Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

ISSN 2709-006X [Print]
ISSN 2709-0078 [Online]

FAOSTAT ANALYTICAL BRIEF 88

Land statistics

2001–2022

Global, regional and country trends

HIGHLIGHTS

- → **In 2022, world total agricultural land was 4 781 million hectares (ha), more than one-third of the global land area. Within agricultural land, cropland covered 1 573 million ha while permanent meadows and pastures were 3 208 million ha.**
- → **The rest of the global land area was almost equally split between forest land, covering 4 050 million ha, and other land, with 4 150 million ha of deserts, glaciers, barren lands, built areas, etc.**
- → **In the two decades since 2001, world total cropland area grew by 80 million ha – about 5 percent – while permanent meadows and pastures lost 170 million ha, a decrease of 6 percent.**
- → **Growth in cropland area from 2001 to 2022 was the result of area expansion in Africa (+73 million ha), South America (+28 million ha) and South-eastern Asia (+22 million ha), which was partially offset by contractions in Northern America (−26 million ha), Eastern Europe (−8 million ha) and Southern Europe (−6 million ha).**
- → **The area used for growing crops grew significantly from 2001 to 2022. Temporary crops (such as wheat, rice and maize) increased by 110 million ha, about 10 percent, reaching 1 085 million ha. Permanent crops (such as cocoa, oil palm and coffee) grew by 55 million ha, reaching 190 million ha in 2022, an increase of 40 percent.**
- → **From 2001 to 2022, while world total cropland area per person decreased by 20 percent, from 0.24 to 0.20 hectares per capita, land productivity, measured in terms of total agricultural gross value of production, grew more strongly – by nearly 60 percent, from USD 546 per hectare to USD 872 per hectare.**

LAND STATISTICS

BACKGROUND

Land statistics describe the human use of the land surface for different purposes and economic activities (land use), as well as the biophysical characteristics associated with both human and natural systems (land cover). The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) disseminates land use statistics and land cover statistics in FAOSTAT annually.

Land use data are collected from countries via the FAO land use, irrigation and agricultural practices questionnaire, following the FAO land use definitions first developed by the World Census of Agriculture (FAO, 2010) and later adopted by the System of Economic and Environmental Accounts (SEEA).

Land cover data are compiled from global remote sensing maps – produced by the European Space Agency, the Copernicus programme and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration – following the SEEA land cover classification.

This analytical brief reports the main results and changes over time in land statistics at the global, regional and country level, for the period 2001–2022.

GLOBAL

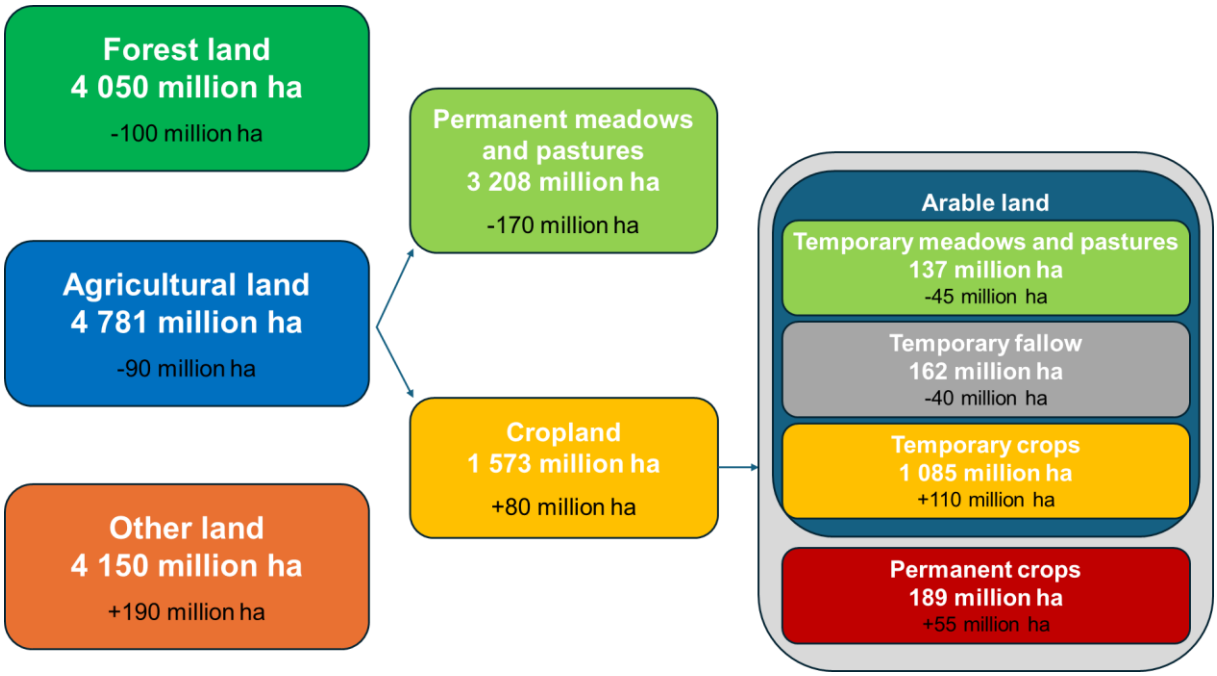
The world total land area was 13 billion hectares (ha).[1] Of this total, agricultural land covered in 2022 more than one-third, or 4 781 million ha, while forest land (4 050 million ha) and other land (4 150 million ha) split the remaining land area in nearly equal parts (Figure 1). In addition to the world total land area, inland waters covered 443 million ha.

In 2022, within agricultural land, world total cropland area was 1 573 billion ha (12 percent of total land area), whereas the area of permanent meadows and pastures was 3 208 million ha. In addition, cropland area has grown by 80 million ha since 2001, while permanent meadows and pastures lost 170 million ha – resulting in a marginal decrease in world total agricultural land (−90 million ha, or about −2 percent) (Figure 1). The gain in cropland area was driven largely by an increase in permanent crops (such as cocoa, oil palm or coffee), which reached 190 million ha in 2022 (+55 million ha since 2001, a 40 percent increase). World total arable land reached 1 284 million ha in 2022, with a much smaller increase (+25 million ha, or +2 percent) that was the result of two opposite trends (Figure 1): a strong growth in the area of temporary crops annual cultivations such as wheat, maize and rice – which reached a total area of 1 080 million ha in 2022 (+110 million ha, or +11 percent) – coupled with a marked reduction in fallow land and temporary meadows and pastures (−85 million ha in total). These latter trends were the result of agriculture intensification in some regions, due to the reduced need for rotations or resting periods within cropping systems.

The cropland increase noted above represented 80 percent of the forest land area loss from 2001 to 2022, or about 100 million ha (Figure 1). This was consistent with previously published FAO estimates of the role of agriculture as the key driver of global deforestation. Likewise, part of the recorded loss in permanent meadows and pastures was consistent with well-documented land degradation processes, for instance those linked to overgrazing by livestock or climate change.

[1] Excluding Antarctica. The FAO land cover data show that this region accounts for an additional 1.2 billion hectares.

Figure 1: World total land area in 2022 by main category



Note: Land use change from 2001 to 2022 (expressed as positive or negative area amounts) is also provided for each category under the 2022 values.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

Irrigation and agricultural practices

World total land area equipped for irrigation in 2022 was 354 million ha, about 20 percent of total cropland area, having increased 60 million ha since 2001, or three-fourths of the global increase in cropland area, further underscoring the agricultural intensification patterns previously noted.

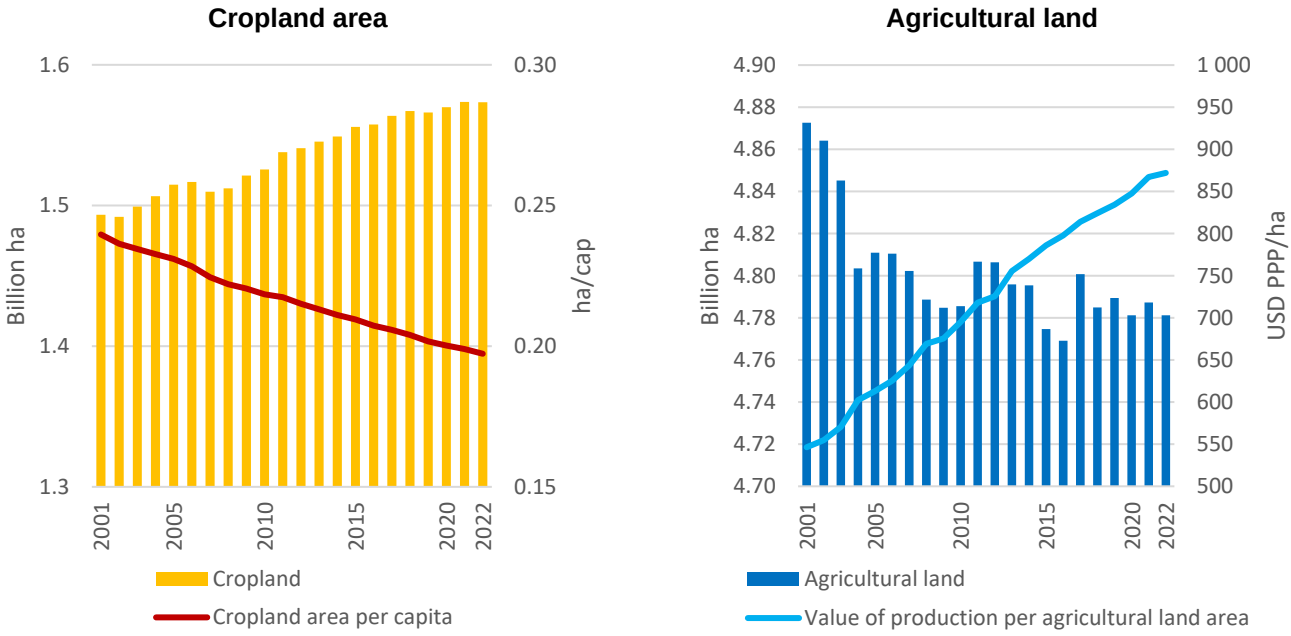
By 2022, the global agricultural area under organic agriculture was 114 million ha, more than triple the area recorded since 2004, when data collection on this category began.

Indicators

From 2001 to 2022, world total agricultural land area declined by 2 percent, with cropland area increasing by 5 percent. Over the same period, cropland area per capita decreased by 18 percent, from 0.24 to 0.20 ha/cap (Figure 2). Conversely, land productivity[2] (computed as the gross value of agricultural production per unit of agricultural land) increased by nearly 60 percent, from USD 546/ha to USD 672/ha, well above the rate of population growth over the same period (+28 percent).

[2] Land productivity is a subindicator of the newly approved proxy of Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 2.4.1 on productive and sustainable agriculture.

Figure 2: World agricultural land area and indicators



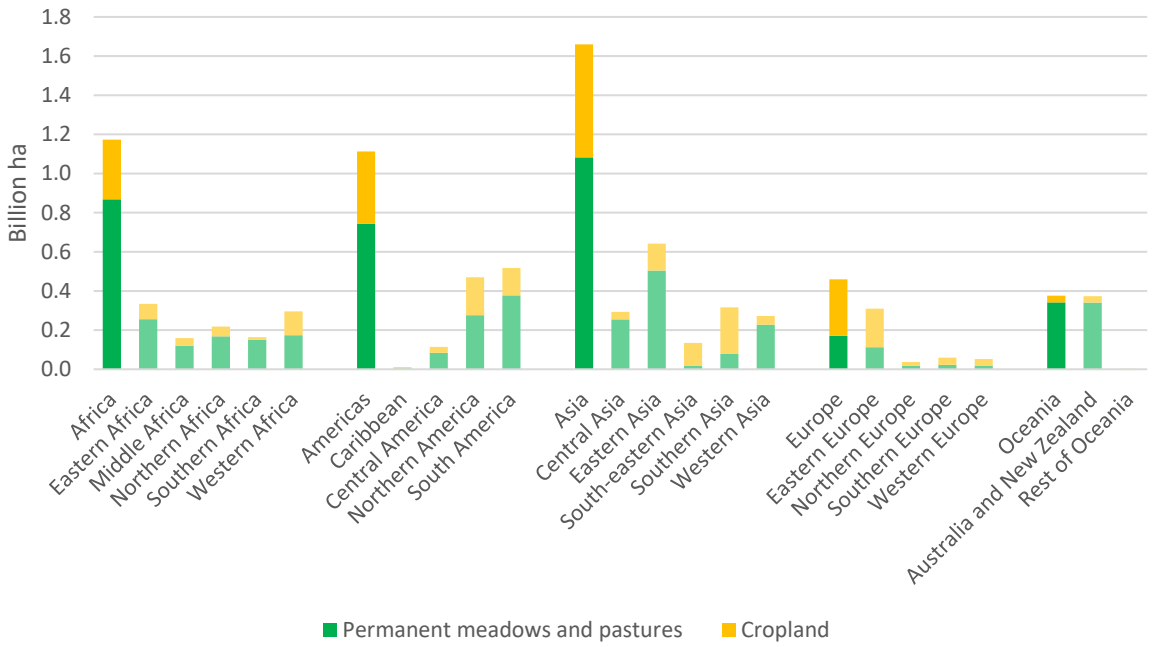
Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

REGIONAL

Asia was the region with the largest agricultural land area in 2022 (1.7 billion ha). Africa and the Americas followed (1.1–1.2 billion ha each), far ahead of Europe (460 million ha) and Oceania (380 million ha).

Eastern Asia had the largest area of permanent meadows and pastures in 2022 (504 million ha), followed by South America (378 million ha) and Australia and New Zealand (341 million ha), then Eastern Africa (256 million ha) and Western Asia (228 million ha) (Figure 3). In 2022, the largest cropland area was in Southern Asia (238 million ha), Eastern Europe (197 million ha) and Northern America (193 million ha) (Figure 3). In the first two regions, cropland area was larger than the area of meadows and pasture as it represented more than 60 percent of total agricultural area. The other regions with a majority of cropland area in total agricultural area included South-eastern Asia (87 percent of agricultural land), the rest of Oceania (74 percent), all the European subregions (50–68 percent) and the Caribbean (57 percent).

Figure 3: Agricultural land area by region, subregion and component (2022)



Note: Rest of Oceania includes Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

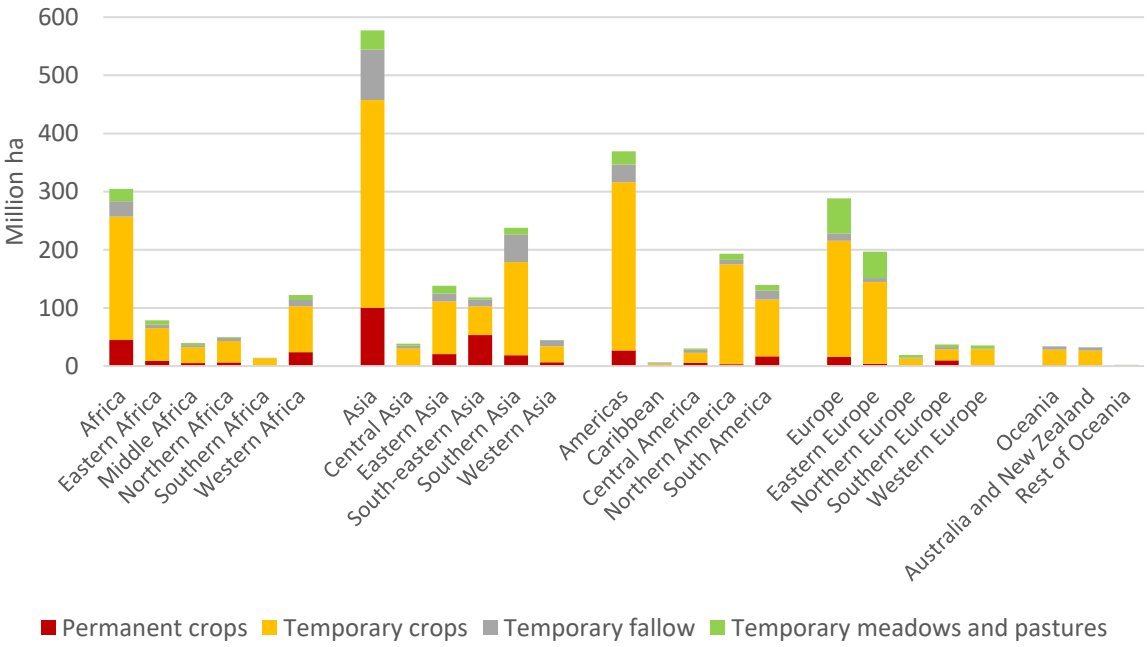
Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

The temporary crops area was the main component of cropland (and of arable land) area across all regions, with a world average share of 70 percent in 2022, highest values above 80 percent in Southern Africa, Northern America and Australia and New Zealand, and lowest values around 20–40 percent in South-eastern Asia , the Caribbean and the rest of Oceania. The absolute area extent of temporary crops was the largest in Northern America (172 million ha), Southern Asia (160 million ha) and Eastern Europe (141 million ha), followed by South America (98 million ha), Eastern Asia (90 million ha), Western Africa (79 million ha) and Eastern Africa (56 million ha) (Figure 4).

Permanent crops occupied the largest areas in South-eastern Asia (53 million ha) and Western Africa (35 million ha), with important contributions to cropland area in Eastern Asia, Southern Asia and South America (ranging 16–23 million ha). Eastern Africa and Southern Europe followed with 9–10 million ha (Figure 4). Considering a 12 percent global average share of permanent crops in cropland in 2022, important relative contributions to regional cropland area were found in the rest of Oceania (72 percent) and South-eastern Asia (45 percent of cropland area), followed by shares above 20 percent in Southern Europe, the Caribbean and Western Africa.

Finally, the cropland statistics show that in 2022, about 300 million ha globally, or 19 percent of total cropland, were temporary meadows and pastures or fallow land (land used in rotations within cropping systems). Europe had the largest relative contribution to cropland in 2022 (25 percent), especially temporary meadows and pastures in Eastern Europe (45 million ha), an area representing about one-third of the world total of this category. Southern Asia had the most area of temporary fallow (47 million ha), covering about one-fourth of the world total (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Cropland area by region, subregion and component (2022)



Note: Rest of Oceania includes Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

Trends in land use change, 2001–2022

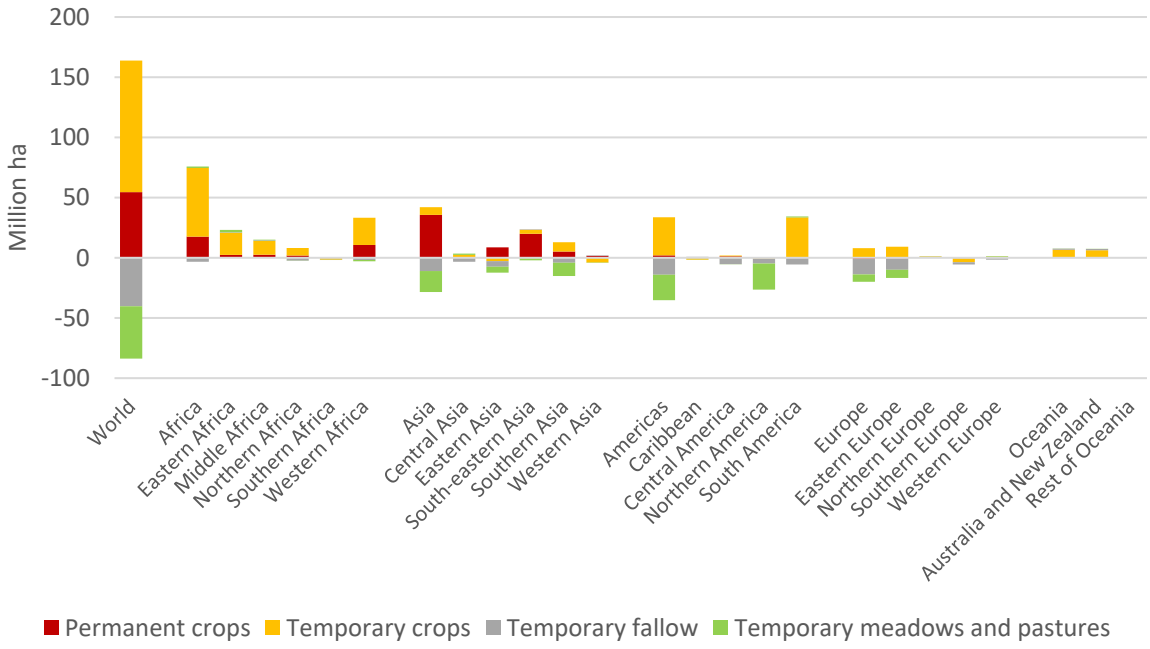
The main regional contributor to the 80 million ha net growth in world total cropland area between 2001 and 2022 was Africa (72 million ha), specifically Western Africa (30 million ha), followed by Eastern Africa (23 million ha) and Middle Africa (15 million ha). Cropland area also grew significantly in South America (29 million ha) and South-eastern Asia (22 million ha) (Figure 5). Conversely, large decreases in cropland area were recorded in regions with industrialized or emerging economies, such as Northern America (−26 million ha), Eastern Europe (−8 million ha), Southern Europe (−6 million ha) and Eastern Asia (−4 million ha).

In general, regions with strong cropland expansion between 2001 and 2022 were dominated by increases in temporary crops (Figure 5). Africa had the strongest such increase (+57 million ha), a 37 percent increase from 2001, compared to a world average increase in temporary crops of 11 percent. The largest additions were in Western Africa (+23 million ha, +40 percent since 2001) Eastern Africa (+18 million ha, +48 percent) and Middle Africa (+11 million ha, +73 percent). Another important though secondary component of cropland growth in Africa was a strong expansion in the area of permanent crops (such as cocoa) adding 18 million ha since 2001 (+64 percent), 11 million ha of which only in Western Africa (+81 percent). In Middle Africa, the area of permanent crops doubled since 2001, reaching nearly 3 million ha in 2022. Elsewhere, the expansion of cropland (realized mainly through growth in temporary crops) was strong in South America (+33 million ha, +51 percent since 2001), followed by Australia and New Zealand (+6 million ha, +22 percent). In South-eastern Asia, cropland expansion was realized through growth in permanent crops, which added 20 million ha to total cropland area since 2001, representing a growth of 60 percent.

Conversely, regions with industrialized and emerging economies tended to record large decreases in cropland area, typically through sharp reductions in the area of temporary meadows and pastures or fallow land, rather than via a contraction in temporary crops area (Figure 5). In Northern America, fallow land area was reduced by 4 million ha in 2022 compared to 2001 (−35 percent), and the area of temporary meadows and pastures by 21 million ha (−67 percent), representing the entire decrease in cropland area in this region. In Europe, reductions in fallow land (−13 million ha; −50 percent from 2001) and temporary meadows and pastures (−6 million ha; −9 percent), mostly realized in Eastern Europe, were the main cause of the contraction in cropland area, despite additions of temporary crops in Eastern Europe (+9 million ha). In Southern Asia, decreases in temporary meadows and pastures (−11 million ha, or −48 percent from 2001) and fallow land (−4 million ha, −8 percent) more than offset increases in both temporary and permanent crops (+13 million ha). In Eastern Asia, decreases in temporary meadows and pastures and fallow land totalling about −10 million ha (−26 percent since 2001), in addition to a decrease in temporary crops of −3 million ha, more than offset strong growth in permanent crops (+9 million ha, +72 percent), leading to an overall decrease in cropland area.

In a few regions, the decrease in cropland area since 2001 was largely driven by decreases in the area of temporary crops (Figure 5). This included Western Asia (−4 million ha of temporary crops), Southern Europe (−3 million ha) and the Caribbean (−2 million ha).

Figure 5: Cropland area change by region, subregion and component between 2001 and 2022



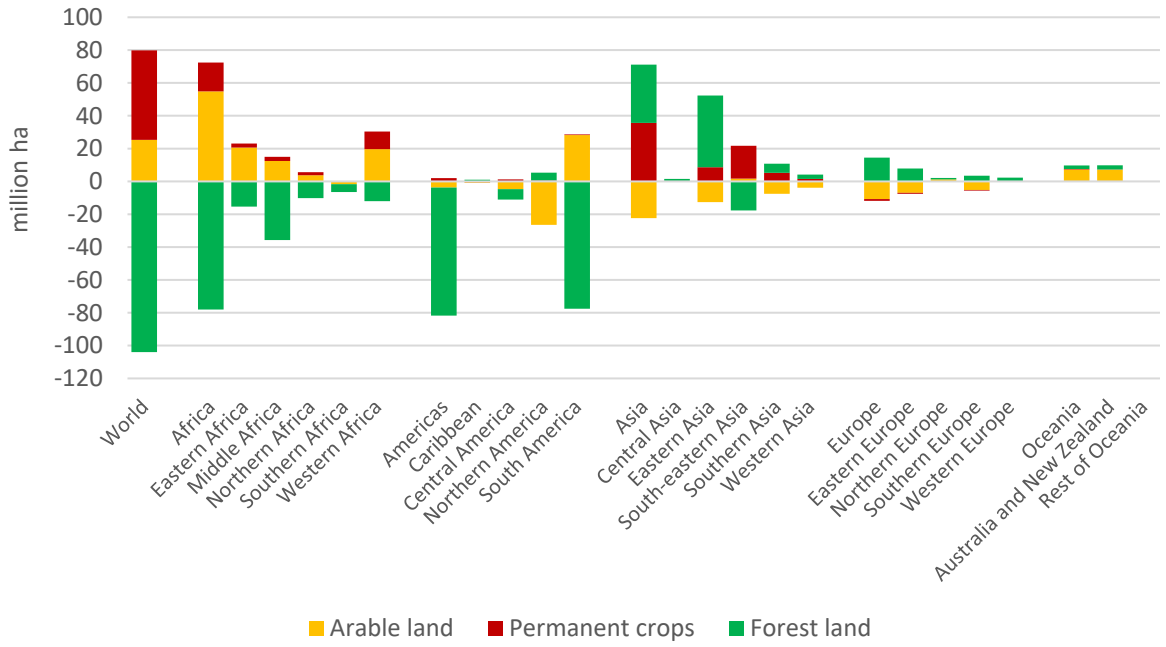
Note: Rest of Oceania includes Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

The discussed global trends in net cropland area growth vs forest area loss gain additional insights from a regional perspective. In general, deforestation was observed in regions with cropland expansion, for example in Africa, where cropland area increased by 72 million ha and forest land area decreased by 78 million ha. Similarly in South America (29 million ha increase vs 78 million ha decrease) and South-

eastern Asia (22 million ha increase vs 18 million ha decrease). Conversely, afforestation was recorded in regions with cropland area decreases, notably in Europe (12 million ha decrease in cropland vs 14 million ha increase in forest land) and Northern America (26 million ha decrease vs 5 million ha increase) (Figure 6).

Figure 6: Land use change in cropland and forest land by region and subregion between 2001 and 2022



Note: Rest of Oceania includes Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

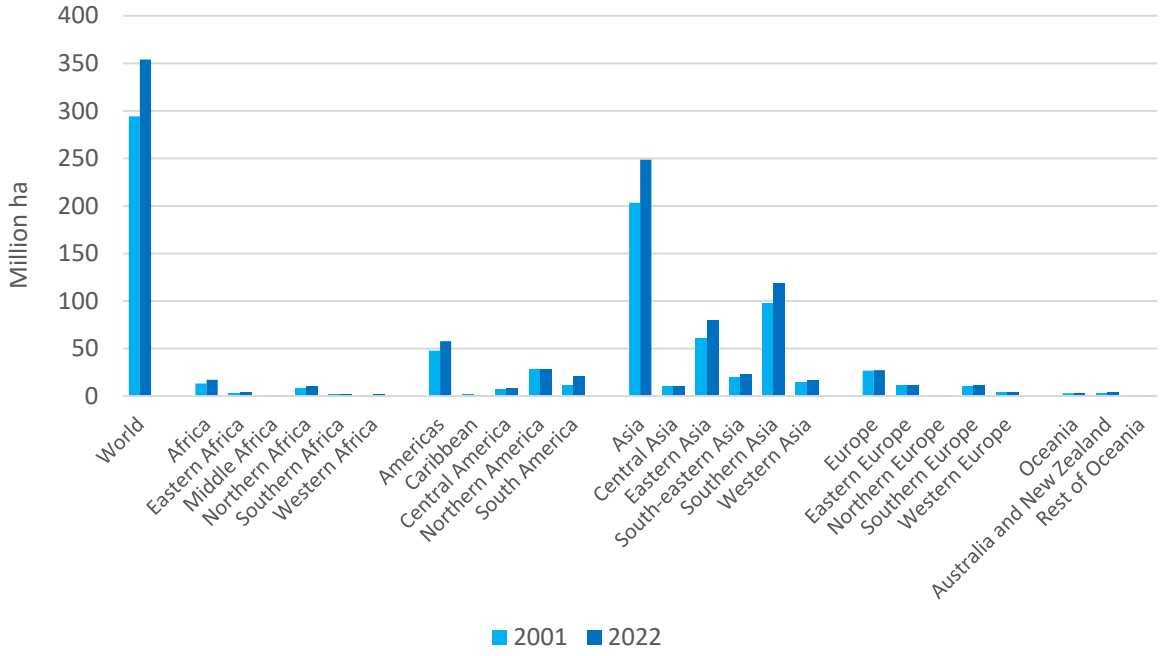
Irrigation and agricultural practices

The regions with the largest area equipped for irrigation in 2022 were Southern Asia (119 million ha) and Eastern Asia (80 million ha) (Figure 7), regions that also had the world's largest percentage of irrigated cropland (above 50 percent), an indication of the key role of paddy rice cultivation in the agrifood systems of these regions. A distant third was Northern America (28 million ha, about 15 percent of total cropland area), followed by South-eastern Asia (23 million ha) and South America (20 million ha). Northern Africa, Eastern Europe, Southern Europe and Central Asia had each about 10 million ha of irrigated area. Among these, in Southern Europe (largely driven by rice and maize cultivation) and Central Asia (driven by cotton cultivation), the share of irrigated cropland was above 25 percent, hence well above the world average of 22 percent.

Most regions and subregions had an increase in the area equipped for irrigation between 2001 and 2022, indicating a trend towards greater utilization of water resources in agriculture over the past decades. At the global level, the increase in area equipped for irrigation was nearly 60 million ha, corresponding to a 20 percent increase since 2001. Notably, three-fourths of this global increase was located in Asia, specifically in Southern Asia (+22 million ha) and Eastern Asia (+19 million ha).

An important increase from 2001 to 2022 was recorded in South America (+9 million ha), South-eastern Asia (+4 million ha), Western Asia and Northern Africa (+2 million ha each). Of these regions, South America had the strongest relative growth (74 percent), possibly reflecting the strong adoption of irrigated high-yielding maize in this region. The other strong relative growth among regions were recorded in Western Africa (63 percent) and Eastern Africa (38 percent), regions that added each about 1 million ha of irrigated land over the period. These statistics do not include information on type of irrigation adopted, which would be needed to better qualify these area trends in terms of their implication for sustainable water use.

Figure 7: Cropland area equipped for irrigation by region and subregion



Note: Rest of Oceania includes Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

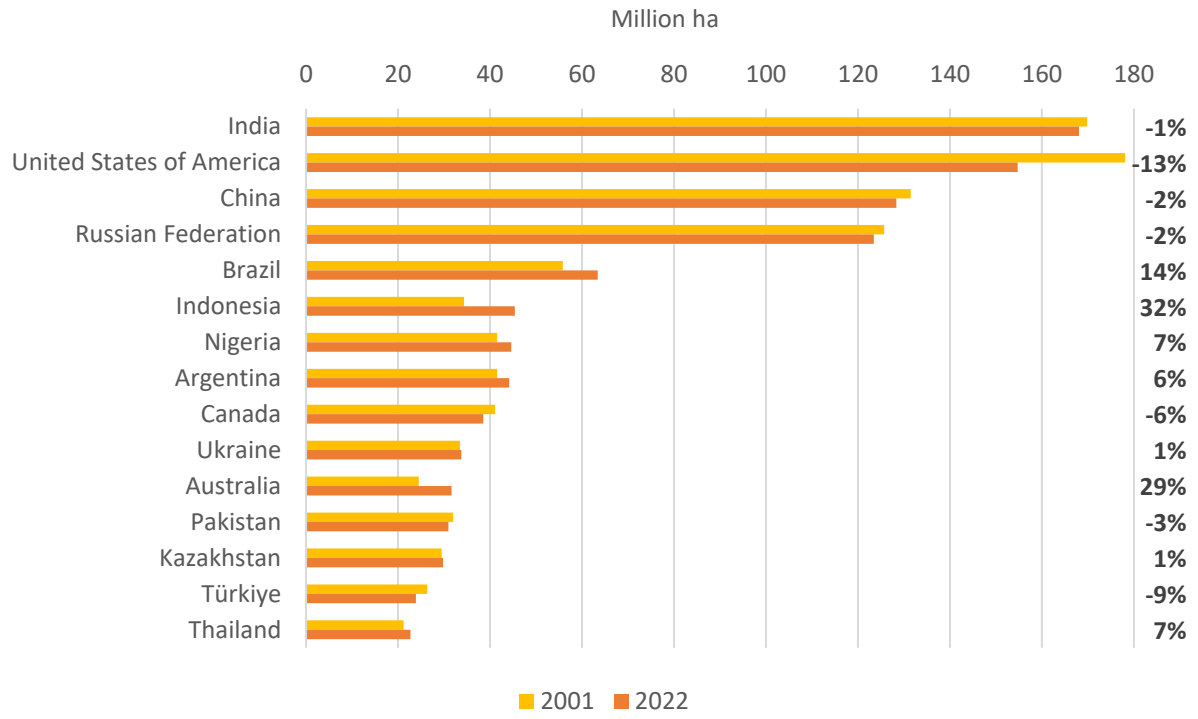
In 2022, about half of the global agricultural land under organic agriculture was in Oceania (36 million ha). Nearly one-fourth was in Europe (18 million ha), followed by the Americas (12 million ha). All the regions experienced a significant increase in the cropland area under organic agriculture since the beginning of reporting in 2004.

COUNTRY

In 2022, India was the country with the largest total cropland area (168 million ha, −1 percent since 2001), overtaking the United States of America (158 million ha, −13 percent), where a marked decrease of 23 million ha had occurred since 2001, reflecting the trend previously discussed for Northern America (Figure 8). The top cropland area countries also included China (128 million ha, −2 percent since 2001), the Russian Federation (123 million ha, −2 percent) and Brazil (63 million ha; +14 percent). Other top-ranking countries included Indonesia, Nigeria, Argentina, Canada and Ukraine, ranging 30-45 million ha. Among these, significant increases in cropland area between 2001 and 2022 were recorded in Indonesia

(+11 million ha, +32 percent), driven by expansion in permanent crops (mainly oil palm) and Australia (+7 million ha, +29 percent), driven by expansion in temporary crops.

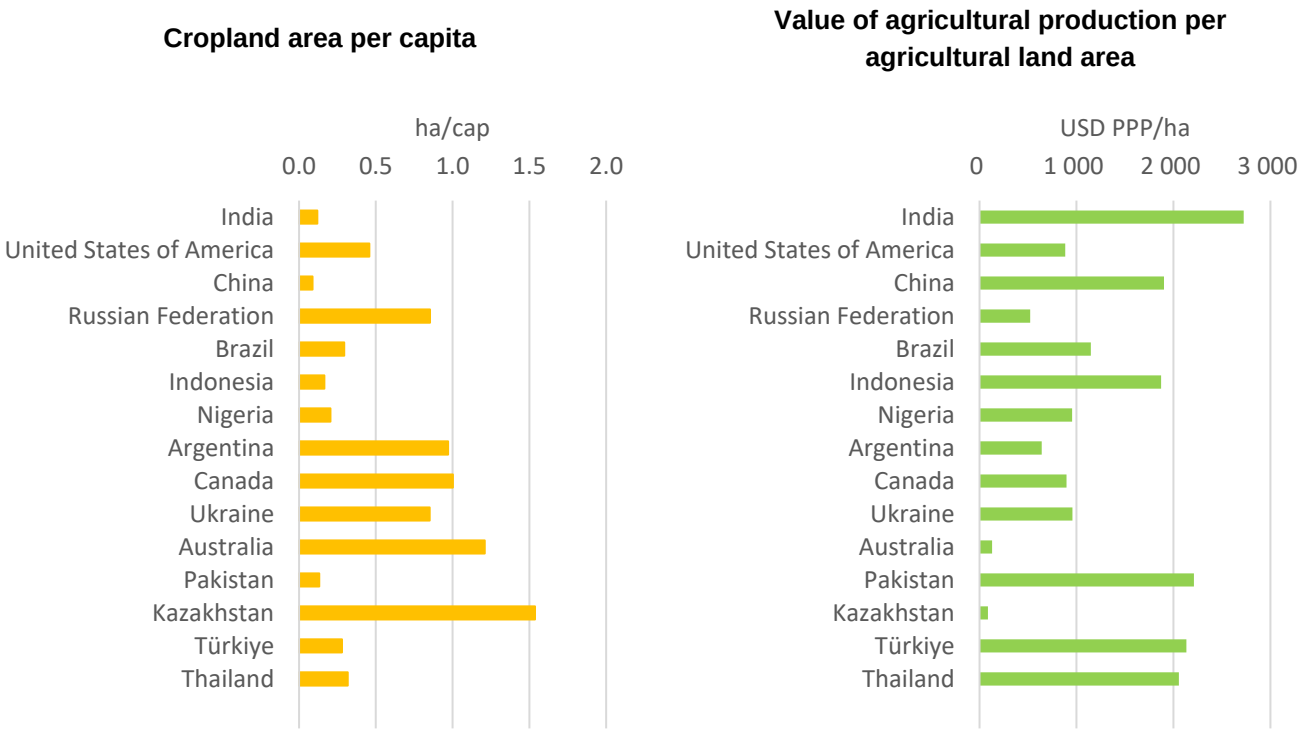
Figure 8: Cropland area and change between 2001 and 2022, top countries



Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

Complementing the above rankings based on cropland area extent with indicators of land use intensity (computed in terms of cropland area per person) and productivity (in terms of agricultural value added of production per agricultural area) shows that in 2022, among the top countries by cropland area (Figure 9), China had the lowest cropland area per capita, and therefore the highest cropland use intensity per capita, with only 0.09 ha/cap. High use intensity was also shown for India (0.12 ha/cap), Pakistan (0.13 ha/cap) and Indonesia (0.16 ha/cap), compared to a world average of 0.2 ha/cap in 2022. Conversely, Kazakhstan (1.5 ha/cap), Australia (1.2 ha/cap), Canada (1.0 ha/cap) and Argentina (1.0 ha/cap) had the lowest cropland use intensity among top countries by cropland area extent, five to eight times the world average in 2022. The distribution of the cropland area per capita was largely mirrored by the indicator of agricultural productivity (Figure 9). Specifically, productivity tended to be higher in countries with the lower cropland area per capita (and therefore higher cropland use intensity per capita), with India (USD 2 725/ha), Pakistan (USD 2 210/ha), Türkiye (USD 2 133/ha), Thailand (USD 2 055/ha), China (USD 1 903/ha) and Indonesia (USD 1 872/ha) as the top performers with productivities two to three times higher than the 2022 world average of USD 867/ha. Similarly, countries with higher cropland area per capita (and lower cropland use intensity per capita) exhibited lower productivity. The low productivity recorded for Australia (USD 130/ha) and Kazakhstan (USD 87/ha) merely reflected the large extensification of agricultural production in those countries.

Figure 9: Indicators of agricultural land for countries with the largest cropland area (2022)



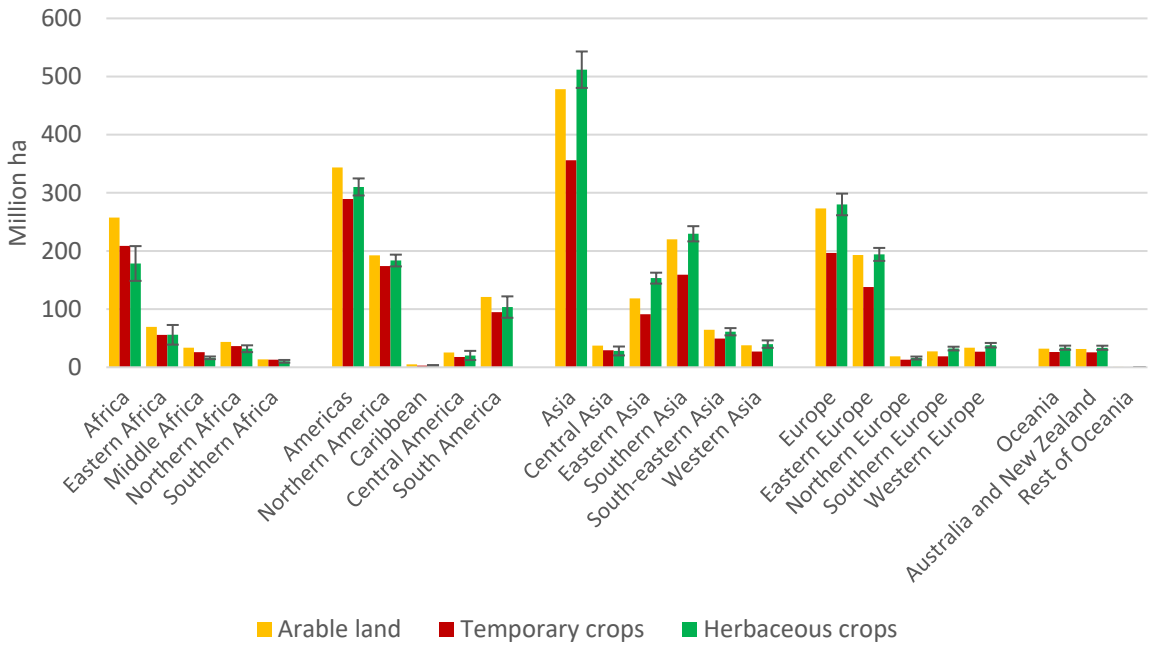
Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL.

ANNEX: ESTIMATING ACCURACY OF LAND USE STATISTICS

When reporting to FAO, Members are not asked to provide information on the precision or accuracy associated with the data they submit, including importantly land use data. In fact, the international guidelines of the Bureau of Weights and Measures suggest as good practice to always communicate such information, using the concept of measurement uncertainty[3] to capture incomplete knowledge due to measurement randomness and/or bias, quantified via standard deviations (BIPM, 2008).

In order to fill this gap, we used information provided in the FAOSTAT Land cover data as a proxy to estimate uncertainty in land use variables, following previous work developed by FAO (Tubiello *et al.*, 2023a and 2023b).

Figure 10: Arable land, temporary and herbaceous crops area (2018–2022 average)



Note: Error bars indicate the 95 percent confidence interval estimated via a small sample (n=9) representing herbaceous crops area values collected from three land cover maps (NASA-MODIS, CGLS and Worldcover) over the period 2018–2022, computed using the relevant t-Student distribution parameters.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL and http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/LC. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

Results indicated that the global mean herbaceous crops area was estimated to 1.3 billion ha ± 6 percent, corresponding to an error of about 80 million ha. Furthermore, there were large variations in uncertainties across regions (Figure 10). Generally, high measurement uncertainties (large errors) were found for areas characterized by mixed and heterogeneous cropping systems, such as in Eastern Africa (30 percent uncertainty), Central America and the Caribbean (40 percent each), or characterized by extensive grassland systems within cropland areas, such as in Central Asia (27 percent). Both agricultural landscapes are notably difficult to distinguish via remote sensing, making measurements

[3] Uncertainty can be thought of as the inverse of precision/accuracy

difficult. Conversely, more homogeneous landscapes, such as those characterized by large-scale cereal cultivation (wheat, maize or rice) resulted in much lower uncertainty in area measurements and thus better precision/accuracy. These regions included Northern America, Eastern and Southern Asia, and Eastern Europe (6 percent each).

Finally, with respect to the FAOSTAT statistics presented herein, results indicated that herbaceous crops area data were more consistent (i.e. statistically indistinguishable) with, and thus could be used as proxy for, land use data of arable land. This was true globally as well as for most of Europe, Northern America, Eastern, Southern and Western Asia, and Oceania. Exceptions were Northern Africa and the Caribbean, where herbaceous crops area was a better proxy for temporary crops.

These results underscore the challenges that still exist in estimating land use from space, while offering insights into methods for beginning to quantify data uncertainty with the aid of remote sensing information. To this end, it is interesting to note that recent estimates of cropland area uncertainty (5 percent) published by the 2022 Census of Agriculture of the United States of America were consistent with the results reported above for uncertainty in herbaceous crops/arable land in Northern America.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The FAOSTAT domains Land Use and Land Cover are available for 198 countries and 42 territories over 1961–2022. The update consolidates the indicators of land use within the main FAOSTAT domain. Methodological and country notes are available as supplementary information in each FAOSTAT domain.

FAO annually collects from countries land use information via a standard questionnaire on land use, irrigation and agricultural practices. The Land Use dataset implements the FAO land use classification disseminating data on 21 land-use categories and 23 categories of irrigation and agricultural practices. Definitions for all land-use categories are available within the FAO questionnaire. A full mapping of the corresponding FAO land use matrix is provided in Table 1.

The FAO land use classification is used by the United Nations (UN) System of Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA); the UN Framework for the Development of Environmental Statistics (FDES); and the World Census of Agriculture. It is furthermore consistent with the land use classes of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), used for country reporting to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

FAO also collects forest data from countries via the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) (FAO, 2020) in five-year cycles. Data include detail on the forest categories ‘Naturally regenerating forest’ and ‘Planted forest’. These data are disseminated in the FAOSTAT Land Use domain, with values in between FRA years (1990, 2000, 2010, 2015) linearly interpolated. Annual data for the period 2016–2020 are taken directly from the FRA. The 2022 forest estimates are linear extrapolation of the last five years of FRA data.

Land use data provided by countries to FAO are typically sourced from national agricultural censuses or agricultural surveys, conducted at regular intervals, usually of 5–10 years. The rationale for sending annual FAO Land Use questionnaires is because such cycles are not synchronized among countries. Changes in national definitions and data practices that may occur between collection cycles may cause breaks in time series. Intensive work is carried out with countries to reconcile this information against

the background of the FAO land use definitions. When reconciliation is not possible, the nature of the time series break is documented in the FAOSTAT country notes, with information of the possible implications of such changes on relevant national and regional land use trends.

The FAOSTAT Land Cover domain contains statistics of land cover area, aggregated at national level and by land cover category following the international land cover classification of the SEEA Central Framework. Land cover statistics are used as supplementary information for the land use statistics. The FAOSTAT land cover data are compiled by national aggregation of geospatial information, which is distributed via publicly available global land cover mapping products as described in the methodological note of the domain. Official country documents including agricultural surveys and censuses, government websites and regional assessments but also sectoral studies are routinely used to fill missing information. Increasingly, land cover data derived from remote sensing products are also used to complement the FAOSTAT analysis.

New 2022 values of SEEA land cover statistics were updated from two medium resolution global land cover products:

a) MODIS-LCCS. NASA MODIS Land Cover Collection 6.1 (MCD12Q1), available for 2001–2022. MODIS Land Cover Classification System (LCCS) types at 500m resolution are used to compute the SEEA-MODIS land cover data in FAOSTAT.

b) European Space Agency CCI, at 30m resolution.

The land use data disseminated in FAOSTAT are relevant to monitor sustainable and productive agriculture, forestry and fisheries activities at the national, regional and global level. In particular, agricultural land statistics serve as a denominator to compute Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicator 2.4.1, while the indicator *value of production per agricultural area* is one of seven subindicators of the newly approved SDG 2.4.1 proxy

Table 1: FAO land use matrix

Country area	**Land area** *Equipped for irrigation* *Actually irrigated*	**Agriculture** *Actually irrigated* *Organic*	**Agricultural land**	**Cropland** *Actually irrigated* *Organic* *Tillage* *Under protective cover*	**Arable land**	**Temporary crops**
						Temporary meadows & pastures
						Temporary fallow
					Permanent crops	
				Permanent meadows & pastures *Actually irrigated* *Organic*	**Cultivated**	
					Naturally growing	
			Farm buildings and farmyards			
		Forest land *Forestry* *Forestry actually irrigated*				
		Other land				
	Inland waters *Aquaculture* *Capture fisheries*					
	Coastal waters *Aquaculture* *Capture fisheries*					
Exclusive Economic Zone *Aquaculture* *Capture fisheries*						

Note: Categories of the Land Use domain are represented in bold. The additional categories in italics represent those under "Irrigation and agricultural practices" and "Aquaculture and fisheries", mapping them onto the main categories of the Land Use domain.

Source: FAO. 2024. FAOSTAT: Land Use. [Accessed July 2024]. http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/RL. Licence: CC-BY-4.0.

REFERENCES

BIPM. 2008. Evaluation of measurement data — Guide to the expression of uncertainty in measurement. Paris. https://www.bipm.org/en/doi/10.59161/jcgm100-2008e

FAO. 2020. Global Forest Resources Assessment. In: *FAO.* Rome. [Cited July 2024]. https://www.fao.org/forest-resources-assessment/en/

FAO & UNSD. 2020. *System of Environmental-Economic Accounting for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries:* SEEA AFF. Rome, FAO. https://doi.org/10.4060/ca7735en

Tubiello, F.N., Conchedda, G., Casse, L., Pengyu, H., Zhongxin, C., De Santis, G., Fritz, S. & Muchoney, D. 2023a. Measuring the world's cropland area. *Nature Food*, 1–3. https://doi.org/10.1038/s43016-022-00667-9

Tubiello, F.N., Conchedda, G., Casse, L., Hao, P., De Santis, G. & Chen, Z. 2023b. A new cropland area database by country circa 2020. *Earth Syst. Sci. Data*. https://doi.org/10.5194/essd-15-4997-2023

This analytical brief was prepared by Francesco N. Tubiello (Environment team, FAO Statistics Division), with support from Giorgia DeSantis, Giulia Conchedda (Land and Water Division) and Griffiths Obli-Laryea (Environment team, FAO Statistics Division).

We are thankful to Olivier Lavagne d'Ortigue for helpful suggestions and revisions to the original manuscript and to Amanda Gordon for FAOSTAT data support.

Required citation: FAO. 2024. *Land statistics 2001–2022 – Global, regional and country trends*. FAOSTAT Analytical Briefs, No. 88. Rome. https://doi.org/10.4060/cd1484en

Cover photo: ©Francesco Tubiello

CONTACTS

Statistics – Economic and Social Development
FAO-Statistics@fao.org
https://www.fao.org/about/who-we-are/departments/statistics-division
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
Rome, Italy

CD1484EN/1/07.24