1.8	322	28	10.7	10.7	4.2	8.8	85.2	80.5
Haiti	71	62	1.1	669	28	28.3	28.3	11.6	11.6	60.1	60.1

# Rural environment and land use

	Rural population			Rural population density	Land area	Land use					
	% of total		average annual % growth	people per sq. km of arable land	thousands of sq. km	Arable land		% of land area		Other land	
	1990	2003	1990–2003	2002	2002	1990	2002	1990	2002	1990	2002
Honduras	58	44	0.7	289	112	13.1	9.5	3.2	3.2	83.7	87.2
Hungary	38	35	-0.9	77	92	54.7	50.1	2.5	2.1	42.7	47.8
India	74	72	1.4	466	2,973	54.9	54.4	2.1	2.8	43.0	42.8
Indonesia	69	56	-0.2	588	1,812	11.2	11.3	6.5	7.3	82.4	81.4
Iran, Islamic Rep.	44	34	-0.4	151	1,636	9.3	9.2	0.8	1.3	89.9	89.6
Iraq	30	32	2.9	137	437	12.1	13.1	0.7	0.8	87.2	86.1
Ireland	43	40	0.5	142	69	15.1	16.3	0.0	0.0	84.8	83.7
Israel	10	8	1.2	157	22	15.8	15.6	4.1	4.0	80.1	80.5
Italy	33	33	0.0	228	294	30.6	28.2	10.1	9.4	59.3	62.4
Jamaica	49	42	-0.3	647	11	11.0	16.1	9.2	10.2	79.8	73.8
Japan	23	21	-0.4	603	365	13.1	12.1	1.3	0.9	85.6	86.9
Jordan	28	21	1.8	369	89	3.3	3.3	1.0	1.2	95.7	95.5
Kazakhstan	43	44	-0.5	30	2,700	13.0	8.0	0.1	0.1	87.0	92.0
Kenya	76	64	1.0	441	569	7.4	8.1	0.9	1.0	91.7	90.9
Korea, Dem. Rep.	42	39	0.4	352	120	19.0	20.8	1.5	1.7	79.5	77.6
Korea, Rep.	26	16	-2.7	481	99	19.8	17.1	1.6	2.0	78.6	81.0
Kuwait	5	4	-1.4	689	18	0.2	0.7	0.1	0.1	99.7	99.2
Kyrgyz Republic	62	66	1.4	244	192	6.5	7.0	0.4	0.3	93.1	92.6
Lao PDR	85	79	1.9	480	231	3.5	4.0	0.3	0.4	96.3	95.7
Latvia	30	40	1.1	50	62	27.2	29.5	0.4	0.5	72.4	70.0
Lebanon	16	9	-2.4	253	10	17.9	16.6	11.9	14.0	70.2	69.4
Lesotho	80	70	0.0	379	30	10.4	10.9	0.1	0.1	89.4	89.0
Liberia	58	53	1.9	467	96	4.2	3.9	2.2	2.3	93.6	93.8
Libya	18	12	-1.5	35	1,760	1.0	1.0	0.2	0.2	98.8	98.8
Lithuania	32	31	-0.8	37	63	47.8	46.7	0.9	0.9	51.3	52.3
Macedonia, FYR	42	40	0.2	146	25	23.8	22.3	2.2	1.8	74.0	75.9
Madagascar	76	69	2.0	386	582	4.7	5.1	1.0	1.0	94.3	93.9
Malawi	88	84	1.6	395	94	19.3	24.4	1.2	1.5	79.5	74.1
Malaysia	50	41	0.7	557	329	5.2	5.5	16.0	17.6	78.9	76.9
Mali	76	68	1.6	167	1,220	1.7	3.8	0.0	0.0	98.3	96.1
Mauritania	56	38	-0.3	226	1,025	0.4	0.5	0.0	0.0	99.6	99.5
Mauritius	60	58	0.9	702	2	49.3	49.3	3.0	3.0	47.8	47.8
Mexico	28	25	0.8	102	1,909	12.6	13.0	1.0	1.3	86.4	85.7
Moldova	53	58	0.5	134	33	52.8	56.1	14.2	9.1	33.0	34.8
Mongolia	43	43	1.3	88	1,567	0.9	0.8	0.0	0.0	99.1	99.2
Morocco	52	43	0.3	153	446	19.5	18.8	1.6	2.0	78.8	79.2
Mozambique	79	64	0.6	288	784	4.4	5.4	0.3	0.3	95.3	94.3
Myanmar	75	71	1.0	353	658	14.5	15.0	0.8	1.1	84.7	83.9
Namibia	73	68	2.1	166	823	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0	99.2	99.0
Nepal	91	87	2.0	659	143	16.0	22.4	0.5	0.7	83.6	77.0
Netherlands	11	10	-0.2	182	34	25.9	27.0	0.9	1.0	73.2	72.0
New Zealand	15	14	0.4	37	268	9.4	5.6	5.1	7.0	85.6	87.4
Nicaragua	47	43	2.0	120	121	10.7	15.9	1.6	1.9	87.7	82.2
Niger	84	78	2.7	200	1,267	2.8	3.5	0.0	0.0	97.2	96.4
Nigeria	65	53	1.2	239	911	32.4	33.2	2.8	3.1	64.8	63.8
Norway	28	24	-0.5	129	306	2.8	2.8	..	..	..	..
Oman	38	22	-0.4	1,534	310	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	99.7	99.7
Pakistan	69	66	2.0	447	771	26.6	27.8	0.6	0.9	72.8	71.3
Panama	46	43	1.1	231	74	6.7	7.4	2.1	2.0	91.2	90.7
Papua New Guinea	85	82	2.2	2,007	453	0.4	0.5	1.3	1.4	98.3	98.1
Paraguay	51	42	0.8	78	397	5.3	7.6	0.2	0.2	94.5	92.2
Peru	31	26	0.4	192	1,280	2.7	2.9	0.3	0.5	96.9	96.6
Philippines	51	39	0.1	559	298	18.4	19.1	14.8	16.8	66.9	64.1
Poland	39	37	-0.4	102	306	47.3	45.5	1.1	1.0	51.6	53.6
Portugal	53	32	-3.5	173	92	25.6	21.7	8.5	7.8	65.8	70.4
Puerto Rico	29	24	-0.7	2,662	9	7.3	3.9	5.6	5.5	87.0	90.5

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	Rural population			Rural population density	Land area thousands of sq. km	Land use					
	% of total		average annual % growth 1990–2003	people per sq. km of arable land 2002		Arable land		% of land area Permanent cropland		Other land	
	1990	2003				1990	2002	1990	2002	1990	2002
Romania	46	44	-0.8	103	230	41.0	40.9	2.6	2.2	56.4	56.9
Russian Federation	27	27	-0.1	32	16,889	7.8	7.3	0.1	0.1	92.1	92.6
Rwanda	95	93	1.4	684	25	35.7	45.2	12.4	10.9	52.0	43.9
Saudi Arabia	22	12	-1.6	79	2,150	1.6	1.7	0.0	0.1	98.4	98.2
Senegal	60	50	1.2	208	193	12.1	12.8	0.1	0.2	87.8	87.0
Serbia and Montenegro	49	48	-2.2	116	102	27.5	..	2.8	..	69.7	..
Sierra Leone	70	61	1.2	607	72	6.8	7.5	0.8	0.9	92.5	91.6
Singapore	0	0	..	0	1	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	97.0	97.0
Slovak Republic	44	42	-0.1	..	49	..	..	..	..	..	..
Slovenia	50	51	0.2	603	20	9.9	8.3	1.8	1.5	88.3	90.2
Somalia	76	71	1.8	638	627	1.6	1.7	0.0	0.0	98.3	98.3
South Africa	51	41	0.3	128	1,214	11.1	12.1	0.7	0.8	88.2	87.1
Spain	25	22	-0.5	65	499	30.7	27.5	9.7	10.0	59.6	62.5
Sri Lanka	79	76	1.0	1,588	65	13.5	14.2	15.9	15.5	70.6	70.4
Sudan	73	61	0.9	125	2,376	5.5	6.8	0.1	0.2	94.4	93.0
Swaziland	76	73	2.4	446	17	10.5	10.3	0.7	0.7	88.8	89.0
Sweden	17	17	0.2	56	412	6.9	6.5	0.0	0.0	93.1	93.5
Switzerland	40	32	-1.0	579	40	9.9	10.3	0.5	0.6	89.6	89.1
Syrian Arab Republic	51	47	2.2	177	184	26.6	25.0	4.0	4.5	69.4	70.5
Tajikistan	68	72	1.8	488	141	6.1	6.6	0.9	0.9	93.0	92.5
Tanzania	78	65	1.2	578	884	4.0	4.5	1.0	1.2	95.0	94.2
Thailand	81	80	0.7	310	511	34.2	31.1	6.1	6.9	59.7	62.1
Togo	71	65	1.9	124	54	38.6	46.1	1.7	2.2	59.7	51.6
Trinidad and Tobago	31	25	-1.1	437	5	14.4	14.6	9.0	9.2	76.6	76.2
Tunisia	42	33	-0.5	117	155	18.7	17.8	12.5	13.8	68.8	68.4
Turkey	39	33	0.5	90	770	32.0	33.7	3.9	3.4	64.0	62.9
Turkmenistan	55	55	2.1	142	470	2.9	3.9	0.1	0.1	97.0	95.9
Uganda	89	85	2.5	410	197	25.4	25.9	9.4	10.7	65.2	63.5
Ukraine	33	32	-0.8	48	579	57.6	56.2	1.9	1.6	40.5	42.3
United Arab Emirates	20	12	2.5	621	84	0.4	0.9	0.2	2.3	99.3	96.8
United Kingdom	11	10	-0.2	107	241	27.5	23.9	0.3	0.2	72.2	75.9
United States	25	22	0.3	37	9,159	20.3	19.2	0.2	0.2	79.5	80.6
Uruguay	11	7	-2.4	20	175	7.2	7.4	0.3	0.2	92.5	92.3
Uzbekistan	60	63	2.1	357	414	10.8	10.8	0.9	0.8	88.3	88.3
Venezuela, RB	16	12	0.0	130	882	3.2	2.8	0.9	0.9	95.9	96.3
Vietnam	80	75	1.1	901	325	16.4	20.6	3.2	6.7	80.4	72.7
West Bank and Gaza	..	..	..	..	6	..	..	..	..	..	..
Yemen, Rep.	77	74	3.4	903	528	2.9	2.9	0.2	0.2	96.9	96.8
Zambia	61	60	2.1	117	743	7.1	7.1	0.0	0.0	92.9	92.9
Zimbabwe	72	63	0.9	255	387	7.5	8.3	0.3	0.3	92.2	91.3
<b>World</b>	<b>56 w</b>	<b>51 w</b>	<b>0.7 w</b>	<b>477 w</b>	<b>130,331 s</b>	<b>10.7 w</b>	<b>10.8 w</b>	<b>0.9 w</b>	<b>1.0 w</b>	<b>88.4 w</b>	<b>88.2 w</b>
Low income	74	70	1.5	509	30,456	12.2	12.6	1.0	1.2	86.9	86.2
Middle income	56	47	-0.1	480	68,844	9.5	9.6	1.0	1.1	89.5	89.2
Lower middle income	59	50	-0.1	497	56,103	9.9	10.0	1.0	1.2	89.1	88.8
Upper middle income	29	25	0.1	193	12,741	7.5	8.0	0.9	1.0	91.5	90.9
Low & middle income	63	57	0.7	495	99,300	10.3	10.6	1.0	1.1	88.7	88.3
East Asia & Pacific	72	61	-0.1	565	15,886	12.1	13.3	2.2	2.7	85.7	83.9
Europe & Central Asia	37	36	0.0	122	23,868	12.2	11.3	0.4	0.4	87.4	88.3
Latin America & Carib.	29	23	-0.1	210	20,057	6.7	7.4	0.9	1.0	92.4	91.6
Middle East & N. Africa	46	41	1.2	603	11,111	4.8	4.9	0.6	0.7	94.6	94.3
South Asia	75	72	1.5	559	4,781	42.7	42.5	1.7	2.2	55.6	55.2
Sub-Saharan Africa	72	64	1.6	352	23,596	5.9	6.8	0.8	0.9	93.2	92.3
High income	23	20	-0.2	202	31,030	12.1	11.6	0.5	0.5	87.4	87.9
Europe EMU	25	22	-0.5	138	2,436	27.1	26.0	4.7	4.5	68.2	69.4

a. Includes Luxembourg. b. Includes Taiwan, China.

## About the data

Indicators of rural development are sparse, as few indicators are disaggregated between rural and urban areas (for some that are, see tables 2.5, 3.5, and 3.10). This table shows indicators of rural population and land use. Rural population is approximated as the midyear nonurban population.

The data in the table show that land use patterns are changing. They also indicate major differences in resource endowments and uses among countries.

True comparability of the data is limited, however, by variations in definitions, statistical methods, and the quality of data collection. Countries use different definitions of rural population and land use, for example. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the primary compiler of these data, occasionally adjusts its definitions of land use categories and sometimes revises earlier data. Because the data reflect changes in data reporting procedures as well as actual changes in land use, apparent trends should be interpreted with caution.

Satellite images show land use that differs from that given by ground-based measures in both area under cultivation and type of land use. Moreover, land use data in countries such as India are based on reporting systems that were designed for the collection of tax revenue. Because taxes on land are no longer a major source of government revenue, the quality and coverage of land use data (except for cropland) have declined. Data on forest area, aggregated in the category other, may be particularly unreliable because of differences in definitions and irregular surveys (see About the data for table 3.4).

## Definitions

- Rural population is calculated as the difference between the total population and the urban population (see Definitions for tables 2.1 and 3.10).
- Rural population density is the rural population divided by the arable land area.
- Land area is a country's total area, excluding area under inland water bodies, national claims to the continental shelf, and exclusive economic zones. In most cases the definition of inland water bodies includes major rivers and lakes. (See table 1.1 for the total surface area of countries.)
- Land use is broken into three categories.
- Arable land includes land defined by the FAO as land under temporary crops (double-cropped areas are counted once), temporary meadows for mowing or for pasture, land under market or kitchen gardens, and land temporarily fallow. Land abandoned as a result of shifting cultivation is excluded.
- Permanent cropland is land cultivated with crops that occupy the land for long periods and need not be replanted after each harvest, such as cocoa, coffee, and rubber. This category includes land under flowering shrubs, fruit trees, nut trees, and vines, but excludes land under trees grown for wood or timber.
- Other land includes forest and woodland as well as logged-over areas to be forested in the near future. Also included are uncultivated land, grassland not used for pasture, wetlands, wastelands, and built-up areas—residential, recreational, and industrial lands and areas covered by roads and other fabricated infrastructure.

## 3.1a

### All income groups and all regions are becoming less rural



Source: Table 3.1.

## Data sources

The data on urban population shares used to estimate rural population come from the United Nations Population Division's World Urbanization Prospects: The 2003 Revision. The total population figures are World Bank estimates. The data on land area and land use are from the FAO's electronic files, which may contain more recent information than those published in its Production Yearbook. The FAO gathers these data from national agencies through annual questionnaires and by analyzing the results of national agricultural censuses.