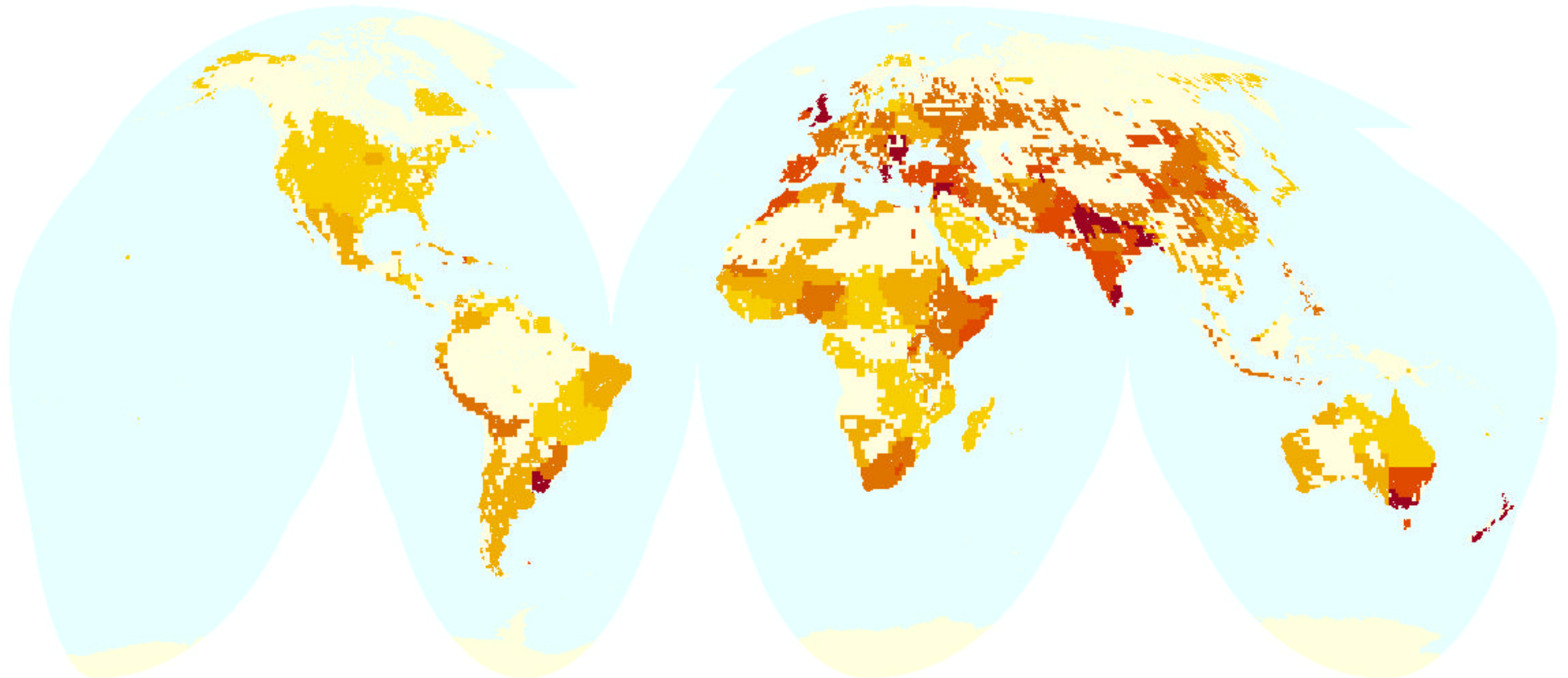


## Global Livestock Density



**Map Projection:** Interrupted Goode's Homolosine

**Citation:** World Resources Institute - PAGE, 2000

**Notes:**

Livestock include cattle, oxen, water buffalo, sheep, goats, horses, camels, and caribou.

Livestock per km<sup>2</sup>

< 1

1 - 10

11 - 25

26 - 50

51 - 100

> 100

**Map Description:**

This map plots density of livestock throughout the world including cattle, sheep and goats, horses, water buffalo, and camels. Densities range from less than 50 head to over 50,000 head of livestock per square kilometer. Some of the highest densities in the world are in the Middle East, Asia, and Australia.

**Analytical Overview:**

A global map of livestock density plots the distribution of cattle, sheep and goats, horses, water buffalo, and camels (Lerner and Matthews 1988). The map is based on country-level data from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In areas where the intensity of livestock production is low, especially in developing regions of Africa and parts of Asia, ranchers presumably rely on native grassland for grazing without many external inputs. Livestock can help maintain soil fertility, increase nutrient retention and water-holding capacity, and create a better climate for micro-flora and fauna. If overgrazing does occur, soil compaction and erosion may follow with a decrease in soil fertility, organic matter, and water-holding capacity. In areas of high intensity livestock production, under industrial and intensive mixed farming systems, high concentrations of animals can cause major environmental problems and have been called "the most severe environmental challenge in the livestock sector" (Delgado et al. 1999). Highly intensive industrial production methods, found near urban agglomerations such as areas of northwestern Europe, the eastern and midwestern United States, and Japan, result in large nutrient surpluses from animal wastes (Steinfeld et al. 1996: 19).

**Source:**

1. Lerner, J. and E. Matthews. 1998. "Methane emission from animals: a global high-resolution database". *Global Biogeochemical Cycles* 2 (2): 139-156.