

ECUADOR



Eccuador is situated on the northwestern coast of South America and has a surface area of 256,370 km². The Andes mountain chain divides the country into geographic regions: coastal, mountain, Amazon, and island (the Galápagos Islands are located 1,000 km from the coast). The country is divided geopolitically into 22 provinces, which in are divided into 269 cantons; the latter are subdivided into parishes.

HEALTH CONDITIONS AND PROBLEMS

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

MALARIA

With regard to malaria, in 2001, the annual parasite index (API) per 1,000 population was 22.5, and the provinces with the highest API, in order of frequency, were: Cotopaxi (54.7), Esmeraldas (54.7), Sucumbíos (53.5), and Pichincha (35.1). In 2005, the national API was 2.21, and the highest APIs were recorded in Esmeraldas (17.0), Pastaza (6.6), Pichincha (5.9), and Sucumbíos (5.0). That year, Esmeraldas was the province with the highest percentage of malaria cases with 29.0%. During 2001–2005, most malaria cases were transmitted by *Plasmodium vivax*, even though there were some cases transmitted by *P. falciparum*. In 2005, a total of 358,361 blood samples were examined from which 16,487 cases were diagnosed, of these 2,127 were positive for *P. falciparum*, and 14,360 were positive for *P. vivax*. The most affected age group was the economically active population (15 to 44 years), with 65% of the total cases. Therapeutic failure in 90% of patients after antimalarial treatment exceeded the recommended threshold of 25%. Incipient resistance to sulfadoxine with pyrimethamine was detected at levels of 8%. Susceptibility of *P. vivax* to the use of chloroquine remained at 100% (32)¹.

¹ Excerpted from Pan American Health Organization. 2007. Health in the Americas, 2007. Volume II – Countries. Ecuador. p. 310. Washington, D.C.: PAHO.