



© Peter Chadwick (Nature Seychelles), Aldabra giant tortoise

8.16 Seychelles

Protected and conserved areas in Seychelles⁷⁹

Seychelles has 40 protected areas covering 242 km² of the land and 209,930 km² of the ocean (UNEP-WCMC & IUCN, 2019q).

A large proportion of the Seychelles terrestrial area is protected. Seychelles has one of the oldest networks of marine protected areas in Eastern Africa, but until recently, this only covered some 0.03% of its coastal and marine ecosystems. The shortfall was recognised, and the Government of Seychelles announced its intention to protect 30% of its waters, half of which (or 15%) would be a strict no-take zones. The Seychelles is engaging in a debt swap mechanism to enable this designation.

Transboundary protected and conserved areas

Seychelles includes part of the Western Indian Ocean Transfrontier Marine Park.

Policy context

A comprehensive report on legislation and policy related to protected area management, governance, and equity was undertaken by the BIOPAMA programme. It identified 28 relevant laws and policies in Seychelles (Tessema, 2019).

Key species⁸⁰

Marine and coastal species are economically important to the Seychelles, and the diversity and abundance of species has been influenced by harvesting patterns for the last two centuries. The country's national report provides data in great detail of marine and coastal species, including current trends and conservation efforts. Seychelles is home to a number of different cetaceans, as well as five species of marine turtles.

In terms of terrestrial and inland water biodiversity, fungal diversity is poorly known, but the country has high levels of diversity in invertebrate species, as well as plants. Levels of endemism are high amongst most groups. Of 11 recorded amphibian species and two snakes, all are endemic. The Aldabra giant tortoise (*Aldabrachelys gigantea*) is endemic to the country. Seychelles is home to at least 65 bird species, of which 13 are endemic. All native mammals in the Seychelles are bats, of which there are six species (four endemic).

Pressures and threats⁸¹

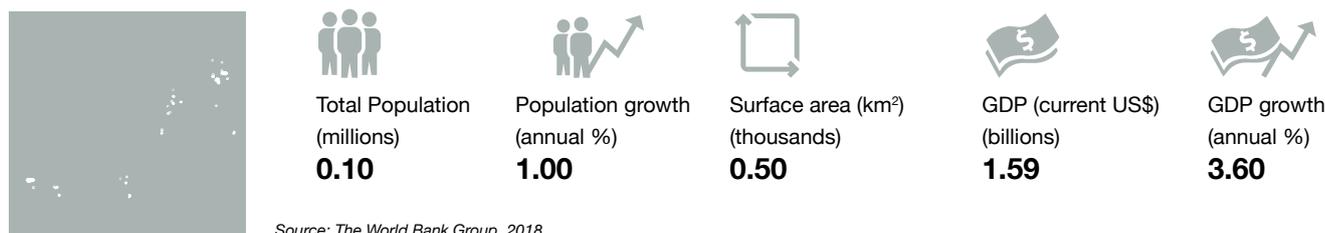
The primary threat to terrestrial ecosystems is the continued incursions by alien invasive species. With high levels of endemism, the islands are particularly susceptible to the impacts of invasive species. The secondary threat is land use change and habitat loss, where development pressures are threatening many habitats. The primary threat in marine ecosystems is over-fishing, which has impacts beyond the species targeted. Climate change represents a major threat to both terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

⁷⁹ The section draws on information contained in Seychelles' Fifth National Report to the CBD and the NBSAP (Government of Seychelles, 2014b; 2014a)

⁸⁰ The section draws on information contained in Seychelles' Fifth National Report to the CBD (Government of Seychelles, 2014a)

⁸¹ The section draws on information contained in Seychelles' Second NBSAP (Government of Seychelles, 2014b).

Figure 8.31 Seychelles Summary



Source: The World Bank Group, 2018.

Area Protected:

40 protected areas



Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN, 2019q



11 amphibian species

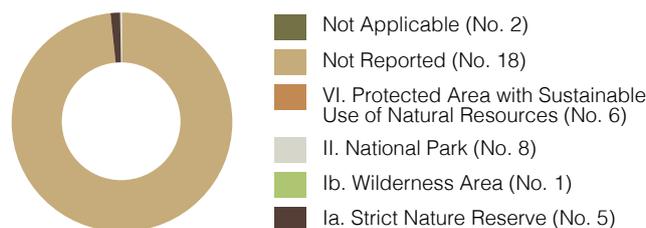


65 bird species



6 bat species

Protected and conserved areas in Seychelles in IUCN Management Categories



Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019q).

Coverage of protected areas in Seychelles

Type of protected area	Area protected or conserved*	Area protected or conserved**
Terrestrial and inland water	49.64%	46.60%
Coastal and marine	15.66%	0.03%

* WDPA dataset

** From National Report on Biodiversity

Source: Government of Seychelles (2014a); UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019q).

Protected and conserved areas designated as global sites of importance in Seychelles

Global designation	No. of sites
UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Natural or Mixed)	2
Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites)	4

Source: Ramsar (2019); UNESCO (2019a, 2019b).

Protected and conserved areas in Seychelles in IUCN Governance Types



Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019q).

National designations of protected and conserved areas in Seychelles

National designation	Number	Area (km ²)
National Park	4	55
Special Reserve	8	2 436
Marine National Park	6	48
Nature Reserve	9	0
MSP Zone 2	1	136 717
MSP Zone 1	1	69 524
Shell Reserve	4	8
Protected Area	1	8

Source: UNEP-WCMC & IUCN (2019q).

Priority areas for conservation



2 sites
Alliance for Zero Extinction sites



20 sites
Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas



59 sites
Key Biodiversity Areas

Source: AZE Secretariat (2019); BirdLife International (2019b, 2019c).

Figure 8.32 Seychelles protected areas

