

The EURASIA CENTER

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Nepal: Environmental Overview

The Himalayan Kingdom:

The Nepalese government has been continuously under reform since 1990 when a multiparty democracy was installed along with a constitutional monarchy. The groups that have been leading these reforms against the King are the Maoists. This has resulted in violence between the two sides. After a number of dismissals, imprisonments of party leaders, and multiple declarations of “a state of emergency”, democracy is still in its first stages. Nepal is a greatly under-developed nation that is trying to foster its tourism industry from infancy as well as modernize itself.

Demographics:



A Buddhist temple that's under construction in Nepal.

- Nepal is in terms of area a small country, with an estimated population of 28,901,790. There are many ethnic groups in the country. One of which is the Chettri (15.5%). Another group is called the Brahman-Hill that consists of 12.5% of the Nepalese population.¹
- Nepal is a predominately Hindu country with 80.6% of the population practicing the religion. Buddhism comes in second with 10.7% followed by Islam at 4.2%.²
- Over 87% of Nepal's population currently lives in rural areas. According to numbers from a decade ago, 82.5% of the population lives under \$2 a day.³
- Life expectancy for a Nepalese man is 60.78 years and 60.33 for females. The current estimated population growth rate in Nepal is

¹ “Nepal.” 2007 CIA World Factbook. <<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/np.html>>

² Ibid

³ “Nepal Statistics” <<http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/english/regions/asia/npl/statistics.htm>>

2.13%.⁴

- The age composition of the population is as follows: 0-14 years: 38.3%, 15-64 years: 57.9%, and 65 years and over: 3.8%.⁵
- As of 2005 the GDP per capita in Nepal was \$269 which placed the country near the bottom of all the countries in the world.⁶

Picture Above: <http://www.studyabroad.com/sabphoto/images/nepal2.jpg>

Education

- As a result, of opening education for the public in 1951, the literacy rate has increased as well as the number of higher education institutions in the country. The amount of money that was allocated to education from the national budget in 2006 was \$98.64 million.⁷



An overview picture of the picture of the Khumbu Valley in Nepal shows the exotic nature of the environment in the country.

three major river systems: the Narayani River, Kamali River, and the Koshi River. These rivers typically flood during the monsoon season which causes the

- The education in Nepal is structured like many South Asian countries. The primary level of education is grades 1-5, followed by a lower secondary level (6-8), and a secondary level (9-10). At the end of the 10th grade, a School Leaving Certificate exam is taken. After passing this exam one will go on to the higher secondary level (11-12). After one graduates from his/her 12th year at school, they will go to university.⁸

- According to the Nepalese government, the numbers of students has risen 10.3% annually in Lower Secondary schools. The number of students traveling abroad at other universities has also tripled in the last decade.⁹

Geography/Natural Resources:

- The landlocked South Asian country of Nepal borders China and India.
- The country features high mountains (Himalayas), hills, and valleys. Nepal has

4 “Nepal.” *2007 CIA World Factbook*. <<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/np.html>>

5 Ibid.

6 “Nepal in Educational Figures.” <<http://www.moe.gov.np/Educational%20Statistics/download%20pdf/Nepal%20in%20Educational%20Figures,%202005.pdf>>.

7 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Nepal>

8 Ibid.

9 “Nepal in Educational Figures.” <<http://www.moe.gov.np/Educational%20Statistics/download%20pdf/Nepal%20in%20Educational%20Figures,%202005.pdf>>.

- rivers to change their course.¹⁰
- Nepal maintains a land area of 143,181 square kilometers—slightly larger than the state of Arkansas. In comparison to other countries, Nepal is the 93rd biggest country in the world in terms of area.¹¹
 - Nepal has 27.3% of its land under forest cover, but one-fourth of the forest area is greatly degraded.¹²
 - Nepal’s main natural resources are quartz, hydropower, and timber. The country also houses small deposits of lignite, copper, cobalt, and iron ore.¹³

Picture Above:

<http://www.palacesandtigers.com/images/gallery/nepal/Nepal%20Khumbu%20Valley.jpg>

Agriculture

- Agriculture accounts for 38% of the nation’s GDP. They grow rice, wheat, maize, sugarcane, oilseed, and potatoes.¹⁴
- The area that has the greatest potential for a good agricultural sector is the region of Tarai. Yet, due to transportation problems it is hard for the food to reach the areas north of Tarai.¹⁵
- Agriculture is Nepal’s hub of economic activity. This sector employs 80% of the population. Due to this, the country runs into a problem because, only 20% of the land is cultivable. This has resulted, in the agricultural industry providing less than 40% of the GDP.¹⁶

Relevant Environmental Laws and Regulations:

Kyoto Protocol

- An international agreement in which countries and cities voluntarily sign up to decrease carbon emissions to reduce global warming.¹⁷

Acknowledgements:

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10 “Geography of Nepal” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geography_of_Nepal>

11 Ibid.

12 “Forest and the Forestry Sector” [FAO Forestry Department](http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/countryinfo/en/npl/). <<http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/countryinfo/en/npl/>>

13 “Nepal.” [2007 CIA World Factbook](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/np.html). <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/np.html>>

14 “Nepal (05/07)” <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5283.htm>>

15 “Nepal: Agriculture.” [Britannica](http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-23644/Nepal) <<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-23644/Nepal>>

16 “Economy of Nepal” [Wikipedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Nepal) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Nepal>.

17 “Kyoto Protocol” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyoto_Protocol>.