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- Subject: Geography
- Chapter: Primary Activities Part 1
- Diagrams, maps and illustrations' credit: NCERT


Primary Activities



Economic Activities

- Human activities which generate income are known as **economic activities**.
- Economic activities are broadly grouped into
 1. Primary,
 2. Secondary,
 3. Tertiary and
 4. Quaternary activities.

- **Primary activities are directly dependent on environment** as these refer to utilisation of earth's resources such as land, water, vegetation, building materials and minerals.
- It includes:
 1. Hunting gathering,
 2. Pastoral activities,
 3. Fishing,
 4. Forestry,
 5. Agriculture, and
 6. Mining and quarrying.



Why inhabitants of coastal and plain regions are engaged in fishing and agriculture respectively? What are the physical and social factors which affect the type of primary activities in different regions?

DO YOU KNOW

People engaged in primary activities are called red-collar workers due to the outdoor nature of their work.

DO YOU KNOW

The name of the part of the chewing gum after the flavour is gone? It is called Chicle – it is made from the milky juice of zapota tree.

HUNTING AND GATHERING

- The earliest human beings depended on their immediate environment for their sustenance. They subsisted on:
 - (a) animals which they hunted; and
 - (b) the edible plants which they gathered from forests in the vicinity.



Fig. 5.1: Women Gathering Oranges in Mizoram

- Primitive societies depended on wild animals.
- People located in very cold and extremely hot climates survived on hunting.
- In coastal areas fishing has experienced modernisation due to technological progress.
- Many species, now have become extinct or endangered due to illegal hunting (poaching).
- The early hunters used primitive tools made of stones, twigs or arrows so the number of animals killed was limited.
- Why has hunting been banned in India?

Characteristics of hunting and food gathering

- Gathering and hunting are the oldest economic activity known.
- Gathering is practised in regions with harsh climatic conditions.
- It often involves primitive societies, who extract, both plants and animals to satisfy their needs for food, shelter and clothing.
- This type of activity requires a small amount of capital investment and operates at very low level of technology.
- The yield per person is very low and little or no surplus is produced.

Distribution

- Gathering is practised in:
 - (i) High latitude zones which include northern Canada, northern Eurasia and southern Chile;
 - (ii) Low latitude zones such as the Amazon Basin, tropical Africa, Northern fringe of Australia and the interior parts of Southeast Asia

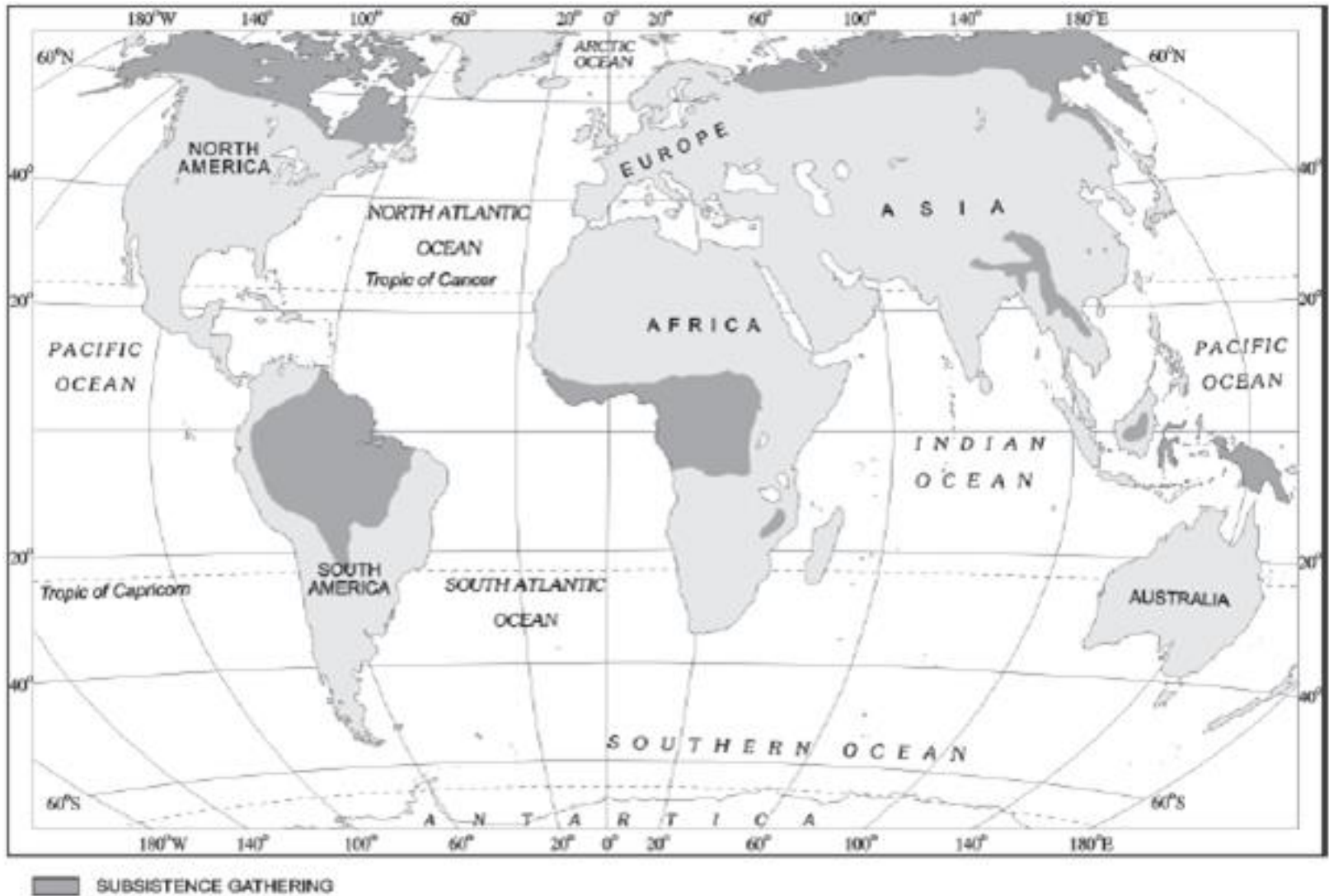


Fig. 5.2: Areas of Subsistence Gathering

Modifications in hunting and food gathering in modern times

- In modern times some gathering is market oriented and has become commercial.
- Gatherers collect valuable plants such as leaves, barks of trees and medicinal plants and after simple processing sell the products in the market.
- They use various parts of the plants, for example, the bark is used for quinine, tannin extract and cork — leaves supply materials for beverages, drugs, cosmetics, fibres, thatch and fabrics; nuts for food and oils and tree trunk yield rubber, balata, gums and resins.

Future of hunting and food gathering

- Gathering has little chance of becoming important at the global level because:
 1. Products of such an activity cannot compete in the world market.
 2. Moreover, synthetic products often of better quality and at lower prices, have replaced many items supplied by the gatherers in tropical forests.

Check this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHDnjJoS-sA&list=TLPQMDYwNDIwMjDxZwpohQQsrQ&index=2>

PASTORALISM

- Involves domestication of animals.
- People living in different climatic conditions selected and domesticated animals found in those regions.
- Depending on the geographical factors, and technological development, animal rearing today is practised either
 - at the subsistence or
 - at the commercial level.

Nomadic Herding

- Nomadic herding or pastoral nomadism is a primitive subsistence activity, in which the herders rely on animals for food, clothing, shelter, tools and transport.
- They move from one place to another along with their livestock, depending on the amount and quality of pastures and water.
- Each nomadic community occupies a well-identified territory as a matter of tradition.



Fig. 5.3: Nomads taking their sheep up to the Mountains at the onset of summer

Characteristics of Nomadic Herding

- 1. Depend on their immediate environment
- 2. Depend on animals they hunted and edible plants which they gathered
- 3. Primitive societies depend on hunting, gathering and fishing.
- 4. Oldest occupation, practiced in harsh climatic conditions
- 5. Depend on animals, for food, shelter, clothing
- 6. Small capital,
- 7. Low level of technology,
- 8. In modern market some gathering is done such as leaves, bark nuts, fabric rubber, balata, gums and resins.

Herders and their animals in different regions

- A wide variety of animals is kept in different regions.
- In **tropical Africa**, cattle are the most important livestock, while
- In **Sahara and Asiatic deserts**, sheep, goats and camel are reared.
- In the **mountainous areas** of Tibet and Andes, yak and llamas and in the **Arctic and sub Arctic areas**, reindeer are the most important animals.



Fig. 5.5: Commercial Livestock Rearing

Reindeer rearing in the northern regions of Alaska where most of the Eskimos own about two-third of the stock.

Important regions

- **Pastoral nomadism** is associated with three important regions.
 1. The **core region** extends from the Atlantic shores of North Africa eastwards across the Arabian peninsula into Mongolia and Central China.
 2. The **second region** extends over the tundra region of Eurasia.
 3. The **third region** lies in the southern hemisphere where there are small areas in South-west Africa and on the island of Madagascar



 NOMADIC HERDING

Fig. 5.4: Areas of Nomadic Herding

Type of nomadic herding

- Movement in search of pastures is undertaken either over vast horizontal distances or vertically from one elevation to another in the mountainous regions.
- The process of migration from plain areas to pastures on mountains during summers and again from mountain pastures to plain areas along with their herd during winters is known as **transhumance**.
- In mountain regions, such as Himalayas, **Gujjars, Bakarwals, Gaddis and Bhotiyas** migrate from plains to the mountains in summers and to the plains from the high altitude pastures in winters.
- Similarly, in the tundra regions, the nomadic herders move from south to north in summers and from north to south in winters.

Major hindrances

- The number of pastoral nomads has been decreasing and the areas operated by them shrinking. This is due to
 - (a) imposition of political boundaries;
 - (b) new settlement plans by different countries.

Check this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sTEbts2-pIM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kJB-twGLqvg>

Characteristics of Commercial livestock rearing

- 1. It is more organized.
- 2. It is capital intensive
- 3. Practised in permanent ranches
- 4. Larger areas and divided into parcels
- 5. Animals are moved from one parcel to another
- 6. It is associated with western cultures.
- 7. Number of animals are kept based on capacity of the pasture

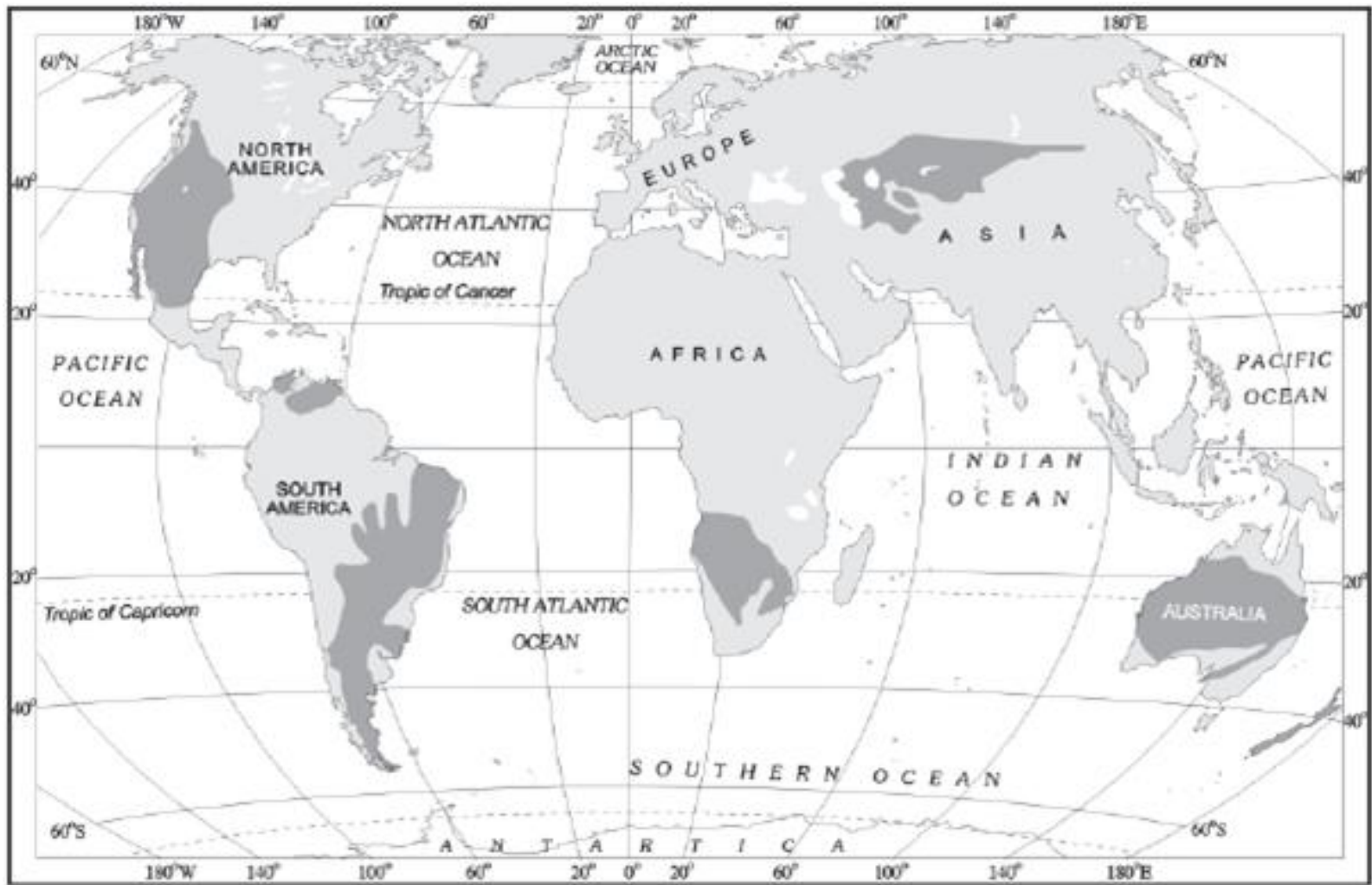
Animals and their products

- Commercial livestock rearing is a specialised activity in which only one type of animal is reared.
- Important animals include
 - sheep, cattle, goats and horses.
- Products such
 - as meat, wool, hides and skin are processed and packed scientifically and exported to different world markets.
- Rearing of animals in ranching is organised on a scientific basis.
- The main emphasis is on •
 - breeding,
 - genetic improvement,
 - disease control and
 - health care of the animals.

Distribution

- Important countries where commercial livestock rearing is practised are:
 - New Zealand,
 - Australia,
 - Argentina,
 - Uruguay and
 - United States of America

Check this too: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQa3ZLO9A_8



■ COMMERCIAL LIVESTOCK REARING

Fig. 5.6: Areas of Commercial Livestock Rearing

AGRICULTURE

- Agriculture is practised under multiple combinations of physical and socio-economic conditions, which gives rise to different types of agricultural systems.
- Based on methods of farming, different types of crops are grown and livestock raised.

Subsistence Agriculture

- Subsistence agriculture is one in which the farming areas consume all, or nearly so, of the products locally grown.
- It can be grouped in two categories —
 - Primitive Subsistence Agriculture and
 - Intensive Subsistence Agriculture.

Primitive Subsistence Agriculture

- **Distribution**
- Primitive subsistence agriculture or shifting cultivation is widely practised by many tribes in the tropics, especially in
 - Africa,
 - south and central America and
 - south east Asia
- It is prevalent in tropical region in different names, e.g.
 - **Jhuming** in North eastern states of India,
 - **Milpa** in central America and Mexico and
 - **Ladang** in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Check this too: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQa3ZLO9A_8

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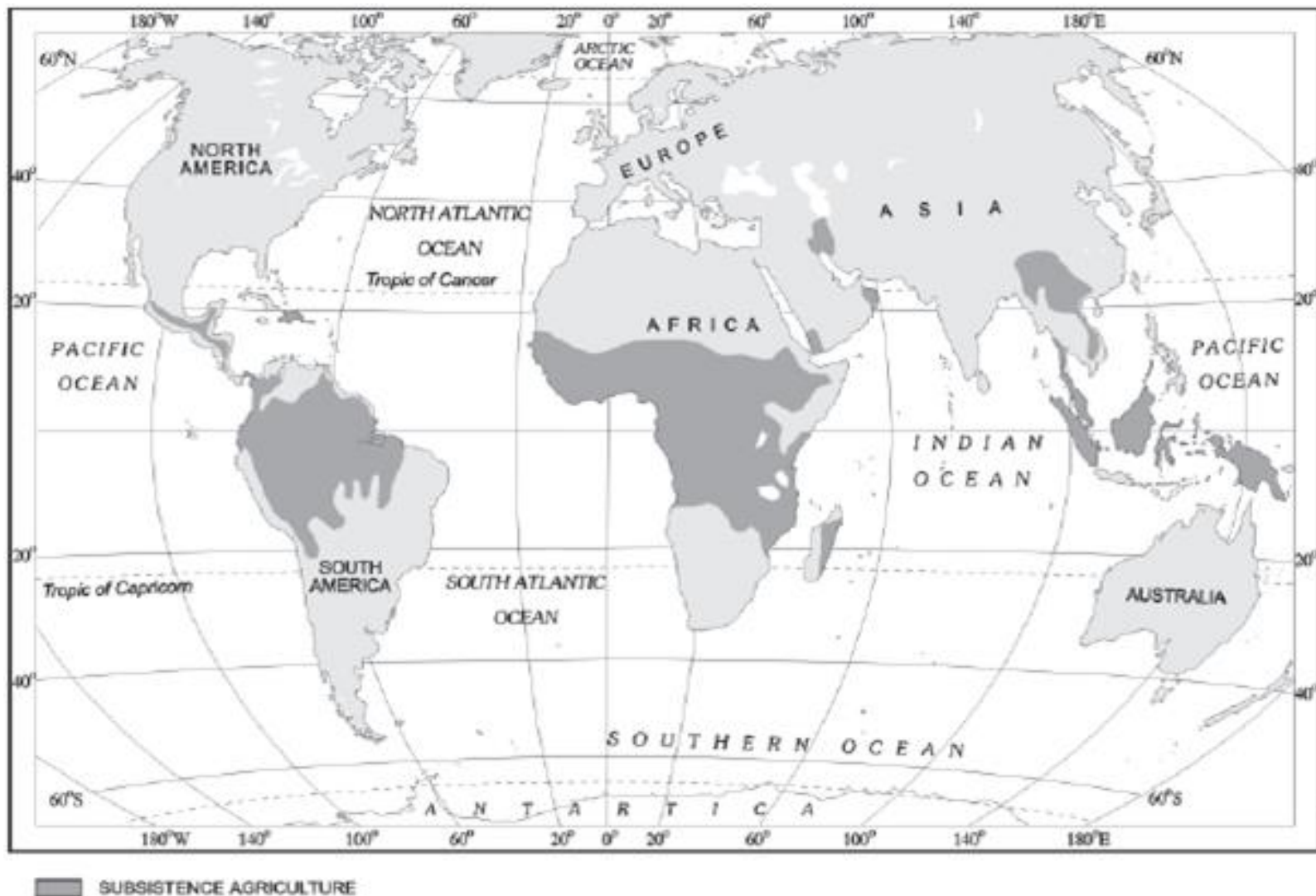


Fig. 5.7: Areas of Primitive Subsistence Agriculture

Process of shifting agriculture

- The vegetation is usually cleared by fire, and the ashes add to the fertility of the soil. Shifting cultivation is thus, also called **slash and burn agriculture**.
- The cultivated patches are very small and cultivation is done with very primitive tools such as sticks and hoes. After sometime (3 to 5 years) the soil loses its fertility and the farmer shifts to another parts and clears other patch of the forest for cultivation.
- The farmer may return to the earlier patch after sometime.
- One of the major **problems** of shifting cultivation is that the cycle of *jhum* becomes less and less due to loss of fertility in different parcels.

Intensive Subsistence Agriculture

- This type of agriculture is largely found in densely populated regions of monsoon Asia. Basically, there are two types of intensive subsistence agriculture.
 - (i) Intensive subsistence agriculture dominated by **wet paddy cultivation**
 - (ii) Intensive subsistence agriculture dominated by **crops other than paddy**

Characteristics of Intensive subsistence agriculture dominated by wet paddy cultivation

1. This type of agriculture is characterised by dominance of the rice crop.
2. Land holdings are very small due to the high density of population.
3. Farmers work with the help of family labour leading to intensive use of land.
4. Use of machinery is limited and most of the agricultural operations are done by manual labour.
5. Farm yard manure is used to maintain the fertility of the soil.
6. In this type of agriculture, the yield per unit area is high but per labour productivity is low.

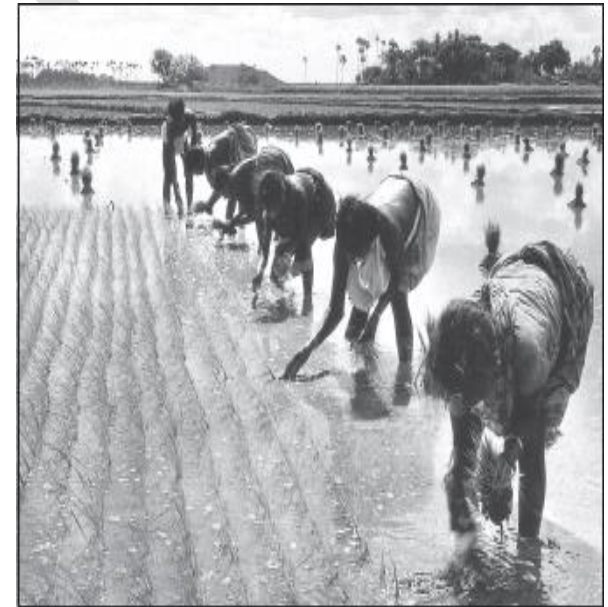


Fig. 5.9: Rice Transplantation

Characteristics of Intensive subsistence agriculture dominated by crops other than paddy

- Practiced in areas where due to climate, soil, relief and other geographical factors paddy cannot be grown.
- Wheat, soybean, barley and sorghum are grown in northern China, Manchuria, North Korea and North Japan.
- Wheat is grown in western part of Indo Gangetic plains and millets are grown in dry parts of western and southern India.
- Irrigation is often used.
- Land holdings are small.
- Family labour is employed.
- Use of machinery is limited
- Farmyard manure is used.

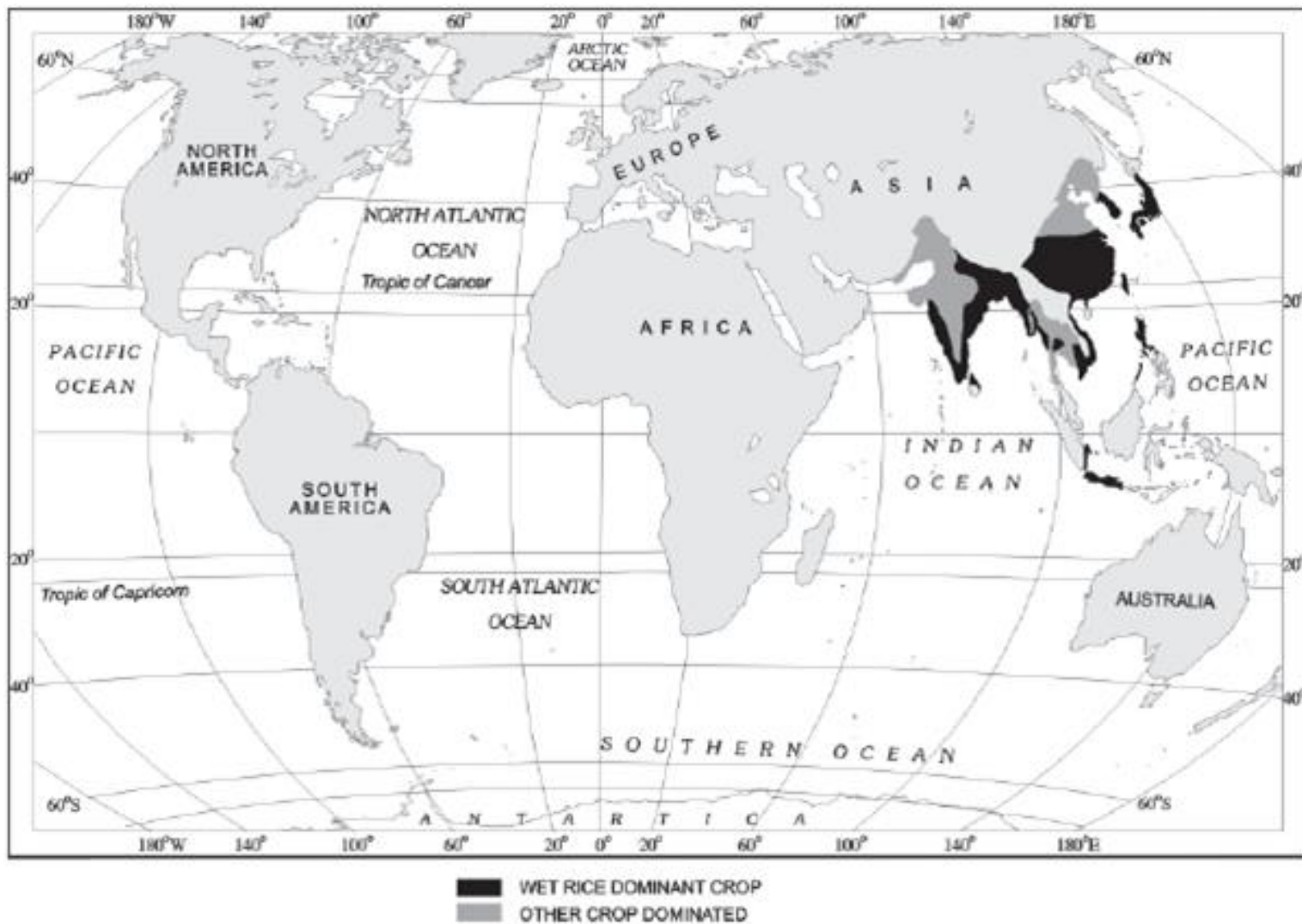


Fig. 5.8: Areas of Intensive Subsistence Farming

Assignment

Q1. Define:

- a. Economic activities
- b. Hunting and food gathering
- c. Transhumance
- d. Commercial livestock rearing
- e. Subsistence agriculture
- f. Intensive subsistence
- g. Shifting agriculture

Q2. Enlist five main characteristics of Hunting and food gathering.

Q3. Describe what modifications have taken place in Hunting and food gathering in modern times.

Q4. 'Gathering has a little chance of becoming important at global level.' Do you agree? Give two arguments in support of your answer.

Q5. Compare and contrast nomadic herding with commercial livestock rearing.

Q6. Give a brief account of the three important regions of pastoral nomadism.

Q7. 'The number of pastoral nomads has been decreasing and the areas operated by them shrinking.' Why is it so?

Q8. 'Rearing of animals in ranching is organised on a scientific basis.' Justify the statement giving three suitable facts.

Q9. Enumerate five main characteristics of the type of agriculture in which 'the yield per unit area is high but per labour productivity is low.'

Q10. Show the following on political map of the world:

- a. Major areas of nomadic herding of the world.
- b. Areas of subsistence agriculture.