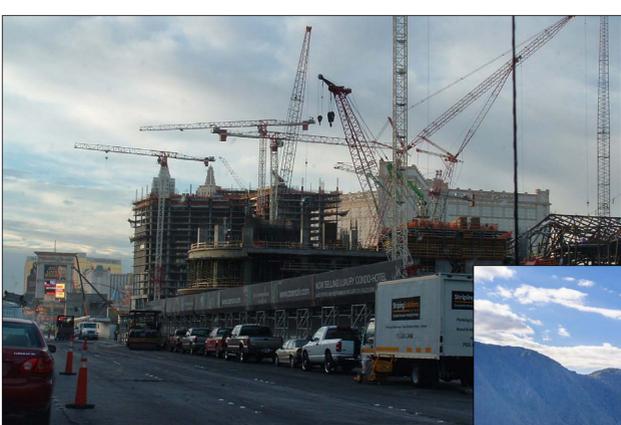
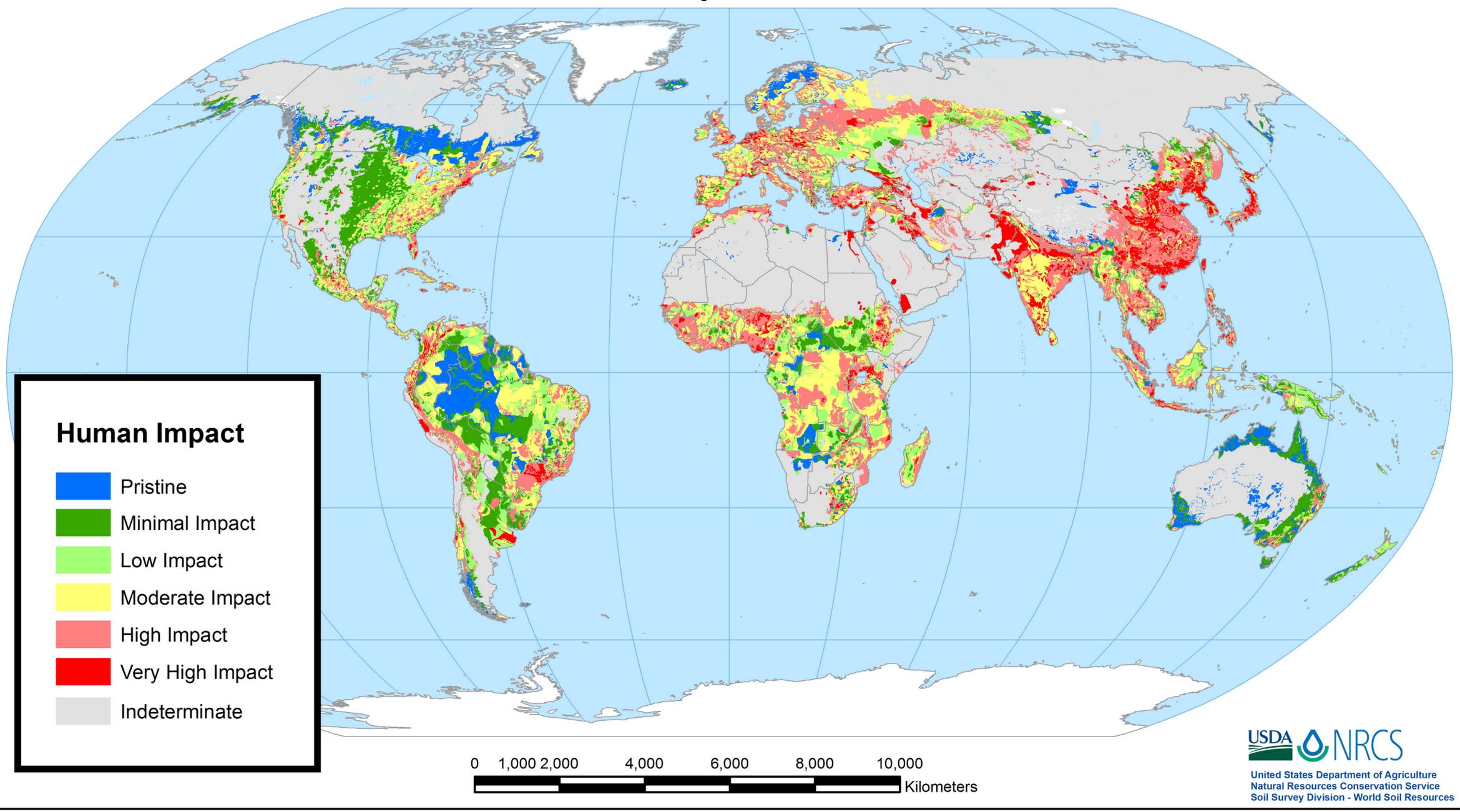




United States Department of Agriculture

# MAP OF THE MONTH *September*

## Human Impact on Land



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### Soil – A Fundamental Resource for Mankind

International communication about the general nature and specific properties of soils has been a major part of the U.S. soil survey program since its beginning. Such communication is critical for understanding how soil types of the United States fit within a global context. International soil scientists, including Europeans, Chinese, Africans, and Latin Americans, have been essential in the development of the current USDA soil classification system.

Modern networks of communication, transportation, global agriculture, and environmental issues have made international communication about soils more important than ever. Consequently, staff of the NRCS World Soil Resources branch have created maps that capture and display the state of world soils. The map above (from 2006), for example, shows where soils have been greatly modified by human activity, both in modern and ancient times. Globally, soils and ecosystems have been modified to such an extent that some geologists and ecologists are proposing that our current geologic time period be labeled the Anthropocene epoch.