

## KEY FACTS

**Official name:** Republic of Seychelles

**Head of State:** President James Michel (Seychelles People's Progressive Front (SPPF) (from 2004; re-elected 19–21 May 2011)

**Head of government:** President James Michel

**Ruling party:** People's Party (Parti Lepep) (PP) (from 1993; re-elected 1 Oct 2011)

**Area:** 453 square km

**Population:** 92,000 (2012)\* (90,945; 2010, census figure)

**Capital:** Victoria

**Official language:** Creole, English and French

**Currency:** Seychelle rupee (SR) = 100 cents

**Exchange rate:** SR11.99 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

**GDP per capita:** US\$11,226 (2012)\*

**GDP real growth:** 2.77% (2012)\*

**GDP:** US\$1.03 billion (2012)\*

**Unemployment:** 3.71% (2012)\*

**Inflation:** 7.11% (2012)\*

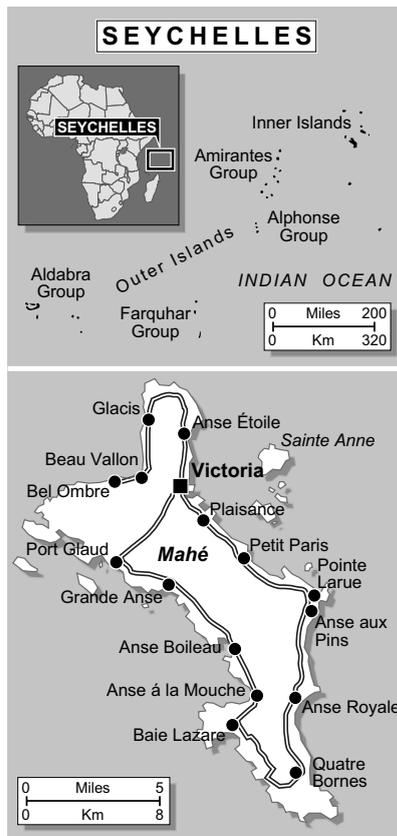
**Balance of trade:** -US\$401.63 million (2011)

**Visitor numbers:** 174,529 (2010)

**Annual FDI:** US\$138.75 million (2011)

\* estimated figure

# Seychelles



The Seychelles' real gross domestic product (GDP) growth slowed again in 2012, to an estimated 2.8 per cent, from 5 per cent in 2011. Despite this, reported the *African Economic Outlook 2013* (AEO), the performance was positive considering the uncertain global environment on which Seychelles' economy depends heavily. Reduced growth was due to a continued decline in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and the impact of increased food and fuel prices on macroeconomic fundamentals. The country also faced exchange rate instability, particularly in the first half of 2012. This led to a depreciation of the rupee and an increase in mid-year inflation to over 9 per cent, the highest in over 4 years. Though end of year inflation reduced to 7.1 per cent, it was significantly higher than in 2011. Despite the fact tourism revenue has fallen following the financial crisis, it is

still the main driver of economic growth and showed some resilience in 2012. Tourism grew by about 8 per cent in 2012 driven by an increase in arrivals, particularly from non-traditional markets. GDP is projected to increase slightly in 2013 to 3.2 per cent as new tourist markets are further explored and the contribution of other sectors, such as fisheries and services, increases. Lower inflation is also expected to increase private sector activity and domestic demand, albeit marginally. GDP is expected to increase marginally to above 4 per cent in 2014, as new markets are explored, consistency in economic policy is maintained, investment spending increased and an improvement in the business environment pursued.

The government continued its fiscal policy in 2013 in line with its objectives of reducing public debt to 50 per cent of GDP by 2018. The country had a primary fiscal surplus of 6.7 per cent of GDP in 2012 (above the targeted 4.7 per cent) and aims to achieve 4.0 per cent in 2013. The country's performance under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) reform programme, supported by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has been positive and resulted in the final disbursement of resources under the programme by December 2012. One of the major tax administration reforms planned for 2012, the introduction of value added tax (VAT) in mid-year was delayed to 1 January 2013. A new Public Finance Bill approved by Cabinet in late 2011 was enacted in 2012, with additional measures expected in 2013. The country has also continued to pursue reforms aimed at improving the regulatory framework for investment. Measures undertaken in 2012, including the approval of amendments to the Financial Institutions Act, the drafting of a Financial Services Commission bill, improvements in business registration, in trade licensing, in customs administration and the restructuring of Public enterprises, have boosted competition, improved financial-sector services and the private-sector environment as well as reducing the state's role from implementer to facilitator. The preparation of a new National Development Plan (NDP) to

replace the existing plan, *Seychelles 2017* which started in 2012 is ongoing. The NDP is expected to be finalised during 2013. The government initiated a policy review of agriculture and fisheries to rejuvenate these sectors, reduce import dependency and promote food security.

Structural transformation in Seychelles is complicated by its geographical position, topography and small population. The country is composed of 115 islands covering a wide geographical area in the Indian Ocean. Natural resources, land space, arable land and fresh-water resources are all limited. The main natural resource exploited on a large scale is fish, from the wide expanse of ocean. The fisheries are the most important export sector and account for over 80 per cent of export revenues, although it only represents about 11 per cent of formal employment. The country has also exploited its land and water surfaces, to promote land-based (hotels, resorts and private housing) and sea-based (fishing, diving, and snorkeling) tourism. While tourism is the main employer in the country; there has been limited diversification and insufficient product differentiation making the sector vulnerable to competition. The country aims to promote eco-tourism and cultural distinction further in order to diversify the sector. Oil and gas exploration which have been underway for over 30 years are finally bearing fruit with the setting up of Petro Seychelles in 2012, to oversee the promotion and supervision of exploration. It is expected that one of the two international companies that have identified commercially viable sites will drill its first well later in 2013, with the other companies following in 2014. If oil deposits are found to be commercially viable, production may take another 6 years to come on stream.

### Risk assessment

Politics	Fair
Economy	Fair
Regional stability	Fair

### COUNTRY PROFILE

#### Historical profile

1794 The islands were taken over by the British and administered from Mauritius.  
1903 Seychelles became a separate colony.  
1948 The first elections to the legislative assembly took place.  
1964 The Seychelles' first political organisations were established – the Seychelles Democratic Party (SDP) led by James Mancham and the Front Progressiste du

Peuple Seychellois (FPPS) (Seychelles People's Progressive Front) (formerly the SPUP) of France-Albert René.

1975 The Seychelles was granted internal self-government; the SDP and the FPPS formed a coalition government under the premiership of Mancham.

1976 Became an independent republic. James Mancham became president and René became prime minister.

1977 René seized power in an armed coup

1978 A new constitution established a one-party state with the FPPS as the sole legal party.

1981 A group of mercenaries from South Africa attempted to overthrow René and return Mancham to power.

1982 A mutiny in the army was put down by pro-government troops.

1991 René re-established a multi-party democracy.

1993 Multi-party presidential and legislative elections resulted in a landslide victory for President René and the FPPS.

1998 Presidential and legislative elections were again won by President René and the FPPS.

2001 Presidential elections resulted in a victory for President René (54.2 per cent of the vote).

2002 The FPPS won the parliamentary elections.

2004 President René, who had come to power in a bloodless coup in 1977, retired and Vice President James Michel was sworn in as president.

2006 In presidential elections, incumbent James Michel (FPPS) was re-elected.

There was a record annual number of 140,627 visitors. To avoid environmental degradation through mass-tourism a cap

of 200,000 visitors will be encouraged. The tourist industry intends to promote its attractions to visitors from the high-end of the market.

2007 The FPPS won 56.16 per cent of the vote in parliamentary elections; the Seychelles National Party (SNP) won 43.84 per cent. Seychelles was re-admitted to the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

2008 The global economic crisis had an adverse effect on the tourist industry; the International Monetary Fund agreed to extend a two-year US\$26 million loan to the country. It also suggested moves to re-structure the economy, including floating the Seychelles rupee, allowing citizens to hold foreign currencies and setting a minimum salary among other measures.

2009 The president called on international creditors to cancel around US\$400 million in foreign debt. The ruling FPPS changed its name to the Parti Lepep (People's Party) (PP).

2010 Around 85 per cent of Seychelles' public debt was successfully reduced and rescheduled; external debt stock fell from 92 per cent of GDP in 2009 to 54 per cent. The government estimated that the Seychelles was losing 4 per cent of GDP due to Somali piracy. A record number of tourists (174,529) visited the island, with most arriving from France, Italy, Germany and the UK.

2011 In February, the government negotiated with the Somali Transitional Federal Government and the breakaway governments of Somaliland and Puntland (Somalia) to form a four-party agreement on repatriation of convicted Somali pirates. Four candidates took part in presidential elections held on 19–21 May. Incumbent

### KEY INDICATORS

### Seychelles

	Unit	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Population	m	*0.08	*0.08	*0.09	*0.09	*0.09
Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$bn	0.82	767.00	0.94	1.01	*1.03
GDP per capita	US\$	9,640	8,973	10,617	11,170	*11,226
GDP real growth	%	-1.0	0.5	6.7	4.9	*2.8
Inflation	%	37.0	31.7	-2.4	2.6	*7.1
Unemployment	%	1.7	5.1	4.6	4.1	*3.7
Exports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	496.8	432.5	407.3	477.9	–
Imports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	1,004.9	759.1	915.6	879.6	–
Balance of trade	US\$m	-508.1	-326.6	-508.3	-401.4	–
Current account	US\$m	-406.9	-284.2	-483.5	-226.3	*-226.0
Total reserves minust gold	US\$m	63.8	190.6	235.6	257.4	318.7
Foreign exchange	US\$m	63.8	178.3	223.8	245.4	308.0
Exchange rate	per US\$	9.46	13.61	12.07	12.15	13.05
* estimated figure						

James Michel (FPPS) won with 55.46 per cent, opposition leader, Wavel Ramkalawan (SNP) won 41.43 per cent. It was almost an exact repeat of the 2006 election results, including the third placing of independent Philippe Boullé with 1.66 per cent; Ralph Volcere (New Democratic Party (NDP)) achieved 1.45 per cent. The September parliamentary elections were boycotted by the main opposition party, the SNP, in protest at the failure by the government to revise electoral laws and the amount of spending political parties were allowed for election campaigning. Voting began in outlying islands in September and the rest of the country in October. The PP won 88.6 per cent of the vote and all of the 31 seats available; 31.9 per cent of votes cast were spoiled. 2012 On 31 October the bidding process to license 30 oil and gas exploration blocks in the territorial waters of the Seychelles were postponed until 2013, while the government awaited recommendations by the International Monetary Fund on how best to run the bidding. On 4 November two Seychellois hostages were released by Somali pirates after a year in captivity.

2013 The Puntland government has signed piracy-transfer agreements with the governments of Seychelles, Mauritius and Maldives, to bring convicted Somali pirates to complete their prison sentences in Puntland prisons, Puntland Counter-Piracy Director Abdirizak Mohamed Dirir has said. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has overseen a prison construction project in Bosaso and Garowe for the purpose of housing convicted pirates. Seychelles plans to transfer 11 convicted Somali pirates to Puntland in October, to serve the remainder of their prison terms.

### Political structure

#### Constitution

In a June 1993 referendum, a new constitution was approved, institutionalising multi-party politics and providing for the establishment of a National Assembly.

#### Form of state

Republic

#### The executive

Executive power rests with the president, elected for a five-year term; renewable three times.

#### National legislature

The unicameral Assemblée Nationale (National Assembly) has 34 members, of which 25 are directly elected by majority vote in single-seat constituencies, the remaining nine are elected by proportional representation. All members serve for five-year terms.

### Last elections

19–21 May 2011 (presidential); 29 September–1 October 2011 (parliamentary)

**Results:** Presidential: James Michel (FPPS) won 55 per cent of the vote, Wavel Ramkalawan (SNP) 41 per cent, Philippe Boullé (independent) 1.66 per cent, Ralph Volcere (New Democratic Party (NDP)) 1.45 per cent.

Parliamentary: the Parti Lepep (People's Party) (PP) won 88.6 per cent of the vote (all of the 31 seats available) the Mouvement Populaire Démocratique (Popular Democratic Movement) (PDM) 10.89 per cent (0). Turnout was 74.3 per cent, but 31.9 per cent of votes cast were spoiled. The two main opposition parties (Mouvement Populaire Démocratique (Popular Democratic Movement) (PDM) and Seychelles National Party (SNP)) boycotted the elections.

### Next elections

2016 (parliamentary and presidential)

### Political parties

#### Ruling party

People's Party (Parti Lepep) (PP) (from 1993; re-elected 1 Oct 2011)

#### Main opposition party

Seychelles National Party (SNP)

### Population

92,000 (2012)\* (90,945; 2010, census figure)

Approximately 34 per cent of the total population is under 15 years.

**Last census:** 26 August 2010: 90,945

**Population density:** 178 inhabitants per square km. Urban population 55 per cent (2010 Unicef).

**Annual growth rate:** 1.0 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

### Ethnic make-up

The islanders have a variety of ethnic origins – African, French, Indian, Chinese and Arab.

### Religions

Practically the whole population is Christian, with 87 per cent belonging to the Roman Catholic faith.

### Education

The government provides free education. The school-going age population is largely concentrated on Mahe, the main island where most of the economic activities are concentrated. There are only two private schools as well as public schools. Total expenditure in public education has grown in real terms. The pupil per capita cost in (public) primary schools is typically US\$910.

**Literacy rate:** 90 per cent (plus)

**Compulsory years:** 6 to 15

**Pupils per teacher:** 15 in primary schools (Unesco)

### Health

The Victoria Hospital has about 445 beds and there are 56 in-patient admissions per bed per year. Health care is provided free of charge.

**Life expectancy:** 72 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

**Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate:** 2.3 births per woman, 2009 (FAO 2012)

**Birth rate/Death rate:** 17 births per 1,000 population; 6.5 deaths per 1,000 population (2003).

**Child (under 5 years) mortality rate (per 1,000):** 13 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2012)

**Head of population per physician:** 1.15 physicians per 1,000 people, 2004 (WHO 2006)

### Welfare

The social security law requires employers and employees to contribute to a national pension programme that gives retirees a modest pension. Self-employed persons contribute by paying 15 per cent of gross earnings. The government also provides low-cost housing and housing loans. There is welfare provision for children and the disabled.

### Main cities

Victoria, on Mahé island (capital, estimated population 21,184 in 2012).

### Languages spoken

Creole is the local language, but English is used in business and government circles. French is also widely spoken.

### Official language/s

Creole, English and French

### Media

Freedom of speech has been improved since 1993 however tough libel laws are used by the government to contain opposition opinion.

### Press

**Dailies:** The government-owned newspaper *Seychelles Nation* ([www.nation.sc](http://www.nation.sc)) is published from Monday to Saturday.

**Weeklies:** *The People* ([www.thepeople.sc](http://www.thepeople.sc)) is published by the FPPS political party, while *Le Nouveau Seychelles Weekly* ([www.seychellesweekly.com](http://www.seychellesweekly.com)), and *Regar* are FPPS-opposition.

**Periodicals:** *The People* is a monthly publication. A few periodicals are also published in English, French and Creole.

### Broadcasting

The state-run, Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation ([www.sbc.sc](http://www.sbc.sc)) (formerly known as Radio Television Seychelles) operates the only television network along with its radio services in Creole, English and French. Both mediums carry advertising. Reception is good on Mahé and the other main islands.

**Radio:** Along with Paradise FM, the SBC service, international broadcast from, RFI,

BBC and VOA may be picked up on shortwave radios.

The African Press Agency ([www.apanews.net](http://www.apanews.net)) and Panapress ([www.panapress.com](http://www.panapress.com)) provide information from the Seychelles.

### Economy

The service sector, dominated by tourism, constituted over 78.9 per cent of GDP in 2009, with industry comprising 19.7 per cent, of which manufacturing was 11.8 per cent and agriculture 2 per cent.

The global economic crisis had a swift and harsh impact on GDP growth, which fell from a high of 9.9 per cent in 2007, as a record 161,273 tourists visited the islands, into a recessionary -1.0 per cent in 2008 as tourist numbers dropped at a time of record highs in fuel and food prices. In 2009, tourist numbers fell by 19 per cent, adversely affecting the economy. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to a three-year US\$31.1 million loan (2009–12) to support public finances and establish macroeconomic stability. GDP growth returned, but only by 0.5 per cent in 2009. However as global trade picked up in 2010 and visitor numbers grew again, GDP growth surged by 6.7 per cent, before falling back to an estimated 4.9 per cent in 2011.

After two years of low inflation, when in 2006 it was a deflationary -1.9 per cent, inflation began to rise in 2007, to 5.3 per cent, soaring sharply in 2008 to 37.0 per cent as the global prices of imported food and fuel climbed, remaining high at 31.7 per cent in 2009 before plunging back into deflation of -2.4 per cent in 2010. Despite the swings in the economy, the Seychelles still has the highest standard of living in Africa, with a per capita income of US\$10,617 in 2010.

Although tourism provides vitally needed foreign exchange, the government has acknowledged that tourism also has inherent drawbacks such as damage to the environment, major foreign currency spending on food, goods and services and fuel imports. The risk to the Seychelles is in becoming an economic monoculture, which would be at the mercy of external shocks and forces. The government is intent on developing other means of income such as the fishing industry, which is currently a major foreign currency earner, telecommunications, financial services, light industry and international conferences. However, this will require considerable foreign investment and the government will need to institute policies and adopt attitudes more compliant to investors. Foreign direct investment has grown steadily from US\$85.8 million in 2005 to US\$167.3 million in 2010.

### External trade

The Seychelles is a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), and operates within a free trade zone with 13 of the 19 member states.

The visible trade deficit is partially offset by earnings from tourism which is the main foreign exchange earner, plus foreign aid and investment, rental from a US satellite tracking station and a BBC relay station.

Preferential import tariffs are granted to goods from Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) member countries – Mauritius, Comoros, Madagascar, Réunion. In return, Seychelles receives preferential import tariffs from IOC countries.

#### Imports

Principal imports are machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, petroleum products and chemicals.

**Main sources:** Saudi Arabia (23.1 per cent of total in 2011), South Africa (8.1 per cent), Spain (8 per cent)

#### Exports

Principal exports are canned tuna, fresh/frozen fish, copra and various herbs and spices including vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg and mace.

**Main destinations:** France (25.7 per cent of total in 2011), UK (20.3 per cent), Japan (10.6 per cent).

#### Re-exports

Petroleum products.

### Agriculture

With the expansion of the tourist industry, the overall importance of agriculture to the economy has declined, although it is still important as a source of foreign exchange and employment. There is a shortage of cultivable land and fertile soil. Approximately 4 per cent of the total land area is agricultural, much of which is given over to copra and cinnamon, which are the major export crops. Farming is traditionally organic and eco-friendly. Small quantities of coconuts, vanilla, tea and limes are exported. Crops grown for local consumption include tropical fruits, cassava, sweet potatoes, yams, sugar cane, bananas, tea and vegetables; rice, the staple food crop, has to be imported. Seychelles is self-sufficient in pork, chicken, fish and some vegetables. There are a number of large farms, 650 small farms and thousands of smallholdings, which the government hopes will reduce dependence on imported foods.

Government reforms include privatisation of state farms, while setting up smaller co-operatives, new marketing structures, upgrading infrastructure and irrigation facilities for farms. An animal feed factory has been established by the Seychelles

Marketing Board (SMB) to support production of meat and eggs. About 98 per cent of milk is imported. The government is encouraging the production of bananas and mangoes.

The fishing industry is an important source of income and foreign exchange, accounting for around 85 per cent of domestically-produced exports. It is being expanded as part of the government policy of economic diversification, with foreign companies being encouraged to become involved. HJ Heinz acquired a 60 per cent majority stake in the government-owned Indian Ocean Tuna processing factory. Heinz has invested nearly US\$8 million in the plant, which operates in the country's International Trade Zone. France and Italy are the main importers of Seychelles tuna.

The Seychelles sells fishing licences in its exclusive 1.3 million square km economic zone. Despite the desire for a growth in capacity and productivity through the development of commercial fishing operations, small-scale artisanal fishing still represents about one-third of fishing exports.

In a meeting of African ministers in Namibia, held on 2 July 2009, members discussed illegal and unregulated fishing, which is estimated to cost Africa US\$1 billion per annum in lost revenue and the threat to stocks and local artisan fishing.

### Industry and manufacturing

The industrial sector, including mining, manufacturing, construction and power, accounted for 27.5 per cent of GDP in 2004.

There is a small-scale manufacturing sector. The main activities include the production of canned tuna, soft drinks, juices, jams, beer, cigarettes, paints, assembling of television sets and processing of cinnamon and coconuts.

Emphasis is on private-sector investment. The government aims to expand light industry in other areas such as artisanal products, packaging, assembly and services.

### Tourism

The numerous islands that make up the Seychelles offer the many tourists a relaxing, tropical experience. Attractions include coral beaches, water sports and local wildlife. The tourist industry has become the most important sector in the economy, constituting 55.1 per cent of GDP in 2010. This was, however, the lowest recorded share of GDP since 2005; in 2007 the sector's share was a record high of 64.3 per cent of GDP, with earnings of US\$590 million, of which visitor spending was US\$323 million. The global economic crisis has had a deep impact on tourism as visitors from Europe

and other Western nations fell. In 2009–10, employment and capital investment in the industry was cut and visitor spending was correspondingly down. The prospects for 2011 were encouraging with all aspects of tourism showing growth.

The Seychelles National Assessment Report (2004–2009) outlining government and industry planning has been steadily introduced. The Report included providing value for money and value added holidays, improved training for tourism staff, improved access by air and sea, diverse attractions and activities and protection of the environment. In 2009, the Seychelles Tourism Board was privatised, to make it more responsive to the industry. Several large hotels were refurbished to attract a higher level of clientele.

In May 2011, the UK-royal couple chose the Seychelles for their honeymoon giving the islands an instant cache. However a few months later, Seychelles suffered some bad publicity, following rare shark attacks on two tourists, who were killed in individual attacks, off the Anse Lazio beach. The beach was later closed and a search was made of the predator.

### Mining

Some granite is quarried. Offshore surveys have indicated the presence of certain metals on the seabed.

### Hydrocarbons

The Seychelles has some known hydrocarbon deposits but due to their size and inaccessibility they have not yet been exploited. However in December 2008 licences were issued to two relatively small oil companies to begin exploration of offshore oil deposits. Some gas reserves have been found offshore, but they have not been exploited.

The parastatal Seychelles Petroleum Company (Sepec) is responsible for purchasing, supplying, transshipment and trading in petroleum. It operates ports and storage terminals, including a 880 tonne liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) storage and cylinder filling plant.

The parastatal Seychelles National Oil Company (Snoc) implements state policy on hydrocarbon exploration.

Any use of natural gas or coal is commercial insignificant.

### Energy

Total installed generating capacity was 95MW in 2006, generating 210 million kilowatt hours per year. Electricity is provided from liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and diesel-fired turbines.

### Banking and insurance

#### Central bank

Central Bank of Seychelles

### Time

GMT plus four hours

### Geography

There are around 115 islands and islets comprising the Seychelles, which cover more than 1.3 million square km in the Indian Ocean, North of Madagascar and over 1,500km from the coast of Kenya. The major islands are a compact group of 41 granite islands, the largest of which includes Mahé, Praslin and La Digue. These islands have high central granite ridges, the highest of which is Morne Seychellois (905 metres) on Mahé. Other islands are composed of coral and are low-lying; many are sparsely populated and four are uninhabited bird sanctuaries. All major islands are lush with vegetation dependent on the surface composition – forests cover the granite islands and coconut palms the coral islands.

### Hemisphere

Southern

### Climate

Tropical and humid. Average daily temperature are 24–32 degrees Celsius throughout the year. Hottest months are December–May; the wettest are from December–March and cooler from June–November. The islands lie outside the cyclone belt.

### Entry requirements

#### Passports

Required by all and must be valid for at least six months beyond length of stay.

#### Visa

A Visitor's Permit is issued on arrival, valid for four weeks (extensions are possible for three-month periods). From 2009 EU citizens may make a short-stay visit, for up to three months, without a visa. A proposed tourist *univisa* (a single visa to visit all 15-member states of SADC: Angola, Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) is expected to be in use by 2013. Visitors should check with the appropriate consulates to confirm start of *univisas* and their scope before beginning a tour of southern Africa.

All visitors must have confirmed accommodation and sufficient funds for the intended length of stay and hold onward/return tickets or pay a deposit equivalent to the value of a return ticket to the country of origin.

#### Currency advice/regulations

Unlimited import/export of foreign currency is permitted. Only legal to exchange foreign currencies for Seychelles Rupees through a bank.

Travellers may take or send out of Seychelles up to SR100 of domestic currency.

### Customs

Personal items, including one video and one single frame camera, a musical instrument, an item of portable electronic equipment and personal music player. Video tapes must be declared. Animals and agricultural products require an entry permit.

#### Prohibited imports

Firearms, illegal drugs and spear-fishing equipment.

### Health (for visitors)

#### Mandatory precautions

Yellow fever certificate if arriving from infected area.

#### Advisable precautions

Inoculations and boosters should be current for tetanus, hepatitis A and diphtheria. There may be a need for vaccinations for typhoid, tuberculosis, hepatitis B and cholera. Anti-mosquito measures including mosquito repellents, nets and clothing covering the body should be used for protection against dengue fever, hepatitis B and chikungunya fever, which include mosquito repellents and nets and clothing that covers the body after dark. There is a risk of rabies.

There is a shortage of routine medications and visitors should take all necessary medicines with them. A first aid kit that includes disposable syringe, is a reasonable precaution. Use only bottled or boiled water for drinks, washing teeth and making ice. Eat only well cooked meals, preferably served hot; vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled. Dairy products are unpasteurised and should be avoided, unless cooked.

Healthcare is not to Western standards and medical insurance, including emergency evacuation, is necessary.

### Hotels

Good standard and widely available. All the large hotels in Mahé are on the beach. Advisable to book and confirm reservation in advance, particularly at Christmas and during August. Government trades tax of 5 per cent is added to bill, and usually also a service charge. Tipping optional.

### Credit cards

Major credit cards widely accepted.

### Public holidays (national)

#### Fixed dates

1–2 Jan (New Year), 1 May (Labour Day), 5 Jun (Liberation Day), 18 Jun (National Day), 15 Aug (Assumption Day/La Digue Festival), 1 Nov (All Saints' Day), 8 Dec (Immaculate Conception), 25 Dec (Christmas Day).

#### Variable dates

Good Friday (Mar/Apr), Corpus Christi (May/Jun).

**Working hours****Banking**

Mon–Fri: 0830–1300; Sat: 0800–1200.

**Business**

Mon–Fri: 0800–1200, 1300–1600.

**Government**

Mon–Fri: 0800–1200, 1300–1600.

**Shops**

Mon–Fri: 0800–1200, 1330–1700; Sat: 0800–1200; some open Sun morning.

**Telecommunications****Mobile/cell phones**

There are 900 and 1800 GSM services available throughout Mahé and surrounding islands. In September 2013 the Seychelles government agreed that Airtel Mobile Commerce (Seychelles) Limited should engage in a pilot programme to test the practical and technical aspects of mobile payment services in the country. The Central Bank of Seychelles and department of information communications technology (DICT) will have oversight of the payment system and technological aspects, respectively.

**Electricity supply**

240V AC, 50 cycles. Plugs are three-pin bayonet.

**Getting there****Air**

**National airline:** Air Seychelles

**International airport/s:** Seychelles International (SEZ), on Mahé Island, 10km from Victoria; duty-free shop, bar, restaurant, bank and car hire.

**Airport tax:** Included in ticket price

**Surface**

**Water:** International shipping lines that maintain contacts with Seychelles may provide passenger services on cargo ships.

**Main port/s:** Victoria, on Mahé island.

**Getting about****National transport**

**Air:** Air Seychelles operates regular services from Mahé to Praslin, Desroches, Fregate, Bird and Dennis islands. Aircraft charters are available to Assumption, Farquhar and Poivre. Helicopter Seychelles provides services and charters from Mahé.

**Road:** Only three islands have metalled road, Mahé, La Digue and Praslin; all other roads are unpaved tracks.

**Buses:** The Seychelles Public Transport Corporation (SPTC) operate regular services on Mahé from Victoria and Praslin, between 0520–2130.

**Water:** There are regular ferry services; a catamaran, Cat Cocos, links Mahé–Praslin, traditional schooners link Praslin–La Digue and La Digue–Mahé.

**City transport**

**Taxis:** Taxis are available on Mahé and Praslin, they are privately operated, but

with government controlled rates. On Praslin a surcharge is levied between 2200–0600.

**Car hire**

There are a limited number of hire cars available on Mahé and Praslin; reservations during peak seasons should be made well in advance. A foreign or international driving licence is required. Driving is on the left, the speed limit outside urban areas is 65kph and 40kph in towns.

**BUSINESS DIRECTORY**

The addresses listed below are a selection only. While World of Information makes every endeavour to check these addresses, we cannot guarantee that changes have not been made, especially to telephone numbers and area codes. We would welcome any corrections.

**Telephone area codes**

The international dialling code (IDD) for Seychelles is +248, followed by subscriber's number.

**Chambers of Commerce**

Seychelles Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Ebrahim Building, PO Box 1399, Victoria, Mahé (tel: 323-812; fax: 321-422; e-mail: [scci@seychelles.net](mailto:scci@seychelles.net)).

**Banking**

Barclays Bank (Seychelles), PO Box 167, Victoria (tel: 383-838; email: [barclays@seychelles.net](mailto:barclays@seychelles.net)).

Bank of Baroda, PO Box 124, Victoria, (tel: 323-037/8; email: [baroda@seychelles.net](mailto:baroda@seychelles.net)).

Habib Bank, PO Box 702, Victoria (tel: 224-371/2; email: [habibsez@seychelles.net](mailto:habibsez@seychelles.net)).

Mauritius Commercial Bank (Seychelles), PO Box 122, Victoria (tel: 284-555; email: [contact@mcbseychelles.com](mailto:contact@mcbseychelles.com)).

Nouvobanq (Seychelles International Mercantile Banking Corporation), PO Box 241, Ground Floor, Victoria House, State House Avenue, Victoria (tel: 293-000; fax: 224-670; email: [nvb@nouvobanqu.sc](mailto:nvb@nouvobanqu.sc)).

Seychelles Savings Bank Limited; PO Box 531, Independence Ave, Victoria (tel: 293-000; fax: 224-713; email: [ssb.savingsbank.sc](mailto:ssb.savingsbank.sc)).

**Central bank**

Central Bank of Seychelles, Independence Avenue, PO Box 701, Victoria, Mahé (tel: 225-200; fax: 224-958; e-mail: [cbs@seychelles.sc](mailto:cbs@seychelles.sc)).

**Travel information**

Air Seychelles, Victoria House, PO Box 386, Victoria (tel: 225-300; fax: 225-159; internet: [www.airseychelles.com](http://www.airseychelles.com)).

Helicopter Seychelles, Providence Industrial Estate; PO Box 595, Victoria (tel: 385-858; fax: 373-055; internet: [www.helicopterseychelles.com](http://www.helicopterseychelles.com)).

Island Development Co (charter flights), New Port; PO Box 638, Mahé (tel: 224-640; fax: 224-467; email: [fdc@seychelles.sc](mailto:fdc@seychelles.sc)).

National Travel Agency, Kingsgate House, PO Box 611, Victoria (tel: 224-900; fax: 225-111).

Seychelles Tourist Office–La Digue, La Passes, La Digue (tel/fax: 234-393; email: [stbladigue@seychelles.sc](mailto:stbladigue@seychelles.sc)).

Seychelles Tourist Office–Praslin, Iles des Palmes Airport, Grand Anse, Praslin (tel: 233-346; fax: 233-571; email: [praslin@seychelles.sc](mailto:praslin@seychelles.sc)).

Travel Services (Seychelles) Ltd., Victoria House, PO Box 356, Victoria (tel: 322-414; fax: 325-010).

**Ministry of tourism**

Ministry of Tourism and Transport, Independence House, PO Box 92, Victoria (tel: 225-313; fax: 225-131).

**National tourist organisation offices**

Seychelles Tourist Board, Bel Ombre; PO Box 1262, Victoria, Mahé (tel: 671-300, fax: 620-620; internet: [www.seychelles.com](http://www.seychelles.com)).

**Ministries**

Investment Development Advisory Services (IDEAS), c/o Ministry of Finance and Communication, 3rd Floor, Central Bank Building, Box 313, Victoria (tel: 225-252; fax: 225-265).

Ministry of Administration and Manpower, National House, PO Box 56, Victoria (tel: 383-000; fax: 224-936).

Ministry of Agriculture and Marine Resources, Independence House, PO Box 166, Victoria (tel: 224-030; fax: 225-245).

Ministry of Community Development, Independence House, PO Box 199, Victoria (tel: 224-030; fax: 225-287).

Ministry of Education and Culture, Mont Fleuri (tel: 224-777; fax: 224-859).

Ministry of Finance and Communication, 3rd Floor, Central Bank Building, PO Box 313, Victoria (tel: 225-252; fax: 225-265).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Planning and Environment, Mont Fleuri (tel: 224-688; fax: 224-845).

Ministry of Health, PO Box 52, Mont Fleuri (tel: 388-000; fax: 224-792).

Ministry of Industry, Maison du Peuple, Victoria (tel: 224-030; fax: 225-086).

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Ministry of Local Government Youth and Sports, Oceangate House, Victoria (tel: 225-477; fax: 225-262).

### Other useful addresses

Island Development Company (IDC), PO Box 638, New Port, Victoria (tel: 224-640; fax: 224-467).

Public Utilities Corporation (PUC) (Electricity), PO Box 174, Victoria (tel: 322-444; fax: 321-020). (Water) Unity House, PO Box 34, Victoria (tel: 322-444; fax: 322-127).

RTS Radio, PO Box 321, Union Vale, Victoria (tel: 224-161).

RTS TV, PO Box 321, Hermitage, Mahé (tel: 224-161).

Seychelles Agricultural Development Company Ltd., PO Box 172, Victoria (tel: 276-618).

Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, Hermitage, PO Box 321, Victoria (tel: 224-161; fax: 224-641).

Seychelles Embassy (USA), Suite 400C, 800 Second Avenue, New York, NW, 10017 (tel: (+1-202) 972-1785; fax: (+1-202) 972-1786; e-mail: seychelles@un.int).

Seychelles Fishing Authority (SFA), PO Box 449, Victoria (tel: 224-521; fax: 224-508).

Seychelles Industrial Development Corporation (SIDEK), PO Box 537, Victoria (tel: 224-941; fax: 225-121).

Seychelles International Business Authority (SIBA), PO Box 991, Central Bank Building, Victoria (tel: 225-402; fax: 225-851).

Seychelles Licensing Authority, PO Box 3, Francis Rachel Street, Victoria (tel: 224-314; fax: 224-256).

Seychelles Marketing Board, PO Box 516, Victoria (tel: 224-444).

Seychelles National Statistics Bureau, PO Box 206, Victoria, (internet: [www.seychelles.net/misdstat](http://www.seychelles.net/misdstat)).

Seychelles Timber Company, Grand Anse, Mahe (tel: 278-343).

State Assurance Corporation of Seychelles, Pirate's Arms Building, PO Box 636, Victoria (tel: 225-000; fax: 224-495).

### Internet sites

Africa Business Network: [www.ifc.org/abn](http://www.ifc.org/abn)

AllAfrica.com: <http://allafrica.com>

African Development Bank: [www.afdb.org](http://www.afdb.org)

Africa Online: [www.africaonline.com](http://www.africaonline.com)

Mbendi AfroPaedia (information on companies, countries, industries and stock exchanges in Africa): <http://mbendi.co.za>

Seychelles Nation online: [www.nation.sc](http://www.nation.sc)