

Irrigated Area, by Region, 1961 to 2003

Description

Total irrigated areas by continental region are listed here for 1961, 1965, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, and 2003, the latest year for which reliable data are available. Units are thousands of hectares. After 1990, all irrigated area in the former USSR is split between Europe and Asia. These data have been updated from previous volumes of *The World's Water* to correct misreporting and changes to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization FAOSTAT database.

Figure DT 16.1 shows total irrigated area plotted over this time period. Although irrigated area has continued to increase, it is now increasing at a rate slower than population. As a result, per capita irrigated area is declining.

Limitations

These data depend on in-country surveys, national reports, and estimates by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. In some regions, multiple cropping may increase the apparent area in production. These data are not reported here. No information is offered about the quality of the land in production. Changes in political borders and the independence of several countries make certain continental time-series comparisons misleading. Data for the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia are provided through 1990; thereafter, the irrigated areas of the newly independent states are reported. When summing by continental area, however, trends will appear misleading because some of the newly independent states are now included in Asia, whereas others are in Europe. Thus, meaningful time-series trends, by continent, cannot be seen for these areas. The time-series for Africa, North and Central America, South America, and Oceania do not suffer from this problem.

Source

United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization. 2006. FAOSTAT database. <http://faostat.fao.org/faostat/collections?subset=agriculture>.

DATA TABLE 16 Irrigated Area, by Region, 1961 to 2003

Region	1961	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2003
Africa	7,389	7,770	8,434	8,943	9,315	10,073	11,000	12,463	13,162	13,370
Asia ¹	89,883	96,713	109,373	121,151	131,659	141,780	155,525	181,767	193,169	193,890
Europe ¹	8,468	9,401	10,583	12,704	14,479	16,018	17,414	26,150	25,341	25,208
North & Central Americas	17,950	19,526	20,939	22,822	27,571	27,454	28,893	30,465	31,426	31,264
Oceania	1,081	1,370	1,590	1,622	1,686	1,959	2,118	2,695	2,682	2,844
South America	4,661	5,070	5,673	6,403	7,382	8,269	9,494	10,155	10,488	10,522
Former Soviet Union ¹	9,400	9,900	11,100	14,500	17,200	19,689	20,800			
Totals	138,832	149,750	167,692	188,145	209,292	225,242	245,244	263,695	276,268	277,098

Notes:

¹ After 1990, all irrigated area in the former USSR is split among Europe and Asia.

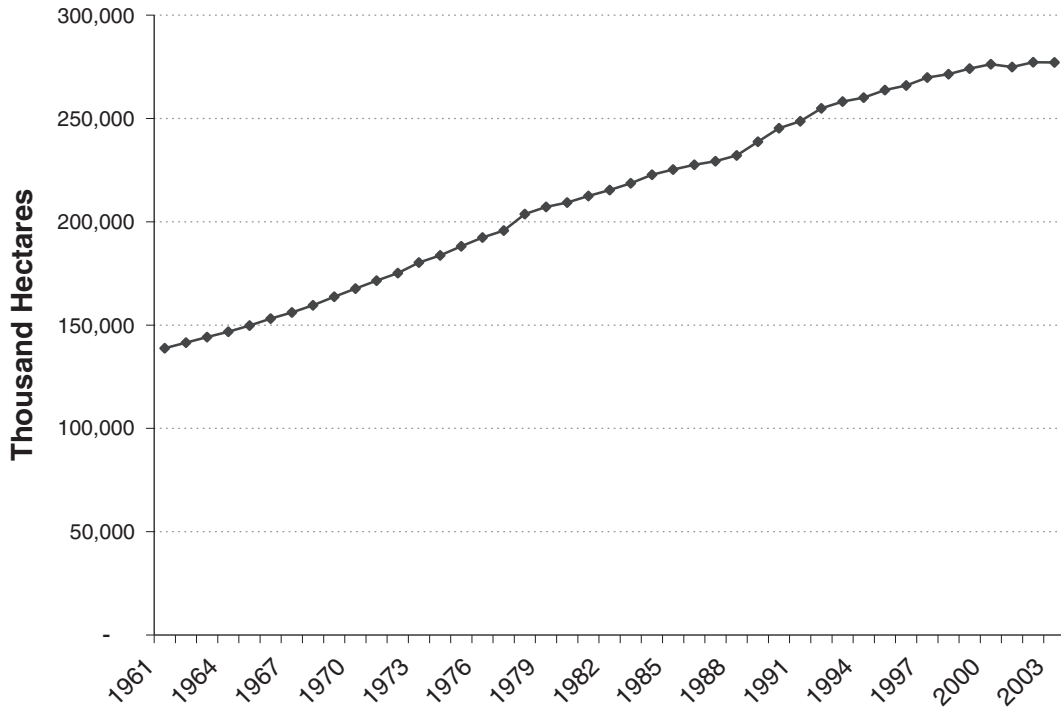


FIGURE DT 16.1 Total irrigated area, 1961–2003.