

Chad (Republic of)

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Location and area

Chad is a landlocked republic in north-central Africa, bounded on the north by Libya, on the east by Sudan, on the south by the Central African Republic, and on the west by Cameroon, Nigeria, and Niger. It has an area of 1,284,000 km².

Topography

Chad's terrain is dominated by the low-lying Lake Chad Basin (elevation about 250 m), which rises gradually to mountains and plateaux on the north, east, and south. In the east, heights of more than 900 m are attained in the Ennedi and Wadai plateaux. The greatest elevations are reached in the Tibesti in the north, with a maximum height of 3,415 m at Emi Koussi. The northern half of the republic lies in the Sahara.

The only important rivers, the Logone and Chari (Shari), are located in the southwest and flow into Lake Chad. The lake doubles in size during the rainy season but a combination of extended drought and increased use of the lake's waters for irrigation and other purposes means that its level is falling.

Climate

Chad has a tropical climate. The north is hot and arid and desert conditions prevail. The central area has three seasons: hot from March to July, rainy from July to October, with rainfall averaging between 250 and 750 mm, and cool during the remaining months. The south has similar seasons but receives about 1,150 mm of rain between July and October.

Land use

Only about 3 per cent of Chad's land is under cultivation (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Wetlands

Markov et al. (1988) reports the presence of (mostly seasonal) swamps around lakes in the mountains in the southern part of the country, such as Fitri lake, in the Yagura mountains, and along the Shari river.

Peatlands

Other possible peatland occurrences could be in the Toubouri depression, and area of shallow lakes and swamps (95 km²) in Chad and Cameroon, around Lake Chad (Chad, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon), in the Yaérés floodplain (Chad, Cameroon) and around lake Iro, a shallow lake with some swamp (Howard-Williams & Thompson 1985).

According to the interpreted World Soil Map (Van Engelen & Huting 2002) no histosols exist in Chad and 9,576 km² of gley soils.

Still to be checked :

Maley, J. 1981. Etudes palynologiques dans le bassin du Tchad et paléoclimatologie de l'Afrique nord-tropicale de 30000 ans à l'époque actuelle. Travaux et Documents de l'ORSTOM no. 129 Paris. 586 pp. **36** Tjeri (13°44'N, 16°30'E), 300m, Chad. Pollen.
In Lake Chad : boring 4 : vase tourbeuse pres de Baga-Sola
boring 7 : tourbe argileuse (NW deel van meer in Chad)
mares in de omgeving :
B : Hajjer Bigli boue a debris vegetaux
D : 80 KM n VAN MEER NEAR Mao. : vase tourbeux

Maley, J. (1977) Analyses polliniques et paléoclimatologie des douze derniers millénaires du bassin du Tchad (Afrique centrale). Recherches françaises sur le Quaternaire, INQUA, Suppl. Bull. AFEQ 50 (1)