

**Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:**
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:**Crete's fishery-economy: of regional importance!****Environmental problems of the Mediterranean noticeable also at Crete.**

Fishing is in the Mediterranean region of great economic, social and cultural importance. The fish stocks in the Mediterranean have been heavily decimated in recent decades; the main reasons for this lie in the over fishing and pollution of the sea.

The fishing industry on Crete is compared to the farming and the pastoral economy (see leaflet No. 087-05/E) of minor importance. The fisheries income (mainly anchovies, sardines swordfish and tuna) are often used in Greece. Sponges are leaders in the export business of fishing (and tourism on the island). The largest "fishing fleets" are on the North coast of Crete, in Chania and Iraklion. But also small boats drive almost every day and at all points around the island, on the sea, to catch fresh fish ¹⁾ with traditional fishing methods (trawl/fishing), in addition, "Fishing with dynamite" in some areas (especially on the South coast of Crete) is not uncommon even today. The sea around Crete is now almost empty; beside the predominantly (named) fish species, fishermen bring mackerels, banded sea bream, bonito, grouper, red mullet and Octopus on the regional markets or to the few factories of the island. (e.g. to Kastelli (ROKAKIS)).

Fish is now expensive (not only in Crete); crustaceans and shellfish become increasingly rare on the menus of tavern and if, they are usually deep frozen imports. For the latter exist restrictions for Crete under the EU Regulation 2078 / 92 and the EU-Directive 2000/29/EC in its current version (on that hardly anyone does) and the catch of sea urchins for example is now completely prohibited on Crete (therefore see our leaflet No. 080-05/E: black sea urchins). But we were not in Crete wouldn't be there a alternative to the "seafood". In Zaros for example is a trout farm (with tavern) since the 80's which are increasingly popular (also with the locals) and pleased in a growing success; see also our leaflet No. 050-04/E of the **CRETEenvironmentinfo** at http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/NLUK_en.htm (navigation category: Country and People).

End of 2003 the Fisheries Ministers of the Mediterranean countries at their meeting in Venice found a wider consensus on the need for an improved management of Mediterranean fisheries. Securing **sustainable fisheries in the Mediterranean** is the most important goal, not only for the future of this sector in the Mediterranean countries but also to preserve this common heritage for the future generations.



¹⁾ Mediterranean fish is low in calories, abundant with iodine, easily digestible and a high-quality source of protein. Besides iodine Mediterranean fish provides vitamins A, B1, B2, C and above all D. Nevertheless you should not eat more than twice per week because by the impurities in the Mediterranean, many pollutants end up in the food fish. These include heavy metals (such as mercury and cadmium) and residues of plant protection products.



According to the German society for nutrition, there are in the Mediterranean fish consumption "to the current knowledge no health risk to the population". The results of ECO-Test are different. They found highly toxic tin organic compounds such as Dibutyl stannic (DBT) and Tributyl stannic (TBT), which were formerly included in ship coatings. Also, larger fish such as tuna again exceeded the legal limit values for mercury.

Fig. left shows a **banded sea bream** (*Diploodus sargus*) and right, a **dwarf-spotted grouper** (*Serranus hepatus*).



Figure left: trawl care on a "Kaiks" in the port of Heraklion (2003). The blue-white wide belly boats are tailor-made and typical of the Aegean Sea for the coastal passage of the Mediterranean. (Picture: U. Kluge). Figure on the right shows a fisher (1980) "Cleaning" of the catch; besides sponges primarily the housing of marine gastropods (for sale to tourists).



The figures show (from left to right) a stall with fresh Frisch on the regional market in the port of Heraklion (2004) and on the bed of a Pick-Up (2005). Many fishermen market their catch in the mountain villages which they regularly approach and promote their goods through speakers there. Figure right shows a souvenir shop in Elounda. In addition to shells, snail shells and sponges of all sizes also prepared fish is offered including many "protected" species. Caution is required ff for special preparations, generously discounts are offered. For export and import controls, there may be problems for "Infringement of the conservation agreement", which can lead to a substantial penalty. Pictures: U. Kluge (05/2005)



Within the snail species of the Mediterranean best known are the [Mediterranean cone snail](#)¹⁾ (*Conus mediterraneus*) and the [banded dye-murex](#) (*Murex trunculus*). Whoever gets such a house in the finger adhere it to the ear, to listen to the "Ocean". The noise in the shell is based on resonance. A column of air that vibrates back and forth with an own speed and has a certain resonance frequency is located in the shell. The hollow body of the snail's shell reinforce these sounds to a noise. Only the notes that are close to the frequency of the air column, be strengthened; thus, every shell has its own, very special noise and small shells so have a different noise as a large shells. The great "thinker of antiquity" (ARISTOTLE) already dealt with the description of these marine animals. The knowledge of the ancient production of purple, to which the purple snails provide the colour secretion, we owe a report of PLINY the elder in his "Naturalis historia". On Crete purple should be obtained already before 1600 BC, while for Phoenicia the beginning of the purple dye-works dates something earlier in the year 1439 BC. The Greek KONSTANTION PALEOKAPPA narrated the legend whereupon a dog on the beach has munched a murex and his snout coloured red. The Shepherd believed that the dog was injured and wiped off its muzzle with a cloth. Thereby he noticed that the red colour was designed by the snail! Both types of snail are "Carnivores" and keep their habitat on the ocean floor.

¹⁾ They have a "Fang", with which they inject a neurotoxin in their prey, the prey is paralyzed and can then be consumed "in peace". Also people can put painful stings.