

Mogadishu Kismayo (Somalia)

In its entirety, Somalia covers an area of 633,208 km², with an estimated population of 11.3 million people in 2017 (World Bank, 2016a). Over half of Somalia's population are thought to reside in the coastal zone (Mahongo & Mwaipopo, 2015). The dispersed nature of Somalia's coastal settlement shows the highest population densities apparent in the capital of Mogadishu, as well as further south around Kismaayo and Jamaame. While Mahongo & Mwaipopo (2015), suggest that some 55% of the country's population reside along the coast. Built-Up or urban landcover makes up a tiny percentage (0.33%) of the coastal zone in Somalia, which is indicative of a densely populated urban form.

Somalia's coastal zone is untransformed mainly at 95%, but it is worth noting that this observation is not an indication of the relative condition of unchanged or natural areas. Somalia's coastal zone has the lowest proportion of tree landcover in the WIO. The critical environmental challenges experienced in Somalia include deforestation, water scarcity, waste disposal, natural resources and ecosystem services, and climate change (Beier & Stephansson, 2012: unsustainable livestock and agricultural practices as well as drought. It is also contributing to socio-political conflict (Beier & Stephansson, 2012: 3). Due to variable and often unreliable rainfall, coupled with misuse and mismanagement related to water supply, water scarcity in Somalia is becoming an issue of significant concern. According to Beier and Stephansson, (2012: 4), less than 30% of Somalia's population had safe drinking water in 2014. It is important to note that, like many other regions, there are poverty-environment linkages within Somalia.

According to UN Habitat, The Somali urban landscape is largely ruled by unregulated black market principles. Almost everything is up for grabs (or at least for sale), and transparency, equitable access to services, and respect for human rights are the first victims in such a context. Towns are a bundle of casually, haphazardly laid-out buildings, and a multitude of users fight over the same unorganized public spaces. In the Somali region, as in any other post-conflict context, institutions have to be built again, and with them, the human capacity to manage and guide development. In this context, capacity development is not easy, but it remains the foundational activity for creating sustainable urban centres.