Biocapacity measures how biologically productive land is. It is measured in ‘global hectares’: a hectare with the world average biocapacity. Biologically productive land includes cropland, pasture, forests and fisheries. 16% of the world’s biocapacity is in Brazil.

The biocapacity of a territory is affected by physical conditions and people’s actions. A pertinent example of this is Iraq, the Mesopotamian marshes were once part of the fertile crescent. Much of this marshland has been drained and become desert. Trade sanctions and social upheavals also reduce people’s ability to use land productively. Iraq’s land is now estimated to be the least productive in the world.

 Territory size shows the proportion of all biocapacity that is found there.

“... land is ‘not only’ the ground, it is ‘not only’ a means of production and it is ‘not only’ the material reality that one knows ...”

Claudia Briones, 2006

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