

## Stay Informed

It is very important to stay updated about this topic. In case of doubt, contact an expert. The following points of information are also recommended:



Gobierno de Canarias  
<https://bit.ly/3gXGD7X>



Mimar+ Project  
<https://www.proyctomimarplus.com>



# Recreational Fishermen/Fisherwoman, ... Stay Updated about Ciguatera in the Canary Islands

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Consejería de Agricultura, Ganadería,  
Pesca y Soberanía Alimentaria  
Dirección General de Pesca



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MAC 2014-2020  
Cooperación Territorial



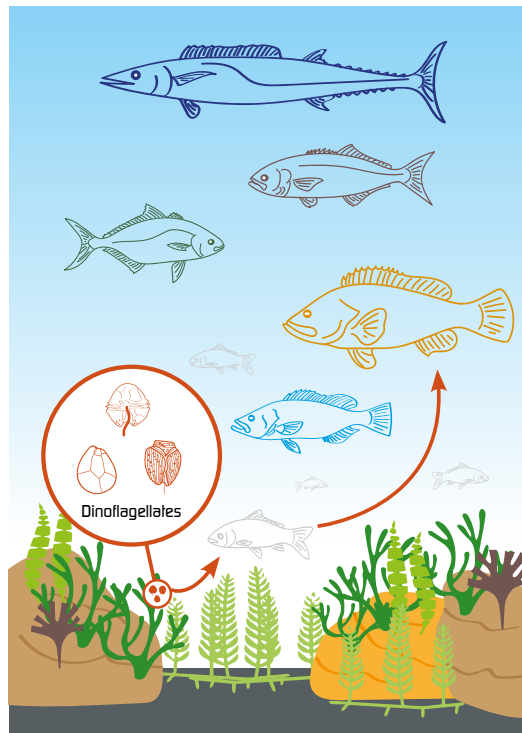
**Recreational fishing (also known as sport fishing or game fishing) is the catching of fish for non-commercial purposes and can be carried out on land, on a boat or underwater.**

### What is ciguatera?

It is a type of **food poisoning** that affects humans and is caused by the consumption of fish contaminated with certain toxins, usually known as **ciguatoxins**. This foodborne illness presents with gastrointestinal, neurological and cardiovascular symptoms. Upon providing symptomatic treatment, patients usually improve within a couple of days or weeks, but in some occasions the symptoms can persist for months or even years.

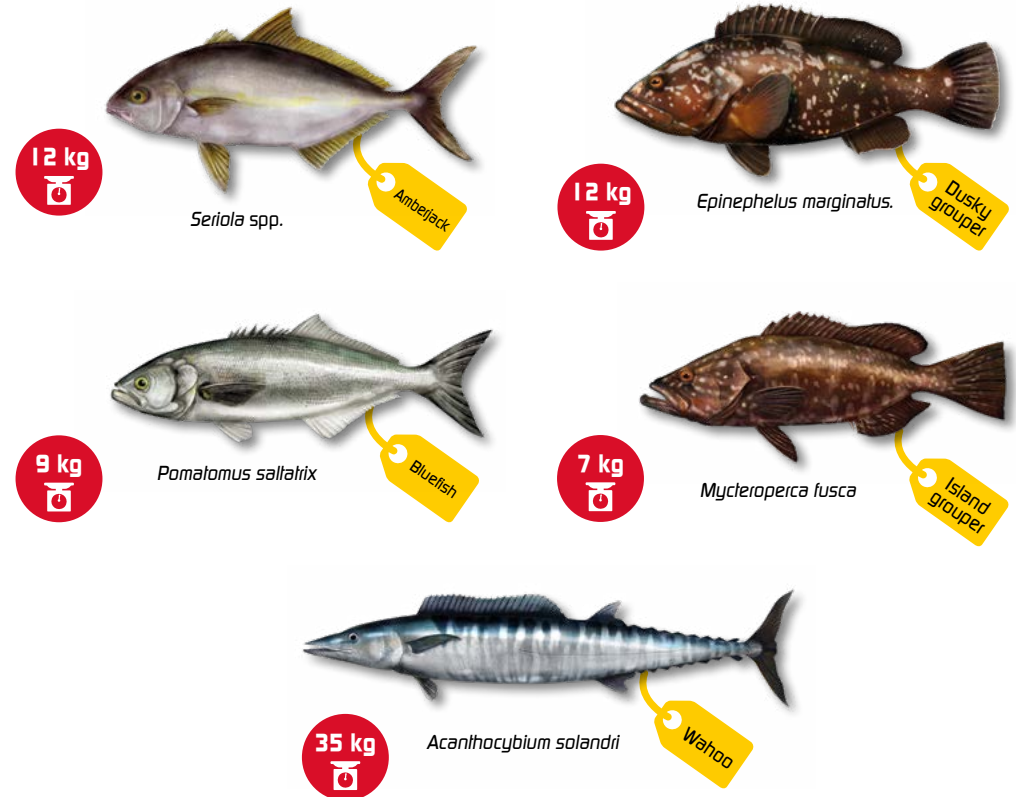
### How do the fish get the toxin... and how does the toxin reach humans?

This syndrome is caused by the accumulation of toxins produced by marine dinoflagellates (microalgae), especially of the genus *Gambierdiscus*. In the Canary Islands, these toxins usually live associated to communities of algae which synthesise highly powerful neurotoxins such as ciguatoxins, maitotoxins and the like. These toxins may significantly vary within the food chain, from small fish and invertebrates that eat the algae carrying the toxic dinoflagellates to big predatory fish, which accumulate the toxins in their organs. Upon consuming these fish, the toxins finally reach humans and can give rise to the ciguatera food poisoning.



### Which are the fish that can cause ciguatera?

The answer to this question is the subject matter of several research projects. However, professional fishermen apply the so-called *Protocol for the control of ciguatoxins in extractive fishing products at the authorised points of first sale in the Canary Islands*. The protocol especially focuses on the following species:



Before consuming any of these species, whose weight is equal to or higher than that specified in the Protocol, a laboratory test of the flesh is recommended. In any case, the consumption of the fish head and viscera should be avoided, since they have a higher concentration of toxins than the flesh. **These toxins are NOT eliminated by any preservation or cooking technique** (such as freezing, marinating, smoking, frying, baking or grating the fish).

**The only means to find out whether a fish carries these toxins is by performing a laboratory test.**