

Geography

Location: Eastern Africa, bordering the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea, between Eritrea and Somalia

Map references: Africa

Area:

total area: 22,000 sq km

land area: 21,980 sq km

comparative area: slightly larger than Massachusetts

Land boundaries: total 508 km, Eritrea 113 km, Ethiopia 337 km, Somalia 58 km

Coastline: 314 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 24 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

International disputes: none

Climate: desert; torrid, dry

Terrain: coastal plain and plateau separated by central mountains

Natural resources: geothermal areas

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 9%

forest and woodland: 0%

other: 91%

Irrigated land: NA sq km

Environment:

current issues: inadequate supplies of potable water; desertification

natural hazards: earthquakes; droughts; occasional cyclonic disturbances from the Indian Ocean bring heavy rains and flash floods

international agreements: party to - Biodiversity, Endangered Species, Law of the Sea, Ship Pollution; signed, but not ratified - Climate Change, Desertification

Note: strategic location near world's busiest shipping lanes and close to Arabian oilfields; terminus of rail traffic into Ethiopia; a vast wasteland