

The Internet: Out of Africa

Bits per capita is a relatively new measure of Internet use. The size of the Internet in a country indicates an element of its progress towards an information-based economy. International Internet bandwidth provides a measure of Internet activity because many people share accounts, or use corporate and academic networks along with cyber cafes and business centers. Outgoing bandwidth also takes better account of the wide range of possible

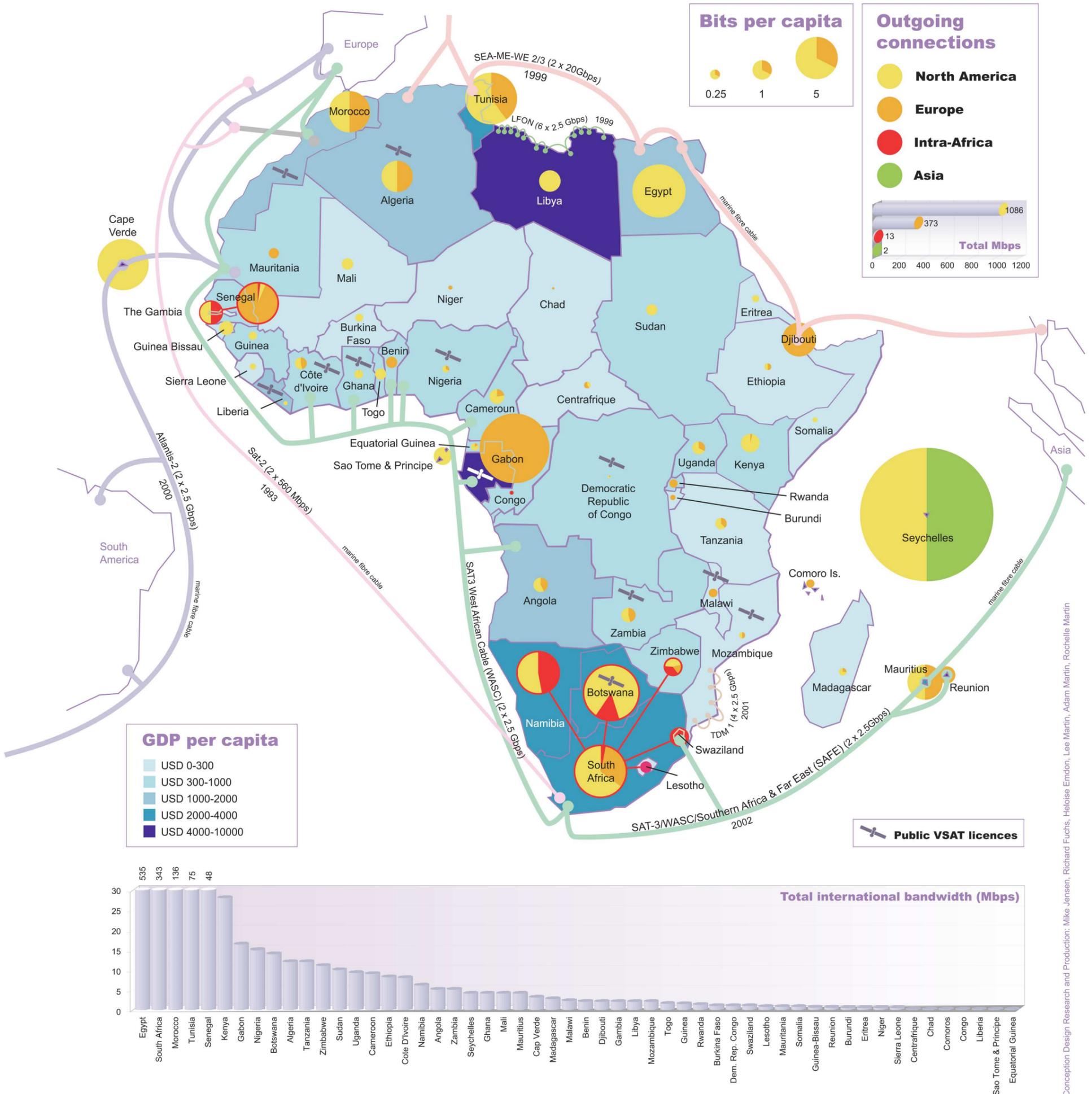
use, from those who write a few emails each week, to users who spend many hours a day on the net browsing, transacting, streaming, and downloading. Because of this, the often used 'Number of Internet Users' indicator may have less relevance in the developing world than in other places.

The coloured circle in each country on the map shows, to exact scale, the international bandwidth in bits per capita (BPC) available in Mid 2002 from

publicly accessible IP networks.

Bandwidth availability in Africa varies tremendously, but is generally very low compared to developed countries. Although there are few intra-African links, the marine fibre cables shown are now all operational and should provide faster and cheaper routes within and out of Africa. 17/04/2002

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Conception Design Research and Production: Mike Jensen, Richard Fuchs, Heloise Emdon, Lee Martin, Adam Martin, Rochelle Martin