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# Africa

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography  
SOS Children works in 44 African Countries. For more information see SOS Children in Africa

**Africa** is the world's second-largest and second most-populous continent, after Asia. At about 30.2 million km<sup>2</sup> (11.7 million sq mi) including adjacent islands, it covers 6% of the Earth's total surface area and 20.4% of the total land area. With about 922 million people (as of 2005) in 61 territories, it accounts for about 14.2% of the world's human population. The continent is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west. There are 46 countries including Madagascar, and 53 including all the island groups.

Africa, particularly central eastern Africa, is widely regarded within the scientific community to be the origin of humans and the Hominidae tree (great apes), as evidenced by the discovery of the earliest hominids and their possible ancestors, as well as later ones that have been dated to around seven million years ago – including *Sahelanthropus tchadensis*, *Australopithecus africanus*, *A. afarensis*, *Homo erectus*, *H. habilis* and *H. ergaster* – with the earliest *Homo sapiens* (human) found in Ethiopia being dated to ca. 200,000 years ago.

Africa straddles the equator and encompasses numerous climate areas; it is the only continent to stretch from the northern temperate to southern temperate zones. Because of the lack of natural regular precipitation and irrigation as well as glaciers or mountain aquifer systems, there is no natural moderating effect on the climate except near the coasts.

## Etymology

Afri was the name of several peoples who dwelt in North Africa near Carthage. Their name is usually connected with Phoenician *afar*, "dust", but a 1981 theory has asserted that it stems from a Berber word *ifri* meaning "cave", in reference to cave dwellers.

In Roman times, Carthage became the capital of Africa Province, which also included the coastal part of modern Libya. The Roman suffix "-ca" denotes "country or land". The later Muslim kingdom of Ifriqiya, modern-day Tunisia, also preserved a form of the name.

Other etymologies that have been postulated for the ancient name "Africa":

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### Africa



<b>Area</b>	30,221,532 km <sup>2</sup> (11,668,598.7 sq mi)	
<b>Population</b>	922,011,000(2005, 2nd)	
<b>Density</b>	30.51/km <sup>2</sup> (about 80/sq mi)	
<b>Countries</b>	<b>53</b>	[ Show ]
<b>Dependencies</b>	<b>8</b>	[ Show ]
<b>Languages</b>	African Languages and many others	
<b>Time Zones</b>	UTC-1 (Cape Verde) to UTC+4 (Mauritius)	



- the 1st century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (*Ant. 1.15*) asserted that it was named for Epher, grandson of Abraham according to Gen. 25:4, whose descendants, he claimed, had invaded Libya.
- the Latin word *aprica*, meaning "sunny", mentioned by Isidore of Seville (sixth century) in *Etymologiae* XIV.5.2
- the Greek word *aphrike*, meaning "without cold." This was proposed by historian Leo Africanus (1488–1554), who suggested the Greek word *phrike* (φρίκη, meaning "cold and horror"), combined with the privative prefix "a-", thus indicating a land free of cold and horror.
- Massey, in 1881, derived an etymology from the Egyptian *af-rui-ka*, "to turn toward the opening of the Ka." The Ka is the energetic double of every person and "opening of the Ka" refers to a womb or birthplace. Africa would be, for the Egyptians, "the birthplace."

The Irish female name *Aifric* is sometimes Anglicised as *Africa*, but the personal name is unrelated to the geonym.

## Geography

Africa is the largest of the three great southward projections from the main mass of the Earth's exposed surface. Separated from Europe by the Mediterranean Sea, it is joined to Asia at its northeast extremity by the Isthmus of Suez (transected by the Suez Canal), 163 km (101 miles) wide. ( Geopolitically, Egypt's Sinai Peninsula east of the Suez Canal is often considered part of Africa, as well. ) From the most northerly point, Ras ben Sakka in Tunisia (37°21' N), to the most southerly point, Cape Agulhas in South Africa (34°51'15" S), is a distance of approximately 8,000 km (5,000 miles); from Cape Verde, 17°33'22" W, the westernmost point, to Ras Hafun in Somalia, 51°27'52" E, the most easterly projection, is a distance of approximately 7,400 km (4,600 miles). The coastline is 26,000 km (16,100 miles) long, and the absence of deep indentations of the shore is illustrated by the fact that Europe, which covers only 10,400,000 km<sup>2</sup> (4,010,000 square miles) – about a third of the surface of Africa – has a coastline of 32,000 km (19,800 miles).

Africa's largest country is Sudan, and its smallest country is the Seychelles, an archipelago off the east coast. The smallest nation on the continental mainland is The Gambia.

According to the ancient Romans, Africa lay to the west of Egypt, while "Asia" was used to refer to Anatolia and lands to the east. A definite line was drawn between the two continents by the geographer Ptolemy (85–165 AD), indicating Alexandria along the Prime Meridian and making the isthmus of Suez and the Red Sea the boundary between Asia and Africa. As Europeans came to understand the real extent of the continent, the idea of *Africa* expanded with their knowledge.

### Climate, fauna, and flora

The climate of Africa ranges from tropical to subarctic on its highest peaks. Its northern half is primarily desert or arid, while its central and southern areas contain both savanna plains and very dense jungle (rainforest) regions. In between, there is a convergence where vegetation patterns such as sahel, and steppe dominate.



A composite satellite image of Africa



Africa boasts perhaps the world's largest combination of density and "range of freedom" of wild animal populations and diversity, with wild populations of large carnivores (such as lions, hyenas, and cheetahs) and herbivores (such as buffalo, deer, elephants, camels, and giraffes) ranging freely on primarily open non-private plains. It is also home to a variety of jungle creatures (including snakes and primates) and aquatic life (including crocodiles and amphibians)(see also: Fauna of Africa).

## History

Africa is considered by most paleoanthropologists to be the oldest inhabited territory on Earth, with the human species originating from the continent. During the middle of the twentieth century, anthropologists discovered many fossils and evidence of human occupation perhaps as early as 7 million years ago. Fossil remains of several species of early apelike humans thought to have evolved into modern man, such as *Australopithecus afarensis* (radiometrically dated to approximately 3.9–3.0 million years BC), *Paranthropus boisei* (c. 2.3–1.4 million BC) and *Homo ergaster* (c. 600,000–1.9 million BC) have been discovered.

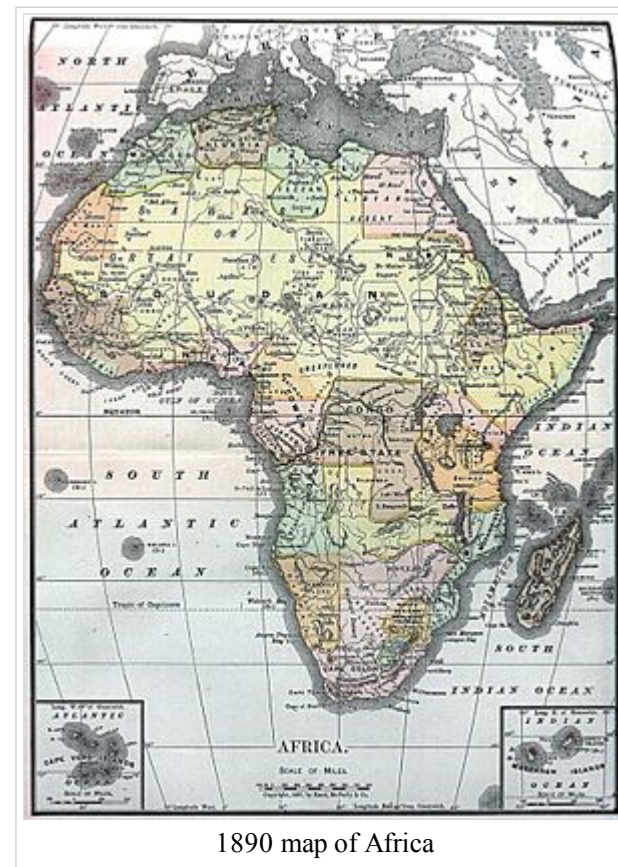
The Ishango bone, dated to about 25,000 years ago, shows tallies in mathematical notation. Throughout humanity's prehistory, Africa (like all other continents) had no nation states, and was instead inhabited by groups of hunter-gatherers such as the Khoi and San.

At the end of the Ice Ages, estimated to have been around 10,500 BC, the Sahara had again become a green fertile valley, and its African populations returned from the interior and coastal highlands in Sub-Saharan Africa. However, the warming and drying climate meant that by 5000 BC the Sahara region was becoming increasingly dry and hostile. The population trekked out of the Sahara region towards the Nile Valley below the Second Cataract where they made permanent or semi-permanent settlements. A major climatic recession occurred, lessening the heavy and persistent rains in Central and Eastern Africa. Since this time dry conditions have prevailed in Eastern Africa, and increasingly during the last 200 years, in Ethiopia.

The domestication of cattle in Africa preceded agriculture and seems to have existed alongside hunter-gathering cultures. It is speculated that by 6000 BC cattle were already domesticated in North Africa. In the Sahara-Nile complex, people domesticated many animals including the pack ass, and a small screw horned goat which was common from Algeria to Nubia.

The first known example of the domestication of plants for agricultural purposes on the continent occurred in the Sahel region circa 5000 BC, when sorghum and African rice began to be cultivated. Around this time, and in the same region, the guinea fowl became domesticated.

In the year 4000 BC the climate of the Sahara started to become drier at an exceedingly fast pace. This climate change caused lakes and rivers to shrink



1890 map of Africa





significantly and caused increasing desertification. This, in turn, decreased the amount of land conducive to settlements and helped to cause migrations of farming communities to the more tropical climate of West Africa.

By 3000 BC agriculture had arisen independently in both the tropical portions of West Africa, where African yams and oil palms were domesticated, and in Ethiopia, where coffee and teff became domesticated. No animals were independently domesticated in these regions, although domestication did spread there from the Sahel and Nile regions. Agricultural crops were also adopted from other regions around this time as pearl millet, cowpea, groundnut, cotton, watermelon and bottle gourds began to be grown agriculturally in both West Africa and the Sahel Region while finger millet, peas, lentil and flax took hold in Ethiopia.

In this period the international phenomenon known as the Beaker culture began to impact upon western North Africa. Named for the distinctively shaped grave ceramics, the Beaker culture is associated with the emergence of a warrior mentality. North African rock art of this period largely depicts animals, but also places a new emphasis on the human figure, equipped with weapons and adornments. People from the Great Lakes Region of Africa settled along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea to become the proto-Canaanites who dominated the lowlands between the Jordan River, the Mediterranean and the Sinai Desert.

By the 1st millennium BC ironworking had been introduced in Northern Africa and quickly spread across the Sahara into the northern parts of sub-Saharan Africa and by 500 BC metalworking began to become commonplace in West Africa. Ironworking was fully established by roughly 500 BC in many areas of East and West Africa, although other regions didn't begin iron working until the early centuries AD. Copper objects from Egypt, North Africa, Nubia and Ethiopia dating from around 500 BC have been excavated in West Africa, suggesting that trans-saharan trade networks had been established by this date.

## **Early civilisations in Northern Africa**



At about 3300 BC, the historical record opens in Africa with the rise of literacy in the Pharaonic civilisation of Ancient Egypt. One of the world's earliest and longest-lasting civilizations, the Egyptian state continued, with varying levels of influence over other areas, until 343 BC. Egyptian influence reached deep into modern-day Libya, north to Crete and Palestine, and south to the kingdoms of Aksum and Nubia. An independent centre of civilisation with trading links to Phoenecia was established on the north-west African coast at Carthage.

Following the conquest of North Africa's Mediterranean coastline by the Roman Empire, the area was integrated economically and culturally into the Roman system. Roman settlement occurred in modern Tunisia and elsewhere along the coast. Christianity spread across these areas from Palestine via Egypt, also passing south, beyond the borders of the Roman world into Nubia and by at least the 6th century into Ethiopia.

In the early seventh century, the newly formed Arabian Islamic Caliphate expanded into Egypt, and then into North Africa. In a short while the local Berber elite had been integrated into Muslim Arab tribes. When the Ummayyad capital Damascus fell in the eighth century, the Islamic centre of the Mediterranean shifted from Syria to Qayrawan in North Africa. Islamic North Africa had become diverse, and a hub for mystics, scholars, jurists and philosophers. During the above mentioned period, Islam spread to sub-Saharan Africa, mainly through trade routes and migration.



Colossal statues of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel, Egypt, date from around 1400 BC.

## Sub-saharan Africa

Even after the Sahara had become a desert, it did not present a totally impenetrable barrier for travellers between north and south. Prior to the introduction of the camel the use of oxen for desert crossing was common, and trade routes followed chains of oases that were strung across the desert. It is thought that the camel was first brought to Egypt after the Persian Empire conquered Egypt in 525 BC, although large herds did not become common enough in North Africa to establish the trans-Saharan trade until the eighth century AD. The Sanhaja Berbers were the first to exploit this.

Pre-colonial Africa possessed perhaps as many as 10,000 different states and polities characterised by many different sorts of political organisation and rule. These included small family groups of hunter-gatherers such as the San people of southern Africa; larger, more structured groups such as the family clan groupings of the Bantu-speaking people of central and southern Africa, heavily-structured clan groups in the Horn of Africa, the large Sahelian Kingdoms, and autonomous city-states such as those of the Yoruba in West Africa, and the Swahili coastal trading towns of East Africa.

By the 9th century AD a string of dynastic states, including the earliest Hausa states, stretched across the sub-saharan savannah from the western regions to central Sudan. The most powerful of these states were Ghana, Gao, and the Kanem-Bornu Empire. Ghana declined in the 11th century but was succeeded by the Mali Empire which consolidated much of western Sudan in the 13th century. Kanem accepted Islam in the 11th century.



Following the breakup of Mali a local leader named Sonni Ali (1464–1492) founded the Songhai Empire in the region of middle Niger and the western Sudan and took control of the trans-Saharan trade. Sonni Ali seized Timbuktu in 1468 and Jenne in 1473, building his regime on trade revenues and the cooperation of Muslim merchants. His successor Askia Muhammad Ture (1493–1528) made Islam the official religion, built mosques, and brought Muslim scholars, including al-Maghili (d.1504), the founder of an important tradition of Sudanic African Muslim scholarship, to Gao. By the 11th century some Hausa states - such as Kano, Jigawa, Katsina, and Gobir - had developed into walled towns engaging in trade, servicing caravans, and the manufacture of goods. Until the 15th century these small states were on the periphery of the major Sudanic empires of the era, paying tribute to Songhai to the west and Kanem-Borno to the east.



In the forested regions of the West African coast, independent kingdoms grew up with little influence from the Muslim north. Ife, historically the first of these Yoruba city-states, established government under a priestly king, or *Oni*. Ife was noted as the religious and cultural centre of the region, and for its unique naturalistic tradition of bronze sculpture. The Ife model of government was adapted at Oyo, where a member of its ruling dynasty controlled several smaller city-states. By the 15th century the Oyo Empire had cut off the mother city from the savanna. Yorubaland established a community in the Edo-speaking area east of Ife at the beginning of the 14th century. This developed into the Benin Empire. By the 15th century Benin had become an independent trading power, blocking Ife's access to the coastal ports. Benin, which may have housed 100,000 inhabitants at its height, spread over twenty-five square kilometres, and was enclosed by three concentric rings of earthworks. By the late 15th century Benin was in contact with Portugal. At its apogee in the 16th and 17th centuries, Benin encompassed parts of southeastern Yorubaland and the western Igbo.

Between the seventh and fifteenth centuries, the Arab slave trade emerged, which by the twentieth century would eventually take as many as 18 million slaves from Africa to parts of the Muslim world. This was as voluminous as the later Atlantic slave trade.

In 1418, the fifth expedition by Chinese admiral Zheng He reached Africa's east coast. The two later Zheng He voyages, the last in 1432, also sailed to East Africa. The Chinese travelled at least as far as Malindi in Kenya. In 1482, the Portuguese established the first of many trading stations along the coast of Ghana at Elmina. The chief commodities dealt in were slaves, gold, ivory and spices. The European discovery of the Americas in 1492 was followed by a great development of the slave trade, which, before the Portuguese era, had been an overland trade almost exclusively, and never confined to any one continent.

In West Africa, the decline of the Atlantic slave trade in the 1820s caused dramatic economic shifts in local polities. The gradual decline of slave-trading, prompted by a lack of demand for slaves in the New World, increasing anti-slavery legislation in Europe and America, and the British navy's increasing presence off the West African coast (see West Africa Squadron), obliged African states to adopt new economies. The largest powers of West Africa: the Asante Confederacy, the Kingdom of Dahomey, and the Oyo Empire, adopted different ways of adapting to the shift. Asante and Dahomey concentrated on the development of "legitimate commerce" in the form of palm oil, cocoa, timber and gold, forming the bedrock of West Africa's modern export trade. The Oyo Empire, unable to adapt, collapsed into civil wars.

In Southern Africa, centred on where modern day Zimbabwe is was the ancient civilisation of the empire of Great Zimbabwe. This is thought to have had trading routes extending widely across the region.



## Pre-colonial exploration

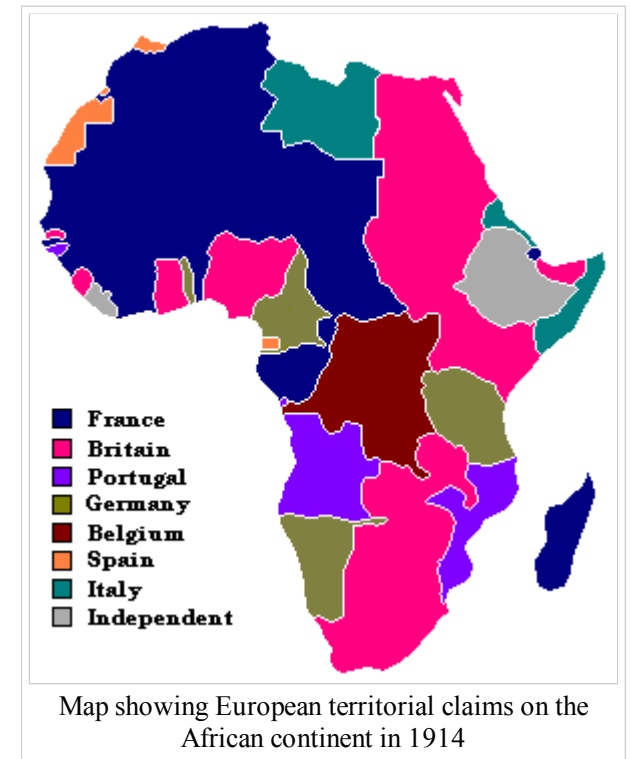
In the mid-nineteenth century, European explorers became interested in exploring the heart of the continent and opening the area for trade, mining and other commercial exploitation. In addition, there was a desire to convert the inhabitants to Christianity. The central area of Africa was still largely unknown to Europeans at this time. David Livingstone explored the continent between 1852 and his death in 1873; amongst other claims to fame, he was the first European to see the Victoria Falls. A prime goal for explorers was to locate the source of the River Nile. Expeditions by Burton and Speke (1857–1858) and Speke and Grant (1863) located Lake Tanganyika and Lake Victoria. The latter was eventually proven as the main source of the Nile. With subsequent expeditions by Baker and Stanley, Africa was well explored by the end of the century and this was to lead the way for the colonization which followed.

## Colonialism and the "scramble for Africa"

In the late nineteenth century, the European imperial powers engaged in a major territorial scramble and occupied most of the continent, creating many colonial nation states, and leaving only two independent nations: Liberia, an independent state partly settled by African Americans; and Orthodox Christian Ethiopia (known to Europeans as "Abyssinia"). Colonial rule by Europeans would continue until after the conclusion of World War II, when all colonial states gradually obtained formal independence.

Colonialism had a destabilising effect on a number of ethnic groups that is still being felt in African politics. Before European influence, national borders were not much of a concern, with Africans generally following the practice of other areas of the world, such as the Arabian Peninsula, where a group's territory was congruent with its military or trade influence. The European insistence of drawing borders around territories to isolate them from those of other colonial powers often had the effect of separating otherwise contiguous political groups, or forcing traditional enemies to live side by side with no buffer between them. For example, although the Congo River appears to be a natural geographic boundary, there were groups that otherwise shared a language, culture or other similarity living on both sides. The division of the land between Belgium and France along the river isolated these groups from each other. Those who lived in Saharan or Sub-Saharan Africa and traded across the continent for centuries often found themselves crossing borders that existed only on European maps.

In nations that had substantial European populations, for example Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Angola, Mozambique, Kenya and South Africa, systems of second-class citizenship were often set up in order to give Europeans political power far in excess of their numbers. In the Congo Free State, personal property of King Leopold II of Belgium, the native population was submitted to inhumane treatment, and a near slavery status assorted with forced labor. However, the lines were not always drawn strictly across racial lines. In Liberia, citizens who were descendants of American slaves had a political system for over 100 years that gave ex-slaves and natives to the area roughly equal legislative power despite the fact the ex-slaves were outnumbered ten to one in the general population.





Europeans often altered the local balance of power, created ethnic divides where they did not previously exist, and introduced a cultural dichotomy detrimental to the native inhabitants in the areas they controlled. For example, in what are now Rwanda and Burundi, two ethnic groups Hutus and Tutsis had merged into one culture by the time German colonists had taken control of the region in the nineteenth century. No longer divided by ethnicity as intermingling, intermarriage, and merging of cultural practices over the centuries had long since erased visible signs of a culture divide, Belgium instituted a policy of racial categorization upon taking control of the region, as racially based categorization and philosophies were a fixture of the European culture of that time. The term Hutu originally referred to the agricultural-based Bantu-speaking peoples that moved into present day Rwanda and Burundi from the West, and the term Tutsi referred to Northeastern cattle-based peoples that migrated into the region later. The terms described a person's economic class; individuals who owned roughly 10 or more cattle were considered Tutsi, and those with fewer were considered Hutu, regardless of ancestral history. This was not a strict line but a general rule of thumb, and one could move from Hutu to Tutsi and vice versa.

The Belgians introduced a racialized system; European-like features such as fairer skin, ample height, narrow noses were seen as more ideally Hamitic, and belonged to those people closest to Tutsi in ancestry, who were thus given power amongst the colonised peoples. Identity cards were issued based on this philosophy.

Tunisia was the first country in Africa to gain independence, doing so in 1956. The decades-long struggle for independence from France was led by Habib Bourguiba, founder of the Republic of Tunisia.

## Post-colonial Africa

Today, Africa contains 53 independent and sovereign countries, most of which still have the borders drawn during the era of European colonialism.

Since colonialism, African states have frequently been hampered by instability, corruption, violence, and authoritarianism. The vast majority of African nations are republics that operate under some form of the presidential system of rule. However, few of them have been able to sustain democratic governments, and many have instead cycled through a series of coups, producing military dictatorships. A number of Africa's post-colonial political leaders were military generals who were poorly educated and ignorant on matters of governance. Great instability, however, was mainly the result of marginalization of other ethnic groups and graft under these leaders. For political gain, many leaders fanned ethnic conflicts that had been exacerbated, or even created, by colonial rule. In many countries, the military was perceived as being the only group that could effectively maintain order, and it ruled many nations in Africa during the 1970s and early 1980s. During the period from the early 1960s to the late 1980s, Africa had more than 70 coups and 13 presidential assassinations. Border and territorial disputes were also common, with the European-imposed borders of many nations being widely contested through armed conflicts.

Cold War conflicts between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as the policies of the International Monetary Fund, also played a role in instability. When a country became independent for the first time, it was often expected to align with one of the two superpowers. Many countries in Northern Africa received Soviet military aid, while many in Central and Southern Africa were supported by the United States, France or both. The 1970s saw an escalation, as newly independent Angola and Mozambique aligned themselves with the Soviet Union, and the West and South Africa sought to contain Soviet influence by funding insurgency movements. There was a major famine in Ethiopia in 1984-85 Ethiopian famine of 1984–85, when hundreds of thousands of people starved.

Since 2003 there has been an ongoing conflict in Darfur which has become a humanitarian disaster. See Darfur war.

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AIDS has also been a prevalent issue in post-colonial Africa. See article AIDS in Africa.

## Politics

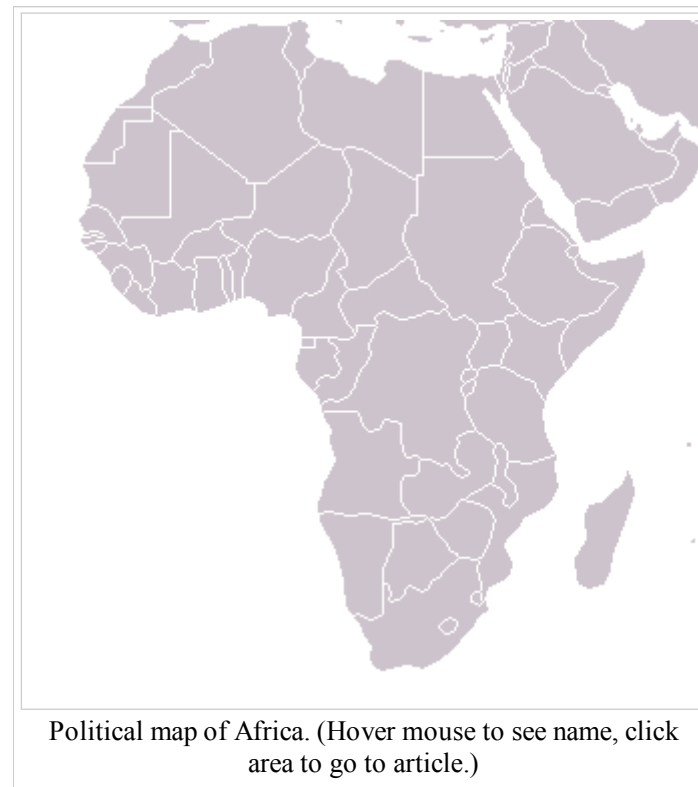
The African Union (AU) is a federation consisting of all of Africa's states except Morocco. The union was formed, with Addis Ababa as its headquarters, on June 26, 2001. In July 2004, the African Union's Pan-African Parliament (PAP) was relocated to Midrand, in South Africa, but the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights remained in Addis Ababa. There is a policy in effect to decentralise the African Federation's institutions so that they are shared by all the states.

The African Union, not to be confused with the AU Commission, is formed by an Act of Union which aims to transform the African Economic Community, a federated commonwealth, into a state, under established international conventions. The African Union has a parliamentary government, known as the African Union Government, consisting of legislative, judicial and executive organs, and led by the African Union President and Head of State, who is also the President of the Pan African Parliament. A person becomes AU President by being elected to the PAP, and subsequently gaining majority support in the PAP.

President Gertrude Ibengwe Mongella is the Head of State and Chief of Government of the African Union, by virtue of the fact that she is the President of the Pan African Parliament. She was elected by Parliament in its inaugural session in March 2004, for a term of five years. The PAP consists of 265 legislators, five from each constituent state of the African Union. Over 21% of the members are female.

The powers and authority of the President of the African Parliament derive from the Union Act, and the Protocol of the Pan African Parliament, as well as the inheritance of presidential authority stipulated by African treaties and by international treaties, including those subordinating the Secretary General of the OAU Secretariat (AU Commission) to the PAP. The government of the AU consists of all-union (federal), regional, state, and municipal authorities, as well as hundreds of institutions, that together manage the day-to-day affairs of the institution.

Failed state policies, inequitable global trade practices, and climatic conditions (especially drought) have resulted in many widespread famines, and significant portions of Africa remain with distribution systems unable to disseminate enough food or water for the population to survive. What had before colonialism been the source for 90% of the world's gold has become the poorest continent on earth, its former riches enjoyed by those on other continents. The spread of disease is also rampant, especially the spread of the HIV and the associated AIDS, which has become a deadly pandemic on the continent.



Political map of Africa. (Hover mouse to see name, click area to go to article.)



There are clear signs of increased networking among African organisations and states. In the civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (former Zaire), rather than rich, non-African countries intervening, neighbouring African countries became involved (see also Second Congo War). Since the conflict began in 1998, the estimated death toll has reached 4 million. Political associations such as the African Union offer hope for greater co-operation and peace between the continent's many countries. Extensive human rights abuses still occur in several parts of Africa, often under the oversight of the state. Most of such violations occur for political reasons, often as a side effect of civil war. Countries where major human rights violations have been reported in recent times include the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Côte d'Ivoire.

## Country name changes

Numerous African countries have undergone name changes during the previous century as the result of consolidations and secessions, territories gaining sovereignty, and regime changes.

Previous name	Year	Current name
Portuguese West Africa	1975	Angola, Republic of
Dahomey, Republic of	1975	Benin, Republic of
Bechuanaland, Protectorate	1966	Botswana, Republic of
Upper Volta	1984	Burkina Faso
Oubangui-Chari	1960	Central African Republic
Zaire, Republic of	1997	Congo, Democratic Republic of the
Middle Congo	1960	Congo, Republic of the
Ivory Coast, The	1985	Côte d'Ivoire, Republic of
Afars and the Issas, Territory of	1977	Djibouti, Republic of
Spanish Guinea	1968	Equatorial Guinea, Republic of
Abyssinia	1941	Ethiopia, Federal Democratic Republic of
Gold Coast	1957	Ghana, Republic of
French West Africa (part of)	1958	Guinea, Republic of
Portuguese Guinea	1974	Guinea-Bissau, Republic of
Basutoland, Territory of	1966	Lesotho, Kingdom of
Nyasaland Protectorate	1964	Malawi, Republic of
French Sudan	1960	Mali, Republic of



South West Africa	1990	Namibia, Republic of
German East Africa / Ruanda-Urundi	1962	Rwanda, Republic of / Burundi, Republic of
British Somaliland / Italian Somaliland	1960	Somalia Republic
Zanzibar / Tanganyika	1964	Tanzania, United Republic of
Buganda	1962	Uganda, Republic of
Northern Rhodesia	1964	Zambia, Republic of
Southern Rhodesia	1980	Zimbabwe, Republic of

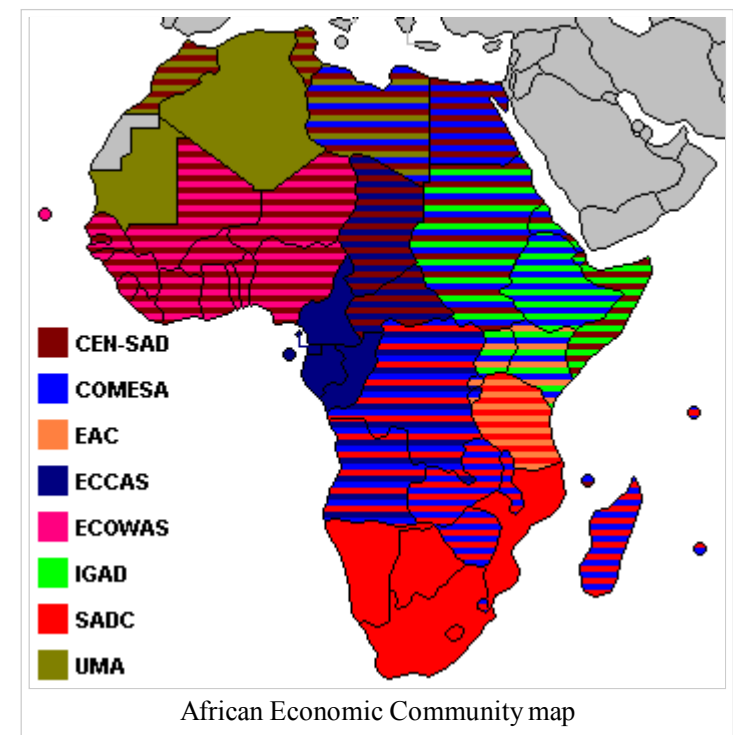
## Economy

Although it has abundant natural resources, Africa remains the world's poorest and most underdeveloped continent, due largely to the effects of: tropical diseases, the slave trade, corrupt governments, failed central planning, the international trade regime and geopolitics; as well as widespread human rights violations, the negative effects of colonialism, despotism, illiteracy, superstition, tribal savagery and military conflict (ranging from war and civil war to guerrilla warfare to genocide). According to the United Nations' Human Development Report in 2003, the bottom 25 ranked nations (151st to 175th) were all African nations.

Widespread poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition and inadequate water supply and sanitation, as well as poor health, affect a large majority of the people who reside in the African continent, where 36.2% of the population is living on under \$1 per day. Africa is by far the world's poorest inhabited continent, and on average, in 2003 it was poorer than it was in 1973.

Some areas, notably Botswana and South Africa, have experienced economic success. The latter has a wealth of natural resources, being the world's leading producer of both gold and diamonds, and having a well-established legal system. South Africa also has access to financial capital, numerous markets, skilled labor, and first world infrastructure in much of the country and has one of the major stock exchanges of the continent, the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

Over a quarter of Botswana's budget (also a major diamond producer) goes toward improving the infrastructure of Gaborone, the nation's capital, largest city, and one of the world's fastest growing cities. Other African countries are making comparable progress, such as Ghana, Cameroon and Egypt.














































On the other hand, 80% of Zimbabweans are unemployed. Two million of the country's residents have fled to Botswana and South Africa. Inflation rates, which fluctuate wildly, average out to more than 1000% a year, and the Zimbabwean dollar has depreciated against the U.S. dollar from 38 to 1 in 1999 to more than 5,000 to 1. Hunger and starvation are widespread, and consumer shortages abound. Since 1998, Zimbabwe's per capita gross domestic product has slid from about \$700 to less than \$200. Death rates have skyrocketed, and school attendance has plummeted. Once a country with a strong economy for Sub-Saharan Africa's standards, natural resources and a tolerant society, Zimbabwe is now one of the poorest and most bitterly divided countries in the continent, brought to ruin in less than two decades.

Nigeria sits on one of the largest proven oil reserves in the world and has the highest population among nations in Africa, with one of the fastest-growing economies in the world.

From 1995 to 2005, economic growth picked up, averaging 5% in 2005. However, some countries experienced much higher growth (10+%) in particular, Angola, Sudan and Equatorial Guinea, all three of which have recently begun extracting their petroleum reserves or have expanded their oil extraction capacity.














Country	Total GDP (nominal) in 2007 (billion US\$)	GDP (PPP) per capita in 2007 (US\$)	HDI in 2005
 Algeria	114.73	5,985	0.733
 Angola	44.03	3,533	0.446
 Benin	4.78	1,390	0.437
 Botswana	10.33	16,450	0.654
 Burkina Faso	6.21	1,140	0.370
 Burundi	0.81	372	0.413
 Cameroon	18.32	1,995	0.532
 Cape Verde	1.14	2,831	0.736
 Central African Republic	1.49	726	0.384
 Chad	6.54	1,749	0.388
 Comoros	0.40	1,063	0.561
 Democratic Republic of the Congo	8.54	309	0.411
 Congo	7.39	3,621	0.548
 Côte d'Ivoire	17.48	1,575	0.432
 Djibouti	0.76	1,964	0.516



 Egypt	107.48	5,051	0.708
 Equatorial Guinea	8.56	12,895	0.642
 Eritrea	1.09	774	0.483
 Ethiopia	13.32	806	0.406
 Gabon	9.55	14,083	0.677
 Gambia	0.51	1,326	0.502
 Ghana	12.91	1,225	0.553
 Guinea	3.32	1,074	0.456
 Guinea-Bissau	0.30	484	0.374
 Kenya	21.19	1,359	0.521
 Lesotho	1.48	1,415	0.549
 Liberia	0.63	357	0.331 (in 1993) N/A
 Libya	50.32	12,277	0.818
 Madagascar	5.50	1,068	0.533
 Malawi	2.23	785	0.437
 Mali	5.93	1,027	0.380
 Mauritania	2.66	1,691	0.550
 Mauritius	6.45	11,152	0.804
 Morocco	57.31	3,547	0.646
 Mozambique	7.61	830	0.384
 Namibia	6.37	4,547	0.650
 Niger	3.54	667	0.374
 Nigeria	114.69	1,892	0.470
 Réunion (France)	15.98	19,233 (nominal)	0.850 (in 2003)
 Rwanda	2.49	899	0.452
 São Tomé and Príncipe	0.12	1,460	0.654





 Senegal	8.94	1,676	0.499
 Seychelles	0.75	16,642	0.843
 Sierra Leone	1.44	692	0.336
 Somalia	0.06	600	0.221 (in 1993) N/A
 South Africa	254.99	9,761	0.674
 Sudan	37.57	2,249	0.526
 Swaziland	2.65	4,384	0.547
 Tanzania	12.78	1,018	0.467
 Togo	2.21	806	0.512
 Tunisia	30.30	6,461	0.766
 Uganda	9.32	939	0.505
 Zambia	10.91	1,175	0.434
 Zimbabwe	5.01	188	0.513

## Demographics

The last 40 years have seen a rapid increase in population; hence, this population is relatively young. In some African states half or more of the population is under 25 years old.

Speakers of Bantu languages (part of the Niger-Congo family) are the majority in southern, central and East Africa proper. But there are also several Nilotic groups in East Africa, and a few remaining indigenous Khoisan ('San' or 'Bushmen') and Pygmy peoples in southern and central Africa, respectively. Bantu-speaking Africans also predominate in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and are found in parts of southern Cameroon and southern Somalia. In the Kalahari Desert of Southern Africa, the distinct people known as the Bushmen (also "San", closely related to, but distinct from "Hottentots") have long been present. The San are physically distinct from other Africans and are the indigenous people of southern Africa. Pygmies are the pre-Bantu indigenous peoples of central Africa.

The peoples of North Africa comprise two main groups; Berber and Arabic-speaking peoples in the west, and Egyptians in the east. The Arabs who arrived in the seventh century introduced the Arabic language and Islam to North Africa. The Semitic Phoenicians, the European Greeks, Romans and Vandals settled in North Africa as well. Berbers still make up the majority in Morocco, while they are a significant minority within Algeria. They are also present in Tunisia and Libya. The Tuareg and other often-nomadic peoples are the principal inhabitants of the Saharan interior of North Africa. Nubians are a Nilo-Saharan-speaking group (though many also speak Arabic), who developed an ancient civilisation in northeast Africa.

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During the past century or so, small but economically important colonies of Lebanese and Chinese have also developed in the larger coastal cities of West and East Africa, respectively.

Some Ethiopian and Eritrean groups (like the Amhara and Tigrayans, collectively known as " Habesha") speak Semitic languages. The Oromo and Somali peoples speak Cushitic languages, but some Somali clans trace their founding to legendary Arab founders. Sudan and Mauritania are divided between a mostly Arabized north and a native African south (although the "Arabs" of Sudan clearly have a predominantly native African ancestry themselves). Some areas of East Africa, particularly the island of Zanzibar and the Kenyan island of Lamu, received Arab Muslim and Southwest Asian settlers and merchants throughout the Middle Ages and in antiquity.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, Europeans such as the Portuguese and Dutch began to establish trading posts and forts along the coasts of western and southern Africa. Eventually, a large number of Dutch augmented by French Huguenots and Germans settled in what is today South Africa. Their descendants, the Afrikaners and the Coloureds, are the largest European-descended groups in Africa today. In the nineteenth century, a second phase of colonisation brought a large number of French and British settlers to Africa. The Portuguese settled mainly in Angola, but also in Mozambique. The French settled in large numbers in Algeria where they became known collectively as *pieds-noirs*, and on a smaller scale in other areas of North and West Africa as well as in Madagascar. The British settled chiefly in South Africa as well as the colony of Rhodesia, and in the highlands of what is now Kenya. Germans settled in what is now Tanzania and Namibia, and there is still a population of German-speaking white Namibians. Smaller numbers of European soldiers, businessmen, and officials also established themselves in administrative centers such as Nairobi and Dakar. Decolonisation during the 1960s often resulted in the mass emigration of European-descended settlers out of Africa – especially from Algeria, Angola, Kenya and Rhodesia. However, in South Africa and Namibia, the white minority remained politically dominant after independence from Europe, and a significant population of Europeans remained in these two countries even after democracy was finally instituted at the end of the Cold War. South Africa has also become the preferred destination of white Anglo-Zimbabweans, and of migrants from all over southern Africa.

European colonisation also brought sizeable groups of Asians, particularly people from the Indian subcontinent, to British colonies. Large Indian communities are found in South Africa, and smaller ones are present in Kenya, Tanzania, and some other southern and East African countries. The large Indian community in Uganda was expelled by the dictator Idi Amin in 1972, though many have since returned. The islands in the Indian Ocean are also populated primarily by people of Asian origin, often mixed with Africans and Europeans. The Malagasy people of Madagascar are a Austronesian people, but those along the coast are generally mixed with Bantu, Arab, Indian and European origins. Malay and Indian ancestries are also important components in the group of people known in South Africa as Cape Coloureds (people with origins in two or more races and continents).

## Languages



By most estimates, Africa contains well over a thousand languages (some have estimated over two thousand), most of African origin and a few of European origin. Africa is the most polyglot continent in the world; it is not rare to find individuals there who fluently speak not only several African languages, but one or two European ones as well. There are four major language families native to Africa.

- The *Afro-Asiatic* languages are a language family of about 240 languages and 285 million people widespread throughout the Horn of Africa, North Africa, the Sahel, and Southwest Asia.
- The *Nilo-Saharan* language family consists of more than a hundred languages spoken by 30 million people. Nilo-Saharan languages are spoken by Nilotic tribes in Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and northern Tanzania.
- The *Niger-Congo* language family covers much of Sub-Saharan Africa and is probably the largest language family in the world in terms of different languages. A substantial number of them are the Bantu languages spoken in much of sub-Saharan Africa.
- The *Khoisan* languages number about fifty and are spoken in Southern Africa by approximately 120,000 people. Many of the Khoisan languages are endangered. The Khoi and San peoples are considered the original inhabitants of this part of Africa.

Following colonialism, nearly all African countries adopted official languages that originated outside the continent, although several countries nowadays also use various languages of native origin (such as Swahili) as their official language. In numerous countries, English and French (see African French) are used for communication in the public sphere such as government, commerce, education and the media. Arabic, Portuguese, Afrikaans and Malagasy are other examples of originally non-African languages that are used by millions of Africans today, both in the public and private spheres.

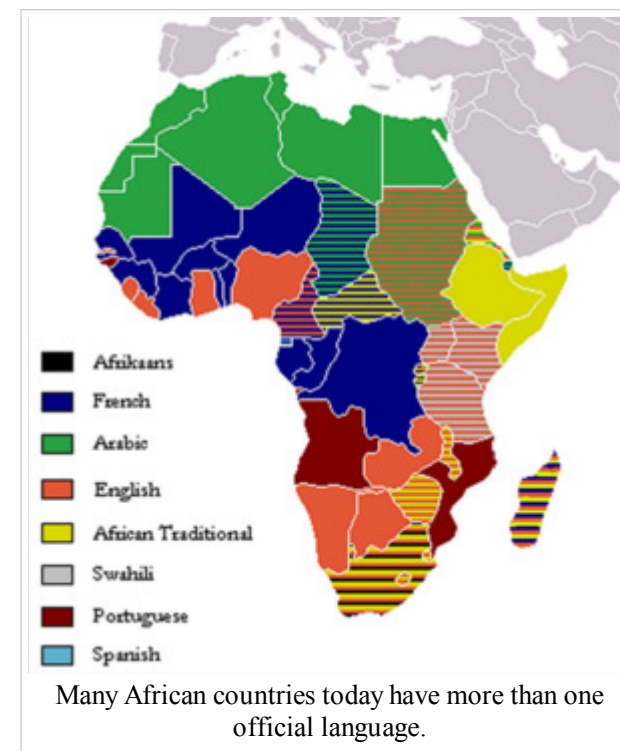
## Culture

African culture is characterised by a vastly diverse patchwork of social values, ranging from extreme patriarchy to extreme matriarchy, sometimes in tribes existing side by side.

Modern African culture is characterised by conflicted responses to Arab nationalism and European imperialism. Increasingly, beginning in the late 1990s, Africans are reasserting their identity. In North Africa especially the rejection of the label Arab or European has resulted in an upsurge of demands for special protection of indigenous Amazigh languages and culture in Morocco, Egypt, Algeria and Tunisia. The re-emergence of Pan-Africanism since the fall of apartheid has heightened calls for a renewed sense of African identity. In South Africa, intellectuals from settler communities of European descent increasingly identify as African for cultural rather than geographical or racial reasons. Famously, some have undergone ritual ceremonies to become members of the Zulu or other community.

Image:African language families.svg

Map showing the distribution of African language families and some major African languages. Afro-Asiatic extends from the Sahel to Southwest Asia. Niger-Congo is divided to show the size of the Bantu sub-family.





Much of the traditional African cultures have become impoverished as a result of years of neglect and suppression by colonial and neo-colonial regimes. There is now a resurgence in the attempts to rediscover and revalorise African traditional cultures, under such movements as the African Renaissance led by Thabo Mbeki, Afrocentrism led by an influential group of scholars including Molefi Asante, as well as the increasing recognition of traditional spiritualism through decriminalization of Vodou and other forms of spirituality. In recent years African traditional culture has become synonymous with rural poverty and subsistence farming.

Urban culture in Africa, now associated with Western values, is a great contrast from traditional African urban culture which was once rich and enviable even by modern Western standards. African cities such as Loango, M'banza Congo, Timbuktu, Thebes, Meroe and others had served as the world's most affluent urban and industrial centers, clean, well-laid out, and full of universities, libraries, and temples.

The main and most enduring cultural fault-line in Africa is the divide between traditional pastoralists and agriculturalists. The divide is not, and never was based on economic competition, but rather on the colonial racial policy that identified pastoralists as constituting a different race from agriculturalists, and enforcing a form of apartheid between the two cultures beginning in the 1880s and lasting until the 1960s. Although European colonial powers were largely industrial, many of the administrators and philosophers, whose writings provided rationale for colonialism, applied quasi-scientific eugenics policies and racist politics on Africans in experiments of misguided social engineering.

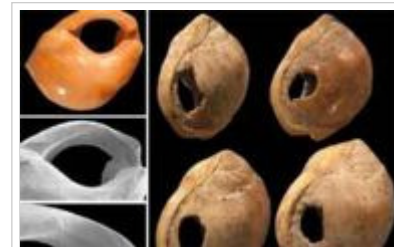
Most of the racial recategorisation of Africans to fit European stereotypes was contradictory and incoherent. However, because their legalism and laws that emanated from these policies were backed by police force, the scientific establishment and economic power, Africans reacted by either conforming to the new rules, or rejecting them in favour of Pan-Africanism. All across Africa communities and individuals were measured by colonial eugenics boards and reassigned identities and ethnicities based on pseudoscience. The schools taught that in general Africans who resembled Europeans in some physical or cultural aspect were superior to other Africans and deserved more privileges.

The easiest way to divide Africans was along economic lines. Pastoralists, agriculturalists, hunter-gatherers and Westernised Africans, all formed distinctly identifiable cultures each of which came to play a different and disfiguring role in Africa's modern politics. The Westernised Africans, specifically Senegalese and Sudanese Nubians from urban centers such as Dakar and Khartoum, were used to serve as the bulk of colonial troops against the rural Africans. Pastoralists were radicalised by the wholesale confiscation of grazing lands in favour of plantations. Agriculturalists came into conflict for land and water with pastoralists after the traditional sharing arrangements had been destroyed by colonial policies.



In addition, a growing body of speculative anthropology and race science made false claims about the superiority and inferiority of Africans with different cultural and economic backgrounds. The vast majority of the scholarship on Africa was extraneous and catered to the demand for exotic and outlandish representations of Africa. The enforcement of the government decrees and policies tended to produce effects that confirmed the prejudices of the European colonialists.

African art and architecture reflect the diversity of African cultures. The oldest existing examples of art from Africa are 75,000 year old beads made from *Nassarius* shells that were found in Blombos Cave. The Great Pyramid of Giza in Egypt was the world's tallest structure for 4,000 years until the completion of Lincoln Cathedral around 1300. The stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe are also noteworthy for their architecture, and the complex of monolithic churches at Lalibela, Ethiopia, of which the Church of St. George is representative, is regarded as another marvel of engineering.



75,000 year old *Nassarius* shell beads found in Blombos Cave, South Africa

## Music and dance

The music of Africa is one of its most dynamic art forms. Egypt has long been a cultural focus of the Arab world, while remembrance of the rhythms of sub-Saharan Africa, in particular West Africa, was transmitted through the Atlantic slave trade to modern samba, blues, jazz, reggae, rap, and rock and roll. The 1950s through the 1970s saw a conglomeration of these various styles with the popularization of Afrobeat and Highlife music. Modern music of the continent includes the highly complex choral singing of southern Africa and the dance rhythms of soukous, dominated by the music of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Recent developments include the emergence of African hip hop, in particular a form from Senegal blended with traditional mbalax, and Kwaito, a South African variant of house music. Afrikaans music, also found in South Africa, is idiosyncratic being composed mostly of traditional Boer music, while more recent immigrant communities have introduced the music of their homes to the continent.

Indigenous musical and dance traditions of Africa are maintained by oral traditions and they are distinct from the music and dance styles of North Africa and Southern Africa. Arab influences are visible in North African music and dance and in Southern Africa western influences are apparent due to colonisation.

Many African languages are tone languages, in which pitch level determines the meaning. This also finds expression in African musical melodies and rhythms. A variety of musical instruments are used, including drums (most widely used), bells, musical bow, lute, flute, and trumpet.

African dances are important mode of communication and dancers use gestures, masks, costumes, body painting and a number of visual devices. With urbanisation and modernisation, modern African dance and music exhibit influences assimilated from several other cultures.

## Legends of Africa

Africa has a wealth of history which is largely unrecorded. Many myths, fables and legends abound.

## Sports





53 African countries have football teams in the Confederation of African Football, while Cameroon, Nigeria, Senegal, and Ghana have advanced to the knockout stage of recent FIFA World Cups. South Africa will host the 2010 World Cup tournament, and will be the first African country to do so.

Cricket is also popular in some African nations, with South Africa and Zimbabwe holding Test status and Kenya also being a significant force in One-Day International cricket. The three countries jointly hosted the 2003 Cricket World Cup.

A number of African nations, especially Ethiopia, Kenya, and Morocco, have fielded world-class long-distance runners such as Abebe Bikila and Cosmas Ndeti.

South Africa hosted and won the 1995 Rugby World Cup and also won the 2007 Rugby World Cup.

## Religion

Africans profess a wide variety of religious beliefs and it is difficult to compile accurate statistics about religious demography in Africa as a whole. Estimations from World Book Encyclopedia claim that there are 150 million African Muslims and 130 million African Christians, while Encyclopedia Britannica estimates that approximately 46.5% of all Africans are Christians and another 40.5% are Muslims with roughly 11.8% of Africans following indigenous African religions. A small number of Africans are Hindu, Baha'i, or have beliefs from the Judaic tradition. Examples of African Jews are the Beta Israel, Lemba peoples and the Abayudaya of Eastern Uganda.

Indigenous Sub-Saharan African religions tend to revolve around a pantheon of deities, and often involve animism and ancestor worship. A common thread in traditional belief systems was the division of the spiritual world into "helpful" and "harmful" spiritual beings. Helpful spirits include ancestor spirits who can be called upon to help their descendants, and more powerful spirits that protect entire communities from natural disaster or attacks from enemies. Harmful spirits include the souls of murdered victims who were buried without the proper funeral rites, and spirits used by hostile spirit mediums to cause illness among their enemies. While the effect of these early forms of worship continues to have a profound influence, belief systems have evolved as they interact with other religions.

The formation of the Old Kingdom of Egypt in the third millennium BC marked the earliest known complex religious system on the continent, and one of the earliest in the world. Around the ninth century, Carthage (in present-day Tunisia) was founded by the Phoenicians, and went on to become a major cosmopolitan centre where deities from neighboring Egypt, Rome and the Etruscan city-states were worshipped. Today, many Jewish peoples also live in North Africa, particularly in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco.

The founding of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Alexandria is traditionally dated to the mid-first century, while the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and the Eritrean Orthodox Church officially date from the fourth century. These are thus some of the first established Christian churches in the world. At first, Christian Orthodoxy made gains in modern-day Sudan and other neighbouring regions. However, after the spread of Islam, growth was slow and restricted to the highlands.

Many Sub-Saharan Africans were converted to Western Christianity during the colonial period. In the last decades of the twentieth century, various sects of Charismatic Christianity rapidly grew. A number of Roman Catholic African bishops were mentioned as possible papal candidates in 2005, the most prominent



of those being Nigerian Cardinal Francis Arinze. African Christians appear to be more socially conservative than their co-religionists in much of the industrialized world, which has quite recently led to tension within denominations such as the Anglican and Methodist Churches.









The African Initiated Churches have experienced significant growth in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

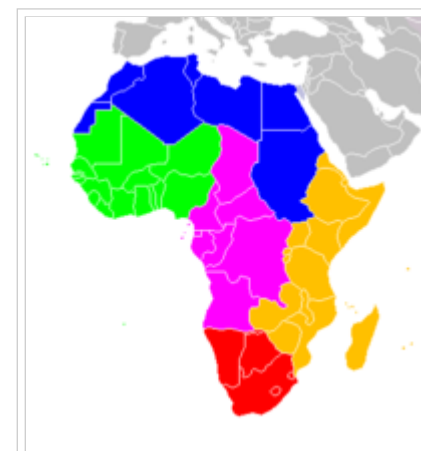
Islam entered Africa as Arab Muslims conquered North Africa between 640 and 710, beginning with Egypt. They settled in Mogadishu, Melinde, Mombasa, Kilwa, and Sofala, following the sea trade down the coast of East Africa, and diffusing through the Sahara desert into the interior of Africa—following in particular the paths of Muslim traders. Muslims were also among the Asian peoples who later settled in British-ruled Africa. During colonial times, Christianity had success in converting those who followed traditional religions but had very little success in converting Muslims, who took advantage of the urbanization and increase in trade to settle in new areas and spread their faith. As a result, Islam in sub-Saharan Africa probably doubled between 1869 and 1914.

Islam continued this tremendous growth into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Today, backed by gulf oil cash, Muslims have increased success in proselytizing, with a growth rate, by some estimates, that is twice as fast as Christianity in Africa.

## Territories and regions















The countries in this table are categorised according to the scheme for geographic subregions used by the United Nations, and data included are per sources in cross-referenced articles. Where they differ, provisos are clearly indicated.

Name of region and territory, with flag	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population ( 1 July 2002 est.)	Population density (per km <sup>2</sup> )	Capital
<b>Eastern Africa:</b>				
 Burundi	27,830	6,373,002	229.0	Bujumbura
 Comoros	2,170	614,382	283.1	Moroni
 Djibouti	23,000	472,810	20.6	Djibouti
 Eritrea	121,320	4,465,651	36.8	Asmara
 Ethiopia	1,127,127	67,673,031	60.0	Addis Ababa
 Kenya	582,650	31,138,735	53.4	Nairobi
 Madagascar	587,040	16,473,477	28.1	Antananarivo
 Malawi	118,480	10,701,824	90.3	Lilongwe



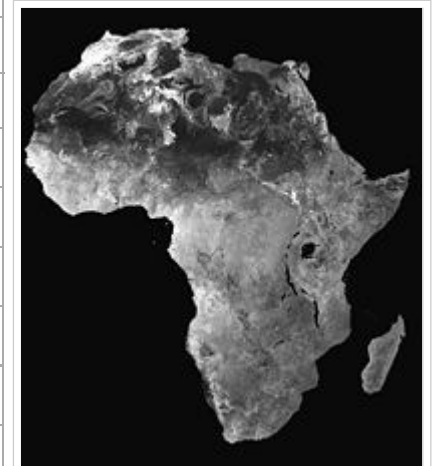
Regions of Africa:  
Northern Africa  
Western Africa  
Middle Africa  
Eastern Africa  
Southern Africa



 Mauritius	2,040	1,200,206	588.3	Port Louis
 Mayotte (France)	374	170,879	456.9	Mamoudzou
 Mozambique	801,590	19,607,519	24.5	Maputo
 Réunion (France)	2,512	743,981	296.2	Saint-Denis
 Rwanda	26,338	7,398,074	280.9	Kigali
 Seychelles	455	80,098	176.0	Victoria
 Somalia	637,657	7,753,310	12.2	Mogadishu
 Tanzania	945,087	37,187,939	39.3	Dodoma
 Uganda	236,040	24,699,073	104.6	Kampala
 Zambia	752,614	9,959,037	13.2	Lusaka
 Zimbabwe	390,580	11,376,676	29.1	Harare
<b>Middle Africa:</b>				
 Angola	1,246,700	10,593,171	8.5	Luanda
 Cameroon	475,440	16,184,748	34.0	Yaoundé
 Central African Republic	622,984	3,642,739	5.8	Bangui
 Chad	1,284,000	8,997,237	7.0	N'Djamena
 Congo	342,000	2,958,448	8.7	Brazzaville
 Democratic Republic of the Congo	2,345,410	55,225,478	23.5	Kinshasa
 Equatorial Guinea	28,051	498,144	17.8	Malabo
 Gabon	267,667	1,233,353	4.6	Libreville
 São Tomé and Príncipe	1,001	170,372	170.2	São Tomé
<b>Northern Africa:</b>				
 Algeria	2,381,740	32,277,942	13.6	Algiers




















Physical map of Africa.
















Satellite photo of Africa.



 Egypt	1,001,450	70,712,345	70.6	Cairo
 Libya	1,759,540	5,368,585	3.1	Tripoli
 Morocco	446,550	31,167,783	69.8	Rabat
 Sudan	2,505,810	37,090,298	14.8	Khartoum
 Tunisia	163,610	9,815,644	60.0	Tunis
 Western Sahara	266,000	256,177	1.0	El Aaiún
<i>Spanish and Portuguese territories in Northern Africa:</i>				
 Canary Islands (Spain)	7,492	1,694,477	226.2	Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Santa Cruz de Tenerife
 Ceuta (Spain)	20	71,505	3,575.2	—
 Madeira Islands (Portugal)	797	245,000	307.4	Funchal
 Melilla (Spain)	12	66,411	5,534.2	—
<b>Southern Africa:</b>				
 Botswana	600,370	1,591,232	2.7	Gaborone
 Lesotho	30,355	2,207,954	72.7	Maseru
 Namibia	825,418	1,820,916	2.2	Windhoek
 South Africa	1,219,912	43,647,658	35.8	Bloemfontein, Cape Town, Pretoria
 Swaziland	17,363	1,123,605	64.7	Mbabane
<b>Western Africa:</b>				
 Benin	112,620	6,787,625	60.3	Porto-Novo
 Burkina Faso	274,200	12,603,185	46.0	Ouagadougou
 Cape Verde	4,033	408,760	101.4	Praia
 Côte d'Ivoire	322,460	16,804,784	52.1	Abidjan, Yamoussoukro



 Gambia	11,300	1,455,842	128.8	Banjul
 Ghana	239,460	20,244,154	84.5	Accra
 Guinea	245,857	7,775,065	31.6	Conakry
 Guinea-Bissau	36,120	1,345,479	37.3	Bissau
 Liberia	111,370	3,288,198	29.5	Monrovia
 Mali	1,240,000	11,340,480	9.1	Bamako
 Mauritania	1,030,700	2,828,858	2.7	Nouakchott
 Niger	1,267,000	10,639,744	8.4	Niamey
 Nigeria	923,768	129,934,911	140.7	Abuja
 Saint Helena (UK)	410	7,317	17.8	Jamestown
 Senegal	196,190	10,589,571	54.0	Dakar
 Sierra Leone	71,740	5,614,743	78.3	Freetown
 Togo	56,785	5,285,501	93.1	Lomé
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,368,609</b>	<b>843,705,143</b>	<b>27.8</b>	

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# African Great Lakes

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

The **Great Lakes** of Africa are a series of lakes in and around the geographic Great Rift Valley formed by the action of the tectonic East African Rift. They include Lake Victoria, the second largest fresh water lake in the world in terms of surface area, and Lake Tanganyika, the world's second largest in volume as well as the second deepest. The term *Greater Lakes* is also used, less commonly, for some of them.

The Great Lakes are divided among three different catchments (river basins), and a number, such as Lake Turkana have internal drainage systems. The following, in order of size from largest to smallest, are included on most lists of the African Great Lakes:

- Lake Victoria
- Lake Tanganyika
- Lake Nyasa
- Lake Turkana
- Lake Albert
- Lake Kivu

Some call only Lake Victoria, Lake Albert, and Lake Edward the Great Lakes, as they are the only three that empty into the White Nile. Lake Kyoga is part of Great Lakes system, but is not itself considered a Great Lake, on size grounds. Lake Tanganyika and Lake Kivu both empty into the Congo River system, while Lake Malawi is drained by the Shire River into the Zambezi. Lake Turkana has no outlet.

Two other lakes close to Lake Tanganyika do not appear on the lists despite being larger than Edward and Kivu: Lake Rukwa and Lake Mweru.

Because the term is a loose one, it is often preferable to use other categorizations such as *African Rift Valley Lakes* or *East African Lakes*.



The Greater Lakes and the East African coastline as seen from space. The Indian Ocean can be seen to the right.



## Great Lakes region

The term Great Lake region is likewise somewhat loose. It is used in a narrow sense for the area lying between northern Lake Tanganyika, western Lake Victoria, and lakes Kivu, Edward and Albert. This comprises Burundi, Rwanda, north-eastern DR Congo, Uganda and north-western Kenya and Tanzania. It is used in a wider sense to extend to all of Kenya and Tanzania, but not usually as far south as Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique nor as far north as Ethiopia, though these four countries border one of the Great Lakes.

An estimated 107 million people live in the Great Lakes region.. The area described in the narrow sense above is one of the most densely populated areas of Africa. Because of past volcanic activity this area also contains some of Africa's best farmland. Its altitude gives it a sub-tropical climate despite being right on the equator, becoming temperate in the mountains. This makes tropical diseases of humans and livestock, such as trypanosomiasis, less prevalent, so that, for instance, cattle and other susceptible animals thrive.

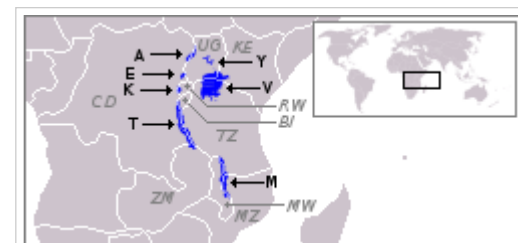
Because of the density of population and the agricultural surplus in the region the area became highly organized into a number of small states. The most powerful of these monarchies were Rwanda, Burundi, Buganda, and Bunyoro. Unusually for sub-Saharan Africa, the traditional borders were largely maintained by the colonial powers.

Being the long sought after source of the Nile, the region had long been of interest to Europeans. The first Europeans to arrive in the region in any numbers were missionaries who had limited success in converting the locals, but did open the region to later colonization. The increased contact with the rest of the world led to a series of devastating epidemics affecting both humans and livestock. These decreased the region's population dramatically, by up to 60% in some areas. The region did not return to its precolonial population until the 1950s.

While seen as a region with great potential after independence, the region has in recent decades been marred by civil war and conflict, from which only Tanzania has largely escaped. The worst affected areas have been left in great poverty.

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T - Tanganyika  
V - Victoria  
A - Albert  
E - Edward  
K - Kivu  
M - Malawi



# HIV/AIDS in Africa

## 2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

SOS Children supports more than 50,000 Aids Orphans in the community. For more information see SOS Children: Aids in Africa

The **HIV/AIDS** epidemics spreading through the countries of **Sub-saharan Africa** are highly varied. Although it is not correct to speak of a single African epidemic, Africa is without doubt the region most affected by the virus. Inhabited by just over 12% of the world's population, Africa is estimated to have more than 60% of the AIDS-infected population. Much of the deadliness of the epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa has to do with a deadly synergy between HIV and Tuberculosis. In fact, Tuberculosis is the world's greatest infectious killer of women of reproductive age and the leading cause of death among people with HIV/AIDS.

World region	Adult HIV prevalence (ages 15–49)	Total HIV cases	AIDS deaths in 2005
Sub-Saharan Africa	6.1%	24.5m	2.0m
Worldwide	1.0%	38.6m	2.8m
North America	0.11%	1.3m	27,000
Western Europe	0.3%	5.8m	12,000

**Regional comparisons of HIV in 2005** (Source: UNAIDS, 2006 Report on the global AIDS epidemic)

In Southern Africa, several factors contribute to the spread of the HIV virus. For one, a stigma is attached to admitting to HIV infection and to using condoms. For another, many deny that the HIV virus causes AIDS: Thabo Mbeki and Robert Mugabe have both suggested AIDS stems from poverty rather than HIV infection. And finally, many myths are attached to the use of condoms, such as the ideas that a conspiracy wants to limit the growth of the African population and that condoms stifle the traditional power of the man in his community.

In the 35 African nations with the highest prevalence, average life expectancy is 48.3 years—6.5 years less than it would be without the disease. For the eleven countries in Africa with prevalence rates above 13%, life expectancy is 47.7 years—11.0 years less than would be expected without HIV/AIDS.

Although many governments in sub-Saharan Africa denied that there was a problem for years, they have now begun to work toward solutions.

Health spending in Africa has never been adequate, either before or after independence. The health care systems inherited from colonial powers were oriented toward curative treatment rather than preventative programs. Strong prevention programs are the cornerstone of effective national responses to AIDS, and the required changes in the health sector have presented huge challenges.



Lack of money is an obvious challenge, although a great deal of aid is distributed throughout developing countries with high HIV/AIDS rates. Response to the epidemic is also hampered by lack of infrastructure, corruption within both donor agencies and government agencies, foreign donors not coordinating with local government and misguided resources.

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) has predicted outcomes for the region to the year 2025. These range from a plateau and eventual decline in deaths beginning around 2012 to a catastrophic continual growth in the death rate with potentially 90 million cases of infection.

Without the kind of nutrition, health care and medicines (such as anti-retrovirals) that are available in developed countries, large numbers of people in Africa will develop full-blown AIDS. They will not only be unable to work, but will also require significant medical care. This will likely cause a collapse of economies and societies. In all of the severely affected countries, the epidemic has left behind many orphans, who are either cared for by extended family members, or must live in orphanages or on the streets. UNAIDS, WHO and UNDP have already documented decreasing life expectancies and lowering of GNP in many African countries with prevalence rates of 10% or more.

A minority of scientists claim that as many as 40% of HIV infections in African adults may be caused by unsafe medical practices rather than by sexual activity. . The World Health Organization states that 2.5% of infections are caused by unsafe medical injection practices and all the others by unprotected sex. .

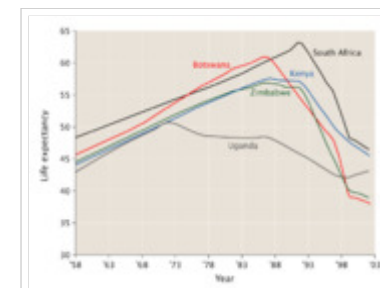
## Access to treatment

*Treatment is technically feasible in every part of the world. Even the lack of infrastructure is not an excuse—I don't know a single place in the world where the real reason AIDS treatment is unavailable is that the health infrastructure has exhausted its capacity to deliver it. It's not knowledge that's the barrier. It's political will.* Peter Piot, Executive Director of UNAIDS

New anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) can slow down and even reverse the progression of HIV infection, delaying the onset of AIDS by twenty years or more. Because of their high cost (\$10,000 to \$15,000 USD per person per year (pppy) in the West for patent drugs and approximately \$800 USD pppy in some African countries for generic drugs), only a few of the 6 million people in developing countries who need ARV treatment have access to medication. Nevertheless, access to ARV therapy has increased more than eightfold since the end of 2003, with about 810,000 people (13.5 per cent of the 6 million in need) on the treatment.

ARVs play a central role in prevention as well. When treatments are known to be available, people are more likely to come forward for testing and well as more likely to adopt lower risk behaviours. ARVs also reduce the amount of the HIV virus in the blood, thus reducing the risk of further transmission.

Patients who start HIV treatment generally have to continue taking medications for the rest of their lives. In areas where drug therapy is expensive, some people must interrupt their treatment when they were unable to afford medication. Drug-resistant strains of HIV have been observed in such areas.



Changes in life expectancy in several African countries. Botswana has been particularly badly hit, while public education projects campaigns have had a positive effect in Uganda. (Source: World Bank *World Development Indicators*, 2004).



The key factor in the expense of ARVs is their patent status, which allows drug companies to recoup research costs and turn a profit, enabling the development of new drugs. International aid organisations such as VSO, Oxfam and Médecins Sans Frontières have questioned whether the revenues generated by ARVs really tally with research costs.

Generic copies of patented ARV drugs are supplied by drug manufacturers in India, South Africa, Brazil, Thailand, and the People's Republic of China. Because fees are not paid to the patent holders, the drugs can be distributed at low prices in developing countries. Generic production competition and 'price offers' (voluntary donations by companies) have forced patent holders to reduce their prices.

ARV patients need regular testing of viral load and CD4 cell count. This requires expensive laboratory equipment and good healthcare logistics. These costs drive the price of generic ARV therapy in African countries up from under \$140 USD pppy for the drugs alone to approximately \$800 USD pppy when done according to Western standards.

For many Africans, living below the poverty threshold of a \$2 USD / day, free (government or NGO-funded) treatment remains the only option.

The World Health Organisation's 3 by 5 initiative aimed to provide three million people with ARV treatment by the end of 2005. International aid organisations have lobbied for an expansion of generic production in developing countries, for immediate short term and stable, predictable long term financing of the 3 by 5 initiative.

The United States AIDS initiative, PEPFAR, is focusing two thirds of its resources on AIDS in Africa. Starting in 2004, expenditures rose from \$2.3B world-wide to \$3.3B in 2006. A funding level of \$4B was requested for 2007.

The DREAM ("Drug Resources Enhancement against AIDS and Malnutrition", formerly "Drug Resource Enhancement against AIDS in Mozambique") initiative promoted by the Community of Sant'Egidio has given access to free ARV treatment with generic HAART drugs to the poor on a large scale. So far, 5,000 people are receiving ARV treatment, especially in Mozambique, but the program is also being built up in Malawi, Guinea, Tanzania and other countries. The program includes regular blood testing according to European standards. It is linked with nutrition and sanitation programs run by volunteers. The compliance rate is 94 per cent.



## Regional analysis

### East-central Africa

In this article, East and central Africa consists of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Congo Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Central African Republic, Rwanda, Burundi and Ethiopia and Eritrea on the Horn of Africa. In 1982, Uganda was the first state in the region to declare HIV cases. This was followed by Kenya in 1984 and Tanzania in 1985.

Country	Adult prevalence	Total HIV	Deaths 2003
Tanzania	8.8%	1,500,000	160,000
Kenya	6.7%	1,100,000	150,000
Congo	4.9%	80,000	9,700
Ethiopia	4.4%*	1,400,000	120,000
Congo DR	4.2%	1,000,000	100,000
Uganda	4.1%	450,000	78,000
Eritrea	2.7%	55,000	6,300

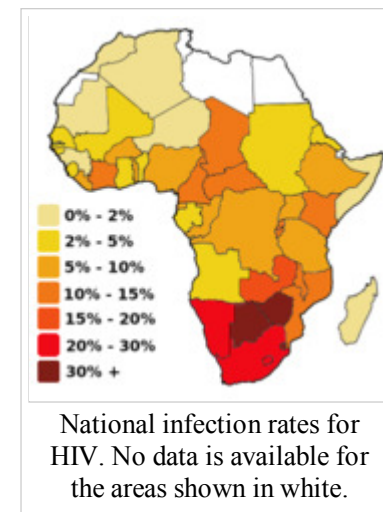
HIV in East-central Africa (Source: UNAIDS)

\* A 2005 survey by the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia showed that Adult (ages 15-49) prevalence was only 1.4%, with prevalence among women at 1.9% and among men at 0.9%.

Some areas of East Africa are beginning to show substantial declines in the prevalence of HIV infection. In the early 1990s, 13% of Ugandan residents were HIV positive; This has now fallen to 4.1% by the end of 2003. Evidence may suggest that the tide may also be turning in Kenya: prevalence fell from 13.6% in 1997–1998 to 9.4% in 2002. Data from Ethiopia and Burundi are also hopeful. HIV prevalence levels still remain high, however, and it is too early to claim that these are permanent reversals in these countries' epidemics.

Most governments in the region established AIDS education programmes in the mid-1980s in partnership with the World Health Organization and international NGOs. These programmes commonly taught the 'ABC' of HIV prevention: a combination of abstinence (A), fidelity to your partner (Be faithful) and condom use (C). The efforts of these educational campaigns appear now to be bearing fruit. In Uganda, awareness of AIDS is demonstrated to be over 99% and more than three in five Ugandans can cite two or more preventative practices. Youths are also delaying the age at which sexual intercourse first occurs.

There are no non-human vectors of HIV infection. The spread of the epidemic across this region is closely linked to the migration of labour from rural areas to







urban centres, which generally have a higher prevalence of HIV. Labourers commonly picked up HIV in the towns and cities, spreading it to the countryside when they visited their home. Empirical evidence brings into sharp relief the connection between road and rail networks and the spread of HIV. Long distance truck drivers have been identified as a group with the high-risk behaviour of sleeping with prostitutes and a tendency to spread the infection along trade routes in the region. Infection rates of up to 33% were observed in this group in the late 1980s in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

## West Africa

For the purposes of this discussion, Western Africa shall include the coastal countries of Mauritania, Senegal, The Gambia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Nigeria and the landlocked states of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Country	Adult prevalence	Total HIV	Deaths 2005
Cote D'Ivoire	7.1%	750,000	65,000
Liberia	5.9%	100,000	72,000
Nigeria	5.4%	3,600,000	310,000
Guinea-Bissau	3.8%	32,000	2,700
Togo	3.2%	110,000	9,100
Gambia	2.4%	20,000	1,300
Ghana	2.3%	320,000	29,000
Burkina Faso	2.0%	150,000	12,000
Benin	1.8%	87,000	9,600
Mali	1.7%	130,000	11,000
Sierra Leone	1.6%	48,000	4,600
Guinea	1.5%	85,000	7,100
Niger	1.1%	79,000	7,600
Senegal	0.8%	44,000	35,00
Mauritania	0.7%	12,000	<1,000

The region has generally high levels of infection of both HIV-1 and HIV-2. The onset of the HIV epidemic in West Africa began in 1985 with reported cases in Cote d'Ivoire, Benin and Mali. Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Cameroon, Senegal and Liberia followed in 1986. Sierra Leone, Togo and Niger in 1987; Mauritania in 1988; The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea in 1989; and finally Cape Verde in 1990.

HIV prevalence in West Africa is lowest in Chad, Niger, Mali, Mauritania and highest in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria. Nigeria has the second largest



HIV prevalence in Africa after South Africa, although the infection rate (number of patients relative to the entire population) based upon Nigeria's estimated population is much lower, generally believed to be well under 7%, as opposed to South Africa's which is well into the double-digits (nearer 30%).

The main driver of infection in the region is commercial sex. In the Ghanaian capital Accra, for example, 80% of HIV infections in young men had been acquired from women who sell sex. In Niger, the adult national HIV prevalence was 1% in 2003, yet surveys of sex workers in different regions found a HIV infection rate of between 9 and 38%.

## Southern Africa

In the mid-1980s, HIV and AIDS were virtually unheard of in Southern Africa - it is now the worst-affected region in the world. There has been no sign of overall national decline in HIV/AIDS in any of the eleven countries: Angola, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, the two small states of Lesotho and Swaziland and the island of Madagascar. In its December 2005 report, UNAIDS reports that Zimbabwe has experienced a drop in infections; however, most independent observers find the confidence of UNAIDS in the Mugabe government's HIV figures to be misplaced, especially since infections have continued to increase in all other southern African countries (with the exception of a possible small drop in Botswana). Almost 30% of the global number of people living with HIV live in an area where only 2% of the world's population reside.

Nearly every country in the region has a national HIV prevalence level of at least 10%. The only exception to this rule is Angola, with a rate of less than 5%. This is not the result of a successful national response to the threat of AIDS but of the long-running Angolan Civil War (1975-2002).

Most HIV infections found in Southern Africa are HIV-1, the world's most common HIV infection, which predominates everywhere except West Africa, home to HIV-2. The first cases of HIV in the region were reported in Zimbabwe in 1985.

## Impacts of the AIDS Epidemic

Africa's HIV/AIDS epidemic has had important effects on society, economics and politics in the continent. (Source: Tony Barnett and Alan Whiteside, "AIDS in the 21st Century: Disease and Globalization," (MacMillan Palgrave 2003)). The economic impact of AIDS is noticed in slower economic growth, a distortion in spending, increased inflows of international assistance, and changing demographic structure of the population. There are also fears that a major long-term drop in adult life-expectancy will change the rationale for economic decision-making, contributing to lower savings and investment rates. However, most of these impacts remain theoretically possible rather than empirically observed. Economists in South Africa have developed the most sophisticated models for the impacts of the epidemic, and Nicoli Nattrass in "The Moral Economy of AIDS in South Africa" estimates that it is possible for the South African government to provide universal access to anti-retroviral therapy without overstretching the national budget. AIDS has intersected with drought, unemployment and other sources of stress to create what Alan Whiteside and Alex de Waal have called "new variant famine," characterized by the inability of poor, AIDS-affected households to cope with the demands of securing sufficient food during a time of food crisis.

The social impact of HIV/AIDS is most evident in the continent's orphans crisis. Approximately 12 million children in sub-Saharan Africa are estimated to be orphaned by AIDS. These children are overwhelmingly cared for by relatives including especially grandmothers, but the capacity of the extended family to cope



with this burden is stretched very thin and is, in places, collapsing. UNICEF and other international agencies consider a scaled-up response to Africa's orphan crisis a humanitarian priority. Practitioners and welfare specialists are sensitive to the need not to identify and isolate children orphaned by AIDS from other needy and vulnerable children, in part because of fear of stigmatizing them. Therefore, there is a search for effective social policies and programs that will provide necessary assistance and protection for all orphans and vulnerable children.

The political impact of the epidemic has been little studied. There has been much concern that high levels of HIV among soldiers and political leaders could lead to a "hollowing out" or even collapse of essential state structures, and an escalation of conflict. Laurie Garrett of the Council on Foreign Affairs is most publicly associated with this position. However, it is also clear that the epidemic has coincided with the entrenchment of democracy in much of Africa, and that governments and armies have learned to cope with the effects of the epidemic.

## Spawning new epidemics in Africa and Abroad

Because HIV has destroyed the immune systems of at least a quarter of the population in some areas, far more people are not only developing Tuberculosis but spreading it to otherwise healthy neighbours.

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# Bantu peoples

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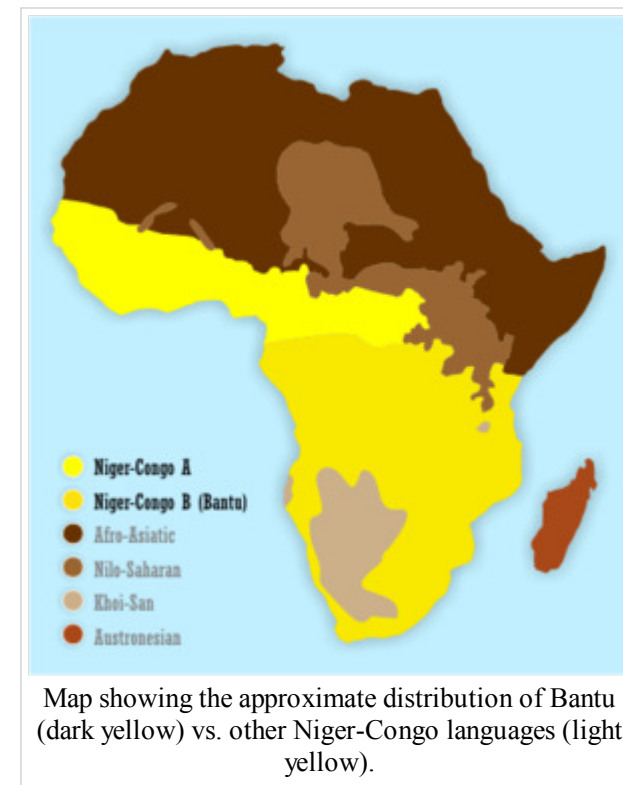
**Bantu** is the name of a large category of African languages. It also is used as a general label for over 400 ethnic groups in Sub-Saharan Africa, from Cameroon across Central Africa and Eastern Africa to Southern Africa. These peoples share a common language family sub-group, the Bantu languages, and broad ancestral culture, but Bantu languages as a whole are as diverse as Indo-European languages.

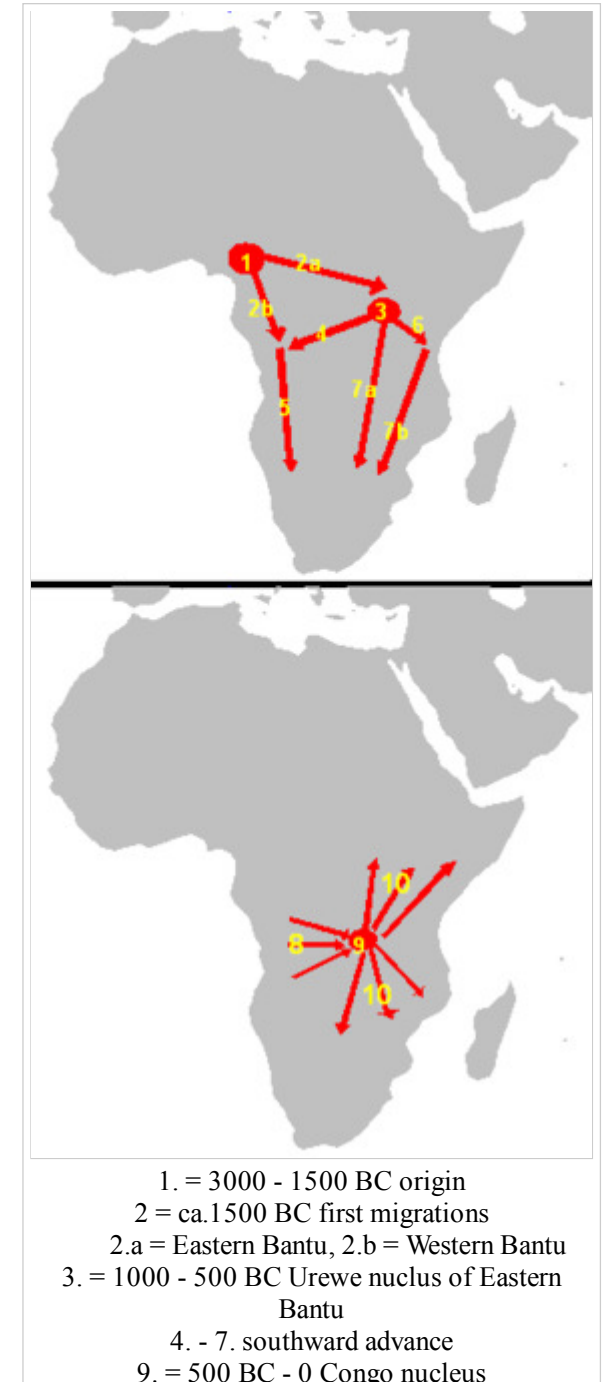
## Definition

"Bantu" means "people" in many Bantu languages, along with similar sounding cognates. Dr. Wilhelm Bleek first used the term "Bantu" in its current sense in his 1862 book *A Comparative Grammar of South African Languages*, in which he hypothesized that a vast number of languages located across central, southern, eastern, and western Africa shared so many characteristics that they must be part of a single language group. Perhaps the most salient was the organization of many parts of speech in concordance with a set of noun categories, by means of inflected prefixes. Thus in isiZulu, a paradigmatic case for Bleek, the noun root *-ntu* is found in nouns such as *umuntu* (person), *abantu* (people), *ubuntu* (quality of being human, humaneness), and verbs and adjectives describing the nouns agree with them: *Umuntu omkhulu uhamba ngokushesha* (The big person walks quickly), *Abantu abakhulu bahamba ngokushesha* (The big people walk quickly).

Bleek's basic thesis of linguistic affinity has been confirmed by numerous researchers using the comparative method.

## Origins







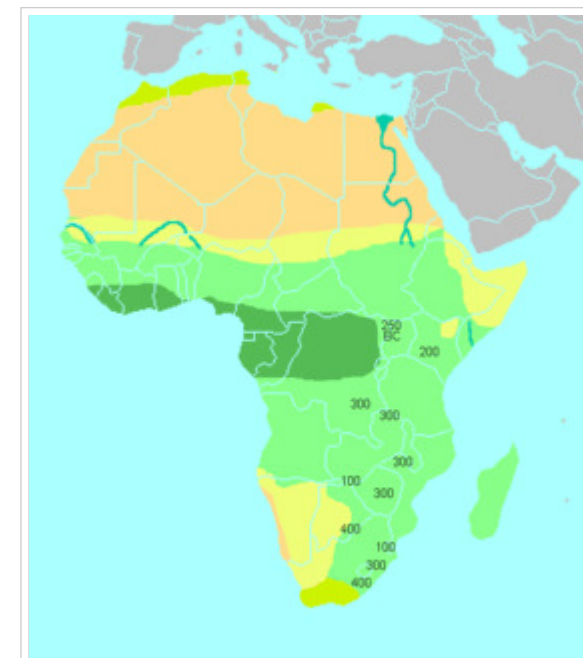
Current scholarly understanding places the ancestral proto-Bantu homeland near the southwestern modern boundary of Nigeria and Cameroon ca. 5000 years ago (3000 BC), and regards the Bantu languages as a branch of the Niger-Congo language family. This view represents a resolution of debates in the 1960s over competing theories advanced by Joseph Greenberg and Malcolm Guthrie, in favour of refinements of Greenberg's theory. Based on wide comparisons including non-Bantu languages, Greenberg argued that Proto-Bantu, the hypothetical ancestor of the Bantu languages, had strong ancestral affinities with a group of languages spoken in Southeastern Nigeria. He proposed that Bantu languages had spread east and south from there, to secondary centers of further dispersion, over hundreds of years.

Using a different comparative method focused more exclusively on relationships among Bantu languages, Guthrie argued for a single central African dispersal point spreading at a roughly equal rate in all directions. Subsequent research on loanwords for adaptations in agriculture and animal husbandry and on the wider Niger-Congo language family rendered that thesis untenable. In the 1990s Jan Vansina proposed a modification of Greenberg's ideas, in which dispersions from secondary and tertiary centers resembled Guthrie's central node idea, but from a number of regional centers rather than just one, creating linguistic clusters.

Before the expansion of farming and herding peoples, including those speaking Bantu languages, Africa south of the equator was populated by neolithic hunting and foraging peoples. Some of them were ancestral to modern Central African forest peoples (so-called Pygmies) who now speak Bantu languages. Others were proto-Khoisan-speaking peoples, whose few modern hunter-forager and linguistic descendants today occupy the arid regions around the Kalahari desert. Many more Khoekhoe and San descendants have a Coloured identity in South Africa and Namibia, speaking Afrikaans and English. The small Hadza and Sandawe-speaking populations in Tanzania, whose languages are proposed by many to have a distant relationship to Khoekhoe and San languages (although the hypothesis that the Khoisan languages are a single family is disputed by many, and the name is simply used for convenience), comprise the other modern hunter-forager remnant in Africa. Over a period of many centuries, most hunting-foraging peoples were displaced and absorbed by incoming Bantu-speaking communities, as well as by Ubangian, Nilotic and Central Sudanic language-speakers in North Central and Eastern Africa. While earliest archaeological evidence of farming and herding in today's Bantu language areas often is presumed to reflect spread of Bantu-speaking communities, it need not always do so.

## Bantu expansion

The Bantu expansion was a millennia-long series of physical migrations, a diffusion of language and knowledge out into and in from neighboring populations, and a creation of new societal groups involving inter-marriage among communities and small groups moving to communities and small groups moving to new areas. Bantu-speakers developed novel methods of agriculture and metalworking which allowed people to colonize new areas with widely varying ecologies in greater densities than hunting and foraging permitted. Meanwhile in Eastern and Southern Africa Bantu-speakers adopted livestock husbandry from other peoples they encountered, and in turn passed it to hunter-foragers, so that herding reached the far south several centuries before Bantu-speaking migrants did. Archaeological, linguistic and genetic evidence all support the idea that the Bantu expansion was one of the most significant human migrations and cultural



Early iron age findings in eastern and southern Africa





transformations within the past few thousand years.

It is unclear when exactly the spread of Bantu-speakers began from their core area as hypothesized ca. 5000 years ago. By 3500 years ago (1500 B.C.) in the west, Bantu-speaking communities had reached the great Central African rainforest, and by 2500 year ago (500 B.C.) pioneering groups had emerged into the savannahs to the south, in what are now the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Zambia. Another stream of migration, moving east, by 3000 years ago (1000 B.C.) was creating a major new population centre near the Great Lakes of East Africa, where a rich environment supported a dense population. Movements by small groups to the southeast from the Great Lakes region were more rapid, with initial settlements widely dispersed near the coast and near rivers, due to comparatively harsh farming conditions in areas further from water. Pioneering groups had reached modern KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa by A.D. 300 along the coast, and the modern Northern Province (encompassed within the former province of the Transvaal) by A.D. 500.

Between the 13th and 15th centuries relatively powerful Bantu-speaking states on a scale larger than local chiefdoms began to emerge, in the Great Lakes region, in the savannah south of the Central African rainforest, and on the Zambezi river where the Monomatapa kings built the famous Great Zimbabwe complex. Such processes of state-formation occurred with increasing frequency from the 16th century onward. They were probably due to denser population, which led to more specialized divisions of labor, including military power, while making emigration more difficult, to increased trade among African communities and with European, Swahili and Arab traders on the coasts, to technological developments in economic activity, and to new techniques in the political-spiritual ritualization of royalty as the source of national strength and health.

## The use of the term "Bantu" in South Africa

In the 1920s relatively liberal white South Africans, missionaries and the small black intelligentsia began to use the term "Bantu" in preference to "Native" and more derogatory terms (such as "Kaffir") to refer collectively to Bantu-speaking South Africans. After World War II, the racist National Party governments adopted that usage officially, while the growing African nationalist movement and its liberal white allies turned to the term "African" instead, so that "Bantu" became identified with the policies of apartheid. By the 1970s this so discredited "Bantu" as an ethno-racial designation that the apartheid government switched to the term "Black" in its official racial categorizations, restricting it to Bantu-speaking Africans, at about the same time that the Black Consciousness Movement led by Steve Biko and others were defining "Black" to mean all racially oppressed South Africans (Africans, Coloureds and Indians).

Examples of South African usages of "Bantu" include:

1. One of South Africa's politicians of recent times, General Bantubonke Harrington Holomisa (Bantubonke is a compound noun meaning "all the people"), is known as Bantu Holomisa.
2. The South African apartheid governments originally gave the name "bantustans" to the eleven rural reserve areas intended for a spurious, *ersatz* independence to deny Africans South African citizenship. "Bantustan" originally reflected an analogy to the various ethnic "-stans" of Western and Central Asia. Again association with apartheid discredited the term, and the South African government shifted to the politically appealing but historically deceptive term "ethnic homelands". Meanwhile the anti-apartheid movement persisted in calling the areas bantustans, to drive home their political illegitimacy.
3. The abstract noun *ubuntu*, humanity or humaneness, is derived regularly from the Nguni noun stem *-ntu* in isiXhosa, isiZulu and siNdebele. In siSwati the



stem is *-ntfu* and the noun is *buntfu*.

4. In the Sotho-Tswana languages of southern Africa, *batho* is the cognate term to Nguni *abantu*, illustrating that such cognates need not actually look like the *-ntu* root exactly. The early African National Congress of South Africa had a newspaper called *Abantu-Batho* from 1912-1933, which carried columns in English, isiZulu, Sesotho, and isiXhosa.

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# Congo River

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

The **Congo River** (for a time known as **Zaire River**) is the largest river in Western Central Africa. Its overall length of 4,700 km (2,922 miles) makes it the second longest in Africa (after the Nile). The river and its tributaries flow through the second largest rain forest area in the world, second only to the Amazon Rainforest in South America. The river also has the second-largest flow in the world, behind the Amazon, and the second-largest watershed of any river, again trailing the Amazon; its watershed is slightly larger than that of the Mississippi River. Because large sections of the river basin lie above and below the equator, its flow is stable, as there is always at least one river experiencing a rainy season. The Congo gets its name from the ancient Kingdom of Kongo which inhabited the lands at the mouth of the river. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo, both countries lying along the river's banks, are named after it. Between 1971 and 1997 the government of then- Zaire called it the **Zaire River**.

The sources of the Congo are in the highlands and mountains of the East African Rift, as well as Lake Tanganyika and Lake Mweru, which feed the Lualaba River, which then becomes the Congo below Boyoma Falls. The Chambeshi River in Zambia is generally taken as the source of the Congo in line with the accepted practice worldwide of using the longest tributary, as with the Nile River.

## Congo River



Congo River near Maluku

<b>Mouth</b>	Atlantic Ocean
<b>Basin countries</b>	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic, Republic of the Congo, Angola, Zambia, Tanzania
<b>Length</b>	4,700 km (2,922 mi)
<b>Avg. discharge</b>	41,800 m <sup>3</sup> /s (1,476,376 ft <sup>3</sup> /s)
<b>Basin area</b>	3,680,000 km <sup>2</sup> (1,420,848 mi <sup>2</sup> )



The river running through Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Congo flows generally west from Kisangani just below the falls, then gradually bends southwest, passing by Mbandaka, joining with the Ubangi River, and running into the Pool Malebo (Stanley Pool). Kinshasa (formerly Léopoldville) and Brazzaville are on opposite sides of the river at the Pool, where the river narrows and falls through a number of cataracts in deep canyons (collectively known as the Livingstone Falls), running by Matadi and Boma, and into the sea at the small town of Muanda.

The Congo River Basin is one of the distinct physiographic sections of the larger Mid-African province, which in turn is part of the larger African massive physiographic division.

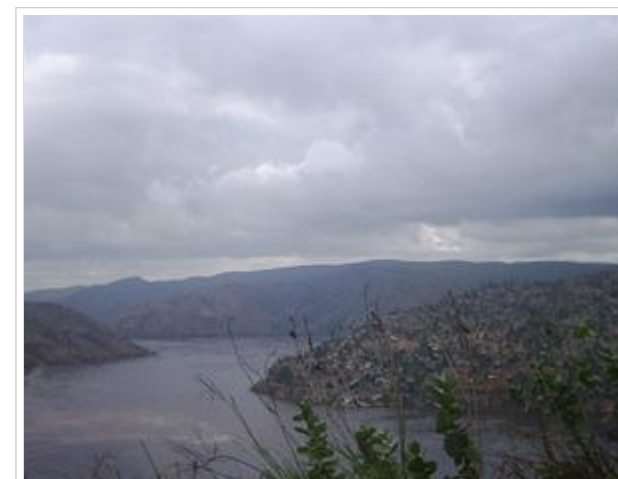
## Economic importance

Although the Livingstone Falls prevent access from the sea, nearly the entire Congo is readily navigable in sections, especially between Kinshasa and Kisangani. Railways now bypass the three major falls, and much of the trade of central Africa passes along the river, including copper, palm oil (as kernels), sugar, coffee, and cotton. The river is also potentially valuable for hydroelectric power, and the Inga Dams below Pool

Malebo are first to exploit the river.

In February 2005, South Africa's state-owned power company, Eskom, announced a proposal to increase the capacity of the Inga dramatically through improvements and the construction of a new hydroelectric dam. The project would bring the maximum output of the facility to 40 GW, twice that of China's Three Gorges Dam.

## Geological history



The Congo river at Matadi



Near the Livingstone Falls

In the Mesozoic before continental drift opened the South Atlantic Ocean, the Congo was the upper part of a river roughly 12,000 km (7,500 miles) long which flowed west across the parts of Gondwanaland which are now Africa and South America: see Longest rivers.

## Tributaries

Sorted in order from the mouth heading upstream.

- Inkisi
  - Nzadi
  - Nsele (south side of Pool Malebo)
  - Bombo
  - Kasai (between Fimi and Congo, known as Kwa)
  - Fimi
  - Lukenie
- 
- Kwango
  - Sankuru
  - Likouala
  - Sangha
  - Ubangi
    - Giri
    - Uele
      - Mbomou
  - Luvua
    - Luapula

## Literature

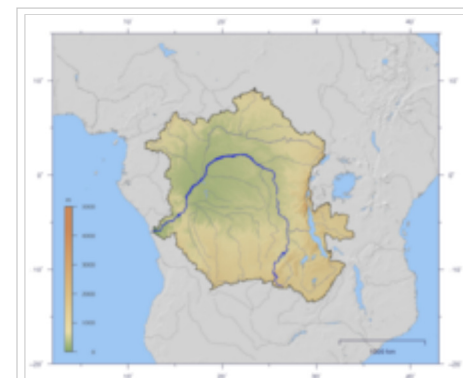
Although not explicitly cited, the Congo River is the location of Joseph Conrad's novel "Heart of Darkness" (published: 1902).

The Congo river is featured in a chapter of Michael Crichton's novel "Congo" (published in 1980), as well as the feature film of the same name, though it is not mentioned by name in the film.

The Congo is also mentioned in Langston Hughes' poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers"



Course and Watershed of the Congo River with countries marked



Course and Watershed of the Congo River with topography shading.



Retrieved from " [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo\\_River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_River)"

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# Culture of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

The **culture of the Democratic Republic of the Congo** reflects the diversity of its hundreds of ethnic groups and their differing ways of life throughout the country—from the mouth of the River Congo on the coast, upriver through the rainforest and savanna in its centre, to the more densely populated mountains in the far east. Since the late 19th century, traditional ways of life have undergone changes brought about by colonialism, the struggle for independence, the stagnation of the Mobutu era, and most recently, the First and Second Congo Wars. Despite these pressures, the customs and cultures of the Congo have retained much of their individuality. The country's 60 million inhabitants are mainly rural. The 30 percent who live in urban areas have been the most open to Western influences.

## People, language and background

Like many African countries, the borders were drawn up by colonial powers, and bore little relation to the actual spread of ethno-linguistic groups. There are around 250 languages spoken in the country, with perhaps a similar amount of ethnic groups. Broadly speaking, there are four main population groups:

- Pygmies, the earliest inhabitants of the Congo, are generally hunter-gatherers who live in the forests. Expert in the ways of the forest, where they have lived for thousands of years, they live by trading meat hunted in the forest with their taller, farming neighbors in exchange for agricultural products. Increasingly, they are becoming absorbed into non-pygmy society, and adopting their languages and customs.
- Bantus arrived in the Congo in several waves from 2000 BC to 500 AD, in most part from the area in what is now southern Nigeria. They are by far the largest group, and the majority live as farmers. They are present in almost every part of the country, and their languages make up three of the five officially-recognized languages. These three languages are Kikongo, Lingala, and Tshiluba. Kikongo is spoken by the Kongo people in the far west of the country, both on the coast and inland, and was promoted by the Belgian colonial administration. Elements of Kikongo have survived amongst the descendants of slaves in the Americas—for instance, the language of the Gullah people of South Carolina contains elements of Kikongo. Lingala, spoken in the capital Kinshasa, is increasingly understood throughout the country, as the lingua franca of trade, spoken along the vast Congo river and its many tributaries. Lingala's status as the language of the national army, as well its use in the lyrics of popular Congolese music, has encouraged its adoption, and it is now the most prominent language in the country. Tshiluba (also known as Chiluba and Luba-Kasai) is spoken in the southeastern Kasai region.
- East Africans brought in the fourth of the official languages, Kingwana—a Congolese dialect of Swahili. Note that the fifth language, French, is the official language of government, a result of Congo's colonial relationship with Belgium. The East Africans are related to the Bantus mentioned above, but tend to differ in their way of life, in that they practice herding as well as farming. They came from the various countries to the east of Congo: Rwanda,



Map of the major Bantu languages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo



Uganda, Burundi and Tanzania, bringing with them many of the ethnic rivalries that have inflamed recent conflicts.

- Hamites, who originally come from Darfur in south part Sudan and Ethiopia, are pastoral cattle raisers. They include the Tutsi, possibly the tallest people in the world. The Hamites also migrated into the Rwanda and Burundi around the same time. Often mixing with the Eastern Africans, they are found in the east and north east of the country, and generally have a more martial culture than other Congolese groups.

The above descriptions are by necessity simplified. Many Congolese are multilingual, and the language used depends on the context. For instance, a government official might use French to set a tone of formality and authority with another official, use Lingala when buying goods at a market, and the local language when in his home village. English is also spoken, especially in the east.

Mixed marriages between ethnic groups are common, particularly in urban areas where many different groups live side by side. Europeans appear in small numbers throughout the country, as missionaries in the countryside, and as businessmen and traders in the cities. Also acting as merchants are small numbers of Lebanese and Pakistanis.

More information on the various peoples in Congo can be found in the Early Congolese History article.

## Religions and beliefs

The main religions in the DRC are:

- Indigenous traditional beliefs: 11.5%
- Roman Catholic Christianity: 50%
- Protestant Christianity: 20%
- Indigenous Christianity: 13.5%, nearly all of whom (13%) are followers of Kimbanguism.
- Other Christian denominations: 1%
- Islam: 1.5%

There are small communities of Jews and Hindus who work in commercial urban areas. Atheism is very rare.

### Indigenous traditional beliefs

Though only 11.5 per cent of Congolese *exclusively* follow indigenous beliefs, these traditional belief systems are often intermingled with forms of Christianity, and are familiar to the majority of Congolese. Throughout the DRC the beliefs take on a number of forms, but they have a number of things in common:

- A creator spirit is thought to be sovereign of the spirit world, but this god is rarely the direct cause of events. In many Congolese languages, the name of the creator god derives from the word *father* or *maker*. Some groups regard the creator as being omnipresent, whilst others believe the god lives in the sky. For most believers in indigenous religions, contact with the creator god is made via ancestor spirits. A smaller number of groups believe that



Branhamist worshippers in Kinshasa



individuals can have direct contact.

- A belief in an essential life-force which animates the body, The force is thought to leave the body upon death and become an ancestor spirit. These spirits continue to be active in the lives of living relatives—by either punishing or rewarding them. In a similar way to saints in the Catholic tradition, some long-dead ancestors (for instance, great hunters or religious leaders) are venerated by people outside their former family.
- Nature spirits, worshiped mainly in forested regions, are often the embodiment of particular locations such as whirlpools, springs and mountains. The afterlife is believed to exist underground, especially under lakes, where ghostly replicas of Congolese villages reside.
- Fetishes—supernaturally empowered objects which can help or hinder.
- Diviners, witches, dream interpreters and healers act as conduits for supernatural forces.
- Ceremonies and collective prayers—to ancestors, nature spirits and the creator god—are generally performed at particular locations such as sacred trees, grottoes or crossroads. These ceremonies usually take place at a specific time of day. The location and times vary according to the ethnic group.

Belief in Witchcraft is common, and sometimes intersects with the more fundamentalist and evangelical versions of Christianity. In recent years, these beliefs have gained adherents in urban areas, whereas before they were mainly confined to the countryside. The increasing beliefs in witches and sorcery have tended to mirror the social decay caused by war and poverty. Many of the street children that roam the Congo's cities have been cast out of their families after being denounced as witches. These homeless 'witch children' often live in cemeteries and only come out at night, and follow occult practices. See BBC News article on Kinshasa's street children. For comparison, see article on beliefs of Miami street children.

## Catholic and Protestant Christianity

Christianity has a long history in Congo, dating back to 1484, when the Portuguese arrived and convinced the king and entourage of the Kongo people to convert. In 1506 a Portuguese-supported candidate for kingship, Alfonso I of Kongo won the throne. Alfonso (the Kongo royal family had begun to take on Portuguese names), established relations with the Vatican. More widespread conversion occurred during the Belgian colonial era. Christianity varies in its forms, and is in some ways surprisingly similar to native beliefs.

During the colonial period, a European-style Christianity was at first promoted by the authorities. Native Congolese generally attended different churches or services than whites. If they worshiped under the same roof, the native Congolese sat on benches at the back, while the whites sat in chairs at the front. Towards the end of the colonial era, more African elements were incorporated into Christianity, including songs and dances which were formerly condemned as pagan. Eventually, even native fables and myths were appropriated and merged into Congolese Christianity, in a similar process to that which occurred with Christianity in Europe.

Recent developments include the increasing popularity of the "Gospel of Prosperity" – a form of Christianity where the emphasis is on wealth acquisition and born-again Christianity. Adherents are led to believe that instant wealth and magical prosperity will result from giving tithes to their charismatic preacher. The leaders often draw on the techniques of American televangelists, and the message is appealing to those living in extreme poverty.



A Congolese Christian

## Kimbanguism and Indigenous Christianity



In the first half on the 20th century, prophetic movements sprang up. Their nature was both anti-colonial and Christian, and led to a rigorous crackdown by the authorities.

Simon Kimbangu was the prophet of largest of these movements. He was born in a village near Kinshasa, raised and educated by a Protestant Christian mission and trained to become a priest. In April 1921, at the age of 39, he reportedly had a religious vision of Jesus Christ, who called on him to reconvert his people and dedicate his life to Christ. Kimbangu chose to try to ignore the vision, and fled to Kinshasa where he abandoned his life as a priest and took to menial work. More visions came, and eventually he heeded the calling and returned to his home village and started to devote his life to Christ. Soon after, he is reported to have healed a sick woman by laying his hands on her. Dozens of apparent miracles were subsequently performed by Kimbangu, and he gained followers from surrounding villages and towns. The official Catholic organizations protested to the authorities, and the Protestant church abandoned him. The economic effects of Kimbangu's ministry were being felt, with thousands of Congolese leaving their work to listen to Kimbangu speak. In June the Belgians arrested him for inciting revolution and civil disobedience. Four months later he was sentenced to death. After an international outcry, Albert I of Belgium commuted to the sentence to life imprisonment. He died 30 years later in prison, in 1951.

Colonial authorities assumed his movement would wither after his imprisonment and death, but the church continued to flourish underground, and was an effective weapon in the fight against colonialism. In the post-colonial era, its record has been more mixed. Instead of banning the church, Mobutu used a far more effective method of neutralizing it: namely co-opting the church and giving it an official status. Kimbanguism has now spread across the country, and now has branches in nine of the surrounding countries, making it the most popular "native" form of Christianity in Africa. Followers do not smoke, drink alcohol and abhor violence. Monogamy is practiced.

## Religion today

Article 22 of the constitution allows for religious freedom. These rights are generally respected by the government . Religious tension exists in some areas because of the link between prophetic groups and paramilitary organizations. In the turbulent eastern region, where the Second Congo War still simmers, some guerrilla groups have a major religious element, believing for instance that they are able to turn enemy bullets into water by wearing certain fetishes.

## Food and drink



Less than 2% of land is cultivated, and most of this is used for subsistence farming. People gather wild fruit, mushrooms, honey etc; hunt (see bushmeat); and fish. They will often sell these crops at markets, or by the roadside. Cattle breeding and the development of large-scale agricultural businesses has been hindered by the recent war and the poor quality of the road system.

Congo's farmland is the source of a wide variety of crops. These include maize, rice, cassava (manioc), sweet potatoes, yam, taro, plantain, tomatoes, pumpkin and varieties of peas and nuts. These foods are eaten throughout the country, but there are also regional dishes. The most important crops for export are coffee and palm oil.



Woman carrying bananas

Congolese meals often consist of a starchy ingredient, along with vegetables and meat in the form of a stew. The starch can come in the form of a paste or mash made of cassava and/or corn flour, called *fufu* or *ugali*. When eaten, the fufu is rolled into golf ball-sized balls and dipped into the spicy stew—often an indentation is made with the thumb in order to bring up a thimbleful of sauce. A type of fermented bread, *kwanga*, made from cassava, is commercially produced throughout the country. *Lituma* is a popular plantain dish made from mashed plantains which are formed into balls and baked. Sweet potatoes are prepared in a similar way, and mixed with roasted peanuts in some parts of the country. Rice is often mixed with beans. To accompany these starchy ingredients, green vegetables such as cassava leaves, *tshitekutaku* (a spinach-like plant) and okra are often added. Mushrooms, especially prized amongst the Luba people, are often

seen as a substitute for meat in times of shortage. Though actual vegetarianism is unknown, most meals are eaten without meat due to its high price.

Fish are plentiful along the River Congo, its tributaries, and various lakes; and are baked, boiled or fried for immediate consumption; or smoked or salted when preserved. Markets often sell ready-to-eat peppered fish baked in banana leaves. Goat is the most widely consumed meat. *Mwambe* is a common way of cooking chicken with peanut sauce. Edible insects such as grasshoppers and caterpillars are eaten; they tend to have a nutty flavour.

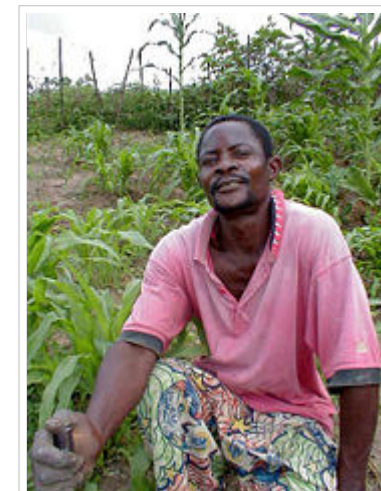
Sauces to mix with the ingredients above can be made with tomatoes, onions, and the local aromatic herbs. Vegetable oil, together with salt, hot red chile pepper and sweet green pepper are used to impart extra flavour. These spices are less frequently used in the far south.

### ***Nganda* restaurants**

Kinshasa's *nganda* restaurants, with a greater mix of ethnicities, are ethnic restaurants serving food from specific parts of the country, as well as Western imports such as bread and beer. Often owned by unmarried women, the *nganda* occupy a middle ground between bars and restaurants. Three typical types of *nganda* restaurants are:

- Riverside *nganda* serve baked fish served with cooked plantains: recipes from up river.
- Kongo *nganda* serve fish dishes with a vegetable sauce, together with *kwanga* mentioned above. These dishes originate downriver from Kinshasa.

\* **Kasai *nganda* serve goat meat with rice and green vegetables. They also use rabbit as the grand dessert at a special occasion.**



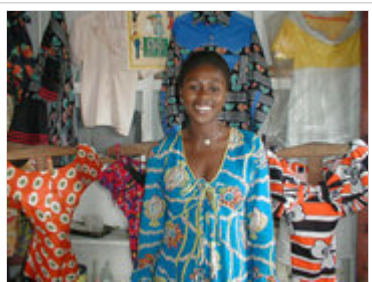
Congolese farmer with his crops





*Nganda* restaurants are often geared not only to specific regions, but also different classes—from migrant menial workers and miners, to professionals and government officials.

## Dress and fashion



Congolese woman with fashion designs

Older members of more remote Congolese communities can remember when Congolese used to dress in clothes made of raffia and bark. Today, such clothing is mostly seen only in ceremonial or ritual contexts. Colonialism brought in Western attire. During the Mobutu era, a kind of Mao suit called the *abacost* (derived from *à bas le costume* - "down with the suit") was promoted, as part of the *Authenticity* campaign (whose aim was to move away from Western values). Ties and Western-style jackets were even banned. Since the *abacost* was relatively expensive, men took to wearing West African style patterned shirts. Ironically, the cloth used for these "authentic" shirts is often imported from the Netherlands and the United States.



Two men in Kinshasa. The younger man's clothing recalls Billism

For women, the typical clothing today is a wrap made of printed cloth, together with a kerchief to cover the hair. Jewelry is generally kept to a minimum, apart from on special occasions. For men, patterned shirts over trousers, or western-style suits predominate. In urban areas, and amongst Congolese abroad, there is often an emphasis on sharply dressed elegance—this is intricately connected to the subculture of soukous and rumba music. Young Congolese in the cities also look towards African-American Hip hop fashion for inspiration. Several Congolese fashion designers have become successful in Paris.

## Music

### Zairese/Congolese writers

- Léonie Abo, (1945–)
- Raïs Neza Boneza (1979–)
- Amba Bongo
- Lima-Baleka Bosekilolo
- Maguy Kabamba (1960–)
- Christine Kalonji
- V.Y. Mudimbe (1941–)
- Kavidu Wivine N'Landu
- Clémentine Nzuji (1944–)
- Sony Labou Tansi (1947–1995)





- Kabika Tshilolo
- Frederick Kambemba Yamusangie
- Lye M Yoka

## Visual art

The Congo is also known for his art. Traditional art includes masks and wooden statues. Notable contemporary artists are Chéri Samba or Bodys Isek Kingelez.

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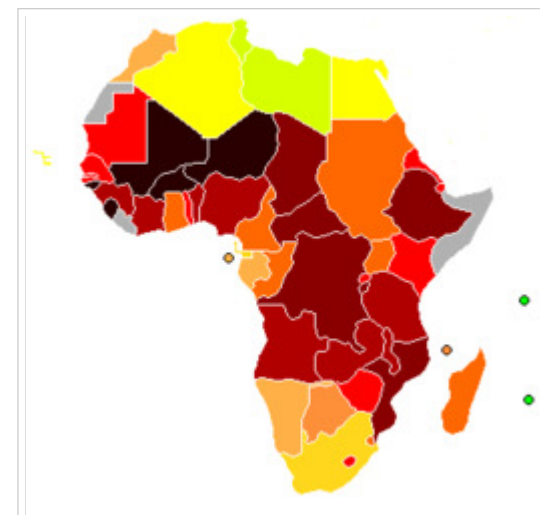
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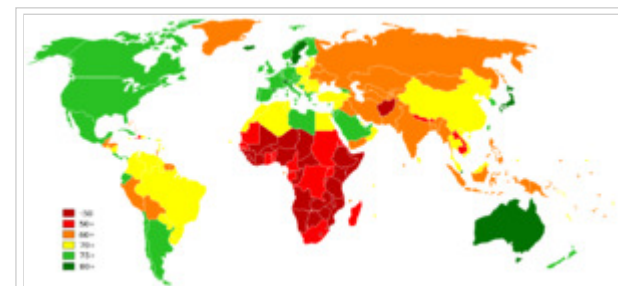
# Demographics of Africa

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography



Map of Africa indicating Human Development Index (2004).

above 0.950	0.700-0.749	0.450-0.499
0.900-0.949	0.650-0.699	0.400-0.449
0.850-0.899	0.600-0.649	0.350-0.399
0.800-0.849	0.550-0.599	0.300-0.349
0.750-0.799	0.500-0.549	under 0.300
		n/a



Life expectancy is below 50 years in most African countries, and below 60 years in all countries except for the Mediterranean North.



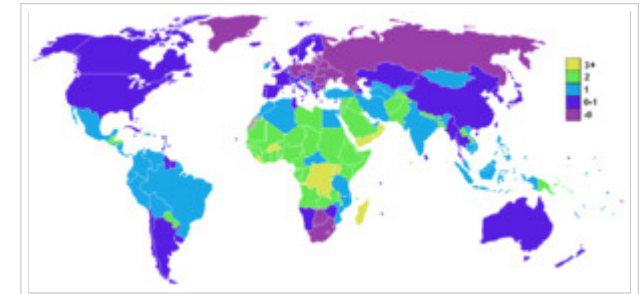
The **population of Africa** has grown exponentially over the past century, and consequently shows a large youth bulge, further reinforced by a low life expectancy of below 50 years in most African countries.

The total population of Africa is estimated at 922 million (as of 2005). It has doubled over the past 28 years, and has quadrupled over the past 55 years (UN estimates). Population is projected to reach one billion before 2010. The most populous African country is Nigeria with 133 million (as of 2006), followed by Egypt (79 million) and Ethiopia (77 million).

Liberia, Burundi, Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar and Burkina Faso have annual population growth rates above 3%.

34 out of 53 African countries are counted among the world's "Least Developed Countries".

## Sub-Saharan Africa



Most African countries have annual population growth rates above 2%.



More than 40% of the population of are below 15 years in most sub-Saharan countries, as well as the Sudan but with the exception of South Africa,, in Uganda as many as 50% (as compared to 20% in the USA). Infant mortality is high, with as many as 190 deaths per 1,000 live births in Angola, and between 25% and 50% malnourished in Tanzania, Kenya, Sudan, Mozambique, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Angola and other countries.

HIV/AIDS is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa, with some 11% of adult population infected and an estimated 2 million deaths caused by AIDS in 2005.

## Ethnicity

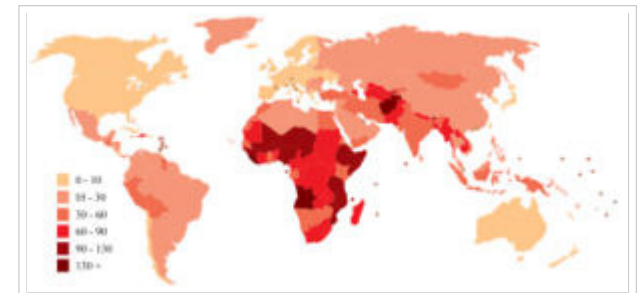
Speakers of Bantu languages (part of the Niger-Congo family) are the majority in southern, central and east Africa proper. But there are also several Nilotic groups in East Africa, and a few remaining indigenous Khoisan ('San' or 'Bushmen') and Pygmy peoples in southern and central Africa, respectively. Bantu-speaking Africans also predominate in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and are found in parts of southern Cameroon and southern Somalia. In the Kalahari Desert of Southern Africa, the distinct people known as the Bushmen (also "San", closely related to, but distinct from "Hottentots") have long been present. The San are physically distinct from other Africans and are the indigenous people of southern Africa. Pygmies are the pre-Bantu indigenous peoples of central Africa.

South Africa has the largest populations of whites, Indians and Coloured in Africa. The term "Coloured" is used to describe persons of mixed race in South Africa and Namibia. People of European descent in South Africa include the Afrikaner and a sizeable populations of Anglo-Africans and Portuguese Africans. Madagascar's population is predominantly of mixed Austronesian (Pacific Islander) and African origin. The area of southern Sudan is inhabited by Nilotic people, the tallest and blackest people in the world.

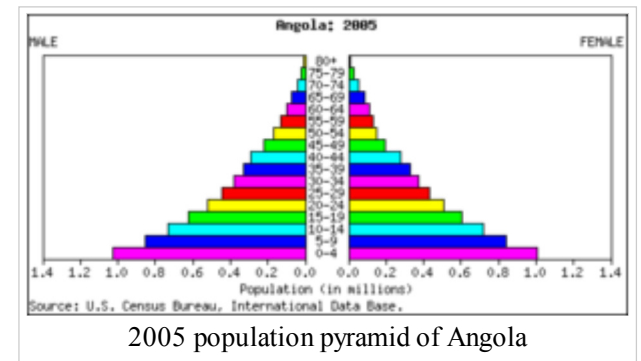
List of major languages of Sub-Saharan Africa by region, family and total number of native speakers in millions)

### East Africa

- Afro-Asiatic
  - Amharic: 35-42
  - Somali: 15
  - Oromo: 30-35
- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu:
  - Swahili: 5-10
  - Chichewa: 9



The infant mortality rate in Africa is at 9% and child mortality under 5 years at 15%.



2005 population pyramid of Angola



- Gikuyu (Kenya): 5
- Luhya: 4

### West Africa

- Niger-Congo
  - Volta-Congo
    - Benue-Congo
      - Yoruba: 25
      - Ibibio (Nigeria): 8-12
      - Igbo (Nigeria): 10-16
    - Akan (Ghana): 9
    - More: 5
  - Fula-Wolof
    - Fula (West Africa): 10-16
    - Wolof: 3
- Afro-Asiatic
  - Hausa: 24
- Nilo-Saharan
  - Kanuri: 4

### Southern Africa

- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu
  - Zulu: 10
  - Xhosa: 8
  - Shona: 7
  - Sotho: 5
  - Tswana: 4
  - Umbundu (Angola): 4
  - Northern Sotho: 4
- Afrikaans: 6-7

### Central Africa

- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu
  - Kinyarwanda (Rwanda) 7
  - Kongo: 7





- Tshiluba: 6
- Kirundi: 5

## North Africa

The peoples of North Africa comprise two main groups; Berber and Arabic-speaking peoples in the west, and Egyptians in the east. The Arabs who arrived in the seventh century introduced the Arabic language and Islam to North Africa. The Semitic Phoenicians, the European Greeks, Romans, Vandals and Pied-noir settled in North Africa as well. Berbers still make up the majority in Morocco, while they are a significant minority within Algeria. They are also present in Tunisia and Libya. The Tuareg and other often-nomadic peoples are the principal inhabitants of the Saharan interior of North Africa. Nubians are a Nilo-Saharan-speaking group (though many also speak Arabic), who developed an ancient civilisation in northeast Africa.

During the past century or so, small but economically important colonies of Lebanese, Indians and Chinese have also developed in the larger coastal cities of West and East Africa, respectively.

Some Ethiopian and Eritrean groups (like the Amhara and Tigrayans, collectively known as " Habesha") speak Semitic languages. The Oromo and Somali peoples speak Cushitic languages, but some Somali clans trace their founding to legendary Arab founders. Sudan and Mauritania are divided between a mostly Arabized north and a native African south (although the "Arabs" of Sudan clearly have a predominantly native African ancestry themselves). Some areas of East Africa, particularly the island of Zanzibar and the Kenyan island of Lamu, received Arab Muslim and Southwest Asian settlers and merchants throughout the Middle Ages and in antiquity.

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# Demographics of South Africa

## 2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

South Africa has an uncommon demographic profile, marked by a highly heterogeneous population base, social issues brought on by the legacy of apartheid, divisions within ethnic groups, HIV/AIDS and emigration. Within the *Rainbow Nation* demography consequently plays a prominent role in public policy.

Blacks comprise of about 79.7% (2007 est.) of the population and represent different ethnic groups, including Zulu, Xhosa, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho and Swazi, as well as recent immigrants from other parts of Africa (particularly Zimbabwe and Nigeria). Whites comprise of 9.1% (2007 est), comprising of the descendants of Dutch, French, English, and German settlers who began arriving at the Cape from the late 17th century, immigrants from Europe who arrived in South Africa in the twentieth century, and Portuguese who left the former Portuguese colonies of southern Africa (Angola and Mozambique) after their independence in the mid-70s. Coloureds (8.8%, 2007 est) are mixed-race people primarily descended from the earliest settlers, their slaves, and the indigenous peoples. The remaining 2.4% are categorised as 'Indian/Asian', including the descendants of Indian indentured sugar estate workers and traders who came to South Africa in the mid-19th (particularly around Natal), as well as a small Chinese population of approximately 100,000 people.

South Africa has relatively high rates of emigration. According to OECD data, countries with a large number of South African immigrants (irrespective of naturalisation) include Great Britain (141,405, 2001 est), Australia (79,425, 2001 est), United States (68,290 est, 2000 est), Canada (37680, 2001 est) and New Zealand (26,061, 2001 est). Smaller South African communities are in Portugal, Netherlands, Greece and Ireland .

## Statistics

**Population:** 44,819,778 (2001) **Population:** 47,850,700 ( 2007 est.)

**Age structure:** (2001)

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## Life in South Africa

Censorship

Culture

**Demographics**

Politics

Education

Economy

Arts and entertainment

Public Holidays

Languages

Human rights

Poverty

Social issues

Religion

Sports

Social structure

Standard of living



0-14 years: 32.1% (male 7,17 million/female 7,21 million)  
 15-64 years: 63% (male 13,49 million/female 14,74 million)  
 65 years and over: 4.9% (male 0,8 million/female 1,39 million)

#### **Population growth rate:**

1.06% (2006 est.)  
 -0.46% (2007 est.)

#### **Birth rate:**

20.63 births/1,000 population (2001)  
 17.94 births/1,000 population (2007 est.)

#### **Death rate:**

12.6 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)  
 22.4 deaths/1,000 population (2007 est.)

#### **Deaths**

567,488 (2004)  
 599,000 (2006 est.)

#### **Net migration rate:**

-1.56 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2002 est.)  
 -0.08 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2007 est.)

*note:* there is an increasing flow of Zimbabweans into South Africa and Botswana in search of better economic opportunities.

#### **Sex ratio:**

*at birth:* 1.02 male(s)/female  
*under 15 years:* 1.01 male(s)/female  
*15-64 years:* 0.95 male(s)/female  
*65 years and over:* 0.63 male(s)/female

*total population:* 0.95 male(s)/female (2006 est.)

**Infant mortality rate:**

*total:* 42.5 deaths/1,000 live births

*male:* 47.4 deaths/1,000 live births

*female:* 37.4 deaths/1,000 live births (2003)

**Life expectancy at birth:**

*total population:* 50.7 years

*male:* 49.0 years

*female:* 52.5 years (2006 est.)

**Total fertility rate:**

2.90 children born/woman (2001 est.)

2.20 children born/woman (2006 est.)

2.16 children born/woman (2007 est.)

**HIV/AIDS:**

Prevalence rate among those aged 2 years and older: 10.8% (2005)

people living with HIV/AIDS: 5,2 million (2006 est.)

deaths due to AIDS: 336,000 (2006 MRC est.)

deaths due to AIDS: 345,640 (ASSA2003 model's estimate for 2006)

**Nationality:**

*noun:* South African(s)

*adjective:* South African

**Ethnic groups:**

black 79.5%, white 9.2%, Coloured 8.9%, Asian 2.5% (2006 est.)



## Religions:

Zion Christian 11.1%, Pentecostal/Charismatic 8.2%, Catholic 7.1%, Methodist 6.8%, Dutch Reformed 6.7%, Anglican 3.8%, other Christian 36%, Islam 1.5%, Hinduism 1.2%, Judaism 0.3%, other 2%, unspecified 1.4%, none 14.9% (2001 census)

## Languages:

11 official languages, including Afrikaans, English, Southern Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sesotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu. Other spoken languages include San dialects, Portuguese, German, Hindi, Telugu, Gujarati and also Tamil.

## Literacy:

*definition:* Age 15 and over, can read and write

*total population:* 86.4%

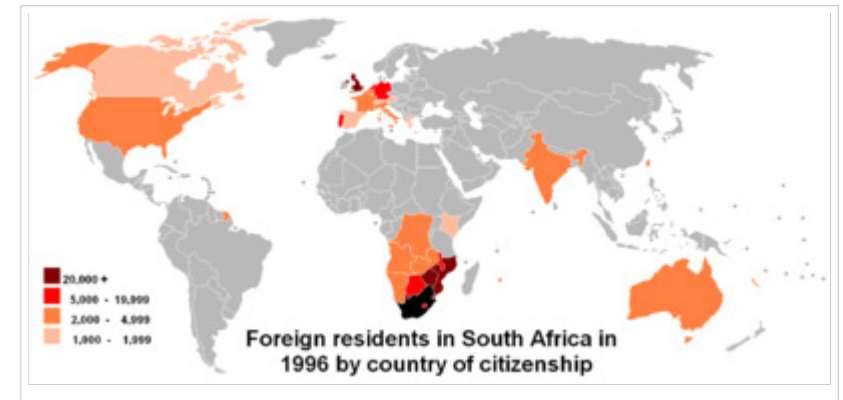
*male:* 87%

*female:* 85.7% (2003 est.)

*total population:* 85%

*male:* 86%

*female:* 85% (2000 est.)



## Largest cities

The following is a list of the ten most populous cities/municipalities in the country, with their populations from the 2001 census.

Rank	Municipality	Population (2001)	Population (1996)	Percent Change from 1996-2001
1.	Johannesburg, Gauteng	3,225,812	2,639,110	22.2%
2.	Durban, KwaZulu-Natal	3,090,117	2,751,193	12.3%
3.	Cape Town, Western Cape	2,893,251	2,563,612	12.9%
4.	East Rand, Gauteng	2,480,282	2,026,807	22.4%
5.	Pretoria, Gauteng	1,985,984	1,682,701	18.0%
6.	Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape	1,005,776	969,771	3.7%



7. East London, Eastern Cape	701,881	682,287	2.9%
8. Vereeniging, Gauteng	658,422	597,948	10.1%
9. Bloemfontein, Free State	645,441	603,704	6.9%
10. Thohoyandou, Limpopo	584,469	537,454	8.7%

List of largest cities in South Africa by population

## Comparison of Black South Africans and White South Africans

### Black South African demographics

As of the census of 2001, there are 35,416,164 Black Africans and 8,625,050 Black African households residing in South Africa. The Black South African population density is 29/km<sup>2</sup>. The density of Black households is 7/km<sup>2</sup>. Black South Africans make up 79.0% of the total population.

The percentage of all Black South African households that are made up of individuals is 19.9%. The average Black household size is 4.11 members.

In South Africa, the Black population is spread out with 34.0% under the age of 15, 21.6% from 15 to 24, 28.3% from 25 to 44, 11.8% from 45 to 64, and 4.3% who are 65 years of age or older. The median age of a Black African is 21 years. For every 100 Black females there are 91.1 Black males. For every 100 Black females age 18 and over, there are 86.2 Black males.

In South Africa, 0.7% of Black residents speak Afrikaans at home, 0.5% speak English, 2.0% speak Southern Ndebele, 22.3% speak Xhosa, 30.1% speak Zulu, 11.9% speak Northern Sotho, 10.0% speak Sesotho, 10.3% speak Tswana, 3.4% speak Swati, 2.9% speak Venda, and 5.6% speak Tsonga. 0.3% of the Black African population speaks a non-official language at home.

With regard to religion, 79.9% of Black residents are Christian, 17.5% have no religion, 0.2% are Muslim, 0.0% are Jewish, 0.0% are Hindu and 2.3% have other or undetermined beliefs.

With regard to education, 22.3% of Black aged 20 and over have received no schooling, 18.5% have had some primary school, 6.9% have completed only primary school, 30.4% have had some high school education, 16.8% have finished only high school, and 5.2% have an education higher than the high school level. Overall, 22.0% of Black Africans have completed high school.

The percentage of Black South African housing units having a telephone and/or mobile phone in the dwelling is 31.1%. The percentage having access to a nearby phone is 57.2%, and 11.7% do not have nearby access or any access. The percentage of Black African households that have a flush or chemical toilet is 41.9%. Refuse is removed from 45.3% of Black African households by the municipality at least once a week, and 11.0% have no rubbish disposal. Some 17.9% of Black Africans have running water inside their dwelling, 51.7% have running water on their property, and 80.2% have access to running water. The





percentage of Black African households using electricity for cooking is 39.3%, for heating, 37.2%, and for lighting, 62.0%. Radios are owned by 68.7% of Black African households while 44.2% have a television, 1.8% own a computer, 40.0% have a refrigerator, and 24.6% have a mobile phone.

The unemployment rate of the Black population aged 15-65 is 28.1%.

The median annual income of Black working adults aged 15-65 is ZAR 12,073. Black African males have a median annual income of ZAR 14,162 versus ZAR 8,903 for Black African females.

## White South African demographics

As of the census of 2001, there are 4,293,640 Whites and 1,409,690 White households residing in South Africa. The White population density is 4/km<sup>2</sup>. The density of White households is 1.16/km<sup>2</sup>. Whites make up 9.6% of the total population.

The percentage of all White households that are made up of individuals is 19.1%. The average White household size is 3.05 members.

In South Africa, the White population is spread out with 19.0% under the age of 15, 15.1% from 15 to 24, 31.0% from 25 to 44, 23.8% from 45 to 64, and 11.1% who are 65 years of age or older. The median age of a White is 35 years. For every 100 White females there are 94.0 White males. For every 100 White females age 18 and over, there are 91.1 White males.

In South Africa, 59.1% of White residents speak Afrikaans at home, 39.3% speak English and 0.1% speak Xhosa. 1.1% of the White population speaks a non-official language at home.

With regard to religion, 86.8% of White residents are Christian, 8.8% have no religion, 0.2% are Muslim, 1.4% are Jewish, and 2.7% have other or undetermined beliefs.

With regard to education, 1.4% of Whites aged 20 and over have received no schooling, 1.2% have had some primary school, 0.8% have completed only primary school, 25.9% have had some high school education, 40.9% have finished only high school, and 29.8% have an education higher than the high school level. Overall, 70.7% of Whites have completed high school.

The percentage of White housing units having a telephone and/or mobile phone in the dwelling is 95.4%. The percentage having access to a nearby phone is 4.4%, and 0.2% do not have nearby access or any access. The percentage of White households that have a flush or chemical toilet is 98.7%. Refuse is removed from 90.8% of White households by the municipality at least once a week, and 0.5% have no rubbish disposal. Some 87.2% of White have running water inside their dwelling, 95.6% have running water on their property, and 99.4% have access to running water. The percentage of White households using electricity for cooking is 96.6%, for heating, 93.2%, and for lighting, 99.2%. Radios are owned by 94.7% of White households while 92.6% have a television, 46.0% own a computer, 97.6% have a refrigerator, and 74.6% have a mobile phone.

The unemployment rate of the White population aged 15-65 is 4.1%.



The median annual income of White working adults aged 15-65 is ZAR 65,405. White males have a median annual income of ZAR 81,701 versus ZAR 52,392 for White females. The annual income distribution of Whites in South Africa is 79.

### South African Population Figures for the 1904 Census

	Cape Colony	Natal	Transvaal	Orange River Colony	Total	Percent
Black	1,424,787	904,041	937,127	225,101	3,491,056	67.45%
White	579,741	97,109	297,277	142,679	1,116,805	21.58%
Coloured	395,034	6,686	24,226	19,282	445,228	8.6%
Asiatic	10,242	100,918	11,321	253	122,734	2.37%

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# East Africa

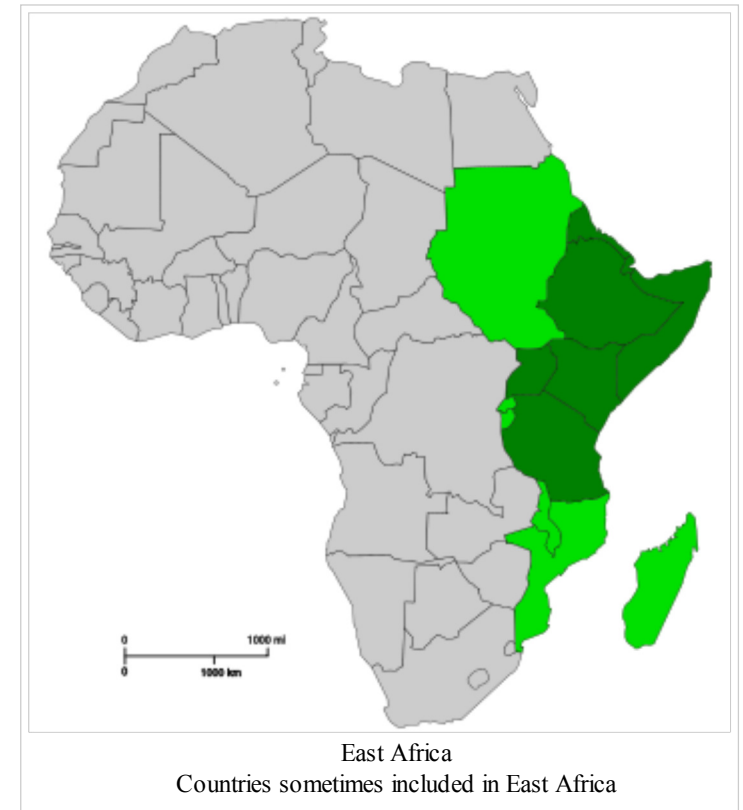
2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**East Africa** is the easternmost region of the African continent, variably defined by geography or geopolitics. It is traditionally comprised of the following countries:

- Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda – members of the East African Community (EAC). Burundi and Rwanda, fellow members of the EAC, are also sometimes included although many also consider them part a of Central Africa
- Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Somalia – collectively known as the Horn of Africa

Sudan is often included in this region. Madagascar is also sometimes included, but has close cultural ties to Southeast Asia and the islands of the Indian Ocean.

## Geography and climate





Some parts of East Africa have been renowned for their concentrations of wild animals, such as the "big five" of elephant, buffalo, lion, leopard and black rhinoceros, though populations have been declining under increased stress in recent times, particularly the rhino and elephant.

The geography of East Africa is often stunning and scenic. Shaped by global plate tectonic forces that have created the Great Rift Valley, East Africa is the site of Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya, the two tallest peaks in Africa. It also includes the world's second largest freshwater lake Lake Victoria, and the world's second deepest lake Lake Tanganyika.

The climate of East Africa is rather atypical of equatorial regions. Because of a combination of the region's generally high altitude and the rain shadow of the westerly monsoon winds created by the Rwenzori Mountains and Ethiopian Highlands, East Africa is surprisingly cool and dry for its latitude.

The lower-lying lands of northern Kenya and Greater Somalia are indeed extremely dry. In fact, on the coast of Somaliland and Puntland many years have no rain whatsoever. Elsewhere the annual rainfall generally increases towards the south and with altitude, being around 400 millimetres (16 in) at Mogadishu and 1,200 millimetres (47 in) at Mombasa on the coast, whilst inland it increases from around 130 millimetres (5 in) at Garoowe to over 1,100 millimetres (43 in) at Moshi near Kilimanjaro. Unusually, most of the rain falls in *two* distinct wet seasons, one centred around April and the other in October or November. This is usually attributed to the passage of the Intertropical Convergence Zone across the region in those months, but it may also be analogous to the autumn monsoon rains of parts of Sri Lanka, Vietnam and the Brazilian Nordeste.

West of the Rwenzoris and Ethiopian highlands the rainfall pattern is more typically tropical, with rain throughout the year near the equator and a single wet season in most of the Ethiopian Highlands from June to September - contracting to July and August around Asmara. Annual rainfall here ranges from over 1,600 millimetres (63 in) on the western slopes to around 1,250 millimetres (49 in) at Addis Ababa and 550 millimetres (22 in) at Asmara. In the high mountains rainfall can be over 2,500 millimetres (98 in).

Rainfall in East Africa is influenced by El Niño events, which tend to increase rainfall except in the northern and western parts of the Ethiopian and Eritrean highlands, where they produce drought and poor Nile floods.

Temperatures in East Africa, except on the hot and generally humid coastal belt, are moderate, with maxima of around 25 °C (77 °F) and minima of 15 °C (59 °F) at an altitude of 1,500 millimetres (5 ft). At altitudes of above 2,500 metres (8,202 ft), frosts are common during the dry season and maxima typically about 21 °C (70 °F) or less.

The unique geography and apparent suitability for farming made East Africa a target for European exploration, exploitation and colonialization in the nineteenth century. Today, tourism is an important part of the economies of Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

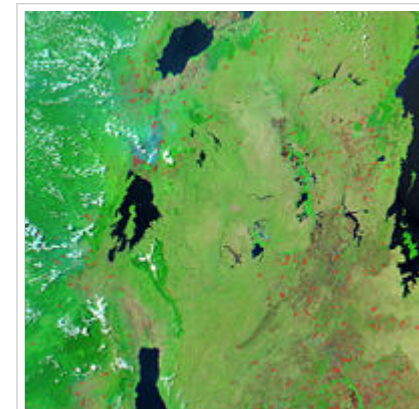


Image of the region between Lake Victoria (on the right) and Lakes Albert, Kivu and Tanganyika (from north to south) showing dense vegetation (bright green) and fires (red)

## History



## Arab and Portuguese eras

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to explore the region of current-day Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, Vasco da Gama having visited Mombasa in 1498. Gama's voyage was successful in reaching India and this permitted the Portuguese to trade with the Far East directly by sea, thus challenging older trading networks of mixed land and sea routes, such as the Spice trade routes that utilized the Persian Gulf, Red Sea and caravans to reach the eastern Mediterranean. The Republic of Venice had gained control over much of the trade routes between Europe and Asia. After traditional land routes to India had been closed by the Ottoman Turks, Portugal hoped to use the sea route pioneered by Gama to break the once Venetian trading monopoly. Portuguese rule in East Africa focused mainly on a coastal strip centred in Mombasa. The Portuguese presence in East Africa officially began after 1505, when flagships under the command of Don Francisco de Almeida conquered Kilwa, an island located in what is now southern Tanzania. In March 1505, having received from Manuel I the appointment of viceroy of the newly conquered territory in India, he set sail from Lisbon in command of a large and powerful fleet, and arrived in July at Quilwa ( Kilwa), which yielded to him almost without a struggle. A much more vigorous resistance was offered by the Moors of Mombasa, but the town was taken and destroyed, and its large treasures went to strengthen the resources of Almeida. Attacks followed on Hoja (now known as Ungwana, located at the mouth of the Tana River), Barawa, Angoche, Pate and other coastal towns until the western Indian Ocean was a safe haven for Portuguese commercial interests. At other places on his way, such as the island of Anjediva, near Goa, and Cannanore, the Portuguese built forts, and adopted measures to secure the Portuguese supremacy. Portugal's main goal in the east coast of Africa was take control of the spice trade from the Arabs. At this stage, the Portuguese presence in East Africa served the purpose of control trade within the Indian Ocean and secure the sea routes linking Europe to Asia. Portuguese naval vessels were very disruptive to the commerce of Portugal's enemies within the western Indian Ocean and were able to demand high tariffs on items transported through the sea due to their strategic control of ports and shipping lanes. The construction of Fort Jesus in Mombasa in 1593 was meant to solidify Portuguese hegemony in the region, but their influence was clipped by the British, Dutch and Omani Arab incursions into the region during the 17th century. The Omani Arabs posed the most direct challenge to Portuguese influence in East Africa and besieged Portuguese fortresses, openly attacked naval vessels and expelled the Portuguese from the Kenyan and Tanzanian coasts by 1730. By this time the Portuguese Empire had already lost its interest on the spice trade sea route due to the decreasing profitability of that business.

Omani Arab colonization of the Kenyan and Tanzanian coasts brought the once independent city-states under closer foreign scrutiny and domination than was experienced during the Portuguese period. Like their predecessors, the Omani Arabs were primarily able only to control the coastal areas, not the interior. However, the creation of clove plantations, intensification of the slave trade and relocation of the Omani capital to Zanzibar in 1839 by Seyyid Said had the effect of consolidating the Omani power in the region. Arab governance of all the major ports along the East African coast continued until British interests aimed particularly at ending the slave trade and creation of a wage-labour system began to put pressure on Omani rule. By the late nineteenth century, the slave trade on the open seas had been completely outlawed by the British and the Omani Arabs had little ability to resist the British navy's ability to enforce the directive. The Omani presence continued in Zanzibar and Pemba until the 1964 revolution, but the official Omani Arab presence in Kenya was checked by German and British seizure of key ports and creation of crucial trade alliances with influential local leaders in the 1880s.

## Period of European Imperialism

East Africa during the 19th and early 20th century became a theatre of competition between the major imperialistic European nations of the time. During the period of the Scramble for Africa, almost every country comprising present day East Africa to varying degrees became part of a European colonial empire.



Portugal had first established a strong presence in southern Mozambique and the Indian Ocean since the 15th century, while during this period their possessions increasingly grew including parts from the present northern Mozambique country, up to Mombasa in present day Kenya. At Lake Malawi, they finally met the recently created British Protectorate of Nyasaland (nowadays Malawi), which surrounded the homonymous lake on three sides, leaving the Portuguese the control of lake's eastern coast. The British Empire set foot in the region's most exploitable and promising lands acquiring what is today Uganda, and Kenya. The Protectorate of Uganda and the Colony of Kenya were located in a rich farmland area mostly appropriate for the cultivation of cash crops like coffee and tea, as well as for animal husbandry with products produced from cattle and goats, such as goat meat, beef and milk. Moreover this area had the potential for a significant residential expansion, being suitable for the relocation of a large number of British nationals to the region. Prevailing climatic conditions and the regions' geomorphology allowed the establishment of flourishing European style settlements like Nairobi and Entebbe.

The French settled the largest island of the Indian Ocean (and the fourth-largest globally), Madagascar along with a group of smaller islands nearby, namely Réunion and the Comoros. Madagascar – until then under British control – became part of the French colonial empire being ceded in exchange for the island of Zanzibar an important hub of spices trade, off the coast of Tanganyika. The British as well held a number of island colonies in the region. The Seychelles an extended archipelago and the rich farmland island of Mauritius, previously under the French sovereignty, were as such.

The German Empire gained control of a large area named German East Africa, comprising present-day Rwanda, Burundi and the mainland part of Tanzania named Tanganyika. In 1922, the British gained a League of Nations mandate over Tanganyika which it administered until Independence was granted to Tanganyika in 1961. Following the Zanzibar Revolution of 1965, the independent state of Tanganyika formed the United Republic of Tanzania by creating a union between the mainland, and the island chain of Zanzibar. Zanzibar is now a semi-autonomous state in a union with the mainland which is collectively and commonly referred to as Tanzania. German East Africa, though very extensive, was not of such strategic importance as the British Crown's colonies to the north: the inhabitation of these lands was difficult and thus limited, mainly due to climatic conditions and the local geomorphology.

Italy gained control of various parts of Somalia in the 1880s. The southern three-fourths of Somalia became an Italian protectorate ( Italian Somaliland).

Meanwhile, in 1884, a narrow coastal strip of northern Somalia came under British control ( British Somaliland). This northern protectorate was just opposite the British colony of Aden on the Arabian Peninsula. With these territories secured, Britain was able to serve as gatekeeper of the sea lane leading to British India.

In 1890, beginning with the purchase of the small port town of ( Asseb) from a local sultan in Eritrea, the Italians colonized all of Eritrea.

In 1895, from bases in Somalia and Eritrea, the Italians launched the First Italo–Ethiopian War against the Orthodox Empire of Ethiopia. By 1896, the war had become a total disaster for the Italians and Ethiopia was able to retain its independence. Ethiopia remained independent until 1936 when, after the Second Italo-Abyssinian War, it became part of Italian East Africa. The Italian occupation of Ethiopia ended in 1941 during World War II as part of the East African Campaign.

The French also staked out an East African outpost on the route to French Indochina. Starting in the 1850s, the small



Map of British East Africa in 1911.





protectorate of Djibouti became French Somaliland in 1897.

## Conflicts

Until recently most governments were illiberal and corrupt, and several countries were riven with political coups, ethnic violence and oppressive dictators. Since the end of colonialism, the region has endured:

- Ethiopian Civil War
- Eritrean War of Independence
- Eritrean-Ethiopian War
- Ogaden War
- Somali Civil War
- Second Sudanese Civil War
- Darfur Conflict in Sudan
- Burundi Civil War
- Lord's Resistance Army insurgency in Uganda
- Rwandan Genocide

Kenya and Tanzania have enjoyed relatively stable governments. However politics has been turbulent at times, including the attempted coup d'état in 1982 and the 2007 election riots in Kenya.

Djibouti and the Puntland and Somaliland regions of Somalia have also seen relative stability.

Tanzania has known stable government since independence although there are significant political and religious tensions resulting from the political union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar in 1964. Zanzibar is now a semi-autonomous state in the United Republic of Tanzania. Tanzania and Uganda fought the Uganda-Tanzania War in 1978–1979, which led to the removal of Uganda's despotic leader Idi Amin.

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# Geography of Africa

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Africa** is a continent comprising 61 political territories (including 53 countries), representing the largest of the great southward projections from the main mass of Earth's surface. It includes, within its remarkably regular outline, an area of 30,368,609 km<sup>2</sup> (11,725,385 mi<sup>2</sup>), including adjacent islands.

Separated from Europe by the Mediterranean Sea and from much of Asia by the Red Sea, Africa is joined to Asia at its northeast extremity by the Isthmus of Suez (which is transected by the Suez Canal), 130 km (80 miles) wide. For geopolitical purposes, the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt – east of the Suez Canal – is often considered part of Africa. From the most northerly point, Ras ben Sakka in Tunisia, in 37°21' N, to the most southerly point, Cape Agulhas in South Africa, 34°51'15" S, is a distance approximately of 8,000 km (5,000 miles); from Cape Verde, 17°33'22" W, the westernmost point, to Ras Hafun in Somalia, 51°27'52" E, the most easterly projection, is a distance (also approximately) of 7,400 km (4,600 miles). The length of coast-line is 26,000 km (16,100 miles) and the absence of deep indentations of the shore is shown by the fact that Europe, which covers only 10,400,000 km<sup>2</sup> (4,010,000 square miles), has a coastline of 32,000 km (19,800 miles).



The main structural lines of the continent show both the east-to-west direction characteristic, at least in the eastern hemisphere, of the more northern parts of the world, and the north-to-south direction seen in the southern peninsulas. Africa is thus composed of two segments at right angles, the northern running from east to west, the southern from north to south, the subordinate lines corresponding in the main to these two directions.

## Main Features



The average elevation of the continent approximates closely to 600 m (2,000 ft) above sea level, roughly near to the mean elevation of both North and South America, but considerably less than that of Asia, 950 m (3,117 ft). In contrast with other continents, it is marked by the comparatively small area of either very high or very low ground, lands under 180 m (600 ft) occupying an unusually small part of the surface; while not only are the highest elevations inferior to those of Asia or South America, but the area of land over 3,000 m (10,000 ft) is also quite insignificant, being represented almost entirely by individual peaks and mountain ranges. Moderately elevated tablelands are thus the characteristic feature of the continent, though the surface of these is broken by higher peaks and ridges. (So prevalent are these isolated peaks and ridges that a specialised term [*Inselberg-landschaft*] has been adopted in Germany to describe this kind of country, thought to be in great part the result of wind action.)

As a general rule, the higher tablelands lie to the east and south, while a progressive diminution in altitude towards the west and north is observable. Apart from the lowlands and the Atlas mountain range, the continent may be divided into two regions of higher and lower plateaus, the dividing line (somewhat concave to the north-west) running from the middle of the Red Sea to about 6 deg. S. on the west coast.

Africa can be divided into a number of geographic zones:

- The coastal plains - often fringed seawards by mangrove swamps - never stretching far from the coast, apart from the lower courses of streams. Recent alluvial flats are found chiefly in the delta of the more important rivers. Elsewhere, the coastal lowlands merely form the lowest steps of the system of terraces that constitutes the ascent to the inner plateaus.
- The Atlas range — orographically distinct from the rest of the continent, being unconnected with and separated from the south by a depressed and desert area (the Sahara).

## Plateau region



Satellite view of Africa



The high southern and eastern plateaus, rarely falling below 600 m (2000 ft), and having a mean elevation of about 1000 m (3500 ft). The South African plateau as far as about 12° S, bounded east, west and south by bands of high ground which fall steeply to the coasts. On this account South Africa has a general resemblance to an inverted saucer. Due south the plateau rim is formed by three parallel steps with level ground between them. The largest of these level areas, the Great Karoo, is a dry, barren region, and a large tract of the plateau proper is of a still more arid character and is known as the Kalahari Desert.

The South African plateau is connected towards the north-east with the East African plateau, with probably a slightly greater average elevation, and marked by some distinct features. It is formed by a widening out of the eastern axis of high ground, which becomes subdivided into a number of zones running north and south and consisting in turn of ranges, tablelands and depressions. The most striking feature is the existence of two great lines of depression, due largely to the subsidence of whole segments of the earth's crust, the lowest parts of which are occupied by vast lakes. Towards the south the two lines converge and give place to one great valley (occupied by Lake Nyasa), the southern part of which is less distinctly due to rifting and subsidence than the rest of the system.

Farther north the western depression, known as the Great Rift Valley is occupied for more than half its length by water, forming the Great Lakes of Tanganyika, Kivu, Lake Edward and Lake Albert, the first-named over 400 miles (600 km) long and the longest freshwater lake in the world. Associated with these great valleys are a number of volcanic peaks, the greatest of which occur on a meridional line east of the eastern trough. The eastern depression, known as the East African trough or rift-valley, contains much smaller lakes, many of them brackish and without outlet, the only one comparable to those of the western trough being Lake Turkana or Basso Norok.

At no great distance east of this rift-valley are Mount Kilimanjaro - with its two peaks Kibo and Mawenzi, the latter being 5889 m (19,321 ft), and the culminating point of the whole continent - and Mount Kenya, which is 5184 m (17,007 ft). Hardly less important is the Ruwenzori Range, over 5060 m (16,600 ft), which lies east of the western trough. Other volcanic peaks rise from the floor of the valleys, some of the Kirunga (Mfumbiro) group, north of Lake Kivu, being still partially active.

The third division of the higher region of Africa is formed by the Ethiopian Highlands, a rugged mass of mountains forming the largest continuous area of its altitude in the whole continent, little of its surface falling below 1500 m (5000 ft), while the summits reach heights of 4600 m to 4900 m (15,000 to 16,000 ft). This block of country lies just west of the line of the great East African Trough, the northern continuation of which passes along its eastern escarpment as it runs up to join the Red Sea. There is, however, in the centre a circular basin occupied by Lake Tsana.

Both in the east and west of the continent the bordering highlands are continued as strips of plateau parallel to the coast, the Ethiopian mountains being continued northwards along the Red Sea coast by a series of ridges reaching in places a height of 2000 m (7000 ft). In the west the zone of high land is broader but somewhat lower. The most mountainous districts lie inland from the head of the Gulf of Guinea (Adamawa, etc.), where heights of 1800 m to 2400 m (6000 to 8000 ft) are reached. Exactly at the head of the gulf the great peak of the Cameroon, on a line of volcanic action continued by the islands to the south-west, has a height of 4075 m (13,370 ft), while Clarence Peak, in Fernando Po, the first of the line of islands, rises to over 2700 m (9000 ft). Towards the extreme west the Futa Jallon highlands form an important diverging point of rivers, but beyond this, as far as the Atlas chain, the elevated rim of the continent is almost wanting.



Topography of Africa



## Plains

The area between the east and west coast highlands, which north of 17° N is mainly desert, is divided into separate basins by other bands of high ground, one of which runs nearly centrally through North Africa in a line corresponding roughly with the curved axis of the continent as a whole. The best marked of the basins so formed (the Congo basin) occupies a circular area bisected by the equator, once probably the site of an inland sea.

Running along the south of desert is the plains region known as the Sahel.

The arid region, the Sahara — the largest desert in the world, covering 9,000,000 km<sup>2</sup> (3,500,000 square miles) — extends from the Atlantic to the Red Sea. Though generally of slight elevation it contains mountain ranges with peaks rising to 2400 m (8000 ft) Bordered N.W. by the Atlas range, to the northeast a rocky plateau separates it from the Mediterranean; this plateau gives place at the extreme east to the delta of the Nile. That river (see below) pierces the desert without modifying its character. The Atlas range, the north-westerly part of the continent, between its seaward and landward heights encloses elevated steppes in places 160 km (100 miles) broad. From the inner slopes of the plateau numerous wadis take a direction towards the Sahara. The greater part of that now desert region is, indeed, furrowed by old water-channels.

The following table gives the approximate altitudes of the chief mountains and lakes of the continent:

<b>Mountain</b>	<b>ft</b>	<b>m</b>	<b>Lake</b>	<b>ft</b>	<b>m</b>
Mount Rungwe	9,711	2960	Chad	850	259
Drakensberg	11,422	3482	Mai-Ndombe	1100	335
Sattima (Aberdare Range)	13,120	4001	Rudolf	1250	381
Cameroon	13,435	4095	Nyasa	1645	501
Jbel Toubkal (Atlas)	13,671	4167	Albert	2028	618
Elgon	14,178	4321	Tanganyika	2624	800
Karisimbi (Virunga Mountains)	14,787	4507	Ngami	2950	899
Simens, Ethiopia	14,872	4533	Mweru	3000	914
Meru	14,980	4566	Edward	3004	916
Ruwenzori	16,763	5109	Bangweulu	3700	1128
Kenya	17,058	5199	Victoria	3720	1134
Kilimanjaro	19,340	5895	Abaya	4200	1280
			Kivu	4829	1472
			Tsana	5690	1734



Naivasha	6135	1870
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## Hydrology

From the outer margin of the African plateaus, a large number of streams run to the sea with comparatively short courses, while the larger rivers flow for long distances on the interior highlands, before breaking through the outer ranges. The main drainage of the continent is to the north and west, or towards the basin of the Atlantic Ocean.

The high lake plateau of East Africa contains the headwaters of both the Nile and the Congo: the longest and second longest river in Africa respectively.

The upper Nile receives its chief supplies from the mountainous region adjoining the Central African trough in the neighbourhood of the equator. From there, streams pour eastward into Lake Victoria, the largest African lake (covering over 26,000 square m.), and to the west and north into Lake Edward and Lake Albert. To the latter of these, the effluents of the other two lakes add their waters. Issuing from there, the Nile flows northward, and between the latitudes of 7 and 10 degrees N. it traverses a vast marshy level, where its course is liable to being blocked by floating vegetation. After receiving the Bahr-el-Ghazal from the west and the Sobat, Blue Nile and Atbara from the Ethiopian highlands (the chief gathering ground of the flood-water), it separates the great desert with its fertile watershed, and enters the Mediterranean at a vast delta.

The most remote head-stream of the Congo is the Chambezi, which flows southwest into the marshy Lake Bangweulu. From this lake issues the Congo, known in its upper course by various names. Flowing first south, it afterwards turns north through Lake Mweru and descends to the forest-clad basin of west equatorial Africa. Traversing this in a majestic northward curve, and receiving vast supplies of water from many great tributaries, it finally turns southwest and cuts a way to the Atlantic Ocean through the western highlands.

North of the Congo basin, and separated from it by a broad undulation of the surface, is the basin of Lake Chad - a flat-shored, shallow lake filled principally by the Chari coming from the southeast.

West of this is the basin of the Niger, the third major river of Africa. With its principal source in the far west, it reverses the direction of flow exhibited by the Nile and Congo, and ultimately flows into the Atlantic — a fact that eluded European geographers for many centuries. An important branch, however - the Benue - flows from the southeast.

These four river-basins occupy the greater part of the lower plateaus of North and West Africa — the remainder consisting of arid regions watered only by intermittent streams that do not reach the sea.

Of the remaining rivers of the Atlantic basin, the Orange, in the extreme south, brings the drainage from the Drakensberg on the opposite side of the continent, while the Kunene, Kwanza, Ogowe and Sanaga drain the west coastal highlands of the southern limb; the Volta, Komoe, Bandama, Gambia and Senegal the highlands of the western limb. North of the Senegal, for over 1000 miles (1600 km) of coast, the arid region reaches to the Atlantic. Farther north are the streams, with comparatively short courses, reaching the Atlantic and Mediterranean from the Atlas mountains.





Of the rivers flowing to the Indian Ocean, the only one draining any large part of the interior plateaus is the Zambezi, whose western branches rise in the western coastal highlands. The main stream has its rise in  $11^{\circ}21'3''$  S  $24^{\circ}22'$  E, at an elevation of 5000 ft. It flows to the west and south for a considerable distance before turning eastward. All the largest tributaries, including the Shire, the outflow of Lake Nyasa, flow down the southern slopes of the band of high ground stretching across the continent from 10 deg. to 12 deg. S. In the southwest, the Zambezi system interlaces with that of the Taokhe (or Tioghe), from which it at times receives surplus water. The rest of the water of the Taokhe, known in its middle course as the Okavango, is lost in a system of swamps and salt pans that was formerly centred in Lake Ngami, now dried up.

Farther south, the Limpopo drains a portion of the interior plateau, but breaks through the bounding highlands on the side of the continent nearest its source. The Rovuma, Rufiji, Tana, Jubba and Webi Shebeli principally drain the outer slopes of the East African highlands, the last of these losing itself in the sands in proximity to the sea. Another large stream, the Hawash, rising in the Ethiopian mountains, is lost in a saline depression near the Gulf of Aden.

Lastly, between the basins of the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, there is an area of inland drainage along the centre of the East African plateau, directed chiefly into the lakes in the great rift valley. The largest river is the Omo, which, fed by the rains of the Ethiopian highlands, carries down a large body of water into Lake Rudolf. The rivers of Africa are generally obstructed either by bars at their mouths, or by cataracts at no great distance upstream. But when these obstacles have been overcome, the rivers and lakes afford a vast network of navigable waters.

The calculation of the areas of African drainage systems, made by Dr A. Bludau (Petermanns Mitteilungen, 43, 1897, pp. 184-186) yields the following general results:

	mi <sup>2</sup>	Mm <sup>2</sup>
Basin of the Atlantic	4,070,000	10.541
Basin of the Mediterranean	1,680,000	4.351
Basin of the Indian Ocean	2,086,000	5.403
Inland drainage area	3,452,000	8.941

The areas of individual river basins are:

	mi <sup>2</sup>	Mm <sup>2</sup>
Congo, length over 3000 mi (4800 km)	1,425,000	3.691
Nile, length fully 4000 mi (6500 km)	1,082,000	2.802
Niger, length about 2600 mi (4200 km)	808,000	2.093
Zambezi, length about 2000 mi (3200 km)	513,500	1.330
Lake Chad	394,000	1.020
Orange, length about 1300 mi (2100 km)	370,505	0.9596
Orange (actual drainage area)	172,500	0.447



The area of the Congo basin is greater than that of any other river except the Amazon, while the African inland drainage area is greater than that of any continent but Asia, where the corresponding area is 4,000,000 square miles (10 Mm<sup>2</sup>).

The principal African lakes have been mentioned in the description of the East African plateau, but some of the phenomena connected with them may be spoken of more particularly here. As a rule, the lakes found within the great rift-valleys have steep sides and are very deep. This is the case with the two largest of the type, Tanganyika and Nyasa, the latter with depths of 430 fathoms (790 m).

Others, however, are shallow, and hardly reach the steep sides of the valleys in the dry season. Such are Lake Rukwa, in a subsidiary depression north of Nyasa, and Eiassi and Manyara in the system of the eastern rift-valley. Lakes of the broad type are of moderate depth, the deepest sounding in Lake Victoria being under 50 fathoms (90 m).

Besides the East African lakes, the principal are: - Lake Chad, in the northern inland watershed; Bangweulu and Mweru, traversed by the head-stream of the Congo; and Lake Mai-Ndombe and Ntomba (Mantumba), within the great bend of that river. All, except possibly Mweru, are more or less shallow, and Lake Chad appears to be drying up.

Divergent opinions have been held as to the mode of origin of the East African lakes, especially Tanganyika, which some geologists have considered to represent an old arm of the sea, dating from a time when the whole central Congo basin was under water; others holding that the lake water has accumulated in a depression caused by subsidence. The former view is based on the existence in the lake of organisms of a decidedly marine type. They include jellyfish, molluscs, prawns, crabs, etc.

## Islands

With exception - Madagascar - the African islands are small. Madagascar, with an area of 229,820 square miles (595,230 km<sup>2</sup>), is, after Greenland, New Guinea and Borneo, the fourth largest island on the Earth. It lies off the S.E. coast of the continent, from which it is separated by the deep Mozambique channel, 250 miles (400 km) wide at its narrowest point. Madagascar in its general structure, as in flora and fauna, forms a connecting link between Africa and southern Asia. East of Madagascar are the small islands of Mauritius and Réunion. Socotra lies E.N.E. of Cape Guardafui. Off the north-west coast are the Canary and Cape Verde archipelagoes. which, like some small islands in the Gulf of Guinea, are of volcanic origin.

## Climate and health



Lying almost entirely within the tropics, and equally to north and south of the equator, Africa does not show excessive variations of temperature.

Great heat is experienced in the lower plains and desert regions of North Africa, removed by the great width of the continent from the influence of the ocean, and here, too, the contrast between day and night, and between summer and winter, is greatest. (The rarity of the air and the great radiation during the night cause the temperature in the Sahara to fall occasionally to freezing point.)

Farther south, the heat is to some extent modified by the moisture brought from the ocean, and by the greater elevation of a large part of the surface, especially in East Africa, where the range of temperature is wider than in the Congo basin or on the Guinea coast.

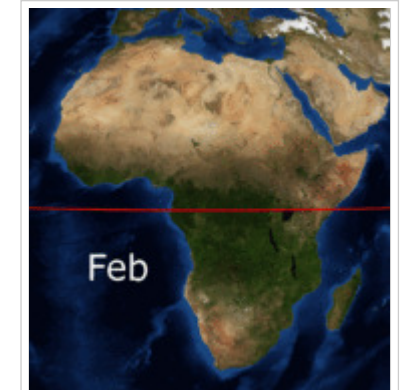
In the extreme north and south the climate is a warm temperate one, the northern countries being on the whole hotter and drier than those in the southern zone; the south of the continent being narrower than the north, the influence of the surrounding ocean is more felt.

The most important climatic differences are due to variations in the amount of rainfall. The wide heated plains of the Sahara, and in a lesser degree the corresponding zone of the Kalahari in the south, have an exceedingly scanty rainfall, the winds which blow over them from the ocean losing part of their moisture as they pass over the outer highlands, and becoming constantly drier owing to the heating effects of the burning soil of the interior; while the scarcity of mountain ranges in the more central parts likewise tends to prevent condensation. In the inter-tropical zone of summer precipitation, the rainfall is greatest when the sun is vertical or soon after. It is therefore greatest of all near the equator, where the sun is twice vertical, and less in the direction of both tropics.

The rainfall zones are, however, somewhat deflected from a due west-to-east direction, the drier northern conditions extending southwards along the east coast, and those of the south northwards along the west. Within the equatorial zone certain areas, especially on the shores of the Gulf of Guinea and in the upper Nile basin, have an intensified rainfall, but this rarely approaches that of the rainiest regions of the world. The rainiest district in all Africa is a strip of coastland west of Mount Cameroon, where there is a mean annual rainfall of about 390 in (9.91 m) as compared with a mean of 458 in (11.63 m) at Cherrapunji, in Meghalaya, India.

The two distinct rainy seasons of the equatorial zone, where the sun is vertical at half-yearly intervals, become gradually merged into one in the direction of the tropics, where the sun is overhead but once. Snow falls on all the higher mountain ranges, and on the highest the climate is thoroughly Alpine.

The countries bordering the Sahara are much exposed to a very dry wind, full of fine particles of sand, blowing from the desert towards the sea. Known in Egypt as the khamsin, on the Mediterranean as the sirocco, it is called on the Guinea coast the harmattan. This wind is not invariably hot; its great dryness causes so much evaporation that cold is not infrequently the result. Similar dry winds blow from the Kalahari Desert in the south. On the eastern coast the monsoons of the Indian Ocean are regularly felt, and on the southeast hurricanes are occasionally experienced.



Vegetation in February and August



## Extreme points

This is a list of the **extreme points of Africa**, the points that are farther north, south, east or west than any other location on the continent.

### *Africa*

- Northernmost Point — Ras ben Sakka, Tunisia (37°21'N)
- Southernmost Point — Cape Agulhas, South Africa (34°51'15"S)
- Westernmost Point — Santo Antão, Cape Verde Islands (25°25'W)
- Easternmost Point — Rodrigues, Mauritius (63°30'E)
- African pole of inaccessibility is close to the border of Central African Republic, Sudan and Congo, near the town Obo.

### *Africa (mainland)*

- Northernmost Point — Ra's al Abyad (Cape Blanc), Tunisia
- Southernmost Point — Cape Agulhas, South Africa
- Westernmost Point — Pointe des Almadies, Cap Vert Peninsula, Senegal (17°33'22"W)
- Easternmost Point — Ras Hafun (Raas Xaafuun), Somalia (51°27'52"E)

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# Horn of Africa

## 2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

The **Horn of Africa** (alternatively **Northeast Africa**, and sometimes **Somali Peninsula**) is a peninsula of East Africa that juts for hundreds of kilometers into the Arabian Sea, and lies along the southern side of the Gulf of Aden. It is the easternmost projection of the African continent. The term also refers to the greater region containing the countries of Eritrea, Djibouti, Ethiopia and Somalia. As such, it covers approximately 2,000,000 km<sup>2</sup> (772,200 sq mi) and is inhabited by about 90.2 million people (Ethiopia: 75 million, Somalia: 10 million, Eritrea: 4.5 million, and Djibouti: 0.7 million).

## Geography and climate

The Horn of Africa is almost equidistant from the equator and the Tropic of Cancer. It consists chiefly of mountains uplifted through the formation of the Great Rift Valley, a fissure in the Earth's crust extending from Turkey to Mozambique and marking the separation of the African and Arabian tectonic plates. Most of the region is mountainous due to faults resulting from the Rift Valley, with the highest peaks in the Simien Mountains of northwestern Ethiopia. Extensive glaciers once covered the Simien and Bale Mountains, but melted at the beginning of the Holocene. The mountains descend in a huge escarpment to the Red Sea and more steadily to the Indian Ocean. Socotra is a small island in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Somalia. Its size is 3,600 km<sup>2</sup> (1,390 sq mi) and it is a territory of Yemen, the southernmost country on the Arabian peninsula.

The lowlands of the Horn are generally arid in spite of their proximity to the equator. This is because the winds of the tropical monsoons that give seasonal rains to the Sahel and the Sudan blow from the west. Consequently, they lose their moisture upon reaching Djibouti and Somalia, with the result that most of the Horn receives little rainfall during the monsoon season. On the windward side in the west and centre of Ethiopia, and the extreme south of Eritrea, monsoonal rainfall is heavy. In the mountains of Ethiopia, many areas receive over 2,000 mm (78 in) per year, and even Asmara receives an average of 570 mm (23 in). This rainfall is the sole source of water for many areas far from Ethiopia, most famously for Egypt, which — in terms of rainfall — is the driest nation on Earth.

In the winter, the northeasterly trade winds do not provide any moisture except in mountainous areas of northern Somalia, where rainfall in late autumn can produce annual totals as high as 500 mm (20 in). On the eastern coast, a strong upwelling and the fact that the winds blow *parallel* to the coast means annual rainfall can be as low as 51 mm (2 in).



The Horn of Africa. NASA image



The Horn of Africa as seen from the NASA Space Shuttle in May 1993. The orange and tan colors in this image indicate a largely arid to semiarid climate.



Temperatures on the Red Sea coast are some of the hottest in the world, typically around 41°C (106°F) in July and 32°C (90°F) in January. On the east coast, owing to the upwelling, they are somewhat cooler but still hot. As elevation increases, temperatures decrease, so that at Asmara, maxima are around 20°C (68°F), though frosts are frequent on cloudless nights. On the highest peaks of the Simien Mountains, however, temperatures rarely reach 14°C (57°F) and can be as low as -10°C (14°F) on cloudless nights.

## History

### Ancient history

The Kingdom of Aksum (also known as "Axum") was an ancient state located in modern-day Ethiopia, Eritrea, northern Somalia and Yemen that thrived between the 1st and 7th centuries. Due to the Horn's strategic location, it has been used to restrict access to the Red Sea in the past.

The region was also a source of biological resources during the Antiquity: The Ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans sent expeditions to the region for frankincense, myrrh, dragon's blood or cinnabar and took these commodities back along the Incense Route. Therefore the Romans called this region **Regio Aromatica**. It is believed to also contain the fabled Egyptian Land of Punt.

The Horn was also part of a network of ports that extended down the coast of Africa, from the Persian Gulf as part of a larger and ancient commerce route along the greater Indian Ocean rim.

### Modern history

In recent decades, the Horn of Africa has been a region continuously in crisis. Ethiopia occupies a predominant position in the Horn because of its demographic importance: about 85% of the area's population live in this country. Large parts of the Horn of Africa were colonized by Italy: Eritrea (1880-1941), the Italian Somaliland protectorate (1890-1960) and a brief occupation of Ethiopia (1936-1941). Britain established in North Somalia ( British Somaliland) and France in Djibouti (French Somaliland). Yet Ethiopia's history is largely marked by conflicts between Muslims and Christians for resources and living space, as well as between nationalism and Marxism-Leninism in modern times. The rest of the region also faces several concurrent problems: Somalia is still caught up in a civil war which first began in the late 1980's, while Ethiopia and Eritrea regularly clash.

Moreover, the region is regularly stricken by natural catastrophes, such as droughts or floods that hit rural areas particularly hard. As a result, the region has some of the world's highest levels of malnutrition and is continuously threatened with a major humanitarian crisis. Between 1982 and 1992, about two million people died in the Horn of Africa due to this combination of war and famine.

Since 2002 The Horn of Africa has been a major focus of attention by the United States, France, Germany, and eleven African nations regarding the War on Terrorism.



Dhow - modern version of traditional trading ship





## Culture and ethnicity

The countries of the Horn of Africa are culturally linked together. Local people have been using the plow for cultivation and kept the Arabian dromedary as domestic animals for a long time and for the most part represent a unique cultural and racial bloc on the continent.

Some important ethno-linguistic groups in the Horn of Africa are:

- In Djibouti: the Afar (Danakil) and the Somali (Issa)
- In Eritrea: the Bilen, the Afar, the Hedareb ( Beni-Amer/ Beja), the Kunama (Baza), the Nara (Nialetic), the Saho (Irob), the Rashaida, the Tigre, and the Tigrinya. The Jebertis are Muslim Tigrinyas who consider themselves as a separate ethnicity, but are not recognized by other sources.
- In Ethiopia: Amharas, Afars, Agaw groups, Gurages, Hamers, Hararis (also Hadere or Adere), the Irob (Catholic Sahos), Sidamas, Oromos, Saho, Somali, Tigrayans, as well as many other small groups (see also ethnicities listed at Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People's Region) .
- In Somalia: the Somali

## Economy

States of the region depend largely on a few key exports:

- Ethiopia: Coffee 80% of total exports.
- Somalia: Bananas and livestock over 50% of total exports.

## Ecology





Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*)

The Horn of Africa is a UNESCO Biodiversity Hotspot and one of the two entirely arid ones. However the Horn of Africa suffers largely from overgrazing and only 5% of its original habitat still remains. On Socotra, another great threat is the development of infrastructure.

## Fauna

About 220 mammals are found in the Horn of Africa. Among threatened species of the region, we find several antelopes such as the beira, the dibatag, the silver dikdik and the Speke's gazelle. Other remarkable species include the Somali wild ass, the desert warthog, the Hamadryas Baboon, the Somali pygmy gerbil, the ammodile, and the Speke's pectinator. The Grevy's zebra is the unique wild equid of the region.

Some important bird species of the Horn are the Bulo Burti boubou, the golden-winged grosbeak, the Warsangli linnet, or the Djibouti Francolin.

The Horn of Africa holds more endemic reptiles than any other region in Africa, with over 285 species total (and about 90 species found exclusively in the region). Among endemic reptile genera, there are *Haackgreerius*, *Haemodracon*, *Dityophis*, *Pachycalamus* and *Aeluroglena*. Half of these genera are uniquely found on Socotra. Unlike reptiles, amphibians are poorly represented in the region.

There are about 100 species of freshwater fish in the Horn of Africa, about 10 of which are endemic. Among the endemic, we find the cave-dwelling Somali blind barb and the Somali cavefish.

## Flora

It is estimated that about 5,000 species of vascular plants are found in the Horn, about half of which are endemic. Endemism is most developed in Socotra and Northern Somalia. The region has two endemic plant families: the Barbeyaceae and the Dirachmaceae. Among the other remarkable species, there are the cucumber tree found only on Socotra (*Dendrosicyos socotrana*), the Bankoualé palm, the yeheb nut, and the Somali cyclamen.

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# Lake Albert (Africa)

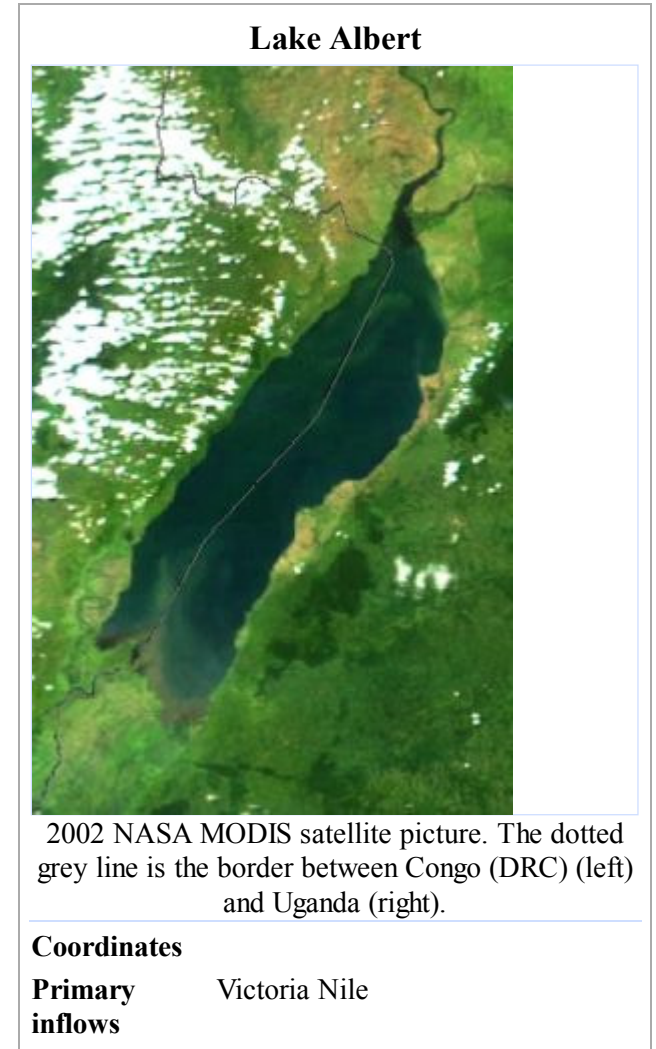
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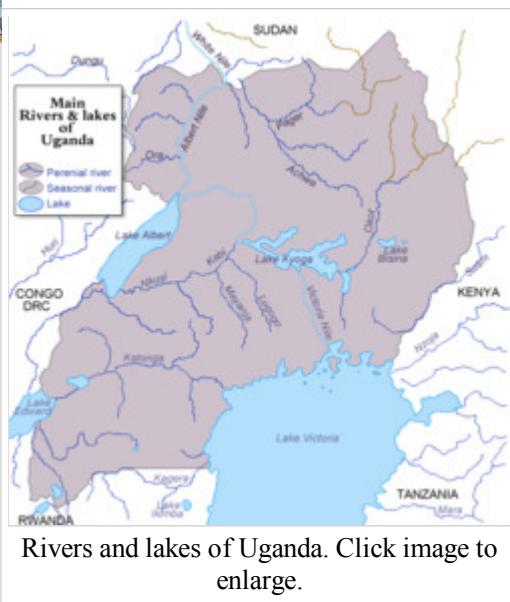
**Lake Albert** – also **Albert Nyanza** and formerly **Lake Mobutu Sese Seko** – is one of the Great Lakes of Africa. It is Africa's seventh largest lake, and ranks as the world's twenty-third largest lake by volume.

## Geography

Lake Albert is located in the centre of the continent, on the border between Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). Lake Albert is the northernmost of the chain of lakes in the Great Rift Valley; it is about 160 km (100 mi) long and 30 km (19 mi) wide, with a maximum depth of 51 m (168 ft), and a surface elevation of 619 m (2,030 ft) above sea level.

Lake Albert is part of the complicated system of the upper Nile. Its main sources are the Victoria Nile, ultimately coming from Lake Victoria to the southeast, and the Semliki River, which issues from Lake Edward to the southwest. The water of the Victoria Nile is much less saline than that of Lake Albert. Its outlet, at the northernmost tip of the lake, is the Albert Nile (which becomes known as the Mountain Nile when it enters Sudan).





At the southern end of the lake, where the Semliki comes in, there are swamps. Farther south loom the mighty Ruwenzori Range, while a range of hills called the Blue Mountains tower over the northwestern shore. The few settlements along the shore include Butiaba and Pakwach.

## History

In 1864, the explorer Samuel Baker discovered the lake; he named it after the recently deceased Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria. Congolese president Mobutu Sese Seko temporarily named the lake after himself.

Conflict is arising over oil found in Lake Albert. Reserves are estimated at less than 100,000 barrels a day for about 10 years when production starts. Tensions between the DRC and Uganda in early August 2007, largely over the ownership of the small Rukwanzi Island, led to an armed clash that killed a British geologist working for an oil prospector.

<b>Primary outflows</b>	Albert Nile
<b>Basin countries</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda
<b>Max. length</b>	160 km
<b>Max. width</b>	30 km
<b>Surface area</b>	5,300 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Average depth</b>	25 m
<b>Max. depth</b>	58 m
<b>Water volume</b>	132 km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Surface elevation</b>	615 m
<b>Settlements</b>	Butiaba, Pakwach
<b>References</b>	

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# Lake Edward

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Lake Edward** or **Edward Nyanza** is the smallest of the Great Lakes of Africa. It is located in the western Great Rift Valley, on the border between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, with its northern shore a few kilometers south of the Equator. The lake was named by the explorer Henry Morton Stanley in honour of Prince Albert Edward, The Prince of Wales.



Lake Edward from Mweya in Queen Elizabeth National Park

## History

Stanley first saw the lake in 1875, and thinking it was part of Lake Albert, named it *Beatrice Gulf*. On his second visit in 1888 through 1889, he realized that there were two independent lakes, and gave it its current name. In the 1970s and 1980s, Uganda and Zaire (Democratic Republic of the Congo) renamed it **Lake Idi Amin** or **Lake Idi Amin Dada** after Ugandan dictator Idi Amin. After his overthrow in 1979, the name was changed back to *Lake Edward*.

## Geography

### Topography and drainage

Lake Edward lies at an elevation of 920 metres, is 77 km long by 40 km wide at its maximum points, and covers a total surface area of 2,325 km<sup>2</sup> (the 15th largest on the continent). The lake is fed by the Nyamugasani, the Ishasha, the Rutshuru, and the Rwindi rivers. It empties to the north via the Semliki River into Lake Albert. Lake George to the northeast empties into Lake Edward via the Kazinga Channel.

The western escarpment of the Great Rift Valley towers up to 2000 m above the western shore of the lake. The southern and eastern shores are flat lava plains. The Ruwenzori Mountains lie 20 km north of the lake.

### Volcanism

### Lake Edward



NASA Landsat photo of Lake Edward and Lake George showing the Kazinga Channel between them

#### Coordinates

<b>Lake type</b>	River
<b>Primary outflows</b>	Semliki River Kazinga Channel
<b>Catchment area</b>	12,096 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Basin countries</b>	Democratic Republic of Congo Uganda
<b>Max. length</b>	77 km
<b>Max. width</b>	40 km
<b>Surface area</b>	2,325 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Average depth</b>	17m
<b>Max. depth</b>	112m
<b>Water volume</b>	39.5km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Surface elevation</b>	912 m



The region shows much evidence of volcanic activity in the last 5000 years. The Katwe-Kikorongo and Bunyaruguru Volcanic Fields, with extensive cones and craters, lie either side of the Kazinga Channel on the north-west shore of the lake. It is thought that Lakes George and Edward have been joined as one larger lake in the past, but lava from these fields flowed in and divided it, leaving only the Kazinga Channel as the remnant of the past union. To the south, the May-ya-Moto thermally active volcano lies 30 km away, and the Nyamuragira volcano in the western Virunga Mountains lies 80 km south, but its lava flows have reached the lake in the past.

The Katwe-Kikorongo field features dozens of large craters and cones covering an area of 30 km by 15 km between lakes Edward and George, and includes seven crater lakes. The largest of these, the 2.5-kilometre-long Lake Katwe, occupies a crater 4 km across and is separated from Lake Edward by just 300 m of land. The crater is about 100 m deep, and Lake Katwe's surface is about 40 m lower than Lake Edward's. It is remarkable that the volcanic origin of this area south-east of the Ruwenzoris was not known until reported by G. F. Scott Elliot in 1894. Stanley visited Lake Katwe in 1889 and noted the deep depression, the salinity of the lake, and a spring of sulphurous water nearby, but failed to connect this to volcanism.

The similarly-sized Bunyaruguru field on the other side of the Kazinga Channel contains about 30 crater lakes, some larger than Katwe.

## Settlements

Lake Edward lies completely within the Virunga National Park (Congo) and the Queen Elizabeth National Park (Uganda) and does not have extensive human habitation on its shores, except at Ishango (DRC) in the north, home to a park ranger training facility. About two-thirds of its waters are in the DR Congo and one third in Uganda. Apart from Ishango, the main Congolese settlement in the south is Vitshumbi, while the Ugandan settlements are Mweya and Katwe in the north-east, near the crater lake of that name, which is the chief producer of salt for Uganda. The Mweya Safari Lodge is the main tourist facility, serving both Lake Edward and Lake Katwe. The nearest cities are Kasese in Uganda to the north-east and Butembo in DR Congo, to the north-west, which are respectively about 50 km and 150 km distant by road.

## Ecology





Lake Edward is home to many species of fish, including populations of *Bagrus docmac*, *Sarotherodon niloticus*, *Sarotherodon leucostictus*, and over 50 species of *Haplochromis* and other haplochromine species, of which only 8 are formally described. Fishing is an important activity among local residents. Fauna living on the banks of the lake – including chimpanzees, elephants, crocodiles, and lions – are protected by the national parks. The area is also home to many perennial and migratory bird species.

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# Lake Kariba

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Lake Kariba** is a large, man-made lake and reservoir located on the Zambezi river, about halfway between the river's source and mouth, about 1300 kilometers upstream from the Indian Ocean. The lake lies along the border between Zambia and Zimbabwe. Lake Kariba was filled between 1958 and 1963 following the completion of the Kariba Dam at its northeastern end, flooding the Kariba Gorge on the Zambezi River and displacing large numbers of the local Tonga people.

The Zimbabwean town of Kariba was built for construction workers on the lake's dam, while some other settlements such as Milbibezi in Zimbabwe and Siavonga and Sinazongwe in Zambia have grown up to house people displaced by the rising waters.

## Physical characteristics

Lake Kariba is over 220 kilometers (140 mi) long and up to 40 kilometers (20 mi) in width. It covers an area of 5,580 square kilometers (2,150 sq mi) and its storage capacity is an immense 185 cubic kilometers (44.4 cu mi). The mean depth of the lake is 29 meters (95 ft); the maximum depth is 97 meters (320 ft). It is one of the world's largest man-made reservoirs. The enormous mass of water (approximately 180,000,000,000,000 kilograms, or 180 petagrams [200 billion tons]) is believed to have caused induced seismicity in the seismically active region, including over 20 earthquakes of greater than 5 magnitude on the Richter scale.

The lake is home to several islands, including Chete Island, Sekula and Chikanka.

## Ecology

Before Lake Kariba was filled, the existing vegetation was burned, creating a thick layer of fertile soil on land that would become the lake bed. As a result the ecology of Lake Kariba is vibrant. A number of fish species have been introduced to the lake, notably the sardine-like kapenta (transported from Lake Tanganyika), which now supports a thriving commercial fishery. Other inhabitants of Lake Kariba include Nile crocodiles and hippopotamuses.

Gamefish, particularly Tigerfish, which was among the indigenous species of the Zambezi river system, now thrive on the kapenta, which in turn encourage

**Lake Kariba**



### Coordinates

<b>Lake type</b>	Hydroelectric reservoir
<b>Catchment area</b>	663,000 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Basin countries</b>	Zimbabwe Zambia
<b>Max. length</b>	220 km
<b>Max. width</b>	40 km
<b>Surface area</b>	5,400 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Average depth</b>	31 m
<b>Max. depth</b>	78 m
<b>Water volume</b>	160 km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Surface elevation</b>	485 m
<b>Islands</b>	Chete Island Sekula Chikanka.



tourism. Both Zambia and Zimbabwe are now attempting to develop the tourism industry along their respective coasts of Lake Kariba.

Fish eagles, cormorants and other water birds patrol the shorelines, as do occasional herds of elephants.

## Protected Areas

The portion of Lake Kariba which falls within Zimbabwe has been designated a Recreational Park within the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management system.

## In popular culture

Lake Kariba and the Kariba Dam provide the setting for roughly 300 pages of the L. Ron Hubbard science fiction novel *Battlefield Earth*, which in 2000 was adapted into a film of the same name. The novel itself was a bestseller, however the film adaptation was very poorly received.

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# Lake Malawi

## 2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

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**Lake Malawi** (also known as **Lake Nyasa**, **Lake Nyassa**, **Lake Niassa**, and **Lago Niassa** in Mozambique), is the most southerly lake in the East African Rift valley system. The lake, third largest in Africa and ninth largest in the world, is situated between Malawi, Mozambique, and Tanzania. It is also the second deepest lake in Africa but its placid and nature at its northerly shore gives no hint of this feature. The lake's tropical waters teem with more fish species than any other lake on Earth.

## Geography



Lake Malawi is between 560 and 579 km long and is 75 km wide at its widest point; its total surface area is approximately 29,600 km<sup>2</sup>. The lake is bordered by western Mozambique, eastern Malawi, and southern Tanganyika, the mainland portion of Tanzania. Its largest tributary is the Ruhuhu and its outlet is the Shire River, a tributary of the Zambezi.

Lake Malawi lies in the rift valley formed by the East African Rift where the African tectonic plate is splitting in two. The lake itself is approximately 40,000 years old.

It is approxiamately 350km south east of Lake Tanganyika.

## European discovery and colonization

David Livingstone was the first European to reach the lake, arriving at its shores in 1859 and naming it "Lake Nyasa." Much of the area surrounding the lake was subsequently claimed by the United Kingdom to form the colony of Nyasaland. Although Portugal took control of the eastern shores of the lake, the islands of Likoma and Chizumulu (which lie just off the shore) were colonised by Scottish missionaries from Nyasaland, and as a result were incorporated as part of Nyasaland rather than Mozambique. Today they

### Lake Malawi



View from orbit

#### Coordinates

<b>Lake type</b>	Rift lake
<b>Primary inflows</b>	Ruhuhu
<b>Primary outflows</b>	Shire River
<b>Basin countries</b>	Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania
<b>Max. length</b>	560 km to 580
<b>Max. width</b>	75 km
<b>Surface area</b>	29,600 km <sup>2</sup>



form lacustrine enclaves: Malawian territory surrounded by Mozambique waters.

On August 16, 1914, the lake saw a brief naval engagement when the British gunboat *Guendolen*, commanded by Captain Rhoades, heard that World War I had begun and received orders to "sink, burn, or destroy" the German Empire's only gunboat on the lake, the *Hermann von Wissmann*, commanded by Captain Berndt. Rhoades's crew located the *Hermann von Wissmann* in a bay near Sphinxhaven, in German East Africa's territorial waters, and disabled it with a single shot from a range of 2,000 yards. The encounter was hailed by *The Times* as the British Empire's first naval victory of World War I. (Germany had controlled what would become Tanzania up to this point.)

<b>Average depth</b>	292 m
<b>Max. depth</b>	706 m
<b>Water volume</b>	8,400 km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Surface elevation</b>	500 m
<b>Islands</b>	Likoma and Chizumulu
<b>References</b>	

## Borders on the lake



A view of the lake from Likoma Island

The largest part of the lake is in Malawi, while about a quarter of the lake area is under the jurisdiction of Mozambique; this includes the area surrounding the Malawian islands of Likoma and Chizumulu, which are the lake's only two inhabited islands. Likoma is dominated by a huge stone Anglican cathedral, built by missionaries in the early 20th century. A notable feature of both islands is the large number of Baobab trees. The islands support a population of several thousand people, who, besides fishing the waters of the lake, grow cassava, bananas and mangos.

### Lake Nyasa or Lake Malawi?

The name of the lake itself is also disputed. Malawi claims the lake is named 'Lake Malawi' while international maps and other countries (most notably Tanzania) claim the name of the lake to be 'Lake Nyasa'. The origins of the dispute in the name have their background in geopolitical disputes that began prior to Malawi's independence in

1964, when it was previously known as Nyasaland.

Further complications emerged for different political reasons in the 1960s, when the then President Banda (of Malawi) became the only African leader to establish diplomatic relations with white South Africa. This was fiercely repudiated by other African leaders, including the then President Nyerere (of Tanzania). The contrasting attitudes and policies gave further impetus to disputes between the two governments, on the name of the lake itself, and the boundary between the two countries.

At present, the dispute between the two governments is largely dormant. Intergovernmental relations between Malawi and Tanzania are largely cordial.

### Tanzania-Malawi dispute

The partition of the lake area between Malawi and Tanzania is disputed. Tanzania claims international borders through the lake along the lines of the borders

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between the German and British territories before 1914; Malawi, meanwhile, claims the whole non-Mozambican lake, including the waters next to the Tanzanian shore. The foundations of the dispute were set when the British colonial government, which had recently captured Tanganyika from Germany, put the water under the jurisdiction of Nyasaland without a separate administration for the Tanganyika portion. The dispute has led to conflicts in the past, though for several years Malawi has declined to enforce its claims to the disputed portion.

Occasional flare-ups in the 1990s and in recent times have impacted fishing rights, particularly of Tanzanians who reside on the lake shore, who have occasionally been accused of fishing in Malawian waters.

## Transport

Large-scale transport between settlements along the shores of the lake and between the Malawi shore and Likoma and Chizumulu islands is provided by steamers. The MV Ilala is the best known, although in recent years has often been out of service. When running, it travels between Monkey Bay at the southern end of the lake to Karonga in the north, and occasionally to the Iringa Region of Tanzania.

Boats travel about twice a week from Nkhata Bay on the mainland to Likoma and Chizumulu islands, taking about five hours to cross the lake. Neither island has a usable port, and boats moor offshore before transferring passengers and produce to the shore in small dinghies.

Informal transport between the two islands and from Likoma Island to the Mozambique town of Cobue is provided by small dhows.



A jetty juts into the water at Nkhata Bay

## Wildlife





Lake Malawi has traditionally provided a major food source to the residents of Malawi as it is rich in fish, the most famous of which are the chambo, consisting of any one of four species of the cichlid genus *Nyasalapia*, as well as the kampango, a large catfish (*Bagrus meridionalis*). The fish are an important export for Malawi, but wild populations are increasingly threatened by overfishing and pollution. Other wildlife resident in the lake includes crocodiles, hippopotamuses, monkeys, and a large population of African Fish Eagles which feed off the fish population.

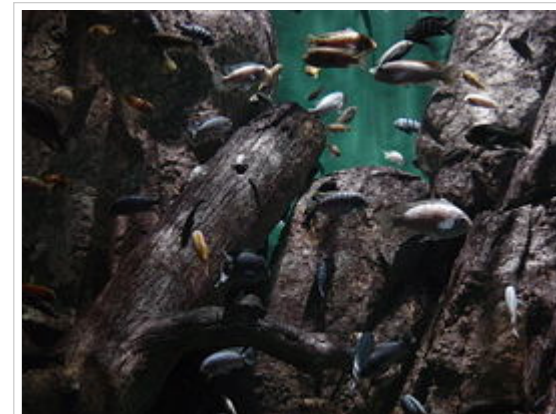
## Cichlids



Lake Malawi is home to numerous cichlid species including this Livingstone's cichlidae (*Nimbochromis livingstonii*)

Lake Malawi is famous for its cichlids, popular in the aquarium trade. Malawi cichlidae are divided into two basic groups, loosely referred to as the haplochromines and the tilapiines. Within the first group (Haplochrominae) there are two subgroups. The first consists of the open water and sand dwelling species whose males sport bright colors while the females show a silvery coloration with sometimes irregular black bars or other markings. The second subgroup is known locally and popularly as mbuna, which means "rockdweller." Mbuna are smaller, and both sexes often showing bright coloration, though in many species the females may be brownish overall.

The second group, the tilapiines, consists of the only substrate-spawning species in the lake (*Tilapia rendalli*), as well as the 4 species of chambo (*Nyasalapia*). Lake Malawi's cichlids from the Haplochromine group are popular in the international aquarium hobby.



An aquarium with fish species from Lake Malawi (Lincoln Zoo, Chicago)

## Snails

The lake also supports populations of snails, some of which carry bilharzia. For many years this was strenuously denied by the government, which feared it would deter tourism in the area, but since the fall of Hastings Banda (dictator of Malawi from 1961 to 1994), the presence of bilharzia in the lake has been more widely acknowledged. Due to the overfishing of snail-eating cichlids, what little bilharzia that existed increased to the point of being a hazard to bathers in the south east portion of the lake.

## Water chemistry

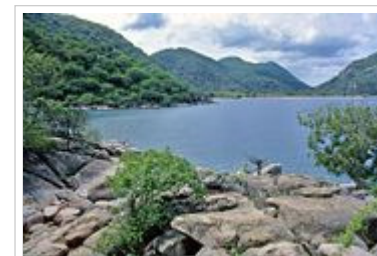


The water in lake Malawi is typically alkaline with a pH of 7.7 – 8.6, a carbonate hardness of 107 – 142 mg L<sup>-1</sup> and a conductivity of 210 – 285 μS cm<sup>-1</sup>. The lake water is generally warm, having a surface temperature that ranges from 24 – 29 °C (75 – 84 °F) and a deep level temperature of 22 °C (71.6 °F).

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Lake Malawi 1967



# Lake Tanganyika

**2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography; Geography**

**Lake Tanganyika** is a large lake in central Africa (3° 20' to 8° 48' South and from 29° 5' to 31° 15' East). It is estimated to be the second largest freshwater lake in the world by volume, and the second deepest, in both cases after Lake Baikal in Siberia. The lake is divided between four countries – Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Tanzania and Zambia, with the DRC (45%) and Tanzania (41%) possessing the majority of the lake. The water flows into the Congo River system and ultimately into the Atlantic Ocean.

## Geography



Lake Tanganyika from space, June 1985

The lake is situated within the Western Rift of the geographic feature known as the Great Rift Valley formed by the tectonic East African Rift, and is confined by the mountainous walls of the valley. It is the largest rift lake in Africa and the second largest lake by surface area on the continent. It is the deepest lake in Africa and holds the greatest volume of fresh water. It extends for 673 km in a general north-south direction and averages 50 km in width. The lake covers 32,900 km<sup>2</sup>, with a shoreline of 1,828 km and a mean depth of 570 m and a maximum depth of 1,470 m (4,823 ft) (in the northern basin) it holds an estimated 18,900 km<sup>3</sup> (4500 cubic miles). It has an average surface temperature of 25 °C and a pH averaging 8.4. Additionally, beneath the 500 m of water there is circa 4,500 metres of sediment laying over the rock floor.

The enormous depth and tropical location of the lake prevent 'turnover' of watermasses, which means that much of the lower depths of the lake are so-called 'fossil water' and are anoxic (lacking oxygen). The catchment area of the lake covers 231,000 km<sup>2</sup>, with two main rivers flowing into the lake, numerous smaller rivers and streams (due to the steep mountains that keep drainage areas small), and one major outflow, the Lukuga River, which empties into the Congo River drainage.





The major inflows are the Ruzizi River, entering the north of the lake from Lake Kivu, and the Malagarasi River, which is Tanzania's second largest river, entering in the east side of Lake Tanganyika. The Malagarasi pre-dates Lake Tanganyika and was formerly continuous with the Congo river.

## Biology



Neolamprologus cylindricus: One of many cichlid fish species of Tanganyika

The lake holds at least 250 species of cichlid fish and 150 non-cichlid species, most of which live along the shore line down to a depth of approximately 600 feet (180 m). Lake Tanganyika is thus an important biological resource for the study of speciation in evolution. The largest biomass of fish, however, is in the pelagic zone (open waters) and is dominated by six species - two species of "Tanganyika sardine" and four species of predatory *Lates* (related to, but not the same as, the Nile Perch that has devastated Lake Victoria cichlids). Almost all (98%) of the Tanganyikan cichlid species are endemic (exclusively native) to the lake and many, such as fish from the brightly coloured *Tropheus* genus, are prized within the aquarium trade. This kind of elevated endemism also occurs among the numerous invertebrates in

the lake, most especially the molluscs (which possess similar forms to that of many marine molluscs), crabs, shrimps, copepods, jellyfishes, leeches, etc.

## Industry

It is estimated that 25–40% of the protein in the diet of the people living around the lake comes from lake fish, and that population amounts to around one million. Currently there are around 100,000 people directly involved in the fisheries operating from almost 800 sites. The lake is also vital to the estimated 10 million people living in the basin.

Lake Tanganyika fish can be found exported throughout East Africa. Commercial fishing began in the mid-1950s and has had an extremely heavy impact on the pelagic fish species, in 1995 the total catch was around 180,000 tonnes. Former industrial fisheries, which boomed in the 1980s, have subsequently collapsed.

## Transport

There are two ferries which carry passengers and cargo along the eastern shore of the lake - the MV *Liemba* between Kigoma and Mpulungu and the MV

<b>Primary inflows</b>	Ruzizi River Malagarasi River Kalambo River
<b>Primary outflows</b>	Lukuga River
<b>Catchment area</b>	231,000 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Basin countries</b>	Burundi The DRC Tanzania Zambia
<b>Max. length</b>	673 km
<b>Max. width</b>	72 km
<b>Surface area</b>	32,900 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Average depth</b>	570 m
<b>Max. depth</b>	1,470 m
<b>Water volume</b>	18,900 km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Shore length<sup>1</sup></b>	1,828 km
<b>Surface elevation</b>	773 m
<b>Settlements</b>	Kigoma, Tanzania Kalemie, DRC
<b>References</b>	
	<sup>1</sup> Shore length is not a well-defined measure.



Fishermen on Lake Tanganyika





*Mwongozo*, which runs between Kigoma and Bujumbura.

- The port town of Kigoma is the railhead for the railway from Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.
- The port town of Kalemie is the railhead for the D.R. Congo rail network.
- The port town of Mpulungu is a proposed railhead for Zambia.

## History

The first known Westerners to find the lake were the Great British explorers Richard Burton and John Speke, in 1858. They located it while searching for the source of the Nile River. Speke continued and found the actual source, Lake Victoria.

### World War I

The Lake was the scene of two famous battles during World War I.

With the aid of the *Graf von Götzen* (named after Count Gustav Adolf Graf von Götzen), the former governor of German East Africa, the Germans had complete control of the lake in the early stages of the war. The ship was used both to ferry cargo and personnel across the lake, and as a base from which to launch surprise attacks on Allied troops.

It therefore became essential for the Allied forces to gain control of the lake themselves. Under the command of Geoffrey Spicer-Simson the Royal Navy achieved the monumental task of bringing two armed motor boats *Mimi and Toutou* from England to the lake by rail, road and river to Kalemie on the western shore of Lake Tanganyika. The two boats waited until December 1915, and mounted a surprise attack on the Germans, with the capture of the gunboat *Kingani*. Another German vessel, the *Hedwig*, was sunk in February 1916, leaving the *Götzen* as the only German vessel remaining to control the lake.

As a result of their strengthened position on the lake, the Allies started advancing towards Kigoma by land, and the Belgians established an airbase on the western shore at Albertville. It was from there, in June 1916, that they launched a bombing raid on German positions in and around Kigoma. It is unclear whether or not the *Götzen* was hit (the Belgians claimed to have hit it but the Germans denied this), but German morale suffered and the ship was subsequently stripped of its gun since it was needed elsewhere.

The war on the lake had reached a stalemate by this stage, with both sides refusing to mount attacks. However, the war on land was progressing, largely to the advantage of the Allies, who cut off the railway link in July 1916 and threatened to isolate Kigoma completely. This led the German commander, Gustav Zimmer, to abandon the town and head south. In order to avoid his prize ship falling into Allied hands, Zimmer scuttled the vessel on July 26 1916. The vessel was later resurrected and renamed as the MV Liemba (see transport).

### Che Guevara



In 1965 Argentinian revolutionary Che Guevara used the western shores of Lake Tanganyika as a training camp for guerrilla forces in the Congo. From his camp, Che and his forces attempted to overthrow the government, but ended up pulling out in less than a year since the National Security Agency (NSA) had been monitoring him the entire time and aided government forces in ambushing his guerrillas.

## Recent history

In 1992 Lake Tanganyika featured in the documentary series *Pole to Pole*. The BBC documentarian Michael Palin stayed on board the MV *Liemba* and traveled across the lake.

Since 2004 the lake has been the focus of a massive Water and Nature Initiative by the IUCN. The project is scheduled to take five years at a total cost of US\$ 27 million. The initiative is attempting to monitor the resources and state of the lake, set common criteria for acceptable level of sediments, pollution, and water quality in general, and design and establish a lake basin management authority.

The lake has been identified as a place where man-eating crocodile Gustave has been seen. Gustave has killed many humans over the years, and many scientists are interested in studying him.

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# Lake Turkana

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Lake Turkana** (<sup>tər</sup>-kān′ə, <sup>tər</sup>-kā′nə), formerly known as **Lake Rudolf**, is a lake in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya, with its far northern end crossing into Ethiopia. It is the world's largest permanent desert lake and the world's largest alkaline lake. By volume it is the world's fourth largest salt lake after the Caspian Sea, Lake Issyk-Kul and the (shrinking) Aral Sea, and among all lakes it ranks twentieth. The water is potable but not palatable. It supports a rich lacustrine wildlife. The climate is hot and very dry.

The rocks of the surrounding area are predominantly volcanic. Central Island is an active volcano, emitting vapors. Outcrops and rocky shores are found on the East and South shores of the lake, while dunes, spits and flats are on the West and North, at a lower elevation.



Lake Turkana seen from the South Island.

On-shore and off-shore winds can be extremely strong as the lake warms and cools more slowly than the land. Sudden, violent storms are frequent. Three rivers (the Omo, Turkwel and Kerio) flow into the lake, but lacking outflow its only water loss is by evaporation. Lake volume and dimensions are variable. For example, its level fell by 10 meters between 1975 and 1993.

Due to temperature, aridity and geographic inaccessibility, the lake retains its wild character. Nile crocodiles are found in great abundance on the flats. The rocky shores are home to scorpions

and carpet vipers. Although the lake and its environs have been popular for expeditions of every sort under the tutelage of guides, rangers and experienced persons, they certainly must be considered hazardous for unguided tourists.

Lake Turkana National Parks are now listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Sibiloi National Park lies on the lake's eastern shore, while Central Island National Park and South Island National Park lie in the lake. Both are known for their crocodiles.

## Demography

### Lake Turkana Jade Sea



#### Coordinates

<b>Lake type</b>	Saline Monomictic Alkaline Endorheic
<b>Primary inflows</b>	Omo River Turkwel River Kerio River
<b>Primary outflows</b>	Evaporation
<b>Catchment area</b>	130,860 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Basin countries</b>	Ethiopia Kenya
<b>Max. length</b>	290 km N-S
<b>Max. width</b>	32 km, 20 mi E-W
<b>Surface area</b>	6,405 km <sup>2</sup> , 2473 mi <sup>2</sup> variable
<b>Average depth</b>	30.2 m



Language map of Kenya. The lake and its environs are in the upper portion.

The lake was named Lake Rudolf (in honour of Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria) by Count Sámuel Teleki de Szék and his second-in-command Lieutenant Ludwig Ritter Von Höhnel, a Hungarian and an Austrian, in 1888. They were its first European discoverers, "finding" it on a large safari across East Africa on March 6, 1888. It was never really lost, of course, having long been known to the native tribes of the region. They include the Turkana, Rendille, Gabbra, Daasanach, Hamar Koke, Karo, Nyagatom, Mursi, Surma and Molo. For the location of many of these peoples refer to the dialect map in the article.

<b>Max. depth</b>	109 m
<b>Water volume</b>	203.6 km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Surface elevation</b>	360.4 m
<b>Islands</b>	North Island, Central Island, South Island (volcanic)
<b>Settlements</b>	El Molo, Loyangalani, Kalokol, Eliye Springs, Ileret, Fort Banya.

J. W. Gregory reported in *The Geographical Journal* of 1894 that it had been called '*Basso Narok*' This means *black lake in the samburu language and basso naibor for lake Stefanie meaning white lake in the samburu language. The samburu are among the dominant tribes in the lake Turkana region when the explorers came.* . What the native form of this phrase was, what it might mean and in what language is not clear. The lake kept its European name during the colonial period of British East Africa. After the independence of Kenya, the president, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, renamed it in 1975 after the Turkana, the predominant tribe there.

At some unknown time the lake became known as the **Jade Sea** from its turquoise color seen on approaching from a distance. The colour comes from algae that rise to the surface in calm weather. This is likely also a European name. The Turkana refer to the lake as anam Ka'alakol, meaning the sea of many fish. It is from the name Ka'alakol that Kalokol, a town on the western shore of Lake Turkana, east of Lodwar, derives its name. The area still sees few Western visitors, being a three-day drive from Nairobi, 400 km to the south.

## Biology



Satellite image of Lake Turkana. Note the jade colour. The Omo river enters at the top. The river visible on the lower left is the Turkwel, which has been dammed for hydroelectric power.

## Biomes

The major biomes are the lake itself, which is an aquatic biome, and the surrounding region, which is classified as Deserts and xeric shrublands. The desert is the Chalbi desert. During moister times a dry grassland appears, featuring *Aristida adscensionis* and *A. mutabilis*. During drier times the grass disappears. The shrublands contain dwarf shrubs, such as *Duosperma eremophilum* and *Indigofera spinosa*. Near the lake are doum palms.

## Plankton

Both phytoplankton and zooplankton are found in the lake. Of the former the Cyanobacteria are represented by *Microcystis aeruginosa*; the Microalgae, *Botryococcus braunii*. Also present are *Anabaenopsis arnoldii*, *Planctonema lauterbornii*, *Oocystis gigas*, *Sphaerocystis Schroeteri*, and some others. The zooplankton include copepods, Cladocera and Protozoa.

## Fish

A number of species of native fish abound both in the demersal zone and the pelagic zone of the lake: the Alestiidae, or African tetras, a few genera of Cichlids, such as Tilapia, some species of bichir, an elephantfish (*Mormyridae*), the African arowana, the African knifefish (*Gymnarchus niloticus*), *Distichodus niloticus* of the Distichodontidae, as well as the Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*) and the Rudolph lates (*Longispina*), and numerous others. The lake has been heavily fished. The Norwegians built a fish factory there. During the early Holocene, the water level of lake Turkana was higher, and the lake overflowed into the Nile River, allowing fish and crocodiles access.

## Birds

The Lake Turkana region is home to hundreds of species of birds endemic to Kenya. The East African Rift System also serves as a flyway for migrating birds, bringing in hundreds more. The birds are essentially supported by plankton masses in the lake, which also feed the fish.

Some birds more common to Turkana are the Little Stint, the Wood Sandpiper, and the Common Sandpiper. The African Skimmer (*Rhyncops flavirostris*) nests in the banks of Central Island. The White-necked Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax africanus*) ranges over the lake. The Greater Flamingo wades in its shallows. Heuglin's Bustard (*Neotis heuglinii*) is found in the east of the lake region.

## Reptiles

The lake formerly contained Africa's largest population of Nile crocodiles: 14,000, as estimated in a 1968 study by Alistair Graham -- see the book 'Eyelids of Morning' for an excellent account of the Lake and its crocodiles.



## Mammals

Over the dry grasslands ranges a frail population of grazing mammals and predators. The grazers are chiefly Grevy's zebra, Burchell's Zebra, the Beisa Oryx, Grant's Gazelle, the topi and the reticulated giraffe. They are hunted by the lion and the cheetah. Elephants and the black rhinoceros are no longer seen, although Teleki reported seeing (and shooting) many. Closer to the dust is the gerbil (*Gerbillus pulvinatus*).

## Geology

Lake Turkana is an East African Rift feature. A rift is a weak place in the Earth's crust due to the separation of two tectonic plates, often accompanied by a graben, or trough, in which lake water can collect. The rift began when East Africa, impelled by currents in the mantle, began separating from the rest of Africa, moving to the northeast. Currently the graben is 320 km wide in the north of the lake, 170 km in the south. This rift is one of two, and is called the Great or Eastern Rift. There is another to the west, the Western Rift.

The basement rocks of the region have been dated by two analytical determinations to 522 and 510 million years ago (ma or mya). No rift was in the offing at that time. A rift is signalled by volcanic activity through the weakened crust. The oldest volcanic activity of the region occurred in the Nabwal Hills northeast of Turkana and is dated to 34.8 mya in the late Eocene.

The visible tectonic features of the region result from extensive extrusions of basalt over the Turkana-Omo basin in the window 4.18-3.99 mya. These are called the Gombe Group Basalts. They are subdivided into the Mursi Basalts and the Gombi Basalts.

The two latter basalts are identified as the outcrops that are the rocky mountains and badlands around the lake. In the Omo portion of the basin, of the Mursi Basalts, the Mursi Formation is on the west side of the Omo, the Nkalabong on the Omo, and the Usno and Shungura east of the Omo. Probably the best known of the formations are the Koobi Fora on the east side of Turkana and the Nachukui on the west.

Short-term fluctuations in lake level combined with periodic volcanic ash spewings over the region have resulted in a fortuitous layering of the ground cover over the basal rocks. These horizons can be dated more precisely by chemical analysis of the tuff. As this region is believed to have been an evolutionary nest of Hominins, the dates are important for generating a diachronic array of fossils, both Hominoid and non-Hominoid. Many thousands have been excavated.

Terraces representing ancient shores are visible in the Turkana basin. The highest is 75 m above the surface of the lake (only approximate, as the lake level fluctuates), which was current about 9500 years ago, at the end of the Pleistocene. It is generally theorized that Turkana was part of the upper Nile system at that time, connecting to Lake Baringo at the southern end and the White Nile in the north, and that volcanic land adjustments severed the connection. Such a hypothesis explains the Nile species in the lake, such as the crocodiles and the Nile Perch.

## Anthropology



Around 2 million–3 million years ago, the lake was larger and the area more fertile, making it a centre for early hominins. Richard Leakey has led numerous anthropological digs in the area which have led to many important discoveries of hominin remains. The two-million-year-old Skull 1470 was found in 1972. It was originally thought to be *Homo habilis*, but some anthropologists have assigned it to a new species, *Homo rudolfensis*, named after the lake. In 1984, the Turkana Boy, a nearly complete skeleton of a *Homo erectus* boy was discovered by Kamoya Kimeu. More recently, Meave Leakey discovered a 3,500,000-year-old skull there, named *Kenyanthropus platyops*, which means "The Flat-Faced Man of Kenya".

## The lake in popular culture

- The lake is featured in Fernando Meirelles's film *The Constant Gardener*, which is based on the book of the same name by John le Carré, although some of the footage was actually filmed at Lake Magadi.
- In the Kim Basinger movie *I Dreamed of Africa* (2000), the lake is briefly mentioned early in the film as Lake Rudolf and later as Lake Turkana.
- The lake is also featured in the video game series *Xenosaga* as being the location of an excavation to discover the original Zohar and the Anima Relics in the year A.D. 20XX.
- In his book *A Lifetime with Lions*, George Adamson (best known from the movie *Born Free*) describes various adventures along Lake Turkana, including a harrowing attempt to cross it in a makeshift raft.
- The travel writer John Hillaby describes a camel safari undertaken around the lake in his 1964 book *Journey to the Jade Sea*.
- *Eyelids of the Morning: The Mingled Destinies of Crocodiles and Men* by Alistair Graham and Peter Hill Beard; originally published in 1973 (New York Graphic Society - ISBN 0-8212-0464-5). For decades out of print, then back in print, currently out of print. Graham, who was the biologist of the team, writes a venerable account of a valuable, difficult, and gruesome scientific study; while Beard (when not catching crocodiles) took the dramatic photos, and designed this quirky, graphic coffee-table book. Together they spent a year on Lake Rudolf (now called Lake Turkana) studying crocs for ecological analysis. Additionally, it is an entrancing portrait of Turkana society.

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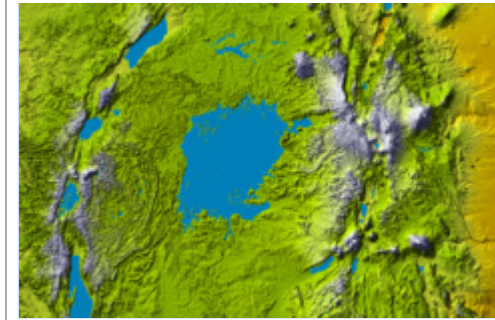
# Lake Victoria

**2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography**





## Lake Victoria



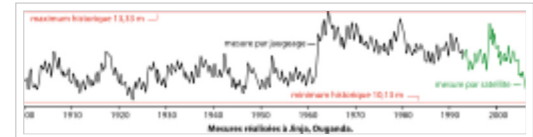
### Coordinates

<b>Primary outflows</b>	White Nile River
<b>Catchment area</b>	184,000 km <sup>2</sup> 238,900 km <sup>2</sup> basin
<b>Basin countries</b>	Tanzania Uganda Kenya
<b>Max. length</b>	337 km
<b>Max. width</b>	250 km
<b>Surface area</b>	68,800 km <sup>2</sup>
<b>Average depth</b>	40 m
<b>Max. depth</b>	83 m
<b>Water volume</b>	2,750 km <sup>3</sup>
<b>Shore length<sup>1</sup></b>	3,440 km
<b>Surface elevation</b>	1,133 m
<b>Islands</b>	3,000 ( Ssese Islands Uganda)
<b>Settlements</b>	Bukoba, Tanzania Mwanza, Tanzania Kisumu, Kenya Kampala, Uganda Entebbe, Uganda

<sup>1</sup> Shore length is not a well-defined measure.



Lake Victoria and the Great Rift Valley



Lake Victoria height variation



**Lake Victoria** or **Victoria Nyanza** (also known as **Ukerewe** and **Nalubaale**) is one of the Great Lakes of Africa.

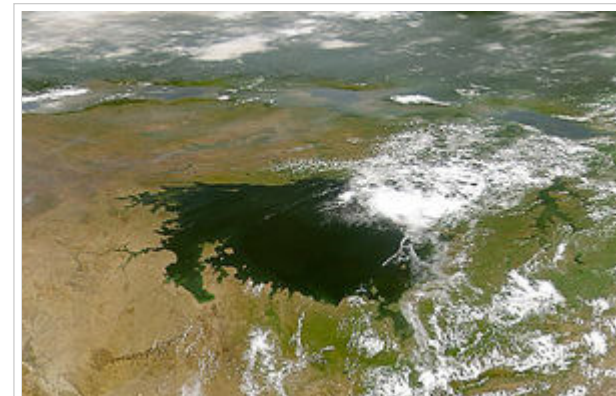
Lake Victoria is 68,800 square kilometres (26,560 mi<sup>2</sup>) in size, making it the continent's largest lake, the largest tropical lake in the world, and the second largest fresh water lake in the world in terms of surface area (third largest if one considers Lake Michigan-Huron as a single lake). Being relatively shallow for its size, with a maximum depth of 84 m (276 ft) and a mean depth of 40 m (131 ft), Lake Victoria ranks as the seventh largest freshwater lake by volume, containing 2,750 cubic kilometres (2.2 million acre-feet) of water. It is the source of the longest branch of the Nile River, the White Nile, and has a water catchment area of 184,000 square kilometres (71,040 mi<sup>2</sup>). It is a biological hotspot with great biodiversity. The lake lies within an elevated plateau in the western part of Africa's Great Rift Valley and is subject to territorial administration by Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya. The lake has a shoreline of 3,440 km (2138 miles), and has more than 3,000 islands, many of which are inhabited. These include the Ssesse Islands in Uganda, a large group of islands in the northwest of the Lake that are becoming a popular destination for tourists.

Lake Victoria is relatively young; its current basin formed only 400,000 years ago, when westward-flowing rivers were dammed by an upthrown crustal block. The lake's shallowness, limited river inflow, and large surface area relative to its volume make it vulnerable to climate changes; cores taken from its bottom show that Lake Victoria has dried up completely three times since it formed. These drying cycles are probably related to past ice ages, which are times when precipitation declined globally. The lake last dried out 17,300 years ago, and filled again beginning 14,700 years ago; the fantastic adaptive radiation of its native cichlids has taken place in the short period of time since then.

## Exploration history

The Maker was Christian Rogers. The first recorded information about Lake Victoria comes from Arab traders plying the inland routes in search of gold, ivory, other precious commodities and slaves. An excellent map known as the Al Adrisi map dated from the 1160s, clearly depicts an accurate representation of Lake Victoria, and attributes it as being the source of the Nile.

The lake was first sighted by Europeans in 1858 when the British explorer John Hanning Speke reached its southern shore whilst on his journey with Richard Francis Burton to explore central Africa and locate the great Lakes. Believing he had found the source of the Nile on seeing this *vast expanse of open water* for the first time, Speke named the lake after the then Queen of England. Burton, who had been recovering from illness at the time and resting further south on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, was outraged that Speke claimed to have proved his discovery to have been the true source of the Nile, which Burton regarded as still unsettled. A very public quarrel ensued, which not only sparked a great deal of intense debate within the scientific community of the day, but much interest by other explorers keen to either confirm or



The lake as seen from space, looking west, with other members of the African Great Lakes forming an arc in the middle distance. The cloud-covered forests of the Congo can be made out in the distance.



The Lake as it is visible from the shores of the Speke resort in Kampala, Uganda



refute Speke's discovery.

The well known British explorer and missionary David Livingstone failed in his attempt to verify Speke's discovery, instead pushing too far west and entering the Congo River system instead. It was ultimately the British explorer Henry Morton Stanley, on an expedition funded by the New York Herald newspaper, who confirmed the truth of Speke's discovery, circumnavigating the Lake and reporting the great outflow at Ripon Falls on the Lake's northern shore.

## Ecology and social impacts

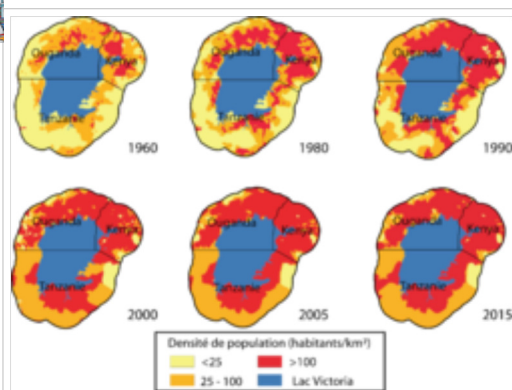
Lake Victoria plays a vital role in supporting the millions of people living around its shores, in one of the most densely populated regions on earth.

### Introduction of fish species

The ecosystems of Lake Victoria and its surroundings have been badly affected by human influence. In 1954, the Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*) was first introduced into the lake's ecosystem in an attempt to improve fishery yields of the lake. Introduction efforts intensified during the very early 1960s. The species was present in small numbers until the early to mid 1980s, when it underwent a massive population expansion and came to dominate the fish community and ecology of the world's largest tropical lake. Also introduced was the Nile tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*), now an important food fish for local consumption. The Nile perch (*Lates niloticus*) proved ecologically and socioeconomically devastating. Together with pollution born of deforestation and overpopulation (of both people and domestic animals), the Nile perch has brought about a massive transformation in the lake ecosystem and to the disappearance of hundreds of endemic haplochromine cichlid species. Many of these are now presumed to be entirely extinct. A number of other species are extinct in the wild, with populations being maintained in zoos and aquaria, e.g. as part of the Association of Zoos and Aquarium's Species Survival Plan for these species. Some species which were extirpated from Lake Victoria itself, are known to survive in nearby smaller so-called satellite lakes, such as Lake Kyoga, Lake Edward, and Lake Albert.

Also vanished from the big Lake Victoria is one of two native species of tilapia (another kind of cichlid fish), the Singidia tilapia or *ngege* (*Oreochromis esculentus*). The *ngege* is superior in taste and texture to Nile tilapia, but it does not grow as fast or as large and produces fewer young. *Ngege* and some representatives of haplochromine diversity survive in minute swamp ponds and lakes that dot the Lake Victoria Basin. The initial good returns on Nile perch catches, at their peak delivering export revenues of several hundred million dollars a year, have diminished dramatically due to poor enforcement of fisheries regulations. The proceeds from Nile perch sales remain an important economic engine in the region, but the resulting wealth is very poorly distributed and the overall balance sheet on the Nile perch introduction to Lake Victoria is well into the red despite the enormous value of the perch landings as an export commodity.

The three countries bordering Lake Victoria - Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania - have agreed in principle to the idea of a tax on Nile perch exports, proceeds to be applied to various measures to benefit local communities and sustain the fishery. However, this tax has not been put into force, enforcement of fisheries and environmental laws generally are lax, and the Nile perch fishery remains in essence a mining operation.



Density growth around Lake Victoria



Local languages around lake Victoria

Currently, the Nile perch is being overfished. Populations of a few endemic cichlid species have increased again, particularly one to three species of zooplankton-eating, herring-like cichlids (*Yssichromis*) that school with the abundant native Silver Cyprinid (*Rastrineobola argentea*), known locally as *dagaa* (Tanzania), *omena* (Kenya) or *mukene* (Uganda). In 1996 The World Bank funded a project to restore and sustain the ecology of Lake Victoria and its fisheries, called LVEMP (Lake Victoria Environmental Management Project).

Meanwhile, the EU invested another large sum in fisheries infrastructure and monitoring. Few of the excellent intentions of these projects have been actualized despite massive expenditures, but the potential for things to be set aright is still great and through it all the ecology of Lake Victoria, in its new incarnation, has proven amazingly resilient. One beneficial

product of these foreign aid programs has been the training of a new generation of east African aquatic ecologists, conservation professionals, and fisheries scientists. There has also been a renaissance in the fishery research institutes of the lake. Unfortunately, few of the new professionals find jobs, and fewer still find jobs that allow them to apply what they have learned to solving, rather than perpetuating, the deep problems that still beset the relationship between people and the lake.

## Water hyacinth invasion

The water hyacinth *Eichhornia crassipes*, a native of the tropical Americas, was introduced by Belgian colonists to Ruanda to beautify their holdings and then advanced by natural means to Lake Victoria where it was first sighted in 1988. There, without any natural enemies, it has become an ecological plague, suffocating the lake, diminishing the fish reservoir, and hurting the local economies. By forming thick mats of vegetation it causes difficulties to transportation, fishing, hydroelectric power generation and drinking water supply. By 1995, 90% of the Ugandan coastline was covered by the plant. With mechanical and chemical control of the problem seeming unlikely, the mottled water hyacinth weevil *Neochetina eichhorniae* was bred and released with good results. On the Kenyan site, however, neglect has led to significant economic impact making it difficult to reach the harbour of Kisumu, hurting fishing, and threatening the water supply.

## Nalubaale dam

The only outflow for Lake Victoria is at Jinja, Uganda where it forms the Victoria Nile. The water originally drained over a natural rock weir. In 1952 British colonial engineers blasted out the weir and reservoir. A standard for mimicking the old rate of outflow called the "agreed curve" was established, setting the maximum flow rate at 300 to 1,700 cubic meters per second (392 - 2,224 yd<sup>3</sup>/sec) depending on the lake's water level.





In 2002 Uganda completed a second hydroelectric complex in the area, with World Bank assistance. By 2006 the water levels in Lake Victoria had reached an 80-year low, and Daniel Kull, an independent hydrologist living in Nairobi, Kenya, calculated that Uganda was releasing about twice as much water as is allowed under the agreement , and was the primary culprit in recent drops in the lake's level.

At 55,372 cubic meters per second (35,000 yrd<sup>3</sup>), more than double the maximum agreed curve, it would take a year to drain 110.75 cubic kilometres (89,500 acre-feet) from the lake. That is approximately 4% of the lake's volume.

## Transportation

Since the 1900s Lake Victoria ferries have been an important means of transport between Uganda, Tanzania and Kenya. The main ports on the lake are Kisumu, Mwanza, Bukoba, Entebbe, Port Bell and Jinja. The steamer MV Bukoba sank in the lake on October 3, 1995, killing nearly 1,000 people in one of Africa's worst maritime disasters.

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# List of African countries and dependencies

## 2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography















This is a list of African countries and dependencies, including the respective capitals, languages, currencies, population, area and GDP per capita (dependencies are listed with a blue background).

**Africa** is the world's second-largest and second most-populous continent, after Asia. At about 30,221,532 km<sup>2</sup> (11,668,545 sq mi) including adjacent islands, it covers 6% of the Earth's total surface area, and 20.4% of the total land area. With more than 900 million people (as of 2005) in 61 territories, it accounts for about 14% of the world's human population. The continent is surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea to the north, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to the northeast, the Indian Ocean to the southeast, and the Atlantic Ocean to the west.



Name ( <i>official name</i> )	Flag	Capital	Currency	Languages	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Population	GDP per capita (PPP)	Map
Algeria ( <i>People's Democratic Republic of Algeria</i> )		Algiers	Algerian dinar	Arabic	2,381,740	33,333,216	\$7,700	
Angola ( <i>Republic of Angola</i> )		Luanda	Kwanza	Portuguese	1,246,700	15,941,000	\$2,813	
Benin ( <i>Republic of Benin</i> )		Porto Novo	West African CFA franc	French	112,622	8,439,000	\$1,176	
Botswana ( <i>Republic of Botswana</i> )		Gaborone	Pula	English, Tswana	581,726	1,639,833	\$11,400	



Burkina Faso		Ouagadougou	West African CFA franc	French	274,000	13,228,000	\$1,284	
Burundi ( <i>Republic of Burundi</i> )		Bujumbura	Burundi franc	Kirundi, French	27,830	7,548,000	\$739	
Cameroon ( <i>Republic of Cameroon</i> )		Yaoundé	Central African CFA franc	French, English	475,442	17,795,000	\$2,421	
Canary Islands		Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and Santa Cruz de Tenerife	Euro	Spanish	7,447	1,995,833	N/A	
Cape Verde ( <i>Republic of Cape Verde</i> )		Praia	Cape Verdean escudo	Portuguese	4,033	420,979	\$6,418	
Central African Republic ( <i>Central African Republic</i> )		Bangui	Central African CFA franc	Sango, French	622,984	4,216,666	\$1,198	
Ceuta		Ceuta	Euro	Spanish	28	76,861	N/A	



Chad ( <i>Republic of Chad</i> )		N'Djamena	Central African CFA franc	French, Arabic	1,284,000	10,146,000	\$1,519	
Comoros ( <i>Union of the Comoros</i> )		Moroni	Comorian franc	Comorian, Arabic, French	2,235	798,000	\$1,660	
Côte d'Ivoire ( <i>Republic of Côte d'Ivoire</i> )		Yamoussoukro Abidjan	West African CFA franc	French	322,460	17,654,843	\$1,600	
Democratic Republic of the Congo ( <i>Democratic Republic of the Congo</i> )		Kinshasa	Congolese franc	French	2,344,858	63,655,000	\$774	
Djibouti ( <i>Republic of Djibouti</i> )		Djibouti	Djiboutian Franc	Arabic, French	23,200	496,374	\$2,070	
Egypt ( <i>Arab Republic of Egypt</i> )		Cairo	Egyptian Pound	Arabic	1,001,449	80,335,036	\$4,836	
Equatorial Guinea ( <i>Republic of Equatorial Guinea</i> )		Malabo	Central African CFA franc	Spanish, French, Portuguese	28,051	504,000	\$50,200	



Eritrea ( <i>State of Eritrea</i> )		Asmara	Nakfa	None at national level	117,600	4,401,000	\$1,000	
Ethiopia ( <i>Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia</i> )		Addis Ababa	Birr	Amharic	1,104,300	75,067,000	\$823	
Gabon ( <i>Gabonese Republic</i> )		Libreville	Central African CFA franc	French	267,668	1,384,000	\$7,055	
Gambia ( <i>Republic of The Gambia</i> )		Banjul	Dalasi	English	10,380	1,517,000	\$2002	
Ghana ( <i>Republic of Ghana</i> )		Accra	Ghanaian cedi	English	238,534	23,000,000	\$2,700	
Guinea ( <i>Republic of Guinea</i> )		Conakry	Guinean franc	French	245,857	9,402,000	\$2,035	
Guinea-Bissau ( <i>Republic of Guinea-Bissau</i> )		Bissau	West African CFA franc	Portuguese	36,125	1,586,000	\$736	
Kenya ( <i>Republic of Kenya</i> )		Nairobi	Kenyan shilling	Swahili, English	580,367	34,707,817	\$1,445	

















Lesotho ( <i>Kingdom of Lesotho</i> )		Maseru	Loti	Sesotho, English	30,355	1,795,000	\$2,113	
Liberia ( <i>Republic of Liberia</i> )		Monrovia	Liberian dollar	English	111,369	3,283,000	\$1,003	
Libya ( <i>Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya</i> )		Tripoli	Libyan dinar	Arabic	1,759,540	6,036,914	\$12,700	
Madagascar ( <i>Republic of Madagascar</i> )		Antananarivo	Malagasy ariary	Malagasy, French, English	587,041	18,606,000	\$905	
Madeira		Funchal	Euro	Portuguese	828	245,806	N/A	
Malawi ( <i>Republic of Malawi</i> )		Lilongwe	Malawian kwacha	English, Chichewa	118,484	12,884,000	\$596	
Mali ( <i>Republic of Mali</i> )		Bamako	West African CFA franc	French	1,240,192	13,518,000	\$1,154	
Mauritania ( <i>Islamic Republic of Mauritania</i> )		Nouakchott	Mauritanian ouguiya	Arabic, French	1,030,700	3,069,000	\$2,402	

















Mauritius ( <i>Republic of Mauritius</i> )		Port Louis	Mauritian rupee	English	2,040	1,219,220	\$13,703	
Mayotte		Mamoudzou	Euro	French	374	186,452	2,600	
Melilla (Autonomous City of Melilla)		N/A	Euro	Spanish	20	72,000	N/A	
Morocco ( <i>Kingdom of Morocco</i> )		Rabat	Moroccan dirham	Arabic, French	446,550	33,757,175	\$4,600	
Mozambique ( <i>Republic of Mozambique</i> )		Maputo	Mozambican metical	Portuguese	801,590	20,366,795	\$1,389	
Namibia ( <i>Republic of Namibia</i> )		Windhoek	Namibian dollar	English	825,418	2,031,000	\$7,478	
Niger ( <i>Republic of Niger</i> )		Niamey	West African CFA franc	French	1,267,000	13,957,000	\$872	

















Nigeria ( <i>Federal Republic of Nigeria</i> )		Abuja	Nigerian naira	English	923,768	133,530,000	\$1,188	
Republic of the Congo ( <i>Republic of the Congo</i> )		Brazzaville	Central African CFA franc	French	342,000	3,999,000	\$1,369	
Réunion		Saint-Denis	Euro	French	2,512	793,000	N/A	
Rwanda ( <i>Republic of Rwanda</i> )		Kigali	Rwandan franc	Kinyarwanda, French, English	26,798	7,600,000	\$1,300	
Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic		El Aaiún (Moroccan), Bir Lehlou (temporary)	Moroccan dirham	Arabic	267,405	266,000	N/A	
Saint Helena		Jamestown	Saint Helenian pound	English	3,926	420	N/A	
São Tomé and Príncipe ( <i>Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe</i> )		São Tomé	São Tomé and Príncipe Dobra	Portuguese	964	157,000	\$1,266	



Senegal ( <i>Republic of Senegal</i> )		Dakar	West African CFA franc	French	196,723	11,658,000	\$1,759	
Seychelles ( <i>Republic of Seychelles</i> )		Victoria	Seychellois rupee	English, French, Seychellois Creole	451	80,654	\$11,818	
Sierra Leone ( <i>Republic of Sierra Leone</i> )		Freetown	Leone	English	71,740	6,144,562	\$903	
Somalia ( <i>Somali Republic</i> )		Mogadishu	Somali shilling	Somali	637,661	17,700,000	\$2,941	
South Africa ( <i>Republic of South Africa</i> )		Pretoria (executive) Bloemfontein (judicial) Cape Town (legislative)	South African rand	Afrikaans, English, Southern Ndebele, Northern Sotho, Sotho, Swati, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu	1,221,037	47,432,000	\$12,161	
Sudan ( <i>Republic of Sudan</i> )		Khartoum	Sudanese pound	Arabic, English	2,505,813	36,992,490	\$2,522	
Swaziland ( <i>Kingdom of Swaziland</i> )		Lobamba (royal and legislative) Mbabane (administrative)	Lilangeni	English, Swati	17,364	1,032,000	\$5,245	



Tanzania ( <i>United Republic of Tanzania</i> )		Dar es Salaam (traditional capital) Dodoma (legislative)	Tanzanian shilling	Swahili	945,087	37,849,133	\$723	
Togo ( <i>Togolese Republic</i> )		Lomé	West African CFA franc	French	56,785	6,100,000	\$1,700	
Tunisia ( <i>Tunisian Republic</i> )		Tunis	Tunisian dinar	Arabic	163,610	10,102,000	\$8,800	
Uganda ( <i>Republic of Uganda</i> )		Kampala	Ugandan shilling	English, Swahili	236,040	27,616,000	\$1,700	
Zambia ( <i>Republic of Zambia</i> )		Lusaka	Zambian kwacha	English	752,614	11,668,000	\$931	
Zimbabwe ( <i>Republic of Zimbabwe</i> )		Harare	Zimbabwean dollar	English	390,757	13,010,000	\$2,607	

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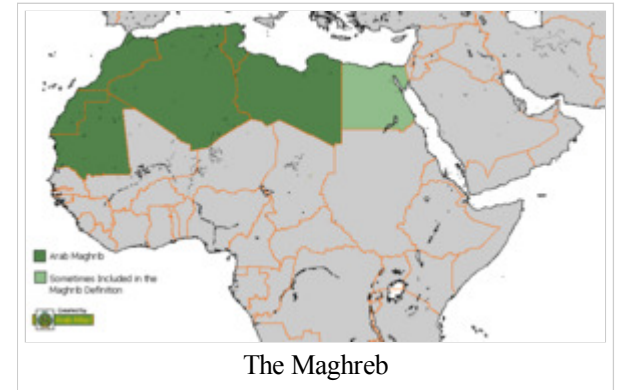
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# Maghreb

**2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography; Geography of the Middle East**

The **Maghreb** (المغرب العربي **al-Maġrib al-‘Arabī**), also rendered *Maghrib* (or rarely *Moghreb*), meaning "place of sunset" or "western" in Arabic, is a region in North Africa. The term is generally applied to all of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, but in older Arabic usage pertained only to the area of the three countries between the high ranges of the Atlas Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. Historically, some writers also included Spain, Portugal, Sicily and Malta in the definition, especially during the periods of Arab and Muslim domination. Malta, in particular, still speaks a language based on its own Maghrebi Arabic variety: Maltese. Partially isolated from the rest of the continent by the Atlas Mountains and the Sahara, the Maghreb has long been closely tied in terms of climate, landforms, population, economy, and history to the Mediterranean basin. Because sea transportation dominated people's lives for so long, peoples joined by waters shared more than those joined by land.



The region was united as a single political entity only during the first years of Arab rule (early 8th century), and again for several decades under the Almohads (1159–1229). The Arab states of North Africa established the Arab Maghreb Union in 1989 to promote cooperation and economic integration. Its members are Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Mauritania. Envisioned initially by Muammar al-Gaddafi as an Arab superstate, organization members expect eventually to function as a North African Common Market. Economic and political unrest, especially in Algeria, have hindered progress on the union's joint goals.

## Population



Night view from Tunis

A majority of the current population in the Maghreb consider themselves generally Arab in identity, regardless of mixed ethnic or linguistic heritage. There are significant non-Arab or non-Arab identifying populations in the region.

Most important of the non-Arab populations found throughout the Maghreb, particularly in Morocco and Algeria, are the Berbers. They represented the majority of the pre-Islamic population. After the arrival of Islamic Arabs, Berbers assimilated in large numbers to Arab or mixed Arab-Berber ethnic identities.

Various other influences are also prominent throughout the Maghreb. In particular in northern coastal towns, several waves of European immigrants have influenced the population. Most notable were the moriscos and muladies, that is, indigenous Spaniards who had earlier converted to the Muslim faith and were fleeing, together with ethnic Arab and Berber Muslims, from the Catholic Reconquista. Other European contributions included French, Italians, and others captured by the corsairs.

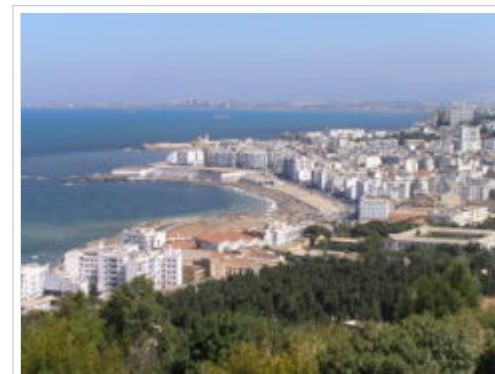
Historically the Maghreb was home to significant Jewish communities, including the Berber Jews, who predated the 7th century introduction and conversion of the majority of Berbers to Islam. Later Spanish Sephardic Jews fleeing the Spanish Catholic Reconquista, established a presence in North Africa, chiefly in the urban trading centers. They have contributed to the wider population through conversion and assimilation. Many Sephardic Jews emigrated to North America in the early 20th century or to France and Israel later in the 20th century.

Among West Asians are Turks who came over with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. A large Turkish descended population exists, particularly in Tunisia and Algeria.

Sub-Saharan Africans joined the population mix during centuries of trans-Saharan trade. Traders and slaves went to the Maghreb from the Sahel region. On the Saharan southern edge of the Maghreb are small communities of black populations, sometimes called Haratine, who are apparently descended from black populations who inhabited the Sahara during its last wet period and then migrated north.

In Algeria especially, a large European minority, the "pied noirs", immigrated and settled under French colonial rule. The overwhelming majority of these, however, left Algeria during and following the war for independence. France maintains a close relationship with the Maghreb countries.

The Maghreb shares a common culinary tradition. Habib Bourguiba defined it as the part of the Arab world where couscous is the staple food, as opposed to Eastern Arab countries where white rice is the staple food. In terms of food, similarities beyond the starches are found throughout the Arab world.



Algiers



Casablanca, Morocco





## Religion

Historic records of religion in the Maghreb region show its gradual inclusion in the Classical World, with coastal colonies established first by Phoenicians, some Greeks, and later extensive conquest and colonization by the Romans. By the second century common era, the area had become a centre of Latin-speaking Christianity. Both Roman settlers and Romanized populations converted to Christianity. The region produced figures such as Christian Church writer Tertullian (c. 155 – c. 202); and Christian Church martyrs or leading figures such as St Cyprian of Carthage (+ 258); St. Monica; her son the philosopher St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo I (+ 430) (1); and St Julia of Carthage (5th century).

The domination of Christianity ended when Arab invasions brought Islam in 647. Carthage fell in 698 and the remainder of the region followed in subsequent decades. Gradual Islamization proceeded, although surviving letters showed correspondence from regional Christians to Rome up until the ninth century. Christianity was still a living faith. Christian bishoprics and dioceses continued to be active, with relations continuing with Rome. As late as Pope Benedict VII (974-983) reign, a new Archbishop of Carthage was consecrated. Evidence of Christianity in the region then faded through the tenth century.

## Islam

During the 7th century, the region's peoples began their nearly total conversion to Islam. There is a small but thriving Jewish community, as well as a small Christian community. Most Muslims follow the Sunni Maliki school. Small Ibadi communities remain in some areas. A strong tradition of venerating marabouts and saints' tombs is found throughout regions inhabited by Berbers. Any map of the region demonstrates the tradition by the proliferation of " Sidi"s, showing places named after the marabouts. Like some other religious traditions, this has substantially decreased over the twentieth century. A network of zaouias traditionally helped proliferate basic literacy and knowledge of Islam in rural regions.

## History

After the end of the Ice Age about ten thousand years ago, when the Sahara dried up, contact between the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa was extremely limited. Arab expansion and the spread of Islam pushed the development of trans-Saharan trade. While restricted due to the cost and dangers, the trade was important and highly profitable. Peoples traded in such goods as salt, gold, ivory, and slaves available from the Sahel regions.

Paleo-anthropological evidence suggests that originally most of the Maghreb was inhabited by " Caucasoid" Cro-Magnoids ( Iberomaurusians) in the north. Later, about 8000 BC, "Caucasoid" speakers of northern Afro-Asiatic languages, such as Berber, came from the east, at least since the Capsian culture.

Many ports along the Maghreb coast were occupied by Phoenicians, particularly Carthaginians. With the defeat of Carthage, Rome took over many of these ports, and ultimately it took control of the entire Maghreb north of the Atlas Mountains. Remaining outside its control were only some of the most mountainous regions like the Moroccan Rif.

The Arabs reached the Maghreb in early Umayyad times. Their control over it was quite weak. Various Islamic "heresies", such as the Ibadis and the Shia,

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adopted by some Berbers, quickly threw off Caliphal control in the name of their interpretations of Islam.

The Arabic language became widespread only later, as a result of the invasion of the Banu Hilal (unleashed, ironically, by the Berber Fatimids in punishment for their Zirid clients' defection) in the 1100s. Throughout this period, the Maghreb most often was divided into three states roughly corresponding to modern Morocco, western Algeria, and eastern Algeria and Tunisia. The region was occasionally briefly unified, as under the Almohads, and briefly under the Hafsids).

After the Middle Ages, the Ottoman Empire loosely controlled the area east of Morocco. After the 19th century, areas of the Maghreb were colonized by France, Spain and later Italy.

Today more than two and a half million Maghrebin immigrants live in France, especially from Algeria. In addition, there are many more French of Maghrebin origin.

## Maghrebi traders in Jewish history

In the tenth century, as the social and political environment in Baghdad became increasingly hostile to Jews, many Jewish traders emigrated to the Maghreb, especially Tunisia. Over the following two or three centuries, such Jewish traders became known as the Maghribis, a distinctive social group who traveled throughout the Mediterranean World. They passed this identification on from father to son.

## Ecoregions of the Maghreb

The Maghreb is divided into a Mediterranean climate region in the north, and the arid Sahara to the south. The Magreb's variations in elevation, rainfall, temperature, and soils give rise to distinct communities of plants and animals. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) identifies several distinct ecoregions in the Maghreb.

### Mediterranean Maghreb

The portions of the Maghreb between the Atlas Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea, along with coastal Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in Libya, are home to Mediterranean forests, woodlands, and shrub. These ecoregions share many species of plants and animals with other portions of Mediterranean Basin. The southern extent of the Mediterranean Maghreb corresponds with the 100 mm isohyet, or the southern range of the European Olive (*Olea europaea*) and Esparto Grass (*Stipa tenacissima*).

- Mediterranean acacia-argania dry woodlands and succulent thickets (Morocco, Canary Islands (Spain), Western Sahara)
- Mediterranean dry woodlands and steppe (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia)
- Mediterranean woodlands and forests (Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia)
- Mediterranean conifer and mixed forests (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Spain)



- Mediterranean High Atlas juniper steppe (Morocco)

## Saharan Maghreb

The Sahara extends across northern Africa from the Atlantic Ocean to the Red Sea. Its centre is hyper-arid and supports little plant or animal life, but the northern portion of the desert receives occasional winter rains, while the strip along the Atlantic coast receives moisture from marine fog, which nourish a greater variety of plants and animals. The northern edge of the Sahara corresponds to the 100 mm isohyet, which is also the northern range of the Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*).

- North Saharan steppe and woodlands: This ecoregion lies along the northern edge of the Sahara, next to the Mediterranean forests, woodlands, and shrub ecoregions of the Mediterranean Maghreb and Cyrenaica. Winter rains sustain shrublands and dry woodlands that form a transition between the Mediterranean climate regions to the north and the hyper-arid Sahara proper to the south. It covers 1,675,300 square kilometers (646,800 square miles) in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, and Western Sahara.
- Atlantic coastal desert: The Atlantic coastal desert occupies a narrow strip along the Atlantic coast, where fog generated offshore by the cool Canary Current provides sufficient moisture to sustain a variety of lichens, succulents, and shrubs. It covers 39,900 square kilometers (15,400 square miles) in Western Sahara and Mauritania.
- Sahara desert: This ecoregion covers the hyper-arid central portion of the Sahara where rainfall is minimal and sporadic. Vegetation is rare, and this ecoregion consists mostly of sand dunes (*erg*), stone plateaus (*hamada*), gravel plains (*reg*), dry valleys (*wadi*), and salt flats. It covers 4,639,900 square kilometers (1,791,500 square miles) of Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Sudan.
- Saharan halophytics: Seasonally-flooded saline depressions in the Maghreb are home to halophytic, or salt-adapted, plant communities. The Saharan halophytics cover 54,000 square kilometers (20,800 square miles), including Tunisian salt lakes of central Tunisia, Chott Melghir in Algeria, and other areas of Egypt, Algeria, Mauritania, and Western Sahara.

## Modern territories of the Maghreb

- Algeria
- *Ceuta* (a Spanish exclave)
- Libya
- Mauritania
- *Melilla* (a Spanish exclave)
- Morocco
- Tunisia
- Western Sahara (claimed by Morocco)

## Medieval regions of the Maghreb



- Ifriqiya
- Djerid
- Sous
- Zab
- Hodna
- Rif
- Maghreb al-Awsat (Central Maghreb)
- Morocco (Maghreb al-Aqsa)
- Tamesna
- Tripolitania

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# Mount Kilimanjaro

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography



## Mount Kilimanjaro



Kibo Summit of Kilimanjaro

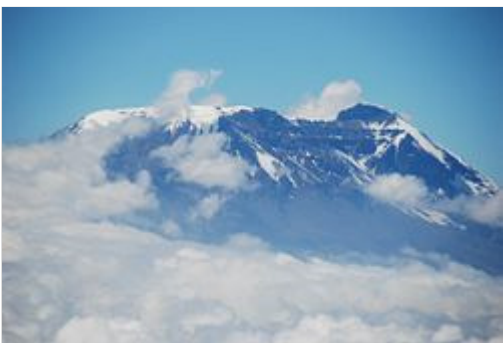
Elevation	5,895 metres (19,341 ft)
Location	Tanzania
Prominence	5,885 m (19,308 ft) Ranked 4th
Coordinates	Coordinates:
Topo map	Kilimanjaro map and guide by Wielochowski
Type	megavolcano
Last eruption	None in recorded history
First ascent	1889 by Hans Meyer, Ludwig Purtscheller, Yohanas Kinyala Lauwo
Easiest route	hike



**Kilimanjaro** with its three volcanic cones, **Kibo**, **Mawenzi**, and **Shira**, is an inactive stratovolcano in north-eastern Tanzania rising 4,600 m (15,100 ft) from its base, and is additionally the highest peak in Africa at 5,895 meters (19,340 ft), providing a dramatic view from the surrounding plains.

## Description

The highest point on Kilimanjaro is Uhuru Peak, on the volcano Kibo 5,895 metres (19,341 ft). The top of Kibo is a 1.5 mile wide crater. As the highest point in Africa, Uhuru Peak is one of the Seven Summits. The summit was first reached by the Marangu army scout Yohanas Kinyala Lauwo, German Hans Meyer and Austrian Ludwig Purtscheller, on October 6, 1889. Two other peaks are also extinct volcanoes: Mawenzi (5,149 m, 16,890 ft), the third highest peak in Africa (after Mount Kenya) and Shira (3,962 m, 13,000 ft). Yohanas' Notch is named after Lauwo.



Mount Kilimanjaro from the air. July 2007.

Due to Kilimanjaro's equatorial location and high elevation, almost every climate type on earth is represented, including a year-round snow-topped summit.

The summit of Kilimanjaro is covered by a GSM mobile phone network, provided by Vodacom. It was previously the highest point in the world with mobile phone service; China Mobile now provides coverage at the top of Mt. Everest, the highest point in the world.



Location in Tanzania



Mount Kilimanjaro - with Landsat Overlay. Heights two times exaggerated.





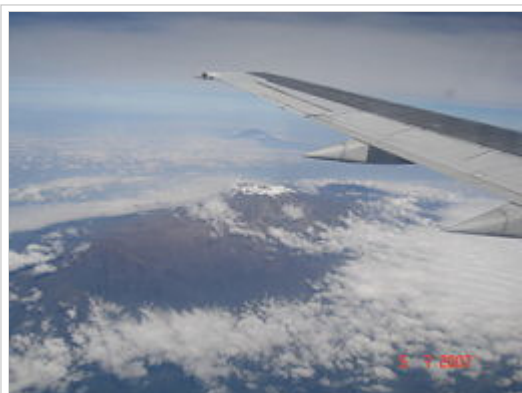
## Current conditions

### Climatic conditions

While the volcano appears to be dormant on the inside, events on top of the mountain draw global attention. The top of the mountain has seen a retreat of the most recent covering of glaciers, with the most recent ice cap volume dropping by more than 80% . In 2002, a study led by Ohio State University ice core paleoclimatologist Lonnie Thompson predicted that ice on top of Africa's tallest peak would be gone between 2015 and 2020 . In 2007, a team of Austrian scientists from University of Innsbruck predicted that the plateau ice cap will be gone by 2040, but some ice on the slope will remain longer due to local weather conditions . A comparison of ice core records suggests conditions today are returning to those of 11,000 years ago. A study by Philip Mote of the University of Washington in the United States and Georg Kaser of the University of Innsbruck in Austria concludes that the shrinking of Kilimanjaro's ice cap is not directly due to rising temperature but rather to decreased precipitation. In May 2008 The Tanzanian Minister for Natural Resources, Ms Shamsa Mwangunga, that there were indications that snow cover on the mountain was actually increasing. As of January 2006, the Western Breach route has been closed by the Tanzanian government following a rockslide that killed four people at Arrow Glacier Camp. The rockslide is believed to have been caused by frost action in an area that is no longer permanently frozen.

### Volcanic Conditions

While it is inactive, Kilimanjaro has fumaroles that emit gas in the crater on the main summit of Kibo. Scientists concluded in 2003 that molten magma is just 400 metres (1,300 ft) below the summit crater. Several collapses and landslides have occurred on Kibo in the past, one creating the area known as the western breach.



View of Kibo, Mowenzi, Shira and Meru in far background

### Mapping

Early good maps of Kilimanjaro were published by the British Government's Directorate of Overseas Surveys (DOS 422 Y742) in 1963. These were based on air photography carried out as early as 1958 by the RAF. These were on a scale of 1:50,000 with contours at 100 ft intervals. These are now unavailable. Tourist mapping was first published by the Ordnance Survey in England in 1989 based on the original DOS mapping (1:100,000, 100ft intervals, DOS 522). This is now no longer available. EWP produced a map with tourist information in 1990 (1:75,000, 100m contour intervals, inset maps of Kibo and Mawenzi on 1:20,000 and 1:30,000 scales respectively and 50m contour interval). This is regularly updated and in its 4th edition. In the last few years numerous other maps have become available of various qualities.

EWP map sample (1:75,000, summit area).



## Name

It is unknown where the name Kilimanjaro comes from, but a number of theories exist. European explorers had adopted it by 1860 and reported that it was its Swahili name, that Kilimanjaro breaks *Kilima* (Swahili for "hill, little mountain") and *Njaro*, whose supposed origin varies according to the theory—for some it's an ancient Swahili word for *white* or for *shining*, while for it has non-Swahili origin, e.g. Kichagga word *jaro* meaning caravan. The problem with all these is that they can't explain why the diminutive *kilima* is used instead of the proper word for mountain, *mlima*. A different approach is to assume that it comes from Kichagga *kilmanare* or *kileajao* meaning "which defeats the bird/leopard/caravan". However this theory can't explain the fact that Kilimanjaro was never used in Kichagga before in Europe in the mid-1800s.

In the 1880s the mountain, called *Kilmanscharo* in German, became a part of German East Africa after Karl Peters had persuaded local chiefs to sign treaties (a common story that Queen Victoria gave the mountain to Kaiser Wilhelm II is not true). In 1889 Uhuru Peak on Kibo was named *Kaiser-Wilhelm-Spitze*, which was used in the German Empire until its defeat in 1918, when the territory became British-administered Tanganyika and the name was dropped.

## National Parks in the Kilimanjaro area

- Kilimanjaro National Park covers 753 km<sup>2</sup> of the mountain, and is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Amboseli National Park, Kenya is on the northern side.
- Tsavo National Park, Kenya lies to the east.
- Arusha National Park covers neighbouring Mt Meru.

## Trekking routes up Kilimanjaro

There are several routes by which to climb Mt Kilimanjaro, namely, Marangu, Rongai, Lemosho, Shira, Umbwe and Machame. Of all the routes, Machame is by far the most scenic albeit steeper route up the mountain. The Rongai is the easiest camping route and the Marangu is also easy, but accommodation is in huts. As a result, this route tends to be very busy and ascent and descent routes are the same.

## Unique vegetation

Kilimanjaro has unique vegetation such as the water holding cabbage in the tussock grassland and other plants like this, all adapted to living in alpine conditions.

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# Mount Nyiragongo

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Mount Nyiragongo** is a volcano in the Virunga Mountains associated with the Great Rift Valley. It is located in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, about 20 km north of the town of Goma and Lake Kivu and just west of the border with Rwanda. The main crater is 250 m deep, two km wide and sometimes contains a lava lake. Nyiragongo and nearby Nyamuragira are together responsible for 40% of Africa's historical volcanic eruptions.

## Geology

Not much is known about how long the volcano has been erupting, but since 1882, it has erupted at least 34 times, including many periods where activity was continuous for years at a time, often in the form of a churning lava lake in the crater. The volcano partly overlaps with two older volcanoes, Baratu and Shaheru, and is also surrounded by hundreds of small volcanic cinder cones from flank eruptions.

Volcanism at Nyiragongo is caused by the rifting of the Earth's crust where two parts of the African Plate are breaking apart. A hot spot is probably also partly responsible for the great activity at Nyiragongo and Nyamuragira.

The lava emitted in eruptions at Nyiragongo is often unusually fluid. Nyiragongo's lavas are made of melilite nephelinite, an alkali-rich type of volcanic rock whose unusual chemical composition may be a factor in the unusual fluidity of the lavas there. Whereas most lava flows move rather slowly and rarely pose a danger to human life, Nyiragongo's lava flows may race downhill at up to 60 miles per hour (up to 100 km/h). This is because of the extremely low silica content (the lava is mafic). Hawaiian volcanic eruptions are also characterised by lavas with low silica content, but the Hawaiian volcanoes are broad, shallow-sloped shield volcanoes in contrast to the steep-sided cone of Nyiragongo, and the silica content is high enough to slow most Hawaiian flows to walking pace.

Nyiragongo is most famous for its semi permanent lava lake, which was discovered by French vulcanologist Haroun Tazieff. The last known eruption was in 2007.

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### Mount Nyiragongo



Lava lake in the crater of Mount Nyiragongo.

Elevation	3,470 metres (11,384 feet)
Location	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Range	Virunga Mountains
Coordinates	
Type	Stratovolcano
Last eruption	2008 (continuing)





## 1977 eruption

Between 1894 and 1977 the crater contained an active lava lake. On 10 January 1977, the crater walls fractured, and the lava lake drained in less than an hour. The lava flowed down the flanks of the volcano at speeds of up to 60 miles per hour on the upper slopes, overwhelming villages and killing at least 70 people. Some reports quote much higher figures of up to several thousand people. The hazards posed by eruptions like this are unique to Nyiragongo. Nowhere else in the world does such a steep-sided stratovolcano contain a lava lake that contains such fluid lavas. Nyiragongo's proximity to heavily populated areas increases its potential for causing a natural disaster. The 1977 eruption raised awareness of the unique dangers posed by Nyiragongo, and because of this it was designated a Decade Volcano, worthy of particular study, in 1991.

The 1977 eruption was preceded by the creation of a new small volcano, Murara, a short distance away on the slopes of Mount Nyamuragira.

## Latest 2002 eruption

Lava lakes reformed in the crater in eruptions in 1982-1983 and 1994. Another major eruption of the volcano began on January 17, 2002, after several months of increased seismic and fumarolic activity. A 13 km fissure opened in the south flank of the volcano, spreading in a few hours from 2800 m to 1550 m elevation, reaching the outskirts of the city of Goma the provincial capital on the northern shore of Lake Kivu. Lava streamed from three spatter cones at the end of the fissure and flowed in a stream 200 to 1000 m wide and up to 2 m deep through Goma. Warnings had been given and 400,000 people were evacuated from the city across the Rwandan border into neighbouring Gisenyi during the eruption. Lava covered the northern end of the runway at Goma International Airport, leaving the southern two-thirds usable, and reached Lake Kivu. This raised fears that the lava might cause gas-saturated waters deep in the lake to suddenly rise to the surface, releasing lethally large amounts of carbon dioxide and methane - a similar event to the disaster at Lake Nyos in Cameroon in 1986. This did not happen, but volcanologists continue to monitor the area closely.

About 45 people died in the eruption from asphyxiation by carbon dioxide and buildings collapsing due to the lava and earthquakes. At least 15% of Goma comprising 4500 buildings were destroyed, leaving about 120,000 people homeless. The eruption was the most destructive effusive eruption in modern history.

Immediately after the eruption stopped, a large number of earthquakes were felt around Goma and Gisenyi. This swarm activity continued for about three months and caused the collapse of more buildings.



Mount Nyiragongo



Another view of Nyiragongo's lava lake





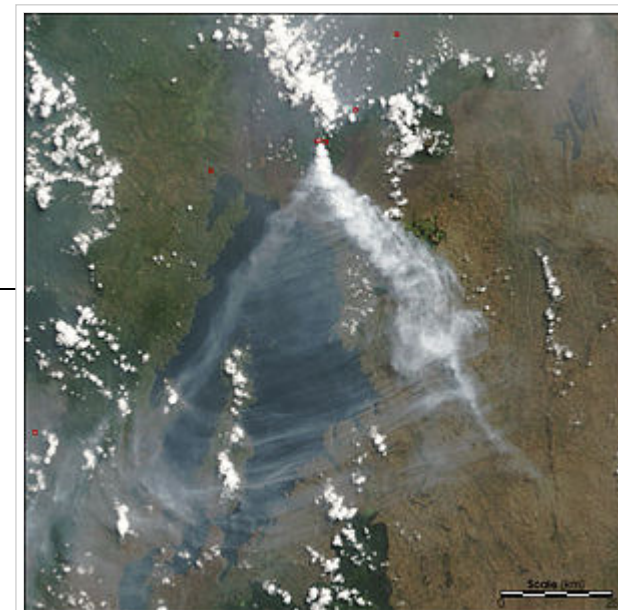
Six months after the start of the 2002 eruption, Nyamuragira volcano also erupted. Activity at Nyiragongo is ongoing, but currently confined to the crater, where another lava lake has formed about 250 metres below the level of the 1994 lava lake.

## Tourist death

On July 6, 2007, 76-year old Tavinder Mohindroo , an Indian tourist on a guided tour up the volcano, slipped and fell over 100 meters down into the crater. She had reportedly climbed down into the crater to take photographs, against advice from her guides, before she fell. She landed on a small ledge and apparently survived the fall, but was dead by the time three rescue workers (from a team of Indian peacekeepers and two vulcanologists) could reach her early the following day. An initial rescue attempt using a UN helicopter failed when the victim could not be found due to poor visibility.

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Satellite image of the eruption plume from Nyiragongo in July 2004



# Niger River

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

The **Niger River** (pronounced /ˈnaɪdʒə/ *NYE-jer*) is the principal river of western Africa, extending about 4180 km (2600 miles). Its drainage basin is 2,117,700 square kilometres (817,600 sq mi) in area. Its source is in the Guinea Highlands in the southeastern Guinea and it runs in a crescent through Mali, Niger, on the border with Benin and then through Nigeria, discharging through a massive delta, known as the Niger Delta of the Oil Rivers, into the Gulf of Guinea. The Niger is the third-longest river in Africa, exceeded only by the Nile and the Congo River (also known as the Zaïre River). Its main tributary is the Benue River.

For much of the 18th century, the exact location and course of the Niger remained virtually unknown to Europe, but many expeditions to plot the river were unsuccessful. In 1788 the African Association was formed in England to promote the exploration of Africa in the hopes of locating the Niger, and in June of 1786 the Scottish explorer Mungo Park was the first European to lay eyes on the river.

## Etymology

The origin of the name *Niger* is not certain. On early European maps it applied only to the middle reaches of the river, in modern Mali, while *Quorra* or *Kworra* was used for the lower reaches in modern Nigeria. The name *Niger* was extended to cover the entire river on maps once Europeans realized that these were one and the same.

A good possibility for a source is the Tuareg phrase *gher n gheren* "river of rivers", shortened to *ngher*, a local name used along the middle reaches of the river around Timbuktu.

It is often assumed, without evidence, that *Niger* derives from the Latin word for "black", *niger*, but it would have been more likely for the Portuguese explorers who first wrote this name on their maps to have used the Portuguese word, *negro*, as they did elsewhere in the world. In any case the Niger is not a blackwater river, which was the motivation for all other rivers that were called black. (See Rio Negro.) Some have rationalized that 'black' may have referred to the colour of the people living on the river, but this did not happen to any other river in Africa. Therefore it would seem that the similarity between the name Niger and the Latin word *niger* is either coincidence, or that knowledge of Latin influenced the spelling of an indigenous name like *ngher*.

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Map of Niger River with Niger River basin in green



Niger river at Kulikoro





It is worth mentioning that the Tabula Peutingeriana records a *Flumen Girin* ("River Girin") with the remark *Hoc flumen quidam Grin vocant, alii Nilum appellant; dicitur enim sub terra Etyopium in Nylum ire Lacum*, "This river which some are naming Grin is called Nile by others, for it is said to flow under the ground of Ethiopia [*i.e.* Africa] into the Nile Lake".

The nations of Nigeria and Niger are named after the river. The people who live along it have a variety of names for it, such as *Jeliba* or *Joliba* "great river" in Manding, *Isa Ber* "big river" in Songhay, and *Oya*, a Yoruba River Niger goddess.

## Geography

The Niger River is a relatively "clear" river, carrying only a tenth as much sediment as the Nile because the Niger's headlands are located in ancient rocks that provide little silt. Like the Nile, the Niger floods yearly; this begins in September, peaks in November, and finishes by May.

An unusual feature of the river is the Niger Inland Delta, which forms where its gradient suddenly decreases. The result is a region of braided streams, marshes, and lakes the size of Belgium; the seasonal floods make the Delta extremely productive for both fishing and agriculture.

The Niger takes one of the most unusual routes of any major river, a boomerang shape that baffled European geographers for two millennia. Its source is just 240 km (150 mi) inland from the Atlantic Ocean, but the river runs away from the sea into the Sahara Desert, then takes a sharp right turn near the ancient city of Timbuktu (Tombouctou) and heads southeast to the Gulf of Guinea.

Ancient Romans thought that the river near Timbuktu was part of the Nile River (e.g., Pliny, N.H. 5.10), a belief also held by Ibn Battuta, while early 17th-century European explorers thought that it flowed west and joined the Senegal River. The true course was probably known to many locals, but Westerners only established it in the late 19th century, firstly mentioned in the book *Travels in the Interior of Africa* by the Scottish explorer Mungo Park. This strange geography apparently came about because the Niger River is two ancient rivers joined together. The upper Niger, from the source past the trading city of Timbuktu to the bend in the current river, once emptied into a now-gone lake, while the lower Niger started in hills near that lake and flowed south into the Gulf of Guinea. As the Sahara dried up in 4000-1000 BC, the two rivers altered their courses and hooked up. (This explanation is generally accepted, although some geographers disagree.)

The northern part of the river, known as the *Niger bend*, is an important area because it is the closest major river and source of water to that part of the Sahara desert. This made it the focal point of trade across the western Sahara, and the centre of the Sahelian kingdoms of Mali and Gao.

The surrounding Niger River Basin is one of the distinct physiographic sections of the Sudan province, which in turn is part of the larger African massive physiographic division.



Mud houses on the centre island at Lake Debo, a wide section of the Niger River



## Pictures

Pictures of the Niger River in Mali

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# Nile












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The **Nile** (Arabic: النيل, transliteration: an-nīl, Ancient Egyptian **iteru** or **Ḥ'pī**, Coptic **piaro** or **phiaro**) is a major north-flowing river in Africa, generally regarded as the longest river in the world.

The Nile has two major tributaries, the White Nile and Blue Nile, the latter being the source of most of the Nile's water and fertile soil, but the former being the longer of the two. The White Nile rises in the Great Lakes region of central Africa, with the most distant source in southern Rwanda, and flows north from there through Tanzania, Lake Victoria, Uganda and southern Sudan, while the Blue Nile starts at Lake Tana in Ethiopia, flowing into Sudan from the southeast. The two rivers meet near the Sudanese capital Khartoum.

The northern section of the river flows almost entirely through desert, from Sudan into Egypt, a country whose civilization has depended on the river since ancient times. Most of the population of Egypt and all of its cities, with the exception of those near the coast, lie along those parts of the Nile valley north of Aswan; and nearly all the cultural and historical sites of Ancient Egypt are found along the banks of the river. The Nile ends in a large delta that empties into the Mediterranean Sea.

## Etymology of the word Nile

<b>Nile</b> River	
	
The River in Egypt	
<b>Name origin:</b> "Nile"(Arabic: 'nīl) comes from the Greek word <i>Neilos</i> (Νεῖλος)	
<b>Countries</b>	 Ethiopia,  Sudan,  Egypt,  Rwanda,  Tanzania,  Uganda,  Burundi,  Democratic Republic of the Congo,  Eritrea,  Kenya
<b>Cities</b>	Khartoum, Cairo
<b>Primary source</b>	White Nile
- coordinates	
<b>Secondary source</b>	Blue Nile
- location	Lake Tana, Ethiopia
- coordinates	



The word "Nile" (Arabic: 'nīl) comes from Greek *Neilos* (Νεῖλος), meaning river valley, and likely borrowed from Phoenician. In the ancient Egyptian language, the Nile is called *H'pī* or *iteru*, meaning "great river", represented by the hieroglyphs shown on the right (literally *itrw*). In Coptic, the words *piaro* (Sahidic) or *phiaro* (Bohairic) meaning "the river" (lit. p(h).iar-o "the.canal-great") come from the same ancient name.

## Tributaries and distributaries



Nile seen from Spot Satellite

The drainage basin of the Nile covers 3,254,555 square kilometres (1,256,591 sq mi), about 10% of the area of Africa.

There are two great tributaries of the Nile, joining at Khartoum: the White Nile, starting in equatorial East Africa, and the Blue Nile, beginning in Ethiopia. Both branches are on the western flanks of the East African Rift, the southern part of the Great Rift Valley. Below the Blue and White Nile confluence the only remaining major tributary is the Atbara River, which originates in Ethiopia north of Lake Tana, and is around 800 kilometres (500 mi) long. It flows only while there is rain in Ethiopia and dries very fast. It joins the Nile approximately 300 kilometres (200 mi) north of Khartoum.

The Nile is unusual in that its last tributary (the Atbara) joins it roughly halfway to the sea. From that point north, the Nile diminishes because of evaporation.

The course of the Nile in Sudan is distinctive. It flows over 6 groups of cataracts, from the first at Aswan to the sixth at Sabaloka (just north of Khartoum) and then turns to flow southward for a good portion of its course, before again returning to flow north to the sea. This is called the "Great Bend of the Nile."

<b>Source confluence</b>	near Khartoum
<b>Mouth</b>	
- location	Mediterranean Sea
<b>Length</b>	6,650 km (4,132 mi)
<b>Basin</b>	3,400,000 km <sup>2</sup> (1,312,747 sq mi)
<b>Discharge</b>	
- average	2,830 m <sup>3</sup> /s (99,941 cu ft/s)



East Africa, showing the course of the Nile River, with the "Blue" and "White" Niles marked in those colours

North of Cairo, the Nile splits into two branches (or distributaries) that feed the Mediterranean: the Rosetta Branch to the west and the Damietta to the east, forming the Nile Delta.

## White Nile

The source of the Nile is sometimes considered to be Lake Victoria, but the lake itself has feeder rivers of considerable size. The most distant stream—and thus the ultimate source of the Nile—emerges from Nyungwe Forest in Rwanda, via the Rukarara, Mwogo, Nyabarongo and Kagera rivers, before flowing into Lake Victoria in Tanzania near the town of Bukoba.

The Nile leaves Lake Victoria at Ripon Falls near Jinja, Uganda, as the Victoria Nile. It flows for approximately 500 kilometres (300 mi) farther, through Lake Kyoga, until it reaches Lake Albert. After leaving Lake Albert, the river is known as the Albert Nile. It then flows into Sudan, where it becomes known as the Bahr al Jabal ("River of the Mountain"). The Bahr al Ghazal, itself 716 kilometres (445 mi) long, joins the Bahr al Jabal at a small lagoon called Lake No, after which the Nile becomes known as the *Bahr al Abyad*, or the White

Nile, from the whitish clay suspended in its waters. When the Nile flooded it left this rich material named silt. The Ancient Egyptians used this soil to farm. From Lake No, the river flows to Khartoum. An anabranch river called Bahr el Zeraf flows out of the Nile's Bahr al Jabal section and rejoins the White Nile.

The term "White Nile" is used in both a general sense, referring to the entire river above Khartoum, and a limited sense, the section between Lake No and Khartoum.

## Blue Nile

The Blue Nile ( Ge'ez ተቋር ግባይ *Ṭiqūr ʿĀbbāy* (Black Abay) to Ethiopians; *Bahr al Azraq* to Sudanese) springs from Lake Tana in the Ethiopian Highlands. The Blue Nile flows about 1,400 kilometres (870 mi) to Khartoum, where the Blue Nile and White Nile join to form the "Nile proper". 90% of the water and 96% of the transported sediment carried by the Nile originates in Ethiopia, with 59% of the water from the Blue Nile alone (the rest being from the Tekezé, Atbarah, Sobat, and small tributaries). The erosion and transportation of silt only occurs during the Ethiopian rainy season in the summer, however, when rainfall is especially high on the Ethiopian Plateau; the rest of the year, the great rivers draining Ethiopia into the Nile (Sobat, Blue Nile, Tekezé, and Atbarah) flow weakly.

## Lost headwaters

Formerly Lake Tanganyika drained northwards along the African Rift Valley into the Albert Nile, making the Nile about 900 miles (1,400 km) longer, until blocked in Miocene times by the bulk of the Virunga Volcanoes. See List of rivers by length.

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The Blue Nile Falls fed by Lake Tana near the city of Bahar Dar, Ethiopia forms the upstream of the Blue Nile. It is also known as Tis Issat Falls after the name of the nearby village.



# Politics





The usage of the Nile River has been vastly associated with East and horn of African politics for many decades. Various countries, including Uganda, Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya have complained about the Egyptian domination of the Nile water resources. The Nile Basin Initiative was one of the most important programs to promote equal usage and peaceful cooperation between the "Nile Basin States." Yet many fear, the Egyptian domination of the waters still causes massive economic obstacles in the area.

The Nile still supports much of the population living along its banks, with the Egyptians living in otherwise inhospitable regions of the Sahara. The river flooded every summer, depositing fertile silt on the plains. The flow of the river is disturbed at several points by cataracts, which are sections of faster-flowing water with many small islands, shallow water, and rocks, forming an obstacle to navigation by boats. The Sudd wetlands in Sudan also forms a formidable obstacle for navigation and flow of water, to the extent that Sudan had once attempted to dig a canal (the Jonglei Canal) to bypass this stagnant mass of water.

The Nile was, and still is, used to transport goods to different places along its long path; especially since winter winds in this area blow up river, the ships could travel up with no work by using the sail, and down using the flow of the river. While most Egyptians still live in the Nile valley, the construction of the Aswan High Dam (finished in 1970) to provide hydroelectricity ended the summer floods and their renewal of the fertile soil.

Cities on the Nile include Khartoum, Aswan, Luxor ( Thebes), and the Giza – Cairo conurbation. The first cataract, the closest to the mouth of the river, is at Aswan to the north of the Aswan Dams. The Nile north of Aswan is a regular tourist route, with cruise ships and traditional wooden sailing boats known as feluccas. In addition, many "floating hotel" cruise boats ply the route between Luxor and Aswan, stopping in at Edfu and Kom Ombo along the way. It used to be possible to sail on these boats all the way from Cairo to Aswan, but security concerns have shut down the northernmost portion for many years.

More recently, drought during the 1980s led to widespread starvation in Ethiopia and Sudan but Egypt was protected from drought by water impounded in Lake Nasser. Beginning in the 1980s techniques of analysis using hydrology transport models have been used in the Nile to analyze water quality.

## Hydrology





The Nile makes its way through the Sahara

The flow rate of the Albert Nile at Mongalla is almost constant throughout the year and averages  $1,048 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $37,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ). After Mongalla, the Nile is known as the Bahr El Jebel which enters the enormous swamps of the Sudd region of Sudan. More than half of the Nile's water is lost in this swamp to evaporation and transpiration. The average flow rate in the Bahr El Jebel at the tails of the swamps is about  $510 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $18,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ). From here it soon meets with the Sobat River and forms the White Nile.

The Bahr al Ghazal and the Sobat River are the two most important tributaries of the White Nile in terms of drainage area and discharge. The Bahr al Ghazal's drainage basin is the largest of any of the Nile's sub-basins, measuring  $520,000$  square kilometres ( $200,000 \text{ sq mi}$ ) in size, but it contributes a relatively small amount of water, about  $2 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $71 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) annually, due to tremendous volumes of water being lost in the Sudd wetlands. The Sobat River, which joins the Nile a short distance below Lake No, drains about half as much land,  $225,000 \text{ km}^2$  ( $86,900 \text{ sq mi}$ ), but contributes  $412$  cubic metres per second ( $14,500 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) annually to the Nile. When in flood the Sobat carries a large amount of sediment, adding greatly to the

White Nile's colour.

The average flow of the White Nile at Malakal, just below the Sobat River, is  $924 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $32,600 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ), the peak flow is approximately  $1,218 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $43,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) in early March and minimum flow is about  $609 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $21,500 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) in late August. The fluctuation there is due the substantial variation in the flow of the Sobat which has a minimum flow of about  $99 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $3,500 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) in August and a peak flow of over  $680 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $24,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) in early March.

From here the White Nile flows to Khartoum where it merges with the Blue Nile to form the Nile River. Further downstream the Atbara River, the last significant Nile tributary, merges with the Nile. During the dry season (January to June) the White Nile contributes between 70% and 90% of the total discharge from the Nile. During this period of time the natural discharge of the Blue Nile can be as low as  $113 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $4,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ), although upstream dams regulate the flow of the river. During the dry period, there will typically be no flow from the Atbara River.

The Blue Nile contributes approximately 80-90% of the Nile River discharge. The flow of the Blue Nile varies considerably over its yearly cycle and is the main contribution to the large natural variation of the Nile flow. During the wet season the peak flow of the Blue Nile will often exceed  $5,663 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $200,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) in latter August (variation by a factor of 50).

Before the placement of dams on the river the yearly discharge varied by a factor of 15 at Aswan. Peak flows of over  $8,212 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $290,000 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) would occur during the later portions of August and early September and minimum flows of about  $552 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  ( $19,500 \text{ cu ft/s}$ ) would occur during later April and early May. The Nile basin is complex, and because of this, the discharge at any given point along the mainstem depends on many factors including weather, diversions, evaporation/ evapotranspiration, and groundwater flow.

## History



The Nile (*iteru* in Ancient Egyptian) was the lifeline of the ancient Egyptian civilization, with most of the population and all of the cities of Egypt resting along those parts of the Nile valley lying north of Aswan. The Nile has been the lifeline for Egyptian culture since the Stone Age. Climate change, or perhaps overgrazing, desiccated the pastoral lands of Egypt to form the Sahara desert, possibly as long ago as 8000 BC, and the inhabitants then presumably migrated to the river, where they developed a settled agricultural economy and a more centralized society.

The river Nile froze twice in recorded history, in 829 and 1010.

## The Eonile

The present Nile is at least the fifth river that has flowed north from the Ethiopian Highlands. Satellite imagery was used to identify dry watercourses in the desert to the west of the Nile. An Eonile canyon, now filled by surface drift, represents an ancestral Nile called the **Eonile** that flowed during the later Miocene (23–5.3 million years before the present). The Eonile transported clastic sediments to the Mediterranean, where several gas fields have been discovered within these sediments.

During the late-Miocene Messinian Salinity Crisis, when the Mediterranean Sea was a closed basin and evaporated empty or nearly so, the Nile cut its course down to the new base level until it was several hundred feet below world ocean level at Aswan and 8,000 feet (2,400 m) below Cairo. This huge canyon is now full of later sediment.

Lake Tanganyika drained northwards into the Nile until the Virunga Volcanoes blocked its course in Rwanda. That would have made the Nile much longer, with its longest headwaters in northern Zambia.

## The integrated Nile

There are two theories in relation to the age of the integrated Nile. The first one is that the integrated drainage of the Nile is of young age, that the Nile basin was formerly broken into series of separate basins, only the most northerly (the Proto Nile basin) feeding a river following the present course of the Nile in Egypt and in the far north of the Sudan. Said (1981) stresses the fact that Egypt itself supplied most of the waters of the Nile during the early part of its history. The other theory is that the drainage from Ethiopia via rivers equivalent to the Blue Nile and the Atbara/ Takazze flowed to the Mediterranean via the Egyptian Nile since well back into Tertiary times.

Salama (1987) suggested that during the Tertiary there were a series of separate closed continental basins, each basin occupying one of the major Sudanese Rift System: Mellut Rift, White Nile Rift, Blue Nile Rift, Atbara Rift and Sag El Naam Rift. The Mellut Rift Basin is nearly 12 km deep at its central part. This rift is possibly still active, with reported tectonic activity in its northern and southern boundaries. The Sudd swamps which forms the central part of the Basin is possibly still subsiding. The White Nile Rift System, although shallower than Bahr El Arab, is about 9 km deep. Geophysical exploration of the Blue Nile Rift System estimated the depth of the sediments to be 5–9 km. These basins were not interconnected except after their subsidence ceased and the rate of sediment deposition was enough to fill up the basins to such a level that would allow connection to take place. The filling up of the depressions led to the connection of



The confluence of the Kagera and Ruvubu rivers near Rusumo Falls, part of the Nile's upper reaches.



the Egyptian Nile with the Sudanese Nile, which captures the Ethiopian and Equatorial head waters during the latest stages of tectonic activities of Eastern, Central and Sudanese Rift Systems. The connection of the different Niles occurred during the cyclic wet periods. The River Atbara overflowed its closed basin during the wet periods which occurred about 100,000 to 120,000 years B.P. The Blue Nile was connected to the main Nile during the 70,000–80,000 years B.P. wet period. The White Nile system in Bahr El Arab and White Nile Rifts remained a closed lake until the connection of the Victoria Nile some 12,500 years B.P.

## Role in the founding of Egyptian civilization

Sustenance played a crucial role in the founding of Egyptian civilization. The Nile is an unending source of sustenance. The Nile made the land surrounding it extremely fertile when it flooded or was inundated annually. The Egyptians were able to cultivate wheat and crops around the Nile, providing food for the general population. Also, the Nile's water attracted game such as water buffalo; and after the Persians introduced them in the 7th century BC, camels. These animals could be killed for meat, or could be captured, tamed and used for ploughing — or in the camels' case, travelling. Water was vital to both people and livestock. The Nile was also a convenient and efficient way of transportation for people and goods.



Dhows on the Nile

The structure of Egypt's society made it one of the most stable in history. In fact, it might easily have surpassed many modern societies. This stability was an immediate result of the Nile's fertility. The Nile also provided flax for trade. Wheat was also traded, a crucial crop in the Middle East where famine was very common. This trading system secured the diplomatic relationship Egypt had with other countries, and often contributed to Egypt's economic stability. Also, the Nile provided the resources such as food or money, to quickly and efficiently raise an army for offensive or defensive roles.

The Nile played a major role in politics and social life. The pharaoh would supposedly flood the Nile, and in return for the life-giving water and crops, the peasants would cultivate the fertile soil and send a portion of the resources they had reaped to the Pharaoh. He or she would in turn use it for the well-being of Egyptian society.

The Nile was a source of spiritual dimension. The Nile was so significant to the lifestyle of the Egyptians, that they created a god dedicated to the welfare of the Nile's annual inundation. The god's name was Hapi, and both he and the pharaoh were thought to control the flooding of the Nile River. Also, the Nile was considered as a causeway from life to death and afterlife. The east was thought of as a place of birth and growth, and the west was considered the place of death, as the god Ra, the sun, underwent birth, death, and resurrection each time he crossed the sky. Thus, all tombs were located west of the Nile, because the Egyptians believed that in order to enter the afterlife, they must be buried on the side that symbolized death.



Reconstruction of the Oikoumene (inhabited world) ancient map based on Herodotus' description of the world, circa 450 BCE.





The Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote that 'Egypt was the gift of the Nile', and in a sense that is correct. Without the waters of the Nile River for irrigation, Egyptian civilization would probably have been short-lived. The Nile provided the elements that make a vigorous civilization, and contributed much to its lasting three thousand years.

That far-reaching trade has been carried on along the Nile since ancient times can be seen from the Ishango bone, possibly the earliest known indication of Ancient Egyptian multiplication, which was discovered along the headwaters of the Nile River (near Lake Edward, in northeastern Congo) and was carbon-dated to 20,000 BC.

## Modern achievements

The White Nile Expedition, led by South African national Hendri Coetzee, became the first to navigate the Nile's entire length. The expedition took off from the source of the Nile in Uganda on January 17, 2004 and arrived safely at the Mediterranean in Rosetta, 4 months and 2 weeks later. National Geographic released a feature film about the expedition towards in late 2005 entitled *The Longest River*.

On April 28, 2004, geologist Pasquale Scaturro and his partner, kayaker and documentary filmmaker Gordon Brown became the first people to navigate the Blue Nile, from Lake Tana in Ethiopia to the beaches of Alexandria on the Mediterranean. Though their expedition included a number of others, Brown and Scaturro were the only ones to remain on the expedition for the entire journey. They chronicled their adventure with an IMAX camera and two handheld video cams, sharing their story in the IMAX film "*Mystery of the Nile*", and in a book of the same title. The team was forced to use outboard motors for most of their journey, and it was not until January 29, 2005 when Canadian Les Jickling and New Zealander Mark Tanner reached the Mediterranean Sea, that the river had been paddled for the first time under human power.

A team led by South Africans Peter Meredith and Hendri Coetzee on 30 April 2005, became the first to navigate the most remote headstream, the remote source of the Nile, the Akagera river, which starts as the Rukarara in Nyungwe forest in Rwanda.

On March 31, 2006, three explorers from Britain and New Zealand lead by Neil McGrigor claimed to have been the first to travel the river from its mouth to a new "true source" deep in Rwanda's Nyungwe rainforest. .

## Crossings

This is a list of crossings from Khartoum to the Mediterranean:

- Aswan Bridge, Aswan
- Luxor Bridge, Luxor
- 1st Ring Road Bridge (Moneeb Crossing), Cairo



The Nile passes through Cairo, Egypt's capital city



- Abbas Bridge, Cairo
- University Bridge, Cairo
- Qasr El Nile Bridge, Cairo
- 6th of October Bridge, Cairo
- Abu El Ela Bridge, Cairo
- 2nd Ring Road Bridge, Cairo

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# North Africa

## 2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**North Africa** is the northernmost region of the African continent, separated by the Sahara from Sub-Saharan Africa. Geopolitically, the UN definition of Northern (not North) Africa for the collection of statistical information (and not its geographical definition) includes the following seven territories:

- Algeria
- Egypt
- Libya
- Morocco
- Sudan
- Tunisia
- Western Sahara\*

\* The disputed territory of Western Sahara is mostly occupied by Morocco; the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic controls the remainder.

The Spanish *plazas de soberanía* ( exclaves) are on the southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, surrounded by Morocco on land.

The Spanish Canary Islands and Portuguese Madeira Islands in the North Atlantic Ocean are northwest of the African mainland and sometimes included in this region.

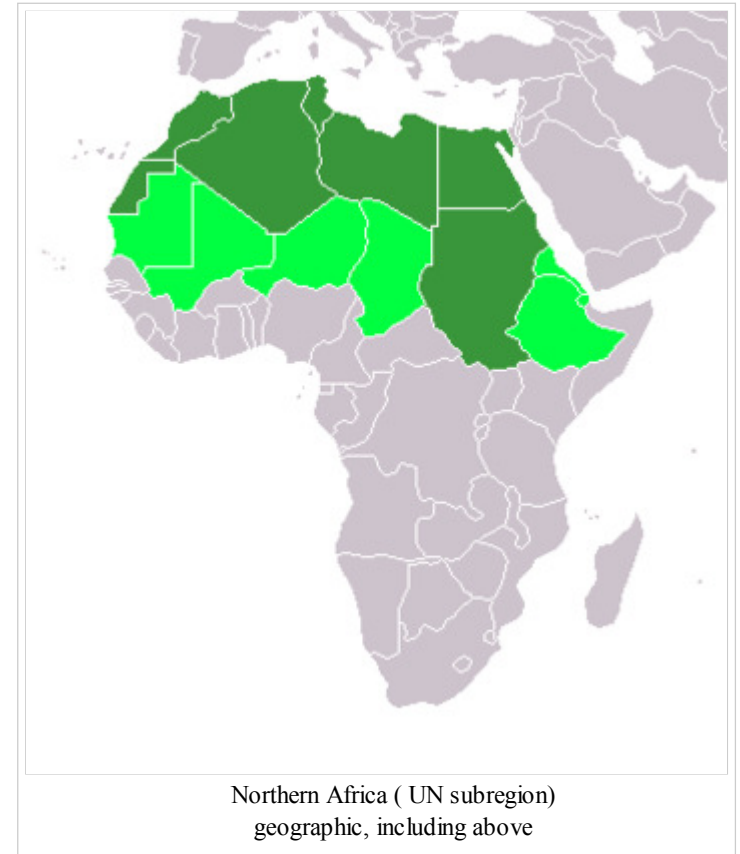
Geographically, Mauritania and more rarely the Azores are sometimes included. There are also other older names for certain locations in North Africa that have been changed since ancient times.

The Maghreb includes Western Sahara (claimed by Morocco), Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. North Africa generally is often included in common definitions of the Middle East, as both regions make up the Arab world. In addition, the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt is part of Asia, making Egypt a transcontinental country.

## Geography

The Atlas Mountains, which extend across much of Morocco, northern Algeria and Tunisia, are part of the fold mountain system which also runs through much

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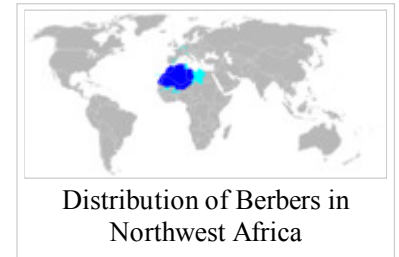


of Southern Europe. They recede to the south and east, becoming a steppe landscape before meeting the Sahara desert which covers more than 90% of the region. The sediments of the Sahara overlie an ancient plateau of crystalline rock, some of which is more than four billion years old.

Sheltered valleys in the Atlas Mountains, the Nile valley and delta, and the Mediterranean coast are the main sources of good farming land. A wide variety of valuable crops including cereals, rice and cotton, and woods such as cedar and cork, are grown. Typical mediterranean crops such as olives, figs, dates and citrus fruits also thrive in these areas. The Nile valley is particularly fertile, and most of Egypt's population lives close to the river. Elsewhere, irrigation is essential to improve crop yields on the desert margins.

## People

The inhabitants of North Africa are generally divided in a manner roughly corresponding to the principal geographic regions of North Africa: the Maghreb, the Nile Valley, and the Sahara. Northwest Africa on the whole is believed to have been inhabited by Berbers since before the beginning of recorded history, while the eastern part of North Africa has been home to the Egyptians. Ancient Egyptians record extensive contact in their Western desert with peoples that appear to have been Berber or proto-Berber. Following the Muslim-Arab conquest in the 7th century AD, the region underwent a process of Arabization and Islamization that has defined its cultural landscape ever since. Questions of ethnic identity usually rely on an affiliation with Arabism and/or Islam, or with indigenous cultures and religions.



Many North African nomads, such as the Bedouin, maintain a traditional pastoral lifestyle on the desert fringes, moving their herds of sheep, goats and camels from place to place – crossing country borders in order to find sufficient grazing land.

## Culture

Though people of the Maghreb and the Sahara speak various dialects of Berber and Arabic, and almost exclusively follow Islam. The Arabic and Berber groups of languages are distantly related, both being members of the Afro-Asiatic family. The Sahara dialects are notably more conservative than those of coastal cities (see Tuareg languages). Over the years, Berber peoples have been influenced by other cultures with which they came in contact: Greeks, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Romans, Vandals, Arabs, and lately Europeans. The cultures of the Maghreb and the Sahara therefore combine indigenous Berber, Arab and elements from neighboring parts of Europe, Asia and Africa. In the Sahara, the distinction between sedentary oasis inhabitants and nomadic Bedouin and Tuareg is particularly marked. The diverse peoples of the Sahara chi que en categorized along ethno-linguistic lines. In the Maghreb, where Arab and Berber identities are often integrated, these lines can be blurred. Some Berber-speaking North Africans may identify as "Arab" depending on the social and political circumstances, although substantial numbers of Berbers (or *Imazighen*) have retained a distinct cultural identity which in the 20th century has been expressed as a clear ethnic identification with Berber history and language. Arabic-speaking Northwest Africans, regardless of ethnic background, often identify with Arab history and culture and may share a common vision with other Arabs. This, however, may or may not exclude pride in and identification with Berber and/or other parts of their heritage. Berber political and cultural activists for their part, often referred to as Berberists, may view all Northwest Africans as principally Berber, whether they are primarily Berber- or Arabic-speaking (see also Arabized Berber).



The Nile Valley traces its origins to the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Kush. The Egyptians over the centuries have shifted their language from Egyptian to modern Egyptian Arabic (both Afro-Asiatic), while retaining a sense of national identity that has historically set them apart from other people in the region. Most Egyptians are Sunni Muslim and a significant minority adheres to Coptic Christianity which has strong historical ties to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and Eritrean Orthodox Church.

North Africa formerly had a large Jewish population, many of whom emigrated to France or Israel when the North African nations gained independence. A smaller number went to Canada. Prior to the modern establishment of Israel, there were about 600,000–700,000 Jews in North Africa, including both Sfardīm (refugees from France, Spain and Portugal from the Renaissance era) as well as indigenous Mizrāḥīm. Today, less than fifteen thousand remain in the region, almost all in Morocco and Tunisia. (See Jewish exodus from Arab lands.)

## History

### Antiquity and Ancient Rome

The most notable nations of antiquity in western North Africa are Carthage and Numidia. The Phoenicians colonized much of North Africa including Carthage and parts of present day Morocco (including Chellah, Mogador and Volubilis). The Carthaginians were of Phoenician origin, with the Roman myth of their origin being that Queen Dido, a Phoenician princess was granted land by a local ruler based on how much land she could cover with a piece of cowhide. She ingeniously devised a method to extend the cowhide to a high proportion, thus gaining a large territory. She was also rejected by the Trojan prince Aeneas according to Virgil, thus creating a historical enmity between Carthage and Rome, as Aeneas would eventually lay the foundations for Rome. The Carthaginians were a commercial power and had a strong navy, but relied on mercenaries for land soldiers. The Carthaginians developed an empire in Spain and Sicily, the latter being the cause of First Punic War with the Romans.

Over a hundred years and more, all Carthaginian territory was eventually conquered by the Romans, resulting in the Carthaginian North African territories becoming the Roman province of Africa in 146 B.C. This led to tension and eventually conflict between Numidia and Rome. The Numidian wars are notable for launching the careers of both Gaius Marius, and Sulla, and stretching the constitutional burden of the Roman republic, as Marius required a professional army, something previously contrary to Roman values to overcome the talented military leader Jugurtha. North Africa remained a part of the Roman Empire, which produced many notable citizens such as Augustine of Hippo, until incompetent leadership from Roman commanders in the early fifth century allowed the Germanic barbarian tribe, the Vandals, to cross the Strait of Gibraltar, where upon they overcame the fickle Roman defense. The loss of North Africa is considered a pinnacle point in the fall of the Western Roman Empire as Africa had previously been an important grain province that maintained Roman prosperity despite the barbarian incursions, and the wealth required to create new armies. The issue of regaining North Africa became paramount to the Western Empire, but was frustrated by Vandal victories and that the focus of Roman energy had to be on the emerging threat of the Huns. In 468 A.D., the last attempt by the Romans, with Byzantine aid, made a serious attempt to invade North Africa but were repelled. This is placed as the point of no return for the western Roman empire in a historical sense and the last Roman Emperor was deposed in 475 by the Ostrogoth generalissimo Odoacer who saw no purpose in regaining North Africa. Trade routes between Europe and North Africa remained intact until the coming of the Moslems.



## Arab Conquest to modern times

The Arab Islamic conquest reached North Africa in 640 AD. By 670, most of North Africa had fallen to Muslim rule. Indigenous Berbers subsequently started to form their own polities in response in places such as Fez, Morocco, and Sijilimasa. In the eleventh century a reformist movement made up of members that called themselves Almoravids, launched a jihad against the kingdoms to the south in the Savanna. This movement solidified the faith of Islam, and allowed for penetration into Sub-Saharan Africa.

After the Middle Ages the area was loosely under the control of the Ottoman Empire, except Morocco. After the 19th century, it was colonized by France, the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy.

In World War II from 1940 to 1943 the area was the setting for the North African Campaign. During the 1950s and 1960s all of the North African states gained independence. There remains a dispute over Western Sahara between Morocco and the Algerian-backed Polisario Front.

## Transport and industry

The economies of Algeria and Libya were transformed by the discovery of oil and natural gas reserves in the deserts. Morocco's major exports are phosphates and agricultural produce, and as in Egypt and Tunisia, the tourist industry is essential to the economy. Egypt has the most varied industrial base, importing technology to develop electronics and engineering industries, and maintaining the reputation of its high-quality cotton textiles.

Oil rigs are scattered throughout the deserts of Libya and Algeria. Libyan oil is especially prized because of its low sulphur content, which it means it produces much less pollution than other fuel oils.

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# Southern Africa

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Southern Africa** is the southernmost region of the African continent, variably defined by geography or geopolitics. Within the region are numerous territories – including the Republic of South Africa, a successor country to the Union of South Africa.

## Definitions and usage

In the UN scheme of geographic regions, five countries constitute Southern Africa:

- Botswana
- Lesotho
- Namibia
- South Africa
- Swaziland

The region is often reckoned to include other territories:

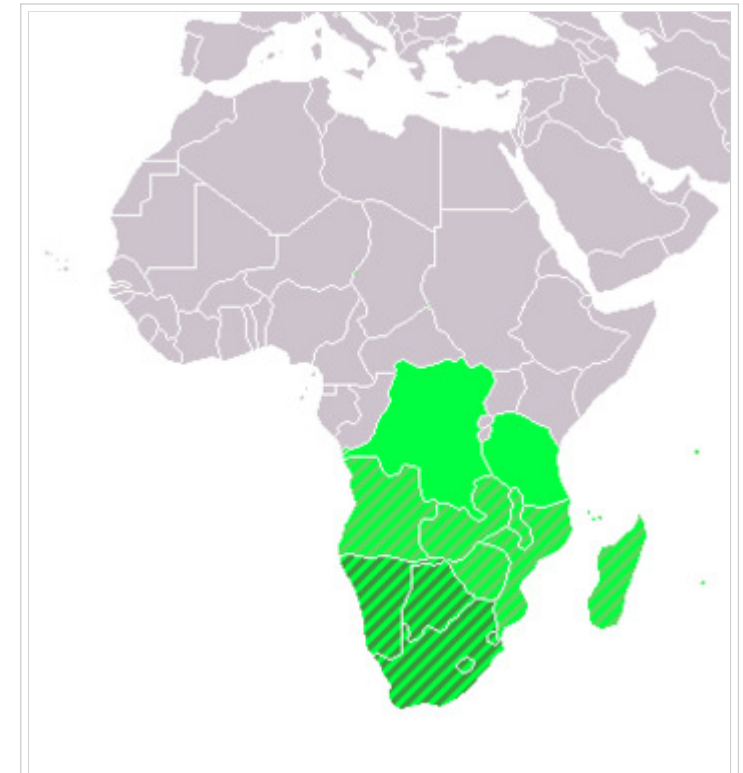
- Angola – also included in Central Africa
- Mozambique and Madagascar – also included in Eastern Africa
- Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe – sometimes included in Southern Africa and formerly of the Central African Federation
- Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles, Mayotte, and Réunion – small island territories in the Indian Ocean and near East Africa mainland.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Tanzania, though more commonly reckoned in Central and Eastern Africa respectively, are occasionally included in Southern Africa. *Apropos*, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) was established in 1980 to facilitate co-operation in the region, which includes all of the above except Comoros (totalling 15 members).

The Southern African Customs Union (SACU), created in 1969, comprises the five countries in the UN subregion of Southern Africa.

The term *Southern Africa* was also used to refer to South Africa and the "independent" Bantustans that were re-incorporated into South Africa following the end of Apartheid in 1994.

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Southern Africa ( UN subregion)  
geographic, including above  
Southern African Development Community (SADC)





Another geographic delineation for the region is the portion of Africa south of the Cunene and Zambezi rivers – that is, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and the southern half of Mozambique. This definition is most commonly used in South Africa.

## Geography

The terrain of Southern Africa is varied, ranging from forest and grasslands to deserts. The region has both low-lying coastal areas, and mountains.

In terms of natural resources, the region has the world's largest resources of platinum and the platinum group elements, chromium, vanadium, and cobalt, as well as uranium, gold, titanium, iron and diamonds.

## Economy

The region is distinct from the rest of Africa, with some of its main exports including platinum, diamonds, gold, and uranium, but it is similar in that it shares some of the problems of the rest of the continent. While colonialism has left its mark on the development over the course of history, today poverty, corruption, and HIV/AIDS are some of the biggest factors impeding economic growth. The pursuit of economic and political stability is an important part of the region's goals, as demonstrated by the SADC.

## Environmental factors

The region has a wide diversity of ecoregions including grassland, bushveld, karoo, savanna and riparian zones. Even though considerable disturbance has occurred in some regions from habitat loss due to human overpopulation, and there remain significant numbers of various wildlife species, including White Rhino, lion, leopard, impala, kudu, blue Wildebeest, Vervet monkey and elephant.

## Culture and peoples

Southern Africa is home to many cultures and peoples. It was once populated by San, Namaqua and Pygmies in widely-dispersed concentrations. Due to the Bantu expansion which edged the previous peoples to the more remote areas of the region, the majority of ethnic groups in this region, including the Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, Ndebele, Tswana, Sotho, and Shona people, BaLunda, Mbundu, Kikuyu and Luo, speak languages which share common Bantu language traits. The process of colonization and settling resulted in a significant population of European ( Afrikaners, Anglo-Africans, Portuguese Africans, etc.) and Indian descent ( Cape Malays, Koreans, Tamils, etc.) in many southern African countries.



A composite satellite image of southern Africa.





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# Sub-Saharan Africa

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

**Sub-Saharan Africa** is a geographical term used to describe the area of the African continent which lies south of the Sahara, or those African countries which are fully or partially located south of the Sahara.

It contrasts with North Africa, which is part of the Arab world.

The Sahel is the transitional zone between the Sahara and the tropical savanna (the *Sûdân* region) and forest-savanna mosaic to the south.

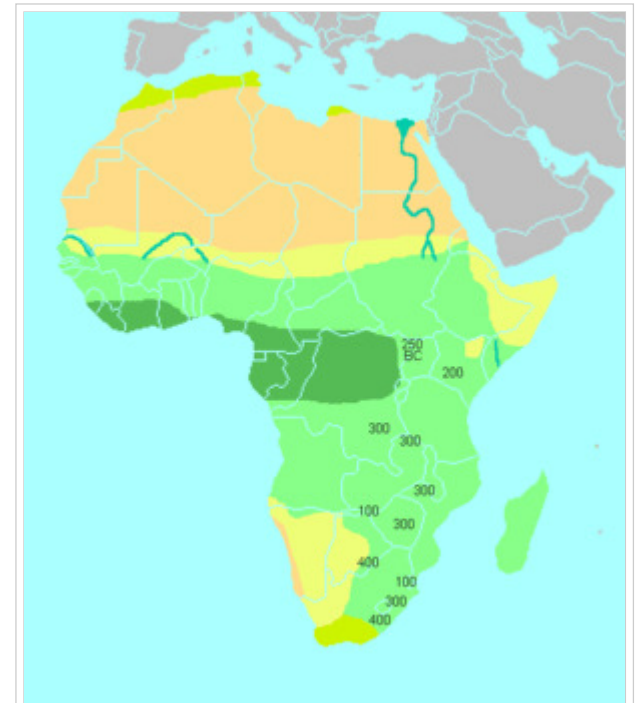
The Horn of Africa and Southern Sudan are geographically part of sub-Saharan Africa, but nevertheless show strong Middle Eastern influence and are also part of the Arab world.

The Sub-Saharan region is also known as **Black Africa**, in reference to its "black" populations, in contrast to the "Caucasoid" or "Melanochroi" inhabitants of North Africa. The term *bilâd as-sûdân* itself literally translates to "land of the blacks".

## Geography

Sub-Saharan Africa covers an area of 24.3 million square kilometers.

Since around 5,400 years ago, the Saharan and sub-Saharan regions of Africa have been separated by the extremely harsh climate of the sparsely populated Sahara, forming an effective barrier interrupted by only the Nile River in Sudan, though the Nile was blocked by the river's cataracts. The Sahara Pump Theory explains how flora and fauna (including *Homo sapiens*) left Africa to penetrate the Middle East and beyond to Europe and Asia. African pluvial periods are associated with a "wet Sahara" phase during which larger lakes and more rivers exist.



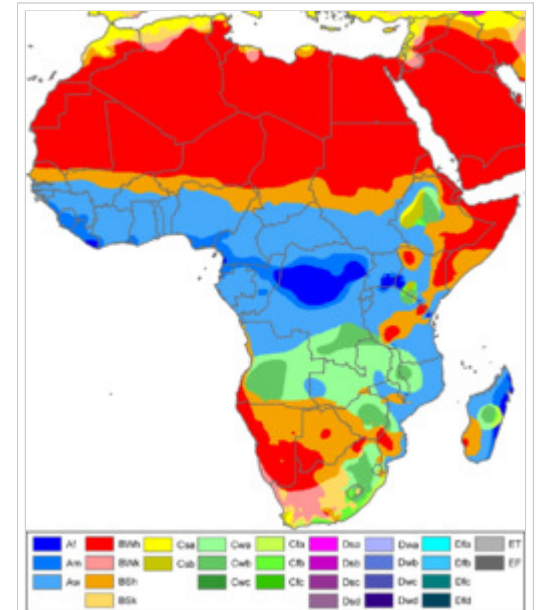
Simplified climatic map of Africa: Sub-Saharan Africa consists of the arid Sahel and the Horn of Africa in the north (yellow), the tropical savannas (light green) and the tropical rainforests (dark green) of Equatorial Africa, and the arid Kalahari Basin (yellow) and the "Mediterranean" south coast (olive) of Southern Africa. The numbers shown correspond to the dates of iron artefacts associated with the Bantu expansion.



## Climate zones and ecoregions

Sub-Saharan Africa has a wide variety of climate zones or biomes. South Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in particular are considered Megadiverse countries.

- the Sahel cuts across all of Africa at a latitude of about 10° to 15° N. Countries that include parts of the Sahara proper in their northern territories and parts of the Sahel in their southern region include Mali, Niger, Chad and Sudan.
- south of the Sahel, there is a belt of savanna, ( Guinean forest-savanna mosaic, Northern Congolian forest-savanna mosaic) widening to include most of Southern Sudan and Ethiopia in the east ( East Sudanian savanna).
- the Horn of Africa includes arid semi-desert along its coast, contrasting with savanna and moist broadleaf forests in the interior of Ethiopia.
- Africa's tropical rainforest stretches along the southern coast of West Africa and dominates Central Africa (the Congo) west of the African Great Lakes
- the Eastern Miombo woodlands are an ecoregion of Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique.
- the Serengeti ecosystem is located in north-western Tanzania and extends to south-western Kenya.
- the Kalahari Basin includes the Kalahari Desert surrounded by a belt of semi-desert
- The Bushveld is a tropical savanna ecoregion of Southern Africa.
- the Karoo is a semi-desert in western South Africa.



Climate zones of Africa, showing the ecological break between the desert climate of the Sahara and the Horn of Africa (red), the semi-arid Sahel (orange) and the tropical climate of Central and Western Africa (blue). Southern Africa has a transition to semi-tropical or temperate climates (green), and more desert or semi-arid regions, centered on Namibia and Botswana.

## History

### East Africa

The distribution of the Nilo-Saharan linguistic phylum is evidence of a certain coherence of the central Sahara, the Sahel and East Africa in prehistoric times. Ancient Nubia appears to have acted as a link connecting Ancient Egypt to sub-Saharan Africa, based on traces of prehistoric south-to-north gene flow. Kush, Nubia at her greatest phase is considered sub-saharan Africa's oldest urban civilization. Nubia was a major source of gold for the ancient world. Accordingly, the Old Nubian language is itself a member of the Nilo-Saharan phylum. Old Nubian (arguably besides Meroitic) represents the oldest attested African language outside the Afro-Asiatic group.

The Axumite Empire spanned the southern Sahara and the Sahel along the western shore of the Red Sea. Located in northern Ethiopia and Eritrea, Aksum was deeply involved in the trade network between India and the Mediterranean. Emerging from ca. the 4th century BC, it rose to prominence by the 1st century AD. It was succeeded by the Zagwe dynasty in the 10th century.

Somalia was under the control of Ethiopian Empire until 1527, when a revolt under Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrihim al-Ghazi led to an invasion of Ethiopia. The



Ajuran dynasty ruled parts of East Africa from the 16th to 20th centuries.

Kenya's proximity to the Arabian Peninsula invited colonization, and Arab and Persian settlements sprouted along the coast by the 8th century. During the first millennium AD, Nilotic and Bantu-speaking peoples moved into the region, and the latter now comprise three-quarters of Kenya's population. In the centuries preceding colonization, the Swahili coast of Kenya was part of the east African region which traded with the Arab world and India especially for ivory and slaves. Swahili, a Bantu language with many Arabic, Persian and other Middle Eastern and South Asian loan words, developed as a *lingua franca* for trade between the different peoples.

In 1498 Vasco da Gama became the first European to reach the East African coast, and by 1525 the Portuguese had subdued the entire coast. Portuguese control lasted until the early 18th century, when Arabs from Oman established a foothold in the region. Assisted by Omani Arabs, the indigenous coastal dwellers succeeded in driving the Portuguese from the area north of the Ruvuma River by the early 18th century.

## West Africa

The Nok culture, known from a type of terracotta figure found in Nigeria, dating to 500 BC - AD 200.

There are a number of medieval kingdoms of the southern Sahara and the Sahel, based on trans-Saharan trade, including the Ghana Empire and the Mali Empire, Songhai Empire, the Kanem Empire and the subsequent Bornu Empire. The Benin Empire was a pre-colonial state of Nigeria (1440-1897).

The kingdoms of Ife and Oyo in the western block of Nigeria became prominent about 700-900 and 1400 respectively. Another prominent kingdom in south western Nigeria was the Kingdom of Benin whose power lasted between the 15th and 19th century. Their dominance reached as far as the well known city of Eko which was named Lagos by the Portuguese traders and other early European settlers. In the 18th century, the Oyo and the Aro confederacy were responsible for most of the slaves exported from Nigeria.

Following the Napoleonic wars, the British expanded trade with the Nigerian interior. In 1885 British claims to a West African sphere of influence received international recognition and in the following year the Royal Niger Company was chartered under the leadership of Sir George Taubman Goldie. In 1900 the company's territory came under the control of the British Government, which moved to consolidate its hold over the area of modern Nigeria. On January 1, 1901 Nigeria became a British protectorate, part of the British Empire, the foremost world power at the time.

## Central Africa

The Bantu expansion has its original nucleus in West Africa, dividing into a Western and an Eastern Bantu group by about 1500 BC. The Eastern group has its nucleus at Urewe, in the first half of the 1st millennium BC. There follow a series of southwards advances, establishing a Congo nucleus by the end of the 1st millennium BC. In a final movement, the Bantu expansion reaches Southern Africa in the 1st millennium AD.

## Southern Africa



Settlements of Bantu-speaking peoples, who were iron-using agriculturists and herdsmen, were already present south of the Limpopo River by the 4th or 5th century (see Bantu expansion) displacing and absorbing the original Khoi-San speakers. They slowly moved south and the earliest ironworks in modern-day KwaZulu-Natal Province are believed to date from around 1050. The southernmost group was the Xhosa people, whose language incorporates certain linguistic traits from the earlier Khoi-San people, reaching the Fish River, in today's Eastern Cape Province.

Monomotapa was a medieval kingdom (c. 1250-1629) which used to stretch between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers of Southern Africa in the modern states of Zimbabwe and Mozambique. It enjoys great fame for the ruins at its old capital of Great Zimbabwe.

In 1487, Bartolomeu Dias became the first European to reach the southernmost tip of Africa. In 1652, a victualling station was established at the Cape of Good Hope by Jan van Riebeeck on behalf of the Dutch East India Company. For most of the 17th and 18th centuries, the slowly-expanding settlement was a Dutch possession. Great Britain seized the Cape of Good Hope area in 1795 ostensibly to stop it falling into the hands of the French, but also seeking to use Cape Town in particular as a stop on the route to Australia and India. It was later returned to the Dutch in 1803, but soon afterwards the Dutch East India Company declared bankruptcy, and the British annexed the Cape Colony in 1806.

The Zulu Kingdom (1817-1879) was a Southern African state in what is now South Africa. The small kingdom gained world fame during and after the Anglo-Zulu War.

## Demographics and economy

Generally, sub-Saharan Africa is the poorest region in the world, suffering from the effects of colonialism, economic mismanagement, local corruption, and inter-ethnic conflict. The region contains many of the least developed countries in the world. (See *Economy of Africa*.) The sub-Saharan African countries form the bulk of the ACP countries.

The population of sub-Saharan Africa was 770.3 million in 2006. The current growth rate is 2.3%. The UN predict for the region a population of nearly 1.5 billion in 2050.

Sub-Saharan African countries top the list of countries and territories by fertility rate with 40 of the highest 50, all with TFR greater than 4 in 2008. All are above the world average except South Africa. Figures for life expectancy, malnourishment, infant mortality and HIV/AIDS infections are also dramatic. More than 40% of the population of are below 15 years in most sub-Saharan countries, as well as the Sudan but with the exception of South Africa,.

## Health care

In 1987, Bamako was the location of a WHO conference known as the Bamako Initiative that helped reshape the health policy of sub-Saharan Africa. The new strategy dramatically increased accessibility through community-based healthcare reform, resulting in more efficient and equitable provision of services. A comprehensive approach strategy was extended to all areas of health care, with subsequent improvement in the health care indicators and improvement in health care efficiency and cost.



Up to and including October 2006 many governments face difficulties in implementing policies aimed at mitigating the effects of the AIDS-pandemic due to lack of technical support despite a number of mitigating measures.

## Languages and ethnic groups

Speakers of Bantu languages (part of the Niger-Congo family) are the majority in southern, central and east Africa proper. But there are also several Nilotic groups in East Africa, and a few remaining indigenous Khoisan ('San' or 'Bushmen') and Pygmy peoples in southern and central Africa, respectively. Bantu-speaking Africans also predominate in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea, and are found in parts of southern Cameroon and southern Somalia. In the Kalahari Desert of Southern Africa, the distinct people known as the Bushmen (also "San", closely related to, but distinct from "Hottentots") have long been present. The San are physically distinct from other Africans and are the indigenous people of southern Africa. Pygmies are the pre-Bantu indigenous peoples of central Africa.

South Africa has the largest populations of whites, Indians and Coloured in Africa. The term "Coloured" is used to describe persons of mixed race in South Africa and Namibia. People of European descent in South Africa include the Afrikaner and a sizeable populations of Anglo-Africans and Portuguese Africans. Madagascar's population is predominantly of mixed Austronesian (Pacific Islander) and African origin. The area of southern Sudan is inhabited by Nilotic people, the tallest and blackest people in the world.

List of major languages of Sub-Saharan Africa by region, family and total number of native speakers in millions)

East Africa



Linguistically, sub-Saharan Africa is dominated by the Niger-Congo phylum (distribution shown in yellow), with pockets of Khoi-San in Southern Africa, Nilo-Saharan in Central and East Africa, and Afro-Asiatic in the Horn of Africa





- Afro-Asiatic
  - Amharic: 35-42
  - Somali: 15
  - Tigrinya: 7
  - Oromo: 30-35
- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu:
  - Swahili: 5-10
  - Chichewa: 9
  - Gikuyu (Kenya): 5
  - Luhya: 4

West Africa



Tigray women



Borana women



A Maasai traditional dance.



- Niger-Congo
  - Volta-Congo
    - Benue-Congo
      - Yoruba: 25
      - Ibibio (Nigeria): 8-12
      - Igbo (Nigeria): 10-16
    - Akan (Ghana): 9
    - More: 5
  - Fula-Wolof
    - Fula (West Africa): 10-16
    - Wolof: 3
- Afro-Asiatic
  - Hausa: 24
- Nilo-Saharan
  - Kanuri: 4

Southern Africa



A Hausa harpist



Fulani women in the East Province of Cameroon



- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu
  - Zulu: 10
  - Xhosa: 8
  - Shona: 7
  - Sotho: 5
  - Tswana: 4
  - Umbundu (Angola): 4
  - Northern Sotho: 4
- Afrikaans: 6-7

### Central Africa

- Niger-Congo, Narrow Bantu
  - Kinyarwanda (Rwanda) 7
  - Kongo: 7
  - Tshiluba: 6
  - Kirundi: 5

### Religion



Zulus in traditional garment.



A San tribesman.



North Africa is strongly dominated by Islam, while Sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of the Horn of Africa, is mostly Christian. Adherence to these world religions overlaps with traditional or tribal religions and mythologies.

### West Africa

- Akan mythology
- Ashanti mythology (Ghana)
- Dahomey (Fon) mythology
- Efik mythology (Nigeria, Cameroon)
- Igbo mythology (Nigeria, Cameroon)
- Isoko mythology (Nigeria)
- Yoruba mythology (Nigeria, Benin)

### Central Africa

- Bushongo mythology (Congo)
- Bambuti (Pygmy) mythology (Congo)
- Lugbara mythology (Congo)

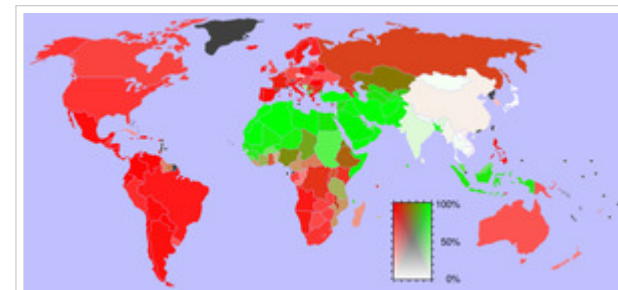
### East Africa

- Akamba mythology (East Kenya)
- Dinka mythology (Sudan)
- Lotuko mythology (Sudan)
- Masai mythology (Kenya, Tanzania)

### Southern Africa

- Khoikhoi mythology
- Lozi mythology (Zambia)
- Tumbuka mythology (Malawi)
- Zulu mythology (South Africa)

## List of countries



In terms of religion, North Africa is strongly dominated by Islam (shown in green), while Sub-Saharan Africa, with the exception of the Horn of Africa, is mostly Christian (shown in red; besides traditional or tribal religions)



Only six African countries are not geographically a part of Sub-Saharan Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Western Sahara (claimed by Morocco). Together with the Sudan, they form the UN subregion of Northern Africa. Mauritania and Niger only include a band of the Sahel along their southern borders. All other African countries have at least significant portions of their territory within Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Central Africa

### ECCAS

- Angola (also in SADC)
- Democratic Republic of Congo (also in SADC)
- Rwanda (also in EAC)
- Burundi (also in EAC)
- São Tomé and Príncipe

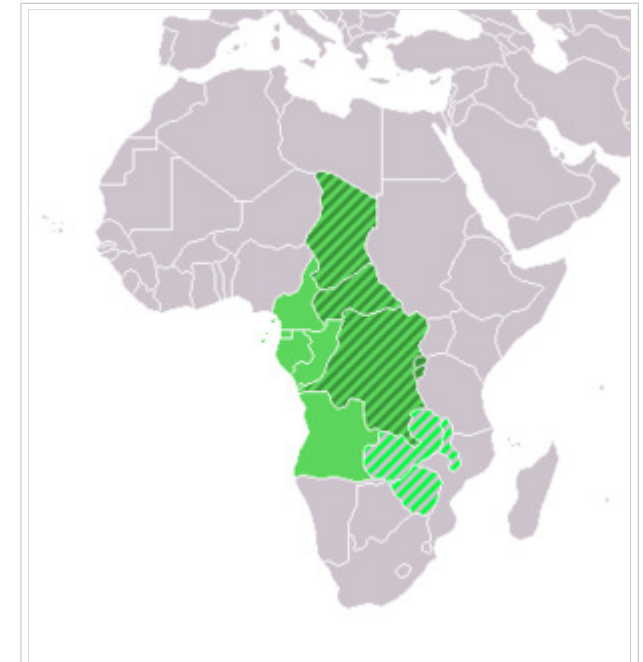
### CEMAC

- Republic of Congo
- Central African Republic
- Cameroon
- Chad
- Equatorial Guinea
- Gabon

## Sudan

- Southern Sudan (autonomous region of Sudan with independence referendum in 2011)

## East Africa



Central Africa  
Middle Africa ( UN subregion)  
Central African Federation (defunct)



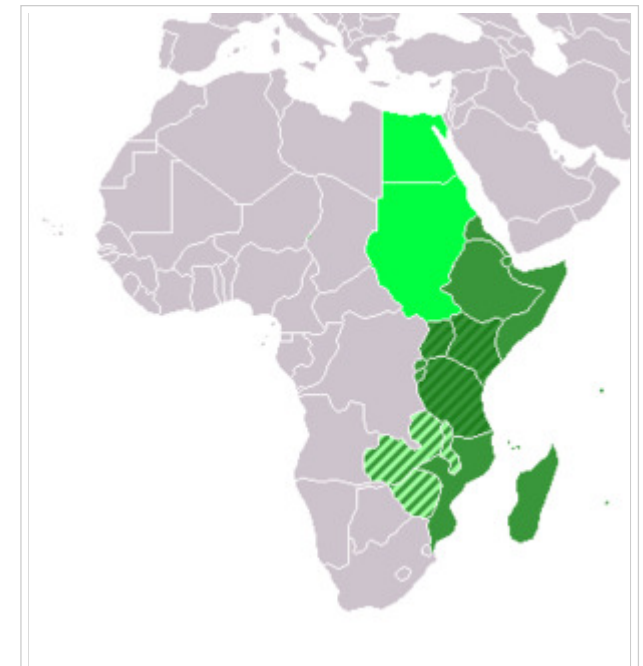
## East African Community

- Kenya
- Tanzania (also in SADC)
- Uganda
- Rwanda (also in ECCAS)
- Burundi (also in ECCAS)

## Horn of Africa

- Ethiopia
- Eritrea
- Djibouti
- Somalia

## Southern Africa / SADC



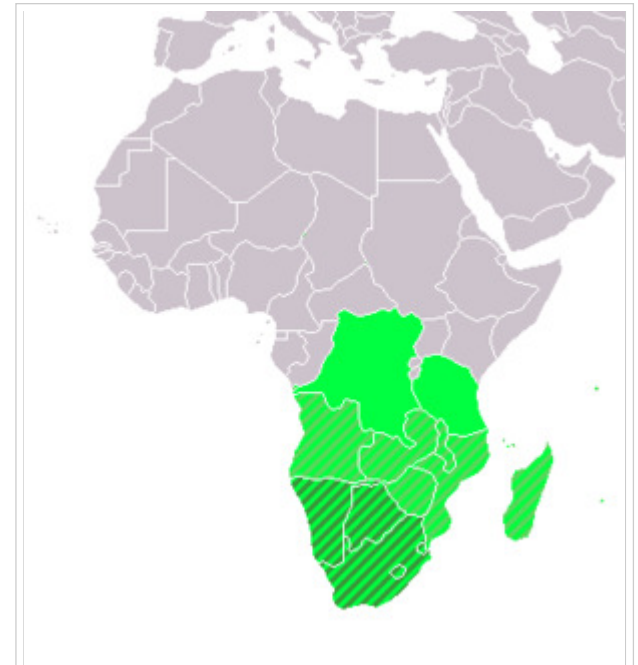
Eastern Africa ( UN subregion)  
 East African Community  
 Central African Federation (defunct)  
 Geographic East Africa, including the UN subregion  
 and East African Community





- Angola (also in ECCAS)
- Botswana
- Comoros
- Lesotho
- Madagascar (sometimes included, not part of the African continent)
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Mauritius
- Namibia
- Seychelles
- South Africa
- Swaziland
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

## West Africa



Southern Africa ( UN subregion)  
geographic, including above  
Southern African Development Community (SADC)



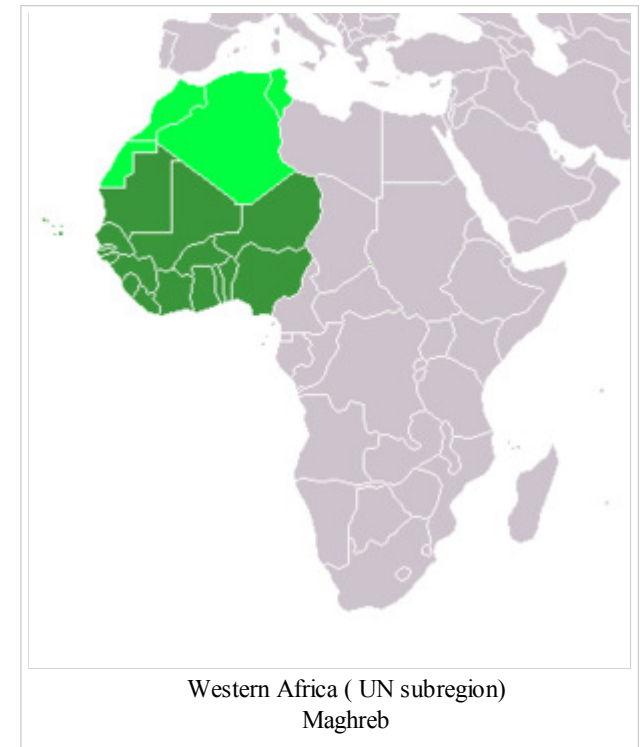
- Mauritania

#### ECOWAS

- The Gambia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Liberia
- Nigeria
- Sierra Leone

#### UEMOA

- Benin
- Burkina Faso
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Guinea-Bissau
- Mali
- Niger
- Senegal
- Togo



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# Suez Canal

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography; Air & Sea transport

The **Suez Canal** ( transliteration: Qanāt al-Suways), is a large man-made canal in Egypt, west of the Sinai Peninsula. It is 163 km (101 miles) long and 300 m (984 ft) wide at its narrowest point, and runs between Port Said (*Būr Saʿīd*) on the Mediterranean Sea, and Suez (*al-Suways*) on the Red Sea.

The canal allows two-way water transportation between Europe and Asia without circumnavigation of Africa. Before its opening in 1869, goods were sometimes offloaded from ships and carried overland between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.

The canal comprises seven parts, north and south of the Great Bitter Lake, linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Gulf of Suez on the Red Sea.

## History

### 2nd millennium BC

Perhaps as early as the 12th Dynasty, Pharaoh Senusret III ( 1878 BC– 1839 BC) may have had a west-east river dug through the Wadi Tumilat, joining the River Nile with the Red Sea (which in ancient times reached north to the Bitter Lakes. This allowed direct trade with Punt, and, indirectly, linked the Red Sea and the Mediterranean.

The reliefs of the Punt expedition under Hatshepsut depict sea-going vessels carrying the expeditionary force returning from Punt. This has given rise to the theory that, at the time, a navigable link existed between the Red Sea and the Nile.

Evidence indicates its existence by the 13th century BC during the time of Ramesses II.

### Repair by Necho, Darius I, and Ptolemy

The waterway fell into disrepair, and according to the *Histories* of the Greek historian Herodotus, about 600 BC, Necho II undertook re-excavation but did not complete it. Herodotus was told that 120,000 men perished in this undertaking. With Necho's death, work was discontinued.



Suez Canal, seen from Earth orbit



Ships moored at El Ballah during transit



The canal was finally completed by Darius I of Persia, who conquered Egypt. According to Herodotus, the completed canal was wide enough that two triremes could pass each other with oars extended, and required four days to traverse. Darius commemorated his achievement with a number of granite stelae that he set up on the Nile bank, including one near Kabret, 130 miles (209 km) from Pie. The Darius Inscriptions read:

“ *Saith King Darius: I am a Persian. Setting out from Persia, I conquered Egypt. I ordered this canal dug from the river called the Nile that flows in Egypt, to the sea that begins in Persia. When the canal had been dug as I ordered, ships went from Egypt through this canal to Persia, even as I intended.* ”

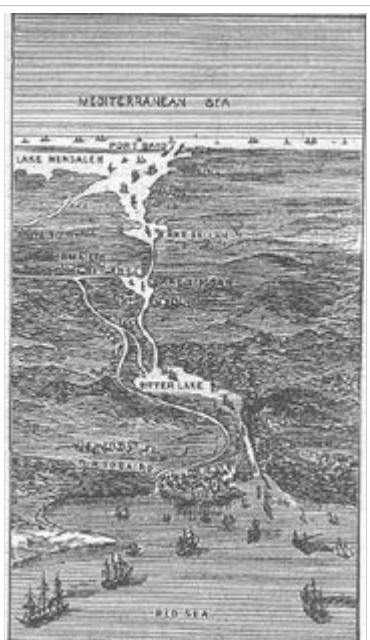
The canal left the Nile at Bubastis. An inscription on a pillar at the canal's Red Sea end at Pithom records that in 270/69 it was again reopened, by Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Over the next 1000 years it was successively modified, destroyed and rebuilt, until finally it was put out of commission in the eighth century by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur.

### **Napoleon considers repair**

At the end of the 18th century while in Egypt, Napoleon Bonaparte contemplated the construction of a canal to join the Mediterranean and Red Seas. But his project was abandoned after the preliminary survey erroneously concluded that the Red Sea was 10 metres higher than the Mediterranean, making a locks-based canal too expensive and very long to construct. The Napoleonic survey commission's error came from fragmented readings mostly done during wartime, which resulted in imprecise calculations.



Construction of the canal



1881 drawing of the Suez Canal.

## Re-construction by Suez Canal Company

In 1854 and 1856 Ferdinand de Lesseps obtained a concession from Said Pasha, the viceroy of Egypt, to create a company to construct a canal open to ships of all nations, according to plans created by Austrian engineer Alois Negrelli. The company was to operate the canal by leasing the relevant land, for 99 years from its opening. De Lesseps had used his friendly relationship with Said, which he had developed while he was a French diplomat during the 1830s. The Suez Canal Company ( *Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez*) came into being on 15 December 1858.

The excavation took nearly 11 years using forced labour of Egyptian workers. Some sources estimate that over 30,000 people were forced to work on the canal.

The British recognised the canal as an important trade route and perceived the French project as a threat to their geopolitical and financial interests. The British Empire was the major global naval force and its power had increased during the American Civil War years 1861-65. The British government officially condemned the forced work and sent armed bedouins to start a revolt among workers. Involuntary labour on the project ceased, and the viceroy condemned the slavery, halting the project.

Angered by the British opportunism, de Lesseps sent a letter to the British government remarking on the British lack of remorse a few years earlier when forced workers died in similar conditions building the British railroad in Egypt.

Initially international opinion was skeptical and Suez Canal Company shares did not sell well overseas. Britain, the United States, Austria and Russia did not buy any shares. All French shares were quickly sold in France. A contemporary British

skeptic claimed:

“ *One thing is sure... our local merchant community doesn't pay practical attention at all to this grand work, and it is legitimate to doubt that the canal's receipts... could ever be sufficient to recover its maintenance fee. It will never become a large ships accessible way in any case.* ”  
(reported by German historian Uwe A. Oster)

The canal opened to shipping on 17 November 1869. Although numerous technical, political, and financial problems had been overcome, the final cost was more than double the original estimate.

The canal had an immediate and dramatic effect on world trade. Combined with the American transcontinental railroad completed six months earlier, it allowed the entire world to be circled in record time. It played an important role in increasing European penetration and colonization of Africa. External debts forced Said Pasha's successor, Isma'il Pasha, to sell his country's share in the canal for £4,000,000 to the United Kingdom in 1875, but France still remained the majority shareholder. Prime minister Benjamin Disraeli was accused by William Gladstone of undermining Britain's constitutional system, due to his lack of reference or consent from Parliament when purchasing the shares with funding from the Rothschilds.

The Convention of Constantinople in 1888 declared the canal a neutral zone under the protection of the British; British troops



One of the first traverses in the 19th century.



had moved in to protect it during a civil war in Egypt in 1882. Under the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936, the UK insisted on retaining control over the canal. In 1951 Egypt repudiated the treaty, and in 1954 the UK agreed to remove its troops, and withdrawal was completed in July 1956.

## Suez Crisis

After the United Kingdom and the United States withdrew their pledge to support the construction of the Aswan Dam due to Egyptian overtures towards the Soviet Union, Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the canal in 1956, intending to finance the dam project using revenue from the canal, while at the same time closing the Gulf of Aqaba to all Israeli shipping by closure of the Straits of Tiran. This provoked the Suez Crisis, in which the UK, France and Israel colluded to invade Egypt. The intention was for Israel to invade on the ground, and for the Anglo-French partnership to give air and other support, later to intervene to resolve the crisis and control the canal.

To stop the war from spreading and to save the British from what he thought was a disastrous action, Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson, proposed the creation of the very first United Nations peacekeeping force to ensure access to the canal for all and an Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai. On 4 November 1956, a majority of nations at the United Nations voted for Pearson's peacekeeping resolution, which mandated the UN peacekeepers to stay in the Sinai Peninsula unless both Egypt and Israel agreed to their withdrawal. The US backed this proposal by putting financial pressure on the British government, which then agreed to withdraw its troops. Pearson was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

As a result of damage and ships intentionally sunk under orders from Nasser the canal was closed until April 1957, when it was cleared with UN assistance. A UN force ( UNEF) was established to maintain the neutrality of the canal and the Sinai Peninsula.

## The Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973

In May 1967 President Nasser ordered the UN peacekeeping forces out of the Sinai Peninsula, including the Suez Canal area. Despite Israeli objections in the United Nations, the peacekeepers were withdrawn and the Egyptian army took up positions on the Israeli border, closing the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping. The canal itself had been closed to Israeli shipping since 1949, except for a short period in 1951-1952.

These actions were key factors in the Israeli decision to launch a pre-emptive attack on Egypt in June 1967, and to capture the Sinai Peninsula to the Suez Canal. After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, also called the Six Day War, the canal was closed by an Egyptian blockade until 5 June 1975. As a result, fourteen cargo ships known as " The Yellow Fleet" remained trapped in the canal for over eight years. In 1973, during the Yom Kippur War, the canal was the scene of a major crossing by the Egyptian army into Israeli-occupied Sinai, followed by an Israeli counteroffensive which ended in a cease-fire. Much wreckage from this conflict remains visible along the canal's edges.

The UNEF mandate expired in 1979. Despite the efforts of the US, Israel, Egypt, and others to obtain an extension of the UN role in observing the peace between Israel and Egypt, as called for under the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty of 1979, the mandate could not be extended because of the veto by the USSR in the security council, at the request of Syria. Accordingly, negotiations for a new observer force in the Sinai produced the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), stationed in Sinai in 1981 in coordination with a phased Israeli withdrawal. It is there under agreements between the US, Israel, Egypt, and other nations. (





Multinational Force and Observers).

## Shooting involving Global Patriot

On 25 March 2008 US Navy security teams, aboard a civilian cargo ship, Global Patriot, which was under short term charter from the US Navy, shot at a small Egyptian boat causing one fatality.

## Operation

The canal has no locks due to the flat terrain, and the minor sea level difference between each end is inconsequential.

The canal allows passage of ships up to 150,000 tons displacement. It permits ships up to 16 m (53 ft) draft to pass, and improvements are planned to increase this to 22 m (72 ft) by 2010, allowing passage of fully-laden supertankers. Presently, supertankers can offload part of their cargo onto a canal-owned boat and reload at the other end of the canal. Tankers exceeding Suezmax, the largest permissible size through the canal, must travel around the Cape of Good Hope.

There is one shipping lane with several passing areas. On a typical day, three convoys transit the canal, two southbound and one northbound. The first southbound convoy enters the canal in the early morning hours and proceeds to the Great Bitter Lake, where the ships anchor out of the fairway, awaiting passage of the northbound convoy. The northbound convoy passes the second southbound convoy, which moors in a bypass near El Qantara. The passage takes between 11 and 16 hours at a speed of around 8 knots (15 km/h). The low speed helps prevent erosion of the canal banks by ships' wakes.

Egypt's Suez Canal Authority (SCA) reported that in 2003 17,224 ships passed through the canal. The canal averages about 8% of the world shipping traffic.

By 1955 approximately two-thirds of Europe's oil passed through the canal. About 7.5% of world sea trade is carried via the canal today. Receipts from the canal July 2005 to May 2006 totaled \$3.246 billion. In 2007, 18,193 vessels passed through the canal.

On 30 December 2007 it was announced that Egypt will increase Suez Canal transit fees by an average of 7.1% in 2008.

## Connections between the shores

From north to south connections are:

- The Suez Canal Bridge, also called the Egyptian-Japanese Friendship Bridge, is a high-level road bridge at El Qantara. In Arabic, *al qantara* means "the bridge". It has a 70-metre clearance over the canal and was built with assistance from the Japanese government and by PentaOcean Construction.
- El Ferdan Railway Bridge 20 km north of Ismailia was completed in 2001 and is the longest swing span bridge in the world, with a span of 340 m (1100



USS *Bainbridge*, an American warship in the Suez Canal



ft). The previous bridge was destroyed in 1967 during the Arab-Israeli conflict.

- Pipelines taking fresh water under the canal to Sinai, about 57km north of Suez, at .
- Ahmed Hamdi Tunnel south of the Great Bitter Lake was built in 1983. Because of leakage problems, a new water-tight tunnel was built inside the old one, from 1992 to 1995.
- The Suez Canal overhead line crossing powerline was built in 1999.

A railway on the west bank runs parallel to the canal for its entire length.

## **Environmental impact**



The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 created the first salt-water passage between the Mediterranean and Red seas. The Red Sea is about 1.2 m higher than the eastern Mediterranean, so the canal serves as a tidal strait that pours Red Sea water into the Mediterranean. The Bitter Lakes, which are hypersaline natural lakes that form part of the canal, blocked the migration of Red Sea species into the Mediterranean for many decades, but as the salinity of the lakes gradually equalised with that of the Red Sea, the barrier to migration was removed, and plants and animals from the Red Sea have begun to colonise the eastern Mediterranean. The Red Sea is generally saltier and more nutrient-poor than the Atlantic, the direction of flow is generally from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean, so the Red Sea species have advantages over Atlantic species in the salty and nutrient-poor eastern Mediterranean. Accordingly, most Red Sea species invade the Mediterranean biota, and only few do the opposite. This migratory phenomenon is called **Lessepsian migration** (after Ferdinand de Lesseps) or **Erythrean invasion**. The construction of the Aswan High Dam across the River Nile in the 1960s reduced the inflow of freshwater and nutrient-rich silt from the Nile into the eastern Mediterranean, making conditions there even more like the Red Sea, worsening the impact of the invasive species.

Invasive species originated from the Red Sea and introduced into the Mediterranean by the construction of the canal have become a major component of the Mediterranean ecosystem, and have serious impacts on the Mediterranean ecology, endangering many local and endemic Mediterranean species. Currently about 300 species from the Red Sea have been identified in the Mediterranean Sea, and there are probably others yet unidentified. The Egyptian government's intent to enlarge the canal have raised concerns from marine biologists, fearing that this will worsen the invasion of Red Sea species in the Mediterranean. .

Construction of the Suez Canal was preceded by cutting a small fresh-water canal from the Nile delta along Wadi Tumilat to the future canal, with a southern branch to Suez and a northern branch to Port Said. Completed in 1863, these brought fresh water to a previously arid area, initially for canal construction, and subsequently facilitating growth of agriculture and settlements along the canal.

## Timeline

- Circa 1799 — Napoleon I of France conquered Egypt and ordered a feasibility analysis. This reported a supposed 10 metre difference in sea levels and a high cost, so the project was set on standby.
- Circa 1840 — A second survey found the first one incorrect. A direct link between the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea would be possible and not be as expensive as expected.
- Circa 1854 — The French consul in Cairo, Ferdinand Marie de Lesseps, created the "Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez".
- 25 Apr 1859 — The French were allowed to begin canal construction (Said Pacha acquired 22% of the Suez Canal Company, the remainder controlled by French private holders).





- 16 Nov 1869 — The Suez Canal opened; operated and owned by Suez Canal Company.
- 25 Nov 1875 — Britain became a minority share holder in the Suez Company, acquiring 44% of the Suez Canal Company. The remainder were controlled by French syndicates.
- 25 Aug 1882 — Britain took control of the canal.
- 2 Mar 1888 — The Convention of Constantinople guaranteed right of passage of all ships through the Suez Canal during war and peace.
- 14 Nov 1936 — Suez Canal Zone established, under British control.
- 13 Jun 1956 — Suez Canal Zone restored to Egypt.
- 26 Jul 1956 — Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal.
- 5 Nov 1956 to 22 Dec 1956 — French, British, and Israeli forces occupied the Suez Canal Zone.
- 22 Dec 1956 — Restored to Egypt.
- 5 June 1967 to 10 June 1967 — Canal closed and blockaded by Egypt, against Israel, sparking the Six-Day War.
- 5 June 1975 — Suez Canal reopened.

### **Presidents of the Suez Canal Company (1855-1956)**

Before nationalisation:

- Ferdinand De Lesseps, (1855 – 7 December 1894)
- Jules Guichard ( 17 December 1892 – 17 July 1896) (acting for de Lesseps to 7 December 1894)
- Auguste-Louis-Albéric, prince d'Arenberg ( 3 August 1896 – 1913)
- Charles Jonnart ( 19 May 1913 – 1927)
- Louis de Vogüé ( 4 April 1927 – 1 March 1948)
- François Charles-Roux ( 4 April 1948 – 26 July 1956)

### **Chairmen of the Suez Canal Authority (1956-Present)**

Since nationalisation:

- Doctor Mohamed Helmy Bahgat Badawy ( 26 July 1956 – 9 July 1957)
- Engineer Mahmoud Younis ( 10 July 1957 – 10 October 1965)
- Engineer Mashhour Ahmed Mashhour ( 14 October 1965 – 31 December 1983)
- Engineer Mohamed Ezzat Adel ( 1 January 1984 – December 1995)
- Admiral Ahmed Ali Fadel ( 22 January 1996 – Present)

### **British Vice-Consuls of Port Suez (1922-1941)**

- G. E. A. C. Monck-Mason, 1922 – 1924



- G. C. Pierides (acting), 1924 – 1925
- Thomas Cecil Rapp, 1925 – 1926
- Abbas Barry (acting), 1926 – 1927
- E. H. L. Hadwen (acting to 1930), 1927 – 1931
- A. N. Williamson-Napier, 1931 – 1934
- H. M. Eyres, 1934 – 1936
- D. J. M. Irving, 1936 – 1940
- R. G. Dundas, 1940 – 1941

### **British Consuls of Port Suez (1941-1956)**

- R. G. Dundas, 1941 – 1942
- H. G. Jakins, 1942 – 1944
- W. B. C. W. Forester, 1944 – 1946
- Frederick Herbert Gamble, 1946 – 1947
- E. M. M. Brett (acting), 1947 – 1948
- C. H. Page, 1948 – 1954
- F. J. Pelly, 1954 – 1955
- J. A. D. Stewart-Robinson (acting), 1955 – 1956
- J. Y. Mulvenny, 1956

### **Governors of the Suez Canal Zone**

- 14 Nov 1936 – 24 Jul 1939: ?
- 24 Jul 1939 – 7 May 1941: Sir Archibald Wavell
- 7 May 1941 – 7 Aug 1942: Sir Claude John Eyre Auchinleck
- 7 Aug 1942 – 19 Feb 1943: Harold Rupert Leofric George Alexander
- 19 Feb 1943 – 6 Jan 1944: Henry Maitland Wilson
- 6 Jan 1944 – Jun 1946: Sir Bernard Charles Tolver Paget
- Jun 1946 – Jun 1947: Miles Christopher Dempsey
- Jun 1947 – 25 Jul 1950: Sir John Tredinnick Crocker
- 25 Jul 1950 – Apr 1953: Sir Brian Hubert Robertson
- Apr 1953 – 28 Sep 1953: Sir Cameron Gordon Graham Nicholson
- 28 Sep 1953 – 13 Jun 1956: Sir Charles Frederic Keightley

### **Supreme Allied Commander**



During the Suez Crisis:

- November 5, 1956 - 22 December 1956: Sir Charles Frederic Keightley

## Popular culture

*Suez*, a film made in 1938, starred Tyrone Power as de Lesseps and Loretta Young as a love interest. An epic, it is very loosely based on history.

The Suez Canal appears in the 1962 film *Lawrence of Arabia*, where it marks the end of T. E. Lawrence's march across the Sinai Peninsula to report to his superiors in Cairo.

The Suez Canal is also a playable map in the game Battlefield 2142.

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# Terik

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: African Geography

The **Terik people** are a Kalenjin group inhabiting parts of the Kakamega and Nandi Districts of western Kenya, numbering about 120,000 people. They live wedged in between the Nandi, Luo and Luhya (Luyia) peoples. Among the Luo they are known as *nyangóóri*, but to the Terik, this is a derogatory term. The Terik call themselves *Terikeek*; in their usage, 'Terik' refers to language, land, and culture.

## History

According to their own oral history the Terik are "people of Mount Elgon"; this is confirmed by linguistic evidence as well as by Bong'om traditions that "the people who later called themselves Terik were still Bong'om when they left Elgon and moved away in a southern direction" (Roeder 1986:142).

In pre-colonial times, relations between the Terik and the Nandi (their eastern neighbours) were characterized by mutual raids for cattle, land and women, a perspective still alive among old Terik people. However, in recent years the Terik have increasingly come to perceive the Nandi as friendly relatives. A number of factors have contributed to this change in perspective.

Territorial expansion of the Luhya people (the western neighbours of the Terik) has strained Terik-Luhya relations during the last decades. Luhya are felt to be a threat to the Terik identity and intermarriage has drastically reduced. The expansion of the Luhya (especially the Logoli group) into Terik territory has been a cause of population pressure. This, along with dwindling agricultural potential in the area, has in the second half of the twentieth century motivated many of the Terik to move eastwards, into 'Nandiland' as they call it. Some Terik even claim that they abandoned their homeland because they were afraid of the Luhya.

The Terik have become increasingly oriented at and assimilated to the Nandi. One of the results is a change towards a Nandi-type age set system. The Terik traditionally have twelve age sets, whereas the Nandi have seven. Terik living in Nandiland tend to name a smaller number of age sets than those living in traditional Terik territory. Terik boys also undergo initiation together with Nandi boys. Assimilation to the Nandi has furthermore been accelerated by the growth of a common *Kalenjin* consciousness, a process which started in the early 1950s.

In recent years, migration into Nandiland has decreased, and the position of the Terik language has been strengthened. Terik schools now teach Terik language.

## Language

The language of the Terik is closely related to the Elgon languages Pok and especially Bong'om. Part of the vocabulary is related exclusively to the Elgon languages, for example words like *murwaket* 'snail', *puntet* 'nail', and *musempet* 'sheep tail'. Another trait distinguishing Terik together with Bong'om and Pok



from other Kalenjin languages is the replacement of *l-V-l* by *r-V-n* in these three dialects. Also, together with the Elgon languages, Terik shows a sound shift *\*l* > *n* which is not shared by other Kalenjin varieties.

The Terik and Nandi languages are mutually intelligible, being both members of the Southern Nilotic Kalenjin ethno-linguistic family. The ongoing assimilation to Nandi way of life has led to a decline in the use of the Terik language in favour of Nandi. Among the Terik, migration into Nandiland tends to be viewed as a change in neighbourhood which may require, among other things, that one adapts one's pronunciation to that of the neighbours. About 50,000 Terik (less than half of the total population) still speak the Terik dialect, but all are middle aged or older. Most children grow up using Nandi. Terik has therefore been classified as an endangered language.

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