

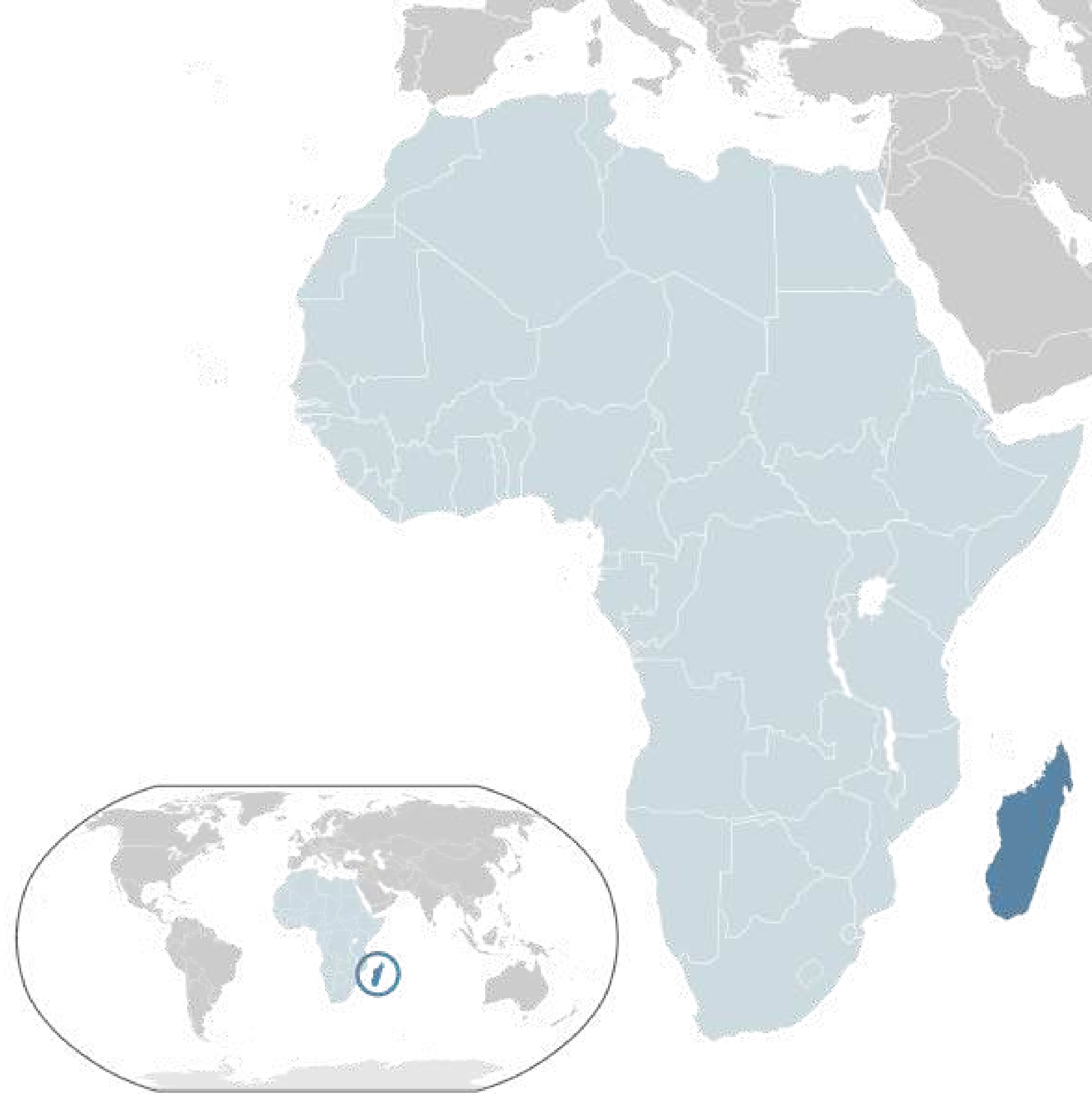
# Madagascar





# Where is Madagascar?

- **Location:** Madagascar is an island nation off the southeastern coast of Africa, in the Indian Ocean.
- **Size and Population:** It's the fourth-largest island in the world, covering approximately 587,041 square kilometers (226,658 square miles), with a population of around 28 million.
- **Capital:** The capital city is Antananarivo, often called "Tana."





# What is the weather like?

- **Geographic Diversity:** Madagascar has diverse landscapes including rainforests, highland plateaus, dry deciduous forests, and coastal beaches.
- **Climate:** The climate varies by region:
  - East coast: Rainy and tropical.
  - Central highlands: Cooler and temperate.
  - West coast: Drier.
  - Southern tip: Arid desert-like conditions.
- **Seasons:** Two main seasons – a hot, rainy season (November to April) and a cooler, dry season (May to October).





# Flora and Fauna

- **Biodiversity:** Madagascar is one of the most biodiverse places on Earth, with over 90% of its wildlife found nowhere else.
- **Unique Species:**
  - Lemurs: Madagascar is famous for its lemurs, which are endemic to the island.
  - Baobab Trees: Iconic trees with massive trunks and unique shapes.
  - Chameleons: The island hosts nearly half of the world's chameleon species.
- **Conservation Status:** Madagascar's wildlife is under threat from deforestation and habitat loss, making conservation a significant issue.





# Main Occupations

- **Agriculture Dominates:** most work in agriculture, with rice, vanilla, coffee, and cloves as major crops.
- **Leading Vanilla Exporter:** world's top producer of vanilla.
- **Other Livelihoods:** Many people also work in fishing, handicrafts, and increasingly, tourism due to the country's unique natural attractions.





# Languages in Madagascar

- **Malagasy:** Malagasy is the official and national language, spoken by 90% of Madagascar's population
- **French Influence:** French is widely used, especially in education, government, and business, reflecting Madagascar's colonial history.
- **Regional Dialects:** There are several regional Malagasy dialects, though standard Malagasy unites the population.
- "Hello" is said as "Salama".



**Salama!**  
(Hello!)

**Manao ahoana  
ianao?**  
(How are you?)

# Education in Madagascar

- **Literacy Rate:** The literacy rate is around 74%, with variations between urban and rural areas.
- **Primary Education:** Primary education is free, but resources are often limited, and dropout rates increase in higher grades. Only 36% females and 34% of males are enrolled in secondary education.
- **Teacher Training:** Only 4% of primary teachers possess the basic pedagogical and subject matter knowledge
- **Challenges:** Many rural areas face shortages of teachers, classrooms, and materials, impacting the quality of education.





# Culture and Religion

- **Religious Blend:** Most Malagasy people practice Christianity, often combined with traditional beliefs like ancestor worship and animism.
- **Ancestor Worship:** Ancestors play an important role in cultural life, and many families maintain tombs and hold ceremonies to honour them.
- **Unique Customs:** Customs like fady (taboos) guide behavior and are respected across many communities.





# Major Festivals

**Santabary Festival:** A celebration of the year's first rice harvest taking place in late April or early May, Santabary involves music, dance, and feasts to honour the land's bounty.



**Alahamady Be:** The Malagasy New Year festival (March 21), celebrated with traditional ceremonies, food, music, and community gatherings.

**Famadihana:** Known as the “turning of the bones,” this is a unique ancestral celebration where families rewrap their ancestors' remains to show respect and connection to their heritage.







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