



## DESTINATION REPORT

### **SEYCHELLES**

©2018 GLOBAL RESCUE LLC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. The information contained herein represents our best understanding of the information presented. Global Rescue do not assume any liability for any errors or omissions and do not guarantee against loss or risk from its use. As a condition for receiving the information, you agree to use the information at your own risk and to hold Global Rescue harmless for any and all loss or damage sustained by you. This material may not be reproduced, distributed, copied or sold, unless expressly permitted in writing.

## GENERAL OVERVIEW

Western explorers discovered the uninhabited Seychelles off the east coast of Africa in 1505. In 1742, France sent the first deliberate expedition to the islands, and colonized the islands in 1756. The islands were named the Seychelles in honor of the Finance Minister under Louis XV, Jean Moreau de Seychelles. The islands were transferred to the British in the 1814 Treaty of Paris. Throughout the 19th century, the British used the islands as coaling stations and as a refuge for slaves freed from slave ships near Africa. In 1976, the Seychelles were granted independence, and a socialist regime led by France-Albert René soon seized power and suspended the constitution. A new constitution was adopted in 1983, and René was consistently reelected, holding power until his retirement in 2004.

The Seychelles is made up of 115 islands located in the Indian Ocean, northeast of Madagascar. The climate is tropical, with some variation in temperature between seasons. The capital of the Seychelles is Victoria, located on Mahé Island-where nearly three quarters of the population lives. Most of the remaining population lives on Praslin or La Digue, and other islands are sparsely or completely uninhabited. The country has three official languages: over 90 percent of the population speaks Seychellois Creole, English is the language of government and commerce, while French is also commonly used.



# SECURITY ASSESSMENT

## Security Risk Rating

Low

## Security Risk Overview

The security situation in the Seychelles is stable. There is a low threat from terrorism, and civil unrest is infrequent. Crime rates are generally low, although burglaries and crimes of opportunity such as petty theft have been increasing. Road travel in the Seychelles can be risky due to narrow and poorly maintained roads.

There is a small but present threat of piracy in the waters off the coast of the Seychelles.

### Terrorism

There is a low threat of indigenous or international terrorist activity in the Seychelles. There have been no reported terrorist attacks in the Seychelles in the past five years.

### Civil Unrest

Levels of civil unrest in the Seychelles are low. However, protests can occur spontaneously, particularly in response to government policies or election-related issues.

### Personal Security

Crime rates are relatively low. However, there has been an increasing number of reports of burglaries and crimes of an opportunistic nature targeting both residents and tourists. Port Louis and the areas of Flic en Flac, Grand Baie, or any place frequented by tourists are likely to have higher petty crime rates, especially at night. Prostitution and drug activities are prevalent in downtown Port Louis after dark, particularly in "Company Gardens" public park in the city's center. Keep valuables secured in a hotel safe at all times, if possible. Unattended bags or valuables at the beach or in a vehicle are common targets.

Crimes of a sexual nature-including harassment and assault-are common and law enforcement is generally ineffective in investigating and prosecuting these crimes.

Same-sex relations among males are illegal, and homosexual acts are punishable by up to 14 years of imprisonment under the law of the Seychelles. Public displays of affection are frowned upon.

Exercise extra caution when trekking as individuals on both marked and unmarked trails have been assaulted and robbed in the past, sometimes at gunpoint. Travel in a group, if possible.

Tour operators may have poor safety standards, particularly for adventure sports like diving and yachting. They may not observe recommended maintenance standards and safety precautions and may not provide sufficient life jackets or other safety equipment.

Piracy remains a threat in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean. Piracy attacks have occurred in coastal waters surrounding the outer islands of the Seychelles.

## Law Enforcement

Police forces are considered to be effective at preventing, responding to, and investigating crime. However, there have been isolated reports of police corruption. Exercise caution when dealing with these officials. Tourist police are also available and operate at most beaches. They wear blue or white golf shirts and generally speak English.

Prison conditions are poor and unsanitary, and access to drinking water is limited. Lengthy pretrial detention periods and judicial inefficiency hinder the justice system.

Be sure to travel with all appropriate documentation, including passport and visa photocopies. Individuals who intend on driving should be in possession of their International Driving Permit (IDP), vehicle registration, and proof of insurance at all times.

## Transportation

**Air:** The Seychelles has not been rated by the International Aviation Safety Assessment Program (IASA). Despite this, international flights on foreign-owned and -operated carriers may be compliant with IASA standards and provide an acceptable alternative to services based in the Seychelles.

**Bus:** Buses are the only form of mass transit in the Seychelles. Bus services are extensive in Mahé and Praslin, and commuters pay a flat rate of SCR 3 for each ride. However, buses may be poorly maintained and infrequent on some routes. They can also be crowded during rush hour.

**Car:** Road infrastructure and local driving practices in the Seychelles are generally poor. Vehicles in the Seychelles travel on the left side of the road. Visitors can drive for up to three months on a foreign driver's license.

Mahé is mountainous, and roads can be narrow, winding, and poorly lit. Most lack safety rails or barriers. Buses tend to drive aggressively. The risk of accidents is elevated on rural and mountain roads at night, especially in Mahé.

**Taxi:** Taxis are generally available. Fares should be negotiated before entering the vehicle. Only use properly marked taxis, and book through a hotel if possible. Do not get into a taxi if there is an unknown passenger sitting in the vehicle. If unhappy with the direction in which the taxi is traveling, speak calmly, yet firmly to the driver in conjunction with the hand gesture to stop in case there is a language barrier. If there is no positive response from the driver, exit the vehicle at the first opportunity.

**Train:** There are no passenger train services in the Seychelles.

**Water:** Most of the inner island resorts are accessible by ferry. Major catamaran ferries operate daily between Mahé and Praslin and Praslin and La Digue. Persons who travel between islands by boat may wish to bring their own life jacket, as boats may not offer basic safety equipment. Avoid any boat or watercraft that appears poorly maintained.

Piracy remains a concern around the outer islands in the south, near the coast of Africa. Sailing vessels and yachts are especially vulnerable to piracy. There remains a threat of piracy off the coast of Somalia despite a decline in the rate of pirate attacks since 2013. A number of foreign governments advise against sailing in the Seychelles' Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) more than 20 kilometers (12 miles) out from the inner Granitic Islands. In general, avoid non-essential sailing more than 20 kilometers (12 miles) from the shore in the Gulf of Aden, the Arabian Sea, and part of the Indian Ocean, or avoid sea travel altogether as some foreign governments refuse to

negotiate with pirates or pay ransom as part of a long-standing policy to deter the targeting of their citizens. Increase vigilance while transiting through high-risk piracy areas. Monitor the latest updates on pirate activity and be prepared to alter routes at short notice.

### **Scams, Fraud, Corruption, and Extortion**

There are no known scams specific to the Seychelles. However, common scams against foreigners, regardless of destination, include dating and marriage scams, false employment opportunities, and virtual kidnapping for ransom. Avoid giving out personal information at all costs, especially bank or credit card numbers.

Corruption of government employees is not uncommon in the Seychelles and it has been reported that these officials may expect, request or demand illegitimate payments from foreigners for real or imaginary violations of local law or for providing routine services. Exercise caution when dealing with these officials.

### **Security Advice**

Be prepared. Make an effort to understand your destination environment before you travel: identify the possible threats and prevailing situation, understand your own vulnerabilities and take action to mitigate the risks.

Maintain a low profile and good situational awareness. Ensure you travel with reliable communications equipment, test your mobile (cellular) telephone upon arrival at your destination and keep it fully charged. Make note of emergency telephone numbers, including the police, fire department, ambulance, and embassy or consulate.

Avoid all protests and demonstrations to minimize the risk of exposure to incidental violence. Travelers should walk away or wait inside a shop or restaurant if it is not possible to leave the area. Plan alternate routes to circumvent potential protest locations. Seek the assistance of a local host, or travel with a local driver, where possible.

To minimize the risk of becoming a victim of petty theft, travelers should maintain caution and exercise situational awareness at all times. Avoid overt displays of wealth. If confronted by a criminal, do nothing to antagonize the situation. Carry a "dummy" wallet if possible, and carry a passport photocopy at all times.

Carry handbags on the opposite side from passing traffic to reduce the risk of thieves on motorcycles trying to snatch them.

Avoid walking unless you are confident of the security situation. Do not walk by yourself at night in secluded or troublesome areas of the city. Do not take shortcuts away from main roads, which tend to be busy and provide a safer environment.

National holidays and public festivals tend to attract large crowds in some countries. Such public gatherings, despite a typically enhanced security presence, create a potential venue for disorder or violence. In addition, large crowds may well impede local transportation systems.

Do not buy counterfeit or any goods in violation of copyright laws. Doing so may be a violation of local laws and can carry hefty fines or even prison time.

Reduce risk of injury from car crashes by always wearing a seatbelt. Some countries have heavy fines for not wearing a seatbelt. Avoid drinking and driving. Be sure to travel with all appropriate documentation, including passport and visa photocopies. Individuals who intend on driving should

be in possession of their International Driving Permit (IDP), vehicle registration, and proof of insurance at all times.

Travelers are subject to the laws of the Seychelles, even if they are not a citizen of the Seychelles. Travelers can also be prosecuted for violating their home country's laws while in a foreign country. Travelers should be aware of the laws and customs of the country they are traveling to in order to avoid prosecution.

# HEALTH ASSESSMENT

## Health Risk Rating

High

## Travel Health Advice

Routine vaccines for preventable diseases, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, chickenpox (or varicella), poliovirus vaccine, etc. are recommended for all travelers.

Prevent against insect bites and insect-borne diseases, such as tick-borne encephalitis or malaria, by using insect repellent and wearing long pants, long sleeve shirts, boots, and hats if possible.

Prevent against foodborne illnesses by avoiding undercooked food and unpasteurized dairy products and washing hands, especially before eating.

## Immunizations - Required for Entry

Immunization	Notes
<b>Yellow Fever</b>	Travelers one year of age and older who have passed through an area with a risk of yellow fever transmission must be vaccinated against yellow fever. The yellow fever vaccine should be administered at least ten days before travel. While a booster shot is no longer recommended every 10 years, some countries do not allow certificates of vaccination older than 10 years.

## Immunizations - General

The following immunizations are recommended for travel to all destinations.

Immunization	Recommendations
<b>Routine</b>	Routine vaccines for preventable diseases, such as measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine, diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine, chickenpox (or varicella), poliovirus vaccine, etc. are recommended for all travelers.
<b>Hepatitis B Virus (HBV)</b>	Hepatitis B Virus is spread through contact with blood, sexual relations, and contact with contaminated needles. There are several pre-exposure vaccination options available: PEDIARIX (pediatric formulation containing DTaP, HepA/B, and polio vaccines), TWINRIX (three dose HepA/HepB combination series), ENGERIX-B, and RECOMBIVAX HB. The full course of three injections is recommended prior to travel.
<b>Influenza (flu)</b>	Influenza is spread between humans through sneezing, coughing, and can be spread by touching objects contaminated with the virus. There are two types of pre-exposure vaccinations available: Trivalent Inactivated Influenza Vaccine (TIV), and Live Intranasal Influenza Vaccine (LAIV). TIV is injected into the upper arm or thigh, and LAIV is administered as a nasal spray. Common TIV vaccines include Afluria, Agriflu, FluLaval, Fluarix, Fluvirin, and Fluzone. Common LAIV vaccines include FluMist.

## Vaccine Preventable Diseases Specific to the Seychelles

The following are vaccine preventable diseases that are prevalent in the Seychelles.

Immunization	Recommendations
<b>Hepatitis A Virus (HAV)</b>	Hepatitis A Virus is found in areas with poor sanitation and poor food and water safety, and can be spread through sexual relations, blood transfusions, and needles. Several pre-exposure vaccination options are available: PEDIARIX (pediatric formulation containing DTaP, HepB, and polio vaccines), HAVRIX, VAQTA, TWINRIX (three dose HepA/HepB combination series), AVAXIM, and EPAXAL. The first injection should be administered before departure and a booster after six months.
<b>Typhoid Fever</b>	Typhoid fever is spread through the ingestion of contaminated food or water. Individuals traveling to areas where typhoid fever is common should undergo vaccination at least one week before travel. Booster shots are necessary, as the vaccination loses effectiveness over the course of several years. Two forms of the vaccine are available: an inactivated shot, and a live weakened oral vaccine.

## Health Risks in the Seychelles

Health Risks	Details	Recommendations
<b>Brucellosis</b>	Brucellosis is a bacterial infection contracted by contact with infected animals or their byproducts, including contaminated milk and meat. Symptoms include fever, muscle pain, weakness and lethargy, headache, and chills. Transmission of Brucellosis is occasionally reported in the Seychelles.	There is no vaccine available to immunize humans against brucellosis. Doxycycline and rifampin are usually prescribed by doctors for 6 weeks following contraction of brucellosis. Less than 2 percent of cases are fatal. Avoid unpasteurized dairy products, and use rubber gloves if it is necessary to handle animal viscera.
<b>Chikungunya Fever</b>	Chikungunya is spread during the rainy season through the bite of an infected mosquito. Not all infected persons may exhibit symptoms, but persons may experience sudden joint pain and fever, as well as headache, rash, and vomiting. The country has recorded several infections in recent years.	There is no vaccine to prevent against chikungunya, but taking proper precautions against mosquito and insect bites, such as applying insect repellent and using mosquito nets, may help prevent against transmission.
<b>Leptospirosis</b>	Leptospirosis is transmitted to humans through contaminated food or water. It is a serious concern during periods of heavy flooding. Persons wading through water should wear boots or long pants. Leptospirosis usually infects a host through abrasions or open wounds. In the Seychelles, the disease is present in rats, dogs, raccoons, and deer.	There is no vaccine to prevent against leptospirosis, but doxycycline is a prophylaxis option. Treatment is difficult and includes killing the agent and treating possible complications. Improper or delayed treatment can be life-threatening. Avoid areas of stagnant water. Avoid contact with animals. Thoroughly wash and cook meat, fruit, and vegetables. Drink only bottled water.
<b>Hepatitis E Virus (HEV)</b>	Hepatitis E Virus is typically contracted through exposure to raw or uncooked shellfish, or unclean drinking water.	There is no vaccine to prevent against Hepatitis E. Hepatitis E can be avoided through overall care in sanitation, particularly of drinking water.
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	HIV is spread through contact with blood or secretions of an infected person, especially through IV drug use, unprotected sex, and blood transfusions.	HIV/AIDS risk can be decreased by avoiding IV drug use and sexual contact with high-risk individuals.

## Food and Water Safety

Although drinking water is chlorinated and generally considered potable, some strains of local bacteria may cause gastroenteritis for unaccustomed travelers. All water should be bottled or otherwise purified before drinking, and ice cubes should be avoided. Avoid the consumption of unpasteurized dairy products, and thoroughly cook all meats, fish, and vegetables prior to consumption. All fruits and vegetables should be thoroughly washed and peeled. There is a risk of ciguatera fish poisoning in the Seychelles, which can be avoided by limiting the consumption of barracuda, grouper, moray eel, amberjack, sea bass, and sturgeon fish.

## **Medical Facilities and Services**

Medical facilities in the Seychelles are limited, particularly on smaller islands. Serious illness will likely require evacuation to the nearest qualified medical facility. Ambulance service is only available on the islands of Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue; however, waiting times vary greatly by location. Some doctors and hospitals may require payment up front and/or in cash. Bring adequate amounts of necessary medications for the intended stay, as similar medications are unlikely to be found in the Seychelles. A hyperbaric chamber and permanent on-site hyperbaric medical specialists are located on Silhouette Island.

# DESTINATION DETAILS

## Time Zones

1 January to 31 December, Seychelles Time (SCT): GMT +4 Hours  
The Seychelles does not observe Daylight Saving Time.

## Currency

Seychelles Rupee (SCR)

**NOTE:** US Dollars, Pounds Sterling, and Euros are sometimes accepted.

## Credit Cards

Credit cards are generally accepted at shops, restaurants, resorts, and hotels in the Seychelles. American Express, MasterCard, and Visa are the most commonly accepted. Prepare some cash for incidental expenses. Travelers should always notify their bank of their travel plans to avoid having their account frozen.

## ATMs

ATMs are available on Mahé and Praslin islands. Most ATMs in the Seychelles accept cards on international networks. Visitors should spend or convert all SCR while in the Seychelles, as few foreign exchange bureaus convert them outside of the Seychelles. Travelers should check with their bank before their trip about any fees that might be charged with ATM use.

## Banking Hours

From Monday to Friday 08:30-14:00 and Saturday 08:30-11:00.  
Hours may vary with bank and location.

## Major Holidays

Services and transportation may be affected on/around these holidays:

Date	Holiday
01 January 2018	New Year's Day
30 March 2018	Good Friday
1 April 2018	Easter Sunday
01 May 2018	Labor Day
05 June 2018	Liberation Day
31 May 2018	Fete Dieu (Feast of Corpus Christi)
18 June 2018	Constitution Day
29 June 2018	Independence (National) Day
15 August 2018	Assumption/La Digue Festival
01 November 2018	All Saints' Day

08 December 2018	Feast of the Immaculate Conception
25 December 2018	Christmas Day

**NOTE:** There are no upcoming elections scheduled to take place in 2018.

## Voltage Information

240V, 50Hz -- Plug Type G

## International Airports

Airport Name	AirportCode	Airport Location
Seychelles International Airport	SEZ	Victoria

## ENTRY & EXIT REQUIREMENTS

The following information is for citizens of the United States. If you are a citizen of a country other than the United States, contact an embassy or consulate for up-to-date requirements. For additional questions regarding entry/exit requirements, contact Global Rescue at (+1) (617) 459-4200.

To enter the Seychelles, a passport valid for at least 90 days after date of departure, an onward or return ticket, and a Visitor's Permit are required. Visitor's Permits are valid for stays of up to 30 days and may be obtained upon arrival with a valid return or onward ticket, proof of accommodation, and proof of sufficient funds. Seychelles is a visa-free country. Duration of stay can be extended in Seychelles through the Department of Immigration in three month increments, up to a total stay of one year.

Proof of yellow fever vaccination is required when arriving from a yellow-fever affected area within six days prior to entry into the Seyshelles.

### EXPORT RESTRICTIONS

**The following restrictions apply:** Local currency cannot exceed SCR 2,000. Special permission is required for the export of flora and fauna souvenirs.

**The following items are prohibited:** Narcotics; pornographic material; offensive material; explosives; endangered species or products derived from endangered species; counterfeit goods; radioactive material; and, birds.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

<b>Intl. Country Code</b>	+248
<b>Fire</b>	999
<b>Police</b>	999
<b>Ambulance</b>	999

### Contact Information for Select Embassies

#### **US Embassy in Mauritius**

**NOTE:** *There is no US diplomatic mission in the Seychelles. Travelers should contact the US Embassy in Mauritius.*

4th Floor, Rogers House  
John Kennedy Street  
Port Louis, Mauritius  
Telephone: (+230) 202-4400  
After-hours Emergency Telephone: (+230) 5253-3641

#### **UK High Commission in Victoria**

3rd floor, Oliaji Trade Centre  
Francis Rachel Street, Mahé  
Victoria, Seychelles  
Telephone: (+248) 428-3666

#### **Australian High Commission in Mauritius**

**NOTE:** *There is no Australian diplomatic mission in the Seychelles. Travelers should contact the Australian High Commission in Mauritius.*

2nd Floor, Rogers House  
5 President John Kennedy Street  
Port Louis, Mauritius  
Telephone: (+230) 202-0160

For other embassies, contact Global Rescue at (+1) (617) 459-4200.