

Geography

Location: Southern Asia, north of Pakistan

Map references: Asia

Area:

total area: 647,500 sq km

land area: 647,500 sq km

comparative area: slightly smaller than Texas

Land boundaries: total 5,529 km, China 76 km, Iran 936 km, Pakistan 2,430 km, Tajikistan 1,206 km, Turkmenistan 744 km, Uzbekistan 137 km

Coastline: 0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims: none; landlocked

International disputes: periodic disputes with Iran over Helmand water rights; Iran supports clients in country, private Pakistani and Saudi sources also are active; power struggles among various groups for control of Kabul, regional rivalries among emerging warlords, traditional tribal disputes continue; support to Islamic fighters in Tajikistan's civil war; border dispute with Pakistan (Durand Line); support to Islamic militants worldwide by some factions

Climate: arid to semiarid; cold winters and hot summers

Terrain: mostly rugged mountains; plains in north and southwest

Natural resources: natural gas, petroleum, coal, copper, talc, barites, sulphur, lead, zinc, iron ore, salt, precious and semiprecious stones

Land use:

arable land: 12%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 46%

forest and woodland: 3%

other: 39%

Irrigated land: 26,600 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: soil degradation; overgrazing; deforestation (much of the remaining forests are being cut down for fuel and building materials); desertification

natural hazards: damaging earthquakes occur in Hindu Kush mountains; flooding

international agreements: party to - Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Marine Dumping, Nuclear Test Ban; signed, but not ratified - Biodiversity, Climate Change, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Life Conservation

Note: landlocked

