

# Seychelles



**History and Background:** lengthy struggle between France and Great Britain for the islands ended in 1814, when they were ceded to the latter. Independence came in 1976. The most recent presidential elections were held in 2001; President RENE, who had served since 1977, was re-elected. In April 2004 RENE stepped down and Vice President James MICHEL was sworn in as president.

## Geography:

**Location:** archipelago in the Indian Ocean, northeast of Madagascar

**Geographic coordinates:** 4 35 S, 55 40 E

**Area:** total: 455 sq km

land: 455 sq km

water: 0 sq km

**Area - comparative:**

**Coastline:** 491 km

**Maritime claims:**

territorial sea: 12 nm

contiguous zone: 24 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

**Climate:** tropical marine; humid; cooler season during southeast monsoon (late May to September); warmer season during northwest monsoon (March to May)

**Natural resources:** fish, copra, cinnamon trees

**Land use:** arable land: 2.22%

permanent crops: 13.33%

other: 84.45% (2001)

**Geography - note:** 41 granitic and about 75 coralline islands.

## ***People:***

**Population:** 81,188 (July 2005 est.)

**Population growth rate:** 0.43% (2005 est.)

**Nationality:**

Noun: Seychellois (singular and plural)

Adjective: Seychellois

**Ethnic groups:**

mixed French, African, Indian, Chinese, and Arab

**Religions:**

Roman Catholic 82.3%, Anglican 6.4%, Seventh Day Adventist 1.1%, other Christian 3.4%, Hindu 2.1%, Muslim 1.1%, other non-Christian 1.5%, unspecified 1.5%, none 0.6% (2002 census)

**Languages:** Creole 91.8%, English 4.9% (official), other 3.1%, unspecified 0.2% (2002 census).

## ***Government:***

**Country name:** conventional long form: Republic of Seychelles  
conventional short form: Seychelles

**Government type:** republic

**Capital:** Victoria.

**Independence:** 29 June 1976 (from UK)

## ***Economy:***

**Economy - overview:** Growth has been led by the tourist sector, which employs about 30% of the labor force and provides more than 70% of hard currency earnings, and by tuna fishing. In recent years the government has encouraged foreign investment in order to upgrade hotels and other services. At the same time, the government has moved to reduce the dependence on tourism by promoting the development of farming, fishing, and small-scale manufacturing.

**GDP:** purchasing power parity - \$626 million (2002 est.)

**GDP - real growth rate:** 1.5% (2004 est.)

**GDP - per capita:** purchasing power parity - \$7,800 (2002 est.)

**GDP - composition by sector:**

agriculture: 2.8%

industry: 28.7%

services: 68.9%

**Investment (gross fixed):** 39.5% of GDP

**Household income or consumption by percentage share:**

Lowest 10%: NA  
Highest 10%: NA

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):** 5%

**Labor force:** 30,900

**Labor force - by occupation:** agriculture 10%, industry 19%, services 71%

**Unemployment rate:** NA

**Budget:** revenues: \$318.3 million  
expenditures: \$298.5 million, including capital expenditures of NA (2004 est.)

**Public debt:** 122.8% of GDP

**Agriculture - products:** coconuts, cinnamon, vanilla, sweet potatoes, cassava (tapioca), bananas; broiler chickens; tuna fish

**Industries:** fishing; tourism; processing of coconuts and vanilla, coir (coconut fiber) rope, boat building, printing, furniture; beverages

**Industrial production growth rate:** NA

**Oil - production:** 0 bbl/day (2001 est.)

**Oil - consumption:** 4,000 bbl/day (2001 est.)

**Current account balance:** \$-98.42 million (2004 est.)

**Exports:** \$256.2 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

**Exports - commodities:** canned tuna, frozen fish, cinnamon bark, copra, petroleum products (reexports)

**Exports - partners:** UK 29.1%, France 17.1%, Spain 11.8%, Japan 9.2%, Italy 8.1%, Germany 6.2%, Netherlands 4.3% (2004)

**Imports:** \$393.4 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

**Imports - commodities:** machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, petroleum products, chemicals

**Imports - partners:** Saudi Arabia 15.6%, Spain 14.1%, France 11%, Singapore 7.5%, Italy 7.3%, South Africa 7.3%, UK 5% (2004)

**Debt - external:** \$218.1 million (2004 est.)

**Currency:** Seychelles rupee (SCR)

**Exchange rates:** Seychelles rupees per US dollar - 5.5.

### ***Transportation:***

**Highways:** total: 373 km  
paved: 315 km  
unpaved: 58 km.

**Ports and harbors:** Victoria

**Merchant marine:** total: 5 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 42,223 GRT/63,538 DWT  
by type: cargo 1, chemical tanker 3, refrigerated cargo 1  
foreign-owned: 1 (Nigeria 1) (2005)

**Airports:** 15