

Geography

Location: Eastern Africa, bordering the Red Sea, between Djibouti and Sudan

Map references: Africa

Area:

total area: 121,320 sq km

land area: 121,320 sq km

comparative area: slightly larger than Pennsylvania

Land boundaries: total 1,630 km, Djibouti 113 km, Ethiopia 912 km, Sudan 605 km

Coastline: 1,151 km (land and island coastline is 2,234 km)

Maritime claims: NA

International disputes: none

Climate: hot, dry desert strip along Red Sea coast; cooler and wetter in the central highlands (up to 61 cm of rainfall annually); semiarid in western hills and lowlands; rainfall heaviest during June-September except on coastal desert

Terrain: dominated by extension of Ethiopian north-south trending highlands, descending on the east to a coastal desert plain, on the northwest to hilly terrain and on the southwest to flat-to-rolling plains

Natural resources: gold, potash, zinc, copper, salt, probably oil (petroleum geologists are prospecting for it), fish

Land use:

arable land: 3%

permanent crops: 2% (coffee)

meadows and pastures: 40%

forest and woodland: 5%

other: 50%

Irrigated land: NA sq km

Environment:

current issues: famine; deforestation; desertification; soil erosion; overgrazing; loss of infrastructure from civil warfare

natural hazards: frequent droughts

international agreements: party to - Endangered Species; signed, but not ratified - Desertification

Note: strategic geopolitical position along world's busiest shipping lanes; Eritrea retained the entire coastline of Ethiopia along the Red Sea upon de jure independence from Ethiopia on 27 April 1993