

GROWING TOBACCO

“Today, my subjects are starving and malnourished growers of tobacco, a crop that poisons its growers, the people who handle it and all those who consume it. . . . My subjects deserve a better livelihood than being producers of poison.”

—KING SOLOMON IGURU, BUNYORO KINGDOM, UGANDA, 2004

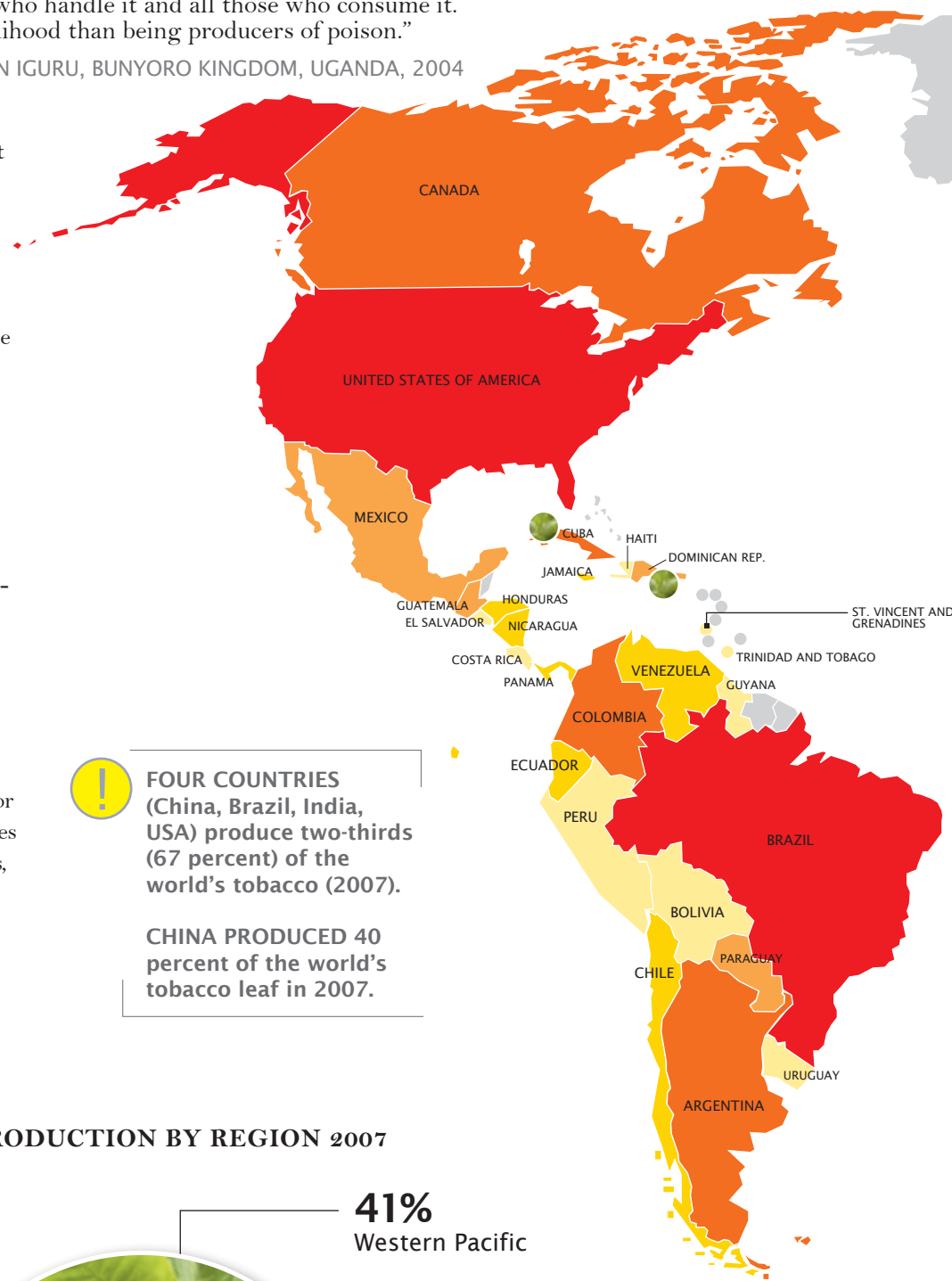
Tobacco is grown in more than 120 countries on almost 4 million hectares of the world’s agricultural land, consuming as much arable land as all the world’s orange groves or banana plantations.

Global tobacco production has almost doubled since the 1960s, increasing 300 percent in low- and middle-resource countries while dropping more than 50 percent in high-resource countries. In 2006, world tobacco production totaled nearly 7 million metric tons with 85 percent of the leaf grown in low- and middle-resource countries.

Tobacco agriculture creates extensive environmental and public health problems. Pesticide and fertilizer runoff contaminate water resources, and the curing of tobacco leaf with wood fuel leads to massive deforestation. Agricultural workers suffer from pesticide poisoning, green tobacco sickness, and lung damage from particulate tobacco, smoke, and field dust.

Although tobacco farming is very profitable for multinational corporations, small farmers often fall into a debt trap perpetuated by tobacco companies. After the cost of inputs is deducted from revenues, small farmers often find themselves deeper in debt.

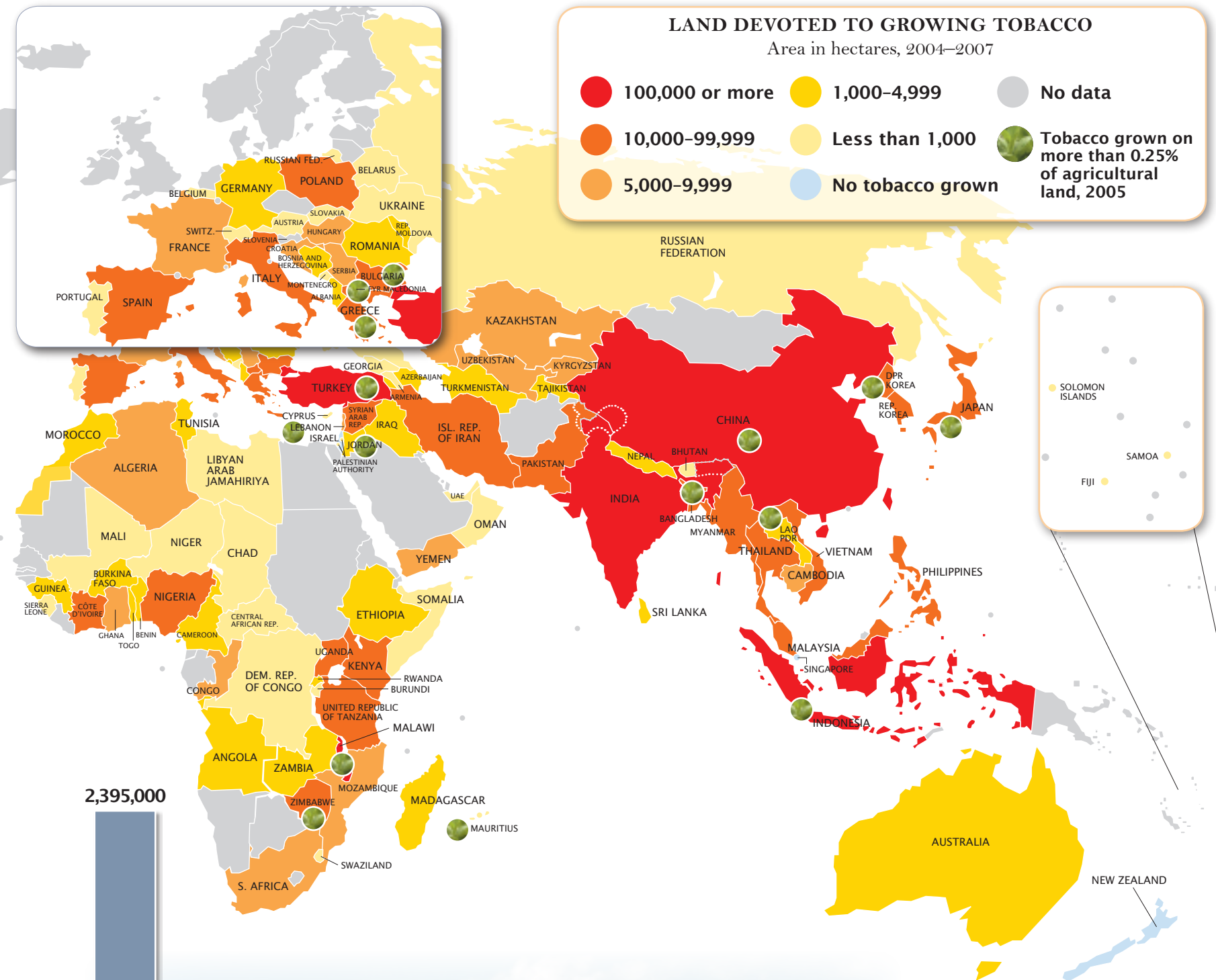
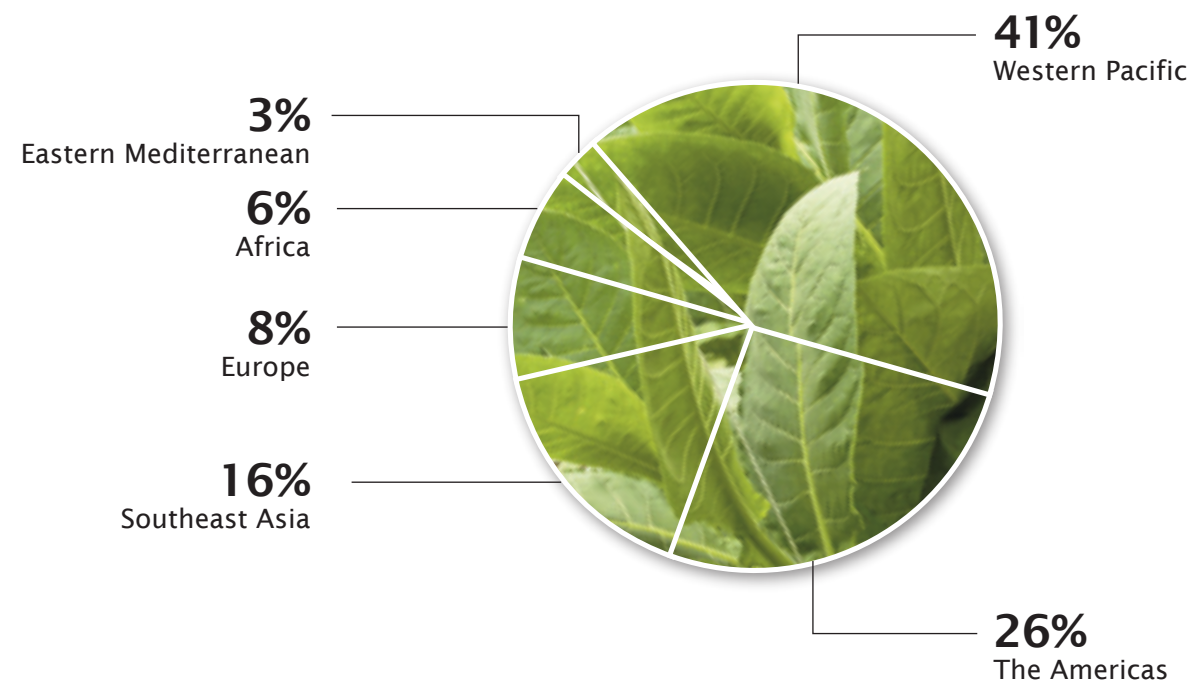
WHO’s Framework Convention on Tobacco Control calls for financial and technical assistance to tobacco growers in countries heavily dependent on tobacco agriculture. Shifting to nutritious, economically viable, and environmentally sound alternatives promises a brighter future for tobacco-producing nations.



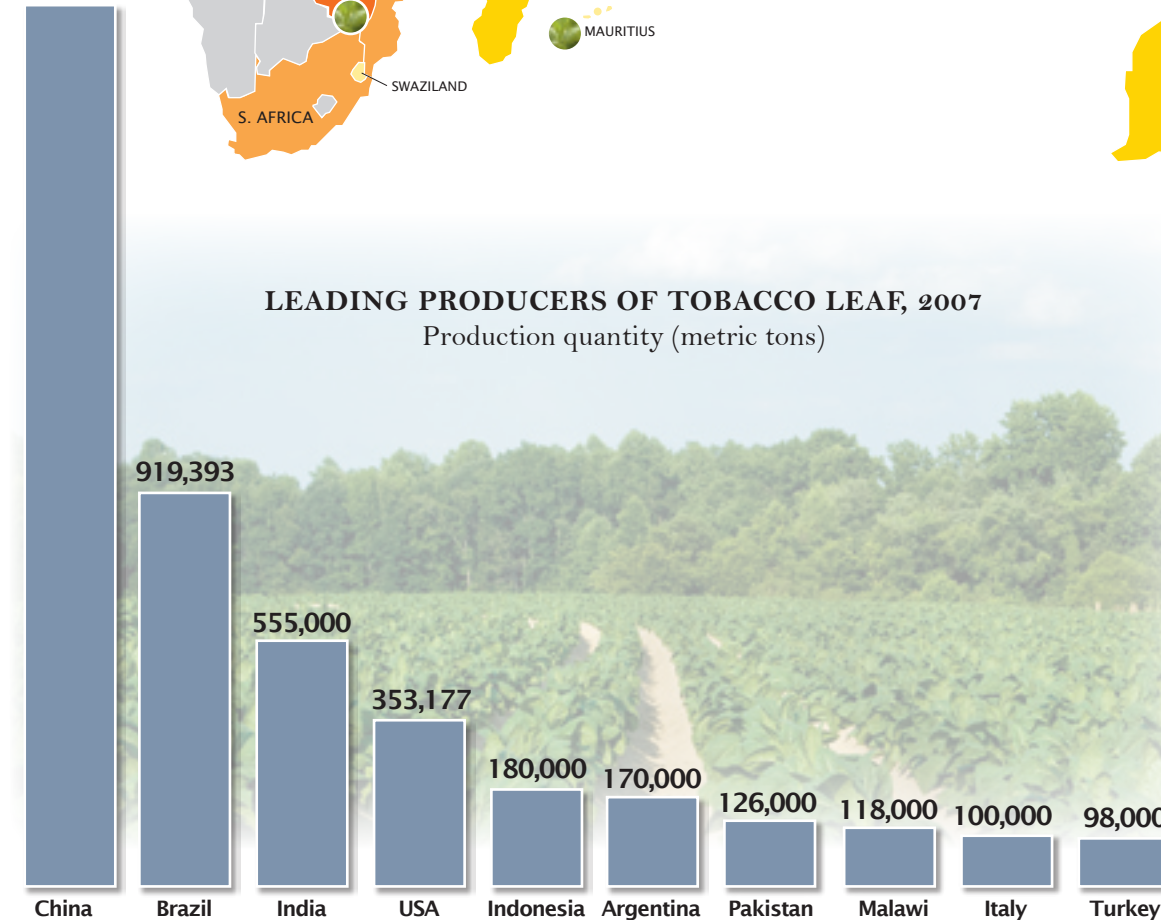
! **FOUR COUNTRIES (China, Brazil, India, USA) produce two-thirds (67 percent) of the world’s tobacco (2007).**

CHINA PRODUCED 40 percent of the world’s tobacco leaf in 2007.

GLOBAL TOBACCO LEAF PRODUCTION BY REGION 2007



2,395,000



LEADING PRODUCERS OF TOBACCO LEAF, 2007
Production quantity (metric tons)