

Comoros (Federal Islamic Republic of the)

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Location and area

Comoros is an independent state comprising a group of islands at the northern entrance to the Mozambique Channel, between the African mainland and the island of Madagascar. Comoros includes three islands: Njazidja (formerly known as Grande Comore), Mwali (Mohéli), and Nzwani (Anjouan). Since the republic's independence in 1975, the fourth island in the Comoros Islands archipelago, Mayotte (Mahoré), has chosen to remain a dependency of France. The republic has an area of 1,862 km², while the Comoros Islands group (including Mayotte) has an area of 2,171 km². (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Topography

The Comoros Islands are of volcanic origin and are mountainous. The highest peak, Kartala (2,361 m) on Njazidja, is an active volcano. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Climate

The islands have a tropical climate with a rainy season lasting from November to April and a cooler dry season prevailing the rest of the year. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Land use

Deforestation and soil erosion are continuing environmental problems. The economy is almost completely dominated by agriculture and fishing. Forests cover about 16 % of the islands' land area (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Peatlands

According to the interpreted World Soil Map (Van Engelen & Huting 2002) no histosols and no gley soils exist on the Comores.