

Cyprus

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Location and area

Cyprus is a republic, and third-largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, located west of Syria and south of Turkey. The island has a maximum length of about 225 km and a maximum width of about 100 km. The total area of the country is 9,251 km². Since 1974 the northern third of Cyprus has been occupied by Turkish troops and has formed, de facto, a separate (though officially unrecognized) state. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Topography

Much of Cyprus is a flat, treeless plain (the "Mesaoria"), located in the interior, that extends from the western to the eastern coasts and is bordered on the north and south by mountain ranges. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Water

Cyprus has no permanent rivers. A number of watercourses bring the overflow from the winter rains down to the Mesaoria plain in spring but are dry for most of the year. The island has a few freshwater lakes and two large salt-water lakes. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Climate

Cyprus has a typical Mediterranean climate, with summers that are hot and dry and a cool, rainy season that extends from October to March. The mean annual temperature is 21° C. The annual rainfall averages less than 500 mm. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

Peatlands

The mountain soils tend to be peaty on higher flatlands (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002).

According to the interpreted World Soil Map (Van Engelen & Huting 2002) no histosols nor gley soils exist on Cyprus.