IRRIGATED CROPS

40% of crop production worldwide... on 20% of the world’s cultivated area only!

346 million ha of irrigated crops were harvested in 2011 on 261 million ha actually irrigated, resulting in a cropping intensity of 130%.

Irrigated crops harvested by continent in million hectares:
- Africa: 14
- Americas: 44
- Asia: 271
- Europe: 15
- Oceania: 2

Irrigated cropping intensity by continent in %:
- Africa: 138
- Americas: 107
- Asia: 141
- Europe: 100
- Oceania: 100

Irrigated cropping intensity is the ratio of harvested irrigated crops area over actually irrigated area.

Asia harvests 78% of the world’s irrigated crops area.

Irrigation and a year-round favourable climate for crop growth make it possible to cultivate the same area more than once a year (i.e. cropping intensity > 100%).

Diversification of irrigated crops is higher in countries with higher income.

Rice is the world’s largest irrigated cereal, covering 29% of the total irrigated crop area and almost half of the irrigated cereals area.

In the year 2010, the global water requirement for irrigation was 1 500 km³.

The total amount of water withdrawn for irrigation being 2 700 km³ gave an irrigation scheme efficiency (or water requirement ratio) of 56%.

7 700 m³/ha is withdrawn annually on average for irrigation.

In the case of paddy rice cultivation, in addition to water for irrigation a layer of 10-20 cm of water is required for land preparation and plant protection.