

CUBA



Source: esri

General

Cuba - officially the Republic of Cuba - comprises the island of Cuba as well as Isla de la Juventud and several minor archipelagos. Cuba is located in the northern Caribbean where the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean meet. It is south of both Florida and the Bahamas, west of Haiti, and north of Jamaica. Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean, it has an area of 11.0 Mha (million hectares) with in 2022 a population of 11.2 million, or 1.02 persons per ha (Wikipedia and United Nations, 2022).

Climate and geography

With the entire island south of the Tropic of Cancer, the local climate is tropical, moderated by north-easterly winds that blow year-round. The temperature is also shaped by the Caribbean current, which brings in warm water from the equator. In general there is a drier season from November to April, and a rainier season from May to October. The average temperature is 21 °C in January and 27 °C in July. The warm temperatures of the Caribbean Sea and the fact that Cuba sits across the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico combine to make the country prone to frequent hurricanes. These are most common in September and October (source: Wikipedia).

Cuba's terrain is mostly flat or rolling plains, with rugged hills and mountains in the southeast. The lowest point is the Caribbean Sea and the highest point is Pico Turquino, part of the Sierra Maestra mountain range, located in the southeast of the island. Other mountain ranges are Sierra Cristal in the southeast, Escambray Mountains in the centre of the island, and Sierra del Rosario in the Northwest. White sand beaches, most notably in Varadero, as well as mangroves and marshes can be found in the coastal area. The largest is the Zapata Swamp.

Existing polders

The total area of the Zapata Marshes near Matanzas and Cienfuegos is 150,000 ha. The Group Polder Development (1982) describes that in these marshes a pilot polder of 825 ha has been constructed to gain experience with land reclamation. This was done based on studies that showed that the impoldering of some 60,000 ha good arable land is technically possible. Designs have been made for five polders, each 4,000 – 5,000 ha. At Google Earth it can be observed that more polders have been developed. Detailed data still have to be obtained.

General characteristics of the polder in Cuba are shown in Table I.

Proposed polders

In addition to the proposed polders in the Zapata Marshes, no other proposed polders could be identified.

Location of the polder in Cuba as shown on the World polder map

The location of the polder in Cuba is shown in Figure 1.

References

Group Polder Development, Department of Civil Engineering, Delft University of Technology, 1982.

Polders of the World. Compendium of polder projects. Delft, the Netherlands.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. 2022. *World population prospects, medium prognosis. The 2022 revision.* New York, USA.



Figure 1. Location of the polder in Cuba (source: esri – Batavialand)

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Lelystad, April 2023

Table I. General characteristics of existing polders in Cuba

Name	Reclamation	Area in ha	Type *)	Latitudes	Longitudes	Elevation in m+MSL	Land use
Pilot polder in Zapata Marshes		825	RLL	22° 21' N	80° 59' W	7	Agriculture
Total		825					

*) RLL = reclaimed low-lying land; LGS = land gained on the sea; DL = drained lake