

# Agriculture and Forestry in Pakistan (new series)

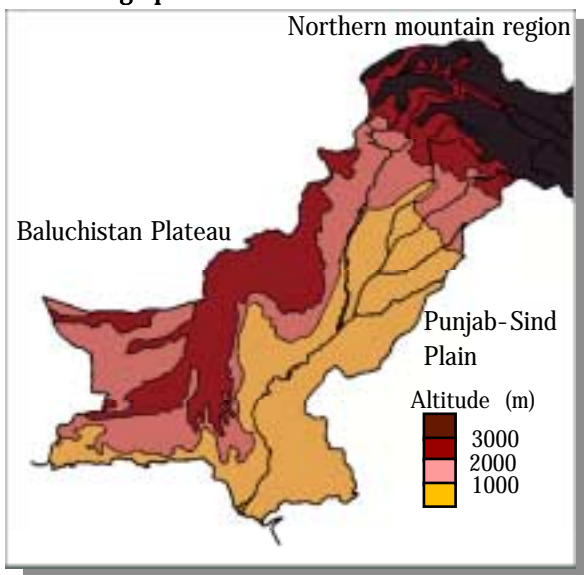
## Part 1: Nature and agriculture in Pakistan

AAI has been involved in technical assistance activities in Pakistan, mainly for development study in the field of agriculture. As a result we have had several reports on Pakistan in AAINews. Viewing Pakistan as a whole, our experience is quite limited to certain areas of the country. However, in this new series we would like to take up issues in Pakistan again, to consider agricultural development in dry land in general and discuss the present form and future tasks of agriculture which make the most of the local environment and the particular characteristics of each region.

The territory of Pakistan extends from the coast of the Arabian Sea to the mountains in Central Asia. It borders Iran, Afghanistan, China and India, and occupies an area of 796,000 km<sup>2</sup> (almost twice the size of Japan). Geographically it can be divided into three regions: the northern mountain region, the Punjab-Sind Plain, and the Baluchistan Plateau. The high steep mountains in the north form part of the world's roof which ranges from the Hindu Kush in the west, to Karakoram, to the Himalayas in the east. The Punjab-Sind Plain is formed in the river basins of the Indus and its tributaries, and there is an irrigation system which is thought to be the world's largest, with a total length of 64,000km. The Baluchistan Plateau consists of the Sulaiman mountain range and other smaller mountain ranges which lie north-south to the west of the Indus River, and it forms the east wing of the Iran Plateau. It is a vast area with a low population density.

Although the Punjab-Sind Plain serves as Pakistan's granary, its annual rainfall amounts to no more than 500mm, making the area arid or semi-arid region. For this reason, the most important factor in agriculture in Pakistan is irrigation, and as shown in the figures below this country can be divided into five agricultural zones according to the kinds of irrigation available in each region. Zone-1 indicates the region where river irrigation is used on over 50% of the entire farmland, in Zone-2 river flood water is used for agriculture in over 50% of the farmland, in Zone-3 reservoirs or canals supply water to over 50% of the farmland, and in Zone-4 over 50% of farmland relies on rainfall. In Zone-5 the agricultural types of Zones 1 to 4 are mixed. Irrigation rates in Pakistan are almost the highest in Asia. Also, both the cultivation areas and per unit productivity have been expanded and improved for major crops such as wheat, rice, cotton, sugar cane and corn. Therefore, the important task now is to promote diversified agricultural activities aiming at revenue increase by increasing crop production, introducing fruit cultivation and cattle farming. Agricultural development, which takes advantage of the local environmental characteristics, will be a rational and reasonable strategy for this purpose.

Geographical features of Pakistan



Regional divisions of agriculture in Pakistan

