

Qatar

Last updated: 31-01-2004

Location and area

Qatar is an independent state in the Middle East, one of the Persian Gulf States, occupying the Qatar Peninsula, jutting into the Persian Gulf from the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. On its southern side it is bordered by Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates; these boundaries are not demarcated. Qatar has an area of about 11,427 km². (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Topography

Qatar is a generally flat peninsula, its highest surface being a central limestone plateau, with hills in the west reaching a maximum elevation of 40 m. The southern area is covered with sand, the rest stony and bare; only in the north is there significant vegetation cover. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Climate

An extremely hot, arid climate prevails, ranging from an average of 17° C in January to about 37° C in July. Humidity is high during the summer (May to October), but the average annual rainfall is less than 125 mm. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Land use

Qatari agriculture is chiefly of local importance. Herding is the principal agricultural occupation (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Wetlands

While almost the entire interior of the peninsula has been modified or degraded by human activity, Qatar's wetlands are predominantly marine and coastal. No data on losses or threats are available (Spiers 1999).

Peatlands

According to the interpreted World Soil Map (Van Engelen & Huting 2002) no histosols nor gley soils exist in Qatar.