

More Developed Country Encyclopedia Article

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The terms more developed countries (MDCs) and **less developed countries** (LDC) were coined by economists to classify the world's 183 countries on the basis of economic development (average annual per capita income and gross national product). The 33 countries (including the United States, Canada, Japan, **Australia**, New Zealand and all the western European countries) in the MDC group are wealthy and industrially-developed. They tend to have temperate climates and fertile soils. About 23 percent of the world's population live in MDCs, but they consume about 80 percent of its mineral and energy resources. In contrast the LDCs are poorer and less industrially-developed. They tend to be located in the Southern Hemisphere where the **climate** is less favorable and soils are generally less fertile. Though the boundaries are purposely vague, this dichotomy is useful for contrasting the economic and social welfare of the richer and poorer countries and in critical environmental categories involving mainly demographic, economic, and social **statistics**.

See Also

Environmental Economics; First World; Third World

Resources

Periodicals

Ehrlich, P. R., and A. H. Ehrlich. "Growing, Growing, Gone (Rich Nations Must Recognize Their Responsibility to Aid Overpopulated Third World)." *Sierra* 75 (March-April 1990): 36–40.

Preston, S. H. "Population Growth and Economic Development." *Environment* (March 1986): 6–9+.