

Maldives

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Location and area

The Maldives are an island republic in southern Asia, located in the northern Indian Ocean, south-west of the southern tip of India. They are made up of a chain of nearly 2,000 small coral islands that are grouped into clusters of atolls. It has a total land area of 298 km². (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Topography

The islands are low-lying and have only small tracts of arable land. Coconut palms and breadfruit trees dominate the vegetation. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Climate

The climate is tropical and humid. The average annual temperature is 27° C, with little seasonal variation. The average annual precipitation is 1,525 mm, most of which falls between May and November (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Peatlands

Hammond (1971) surveyed the peat deposits of the Maldives. Alkaline peats with a pH of over 7.8 were reported by Koohafkan et al. (1998).

Rapid peat growth (2-7 mm y⁻¹) has been reported from the mangrove forests (www.jica.go.jp/english/publication/network/2000/net_0004/06.html).

Still to be checked:

Hammond, R.F. 1971. Survey of peat deposits on Makandudu, Milandu and Forkaidu Islands in Miladummandulu, North Atoll. Report to the Government of the Maldives. United Nations development programme; FAO TA3013, VI + 27 p. .