Agricultural Water Use

Between 1987 and 2003, on average 2.4 trillion cubic metres of water were used for agricultural purposes a year. Agricultural water includes that for irrigation and for livestock rearing.

Much of the water used for agriculture is required in Asian territories such as India, Pakistan, Nepal, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Japan and Vietnam. There is also high per person water use in the Middle Eastern territories of Iran, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Afghanistan.

Agricultural consumption of water resources is less where rainfall is regular, temperatures are moderate or low, fewer crops are grown, and few animals are reared.

Territory size shows the proportion of all water used for agricultural purposes that was used there, 1987 to 2003.

“...the irrigated rice demands a regular flow of water; while millet and sorghum require a river that rises and falls naturally with the seasonal rains.”

Barbara Chasin, 1981