

# Geography

**Location:** Central South America, southwest of Brazil

**Map references:** South America

**Area:**

*total area:* 1,098,580 sq km

*land area:* 1,084,390 sq km

*comparative area:* slightly less than three times the size of Montana

**Land boundaries:** total 6,743 km, Argentina 832 km, Brazil 3,400 km, Chile 861 km, Paraguay 750 km, Peru 900 km

**Coastline:** 0 km (landlocked)

**Maritime claims:** none; landlocked

**International disputes:** has wanted a sovereign corridor to the South Pacific Ocean since the Atacama area was lost to Chile in 1884; dispute with Chile over Rio Lauca water rights

**Climate:** varies with altitude; humid and tropical to cold and semiarid

**Terrain:** rugged Andes Mountains with a highland plateau (Altiplano), hills, lowland plains of the Amazon Basin

**Natural resources:** tin, natural gas, petroleum, zinc, tungsten, antimony, silver, iron, lead, gold, timber

**Land use:**

*arable land:* 3%

*permanent crops:* 0%

*meadows and pastures:* 25%

*forest and woodland:* 52%

*other:* 20%

**Irrigated land:** 1,650 sq km (1989 est.)

**Environment:**

*current issues:* the clearing of land for agricultural purposes and the international demand for tropical timber are contributing to deforestation; soil erosion from overgrazing and poor cultivation methods (including slash-and-burn agriculture); desertification; loss of biodiversity; industrial pollution of water supplies used for drinking and irrigation

*natural hazards:* cold, thin air of high plateau is obstacle to efficient fuel combustion, as well as to physical activity by those unaccustomed to it from birth; flooding in the northeast (March to April)

*international agreements:* party to - Biodiversity, Climate Change, Endangered Species, Nuclear Test Ban, Tropical Timber 83, Wetlands; signed, but not ratified - Desertification, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection

**Note:** landlocked; shares control of Lago Titicaca, world's highest navigable lake (elevation 3,805 m), with Peru