



# IMPETUS

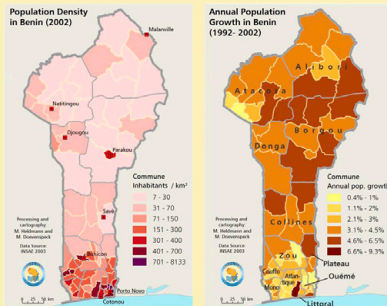
## Regional Geography of Benin

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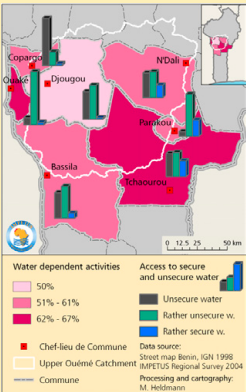
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### Population and Society

- 8 Million inhabitants (2008, IMPETUS estimation)
- Growth rate: 3.25%
- Benin has a clearly uneven population distribution: high densities in the south and around big cities and low densities in the north
- The population growth has an opposed pattern: the central parts show the highest growth rates, except the peri-urban region around Cotonou



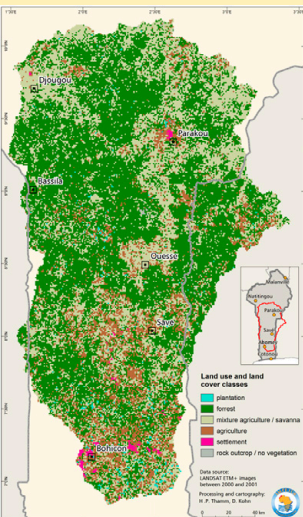
Population density and population growth in benin. (Source: IMPETUS Atlas)



Access to water and economic dependency on water. (Source: IMPETUS Atlas)

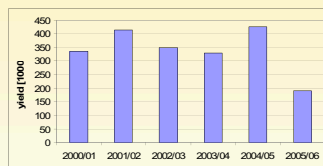
- Benin has a multi-ethnic structure: over 59 ethnics are counted by the national census in 2002
- The water supply differs considerably during seasons by source and regionally
- Only 54.5% of the households have access to mainly safe water
- Specially in rural areas water supply during the dry season is very limited
- According to the IMPETUS regional survey in central Benin, 25% of the respondents depends on water from unsafe waterholes
- For many people, access to fresh water is only possible by purchase

### Economy and Agriculture



Map of land cover and land use of the Ouémé catchment (source: IMPETUS Atlas)

- The economy of Benin is mainly based on agriculture, but trade and informal employment have also high importance
- The GDP per capita is about 1,141 US\$ (purchasing power parity)
- The most important commercial crop and export product is cotton



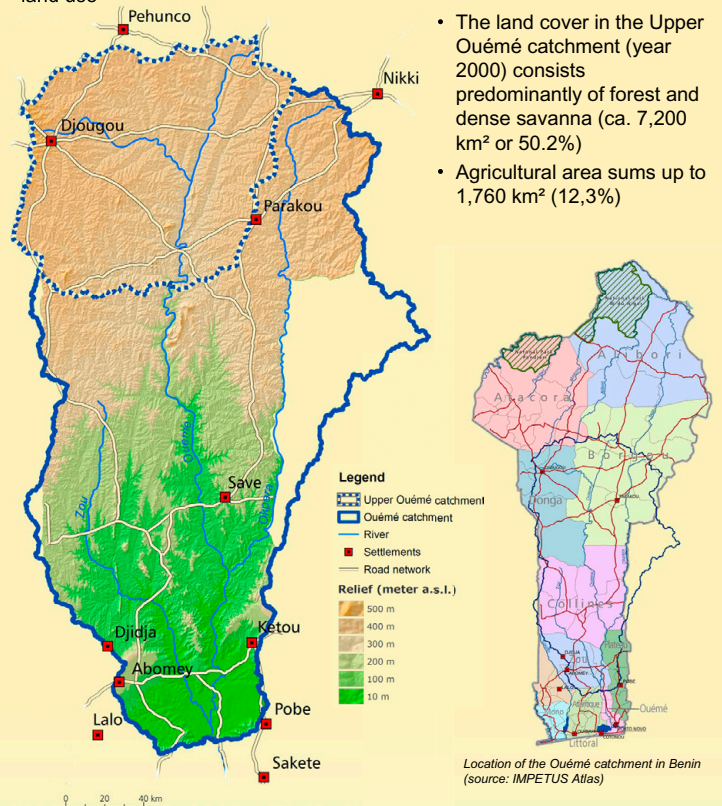
Development of cotton production in Benin. (Source: Ministère du Développement, de l'Économie et des Finances)

- Due to high population growth and low input systems, agricultural areas are increasing at a high rate

- In central Benin, cropland increases by 70% with a loss of over 60,000 ha of forest and savanna between 1991 and 2000
- In the south as well in the north-west of Benin, high population density lead to significant shortage of land and declining soil fertility.

### The Ouémé catchment

- The Ouémé is the biggest river in Benin with a catchment of about 51,000 km<sup>2</sup>
- The IMPETUS research was conducted mainly in the Upper Ouémé catchment, which stretches between the cities Parakou and Djougou
- The Upper Ouémé catchment is characterized by low population density but strong growth rates which cause tremendous changes in land cover and land use

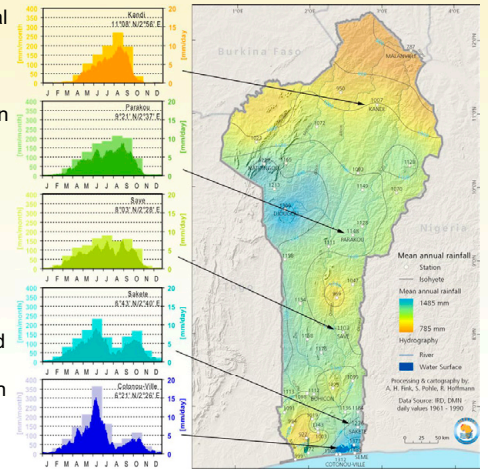


Map of the Ouémé catchment in Benin

- The land cover in the Upper Ouémé catchment (year 2000) consists predominantly of forest and dense savanna (ca. 7,200 km<sup>2</sup> or 50.2%)
- Agricultural area sums up to 1,760 km<sup>2</sup> (12.3%)

### Natural environment

- The sub-humid tropical climate of Benin reveals a north-south gradient with increasing precipitation towards the south.
- The soils have generally moderate fertility, but high regional differences occur.
- The vegetation types coincides with the climatic conditions and consists mainly of savanna types. Only in the south, some wet forest are found.



Mean monthly rainfall amounts (1961-1990) in Benin (Source: IMPETUS Atlas)