**[Agricultural land (% of land area)](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/AG.LND.AGRI.ZS)**

Agricultural land refers to the share of land area that is arable, under permanent crops, and under permanent pastures. 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. Land under permanent crops 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. Permanent pasture is land used for five or more years for forage, including natural and cultivated crops.

* **ID**: AG.LND.AGRI.ZS
* **Source**: Food and Agriculture Organization, electronic files and web site.
* **License**:  CC BY-4.0
* **Aggregation Method:**Weighted average
* **Development Relevance:**Agricultural land covers more than one-third of the world's land area, with arable land representing less than one-third of agricultural land (about 10 percent of the world's land area). Agricultural land constitutes only a part of any country's total area, which can include areas not suitable for agriculture, such as forests, mountains, and inland water bodies. In many industrialized countries, agricultural land is subject to zoning regulations. In the context of zoning, agricultural land (or more properly agriculturally zoned land) refers to plots that may be used for agricultural activities, regardless of the physical type or quality of land. FAO's agricultural land data contains a wide range of information on variables that are significant for: understanding the structure of a country's agricultural sector; making economic plans and policies for food security; deriving environmental indicators, including those related to investment in agriculture and data on gross crop area and net crop area which are useful for policy formulation and monitoring. There is no single correct mix of inputs to the agricultural land, as it is dependent on local climate, land quality, and economic development; appropriate levels and application rates vary by country and over time and depend on the type of crops, the climate and soils, and the production process used.
* **Limitations and Exceptions:**The data are collected by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) from official national sources through annual questionnaires and are supplemented with information from official secondary data sources. The secondary sources cover official country data from websites of national ministries, national publications and related country data reported by various international organizations.. The FAO tries to impose standard definitions and reporting methods, but complete consistency across countries and over time is not possible. Thus, data on agricultural land in different climates may not be comparable. For example, permanent pastures are quite different in nature and intensity in African countries and dry Middle Eastern countries. Data on agricultural employment, in particular, should be used with caution. In many countries much agricultural employment is informal and unrecorded, including substantial work performed by women and children. To address some of these concerns, this indicator is heavily footnoted in the database in sources, definition, and coverage.
* **Long Definition:**Agricultural land refers to the share of land area that is arable, under permanent crops, and under permanent pastures. 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. Land under permanent crops 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. Permanent pasture is land used for five or more years for forage, including natural and cultivated crops.
* **Periodicity:**Annual
* **Statistical Concept and Methodology:**Agriculture is still a major sector in many economies, and agricultural activities provide developing countries with food and revenue. But agricultural activities also can degrade natural resources. Poor farming practices can cause soil erosion and loss of soil fertility. Efforts to increase productivity by using chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and intensive irrigation have environmental costs and health impacts. Excessive use of chemical fertilizers can alter the chemistry of soil. Pesticide poisoning is common in developing countries. And salinization of irrigated land diminishes soil fertility. Thus, inappropriate use of inputs for agricultural production has far-reaching effects. Agricultural land is also sometimes classified as irrigated and non-irrigated land. In arid and semi-arid countries agriculture is often confined to irrigated land, with very little farming possible in non-irrigated areas. Land abandoned as a result of shifting cultivation is excluded from Arable land. Data on agricultural land are valuable for conducting studies on a various perspectives concerning agricultural production, food security and for deriving cropping intensity among others uses. Agricultural land indicator, along with land-use indicators, can also elucidate the environmental sustainability of countries' agricultural practices. Total land area does not include inland water bodies such as major rivers and lakes. Variations from year to year may be due to updated or revised data rather than to change in area.
* **Topic:**Environment: Land use