



Government of Seychelles

National Preparations for the United Nations  
Conference for Sustainable Development, UNCS  
Rio 2012

# National Report

# Republic of Seychelles

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# Executive Summary

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The Seychelles National Report to the Rio+20 Conference represents more than 20 years of commitment to sustainable development which has transformed Seychelles to status of upper middle income country. The Seychelles constitution and national strategy and plans are geared towards sustainable development and the ratification of all the significant international environment conventions and other multilateral agreements are further evidence of commitment by the government and people of Seychelles towards achieving the goals of the Conference on Sustainable Development. Seychelles has also achieved a very high level of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Although the UN does not have an office in Seychelles, the activities of certain UN Agencies, in particular UNDP has had a significant impact on sustainable development in Seychelles. These interventions are highlighted in the various country assessment frameworks.

Seychelles has made significant progress in the implementation of sustainable development, however more so on the environmental dimension than on the economic and social aspects. Major efforts by government to undertake significant macroeconomic reform in 2008 was seen as a successful process. In 2011, a national initiative entitle 'Social Renaissance' was launched by the President of the Republic, in a bid to address rising social issues such as drug and alcohol abuse but also issues of social and community cohesion.

The Seychelles face a wide range of challenges, dominated by the global economic recessions, lack of a tangible agreement to address climate change and the local pressures of development. Better institutions and governance frameworks are essential.

Seychelles is keen to embrace the concept of the green economy, however there is a need for specific sectoral analysis to be undertaken to identify areas where the green economy can drive sustainable development.

# 1 Country Background

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The Seychelles consists of over 115 islands of which some 40 are granitic and the rest coral with a total human population of about 84,600<sup>1</sup>. It has a surface area of 455 km<sup>2</sup> but an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of 1.374 million km<sup>2</sup>. The four main inhabited granitic islands in order of size are Mahe, Praslin, Silhouette and La Digue. The Seychelles islands are located within 4° and 9° South of the equator, and with a total area of 455.3 km<sup>2</sup>. All the islands put together result in a coastline of about 491 km<sup>2</sup>. The majority of the islands are surrounded by coral reefs with an area of about 1,690 km<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>, many of which were affected by the mass coral bleaching event of 1998 which was caused by abnormally warm waters<sup>4</sup>.

The Seychelles is a stable democracy with presidential and parliamentary elections held every five years. The country ranks first in Africa in terms of human development (HDI was 0.773 in 2011) and ranks second in Africa in terms of income (GDP per capita was \$10,824 in 2010). Most MDGs have been met although overseas development aid has decreased substantially in the past few years. The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators show that in most dimensions of governance (political stability, government effectiveness, rule of law and control of corruption), Seychelles is above the 50 percentile rank amongst the 212 countries surveyed in 2009. The 2010 Ibrahim Index of African Governances shows that between 2008 and 2009, Seychelles improved its overall score from 77.0 to 78.5 (out of 100).

## 1.1 Population growth and migration

Seychelles was first settled in 1771, with an initial population of 28 persons. The population has subsequently grown to its present estimated at 86,000 in 2008, and projected to reach 100,000 by 2020 (NSB, 2008). With a literacy rate of 97% and a high

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<sup>1</sup> NSB, 2007 – '2006 population estimates'

<sup>2</sup> The World Fact Book, 2008

<sup>3</sup> See Payet, 2004

<sup>4</sup> Linden *et al.*, 1999

average life expectancy of 72 years, the Seychelles enjoys a high quality of life despite the challenges of being a small island developing state.

To date, almost all of the coastal plains are heavily built or developed, and reclamation of mangrove areas for additional land is a practice, albeit not as common as before. More than 90% of the population and all economic activities are located on the narrow coastal plateau of Mahe Island, at an average elevation of 2 m above sea level. Due to steep land conditions and lack of suitable land for infrastructure, extensive areas have been reclaimed on the east coast of Mahe Island, the largest inhabited island in the group.

The population density in Seychelles is 163 persons per square kilometre. On Mahé the density is very high, estimated to be about 434 persons per square kilometer. The most densely populated are those districts located on the outskirts of Victoria, with a density of about 3000 persons per square kilometre, as compared to about 100 in the more rural areas of the island. The urbanisation rate is estimated at 2.2 % per year. It was identified that there are three main forces that have driven internal migration over the last two decades: employment, education and housing. Consideration of international migration statistics shows an increase in migrants to the Seychelles.

There are no cases of mass movements as a result of natural disasters or climatic anomalies. A rare outbreak of the disease, smallpox, is known to have staggered the population growth between 1887 and 1895. On 21<sup>st</sup> December 2006, 35 residents of Farquhar and Providence Atolls had to be evacuated due to category 4 cyclone Bondo (max. winds of 190 km/h). According to records cyclones in this latitude is extremely rare. The last such event occurred in 1956. The 2005 Indonesian Tsunami caused three deaths and over 30 million USD of damages to infrastructure in Seychelles.

## **1.2 Economic and Social Vulnerability**

Since Independence in 1976, Seychelles has developed from an agrarian-based economy into one based upon tourism and fisheries. In Africa, it has the second highest GDP per

capita and is one of the six upper-middle-income countries. Overseas development assistance decreased significantly when Seychelles achieved middle-income status in the early nineties.

Tourism accounts for 26% of the GDP, provides 30% of employment and 70% of foreign exchange earnings. The fisheries industry is also important in Seychelles contributing 8% to GDP, but this sector continues to be adversely affected by fluctuations in fish stocks and the threat of Somali pirates. Seychelles, being a small island state remains highly vulnerable to global economic downturns, especially in the tourism market and the price of essential commodities (oil and food).

Since the early nineties, Seychelles development trajectory slowed down primarily due to external shocks and also internal macroeconomic imbalances arising from a relatively centralized economy and increasing debt. In response, Seychelles adopted a Macro-Economic Reform Programme in 2003 which resulted in further liberalisation of the economy and reduction in debt. However, these measures proved insufficient to address the macroeconomic imbalances and the economic vulnerability of the country remained high. Persistent foreign exchange shortages resulted in shortages in basic items, inflation and a growing external public debt, which in 2008 represented 98% of GDP (US\$808 million) of which USD 313 million was in arrears. In 2007/2008 the global oil and food price shock seriously exhausted Seychelles official external reserves causing the country to default on a private debt in mid-2008.

In October 2008, government implemented an IMF-backed reform programme to completely liberalise the foreign exchange market and restore economic sustainability. Despite a rapid depreciation of the currency and a significant increase in inflation, peaking at 63.6%, the currency had stabilized by mid-2009 and in August 2009, inflation had reduced to 39.8% and unemployment at 4%. In 2010 the GDP grew by 6.7 percent, and consumer prices which had gone down to near zero increased to 3% primarily as a result of

increase food and oil prices globally. In 2011, public debt declined to about 76% and is expected to reach 50% of GDP by 2018<sup>5</sup>.

Although these measures indicate a stabilization of the economy, the vulnerability of the Seychelles to global shocks cannot be underestimated.

### **1.3 Energy and Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

All of the energy needs of Seychelles are met through imported petroleum products, although there is use of solar water heaters at the domestic level. In 1982, Seychelles spent US\$ 11 million in oil imports; in 2010 the energy import bill was close to 60 million USD. Due to growth in consumption and expansion of the tourism industry, the consumption of imported petroleum products increased from 83,164 toe (Tonne of Oil Equivalent) of fuel in 2000 to more than 155 toe in 2007. Likewise fuel imports are about 22% of GDP. The transport sector consumes more than 42% of total energy, followed by the domestic/tourism/service sectors consuming about 41% and industry consuming only 17 % to total energy. Assuming an annual average economic growth rate of 7%<sup>6</sup>, consumption of energy will approach 514,460 toe in 2017 – that is more than 5 times the amount in 2007.

According to the Seychelles greenhouse gas inventory a 34% increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between 1995 (194.342 Gg of CO<sub>2</sub>) and 2000 (260.640 Gg of CO<sub>2</sub>)<sup>7</sup>. A significant proportion can also be attributed to the shift to the increased use of fuel oil for the production of electricity. However, Seychelles sequestered an estimated 821.74 Gg, thus Seychelles is a net sink country, the balance of which has a tradable carbon value of about 10 million Euro.

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<sup>5</sup> IMF 2011 IMF Mission Finds Seychelles' Three Year Economic Program on Track – IMF Press Release No. 11/376.

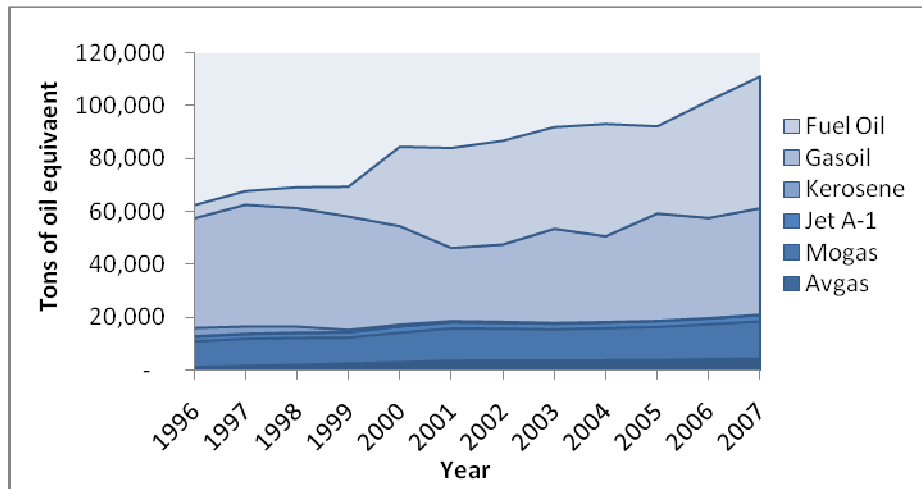
<sup>6</sup> Energy Forecast (Scenario II) by 2008 energy Task Force.

<sup>7</sup> (Cooposammy & Jean Louis, 2008)



Seychelles has very few mitigation projects, the most important being the construction of an 18 MW wind energy farm on Mahe with the support of MASDAR which will be commissioned at the end of 2012.

**Figure 1 Trends in primary energy consumption (GoS, 2008).**



#### 1.4 Biodiversity and Environment Vulnerability

Seychelles is recognised as an important biodiversity area of the world, especially for its unique forests and bird species (of which 12 endemic bird species are global threatened). Ongoing surveys indicate there are more than 1000 species of plant species, 5 endemic bat species, 7 endemic caecilians, 5 endemic frog species, 2 endemic freshwater fish, 2 sub species of terrapins with more than 20 lizards of which 14 species and subspecies are endemics. The arthropods are equally diverse represented by a diversity of insects, scorpions, spiders and fruits flies, many of which are endemic. The marine environment which extends over 1.4 million km<sup>2</sup> has over 1000 described species of fish of which 400 are confined to reef environment, 55 species of sea anemones, 300 species of scleractinian corals, 150 species of echinoderms and 350 species of sponges. Forest cover is estimated at 40,600 ha or 90% of the total land area.

Seychelles became the first country in the Western Indian Ocean region to designate marine protected areas and today more than 47% (or 212 km<sup>2</sup>) of its land territory is under legal protection. Two of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites are also found in the Seychelles. Under a new plan to designate protected areas on the outer islands of the Seychelles, the proportion of Seychelles territory under protective status will exceed 50%<sup>8</sup>. Other areas protected are shell reserves, areas of outstanding beauty and landscape as well as zones of no development. Conservation action is implemented by government, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. Significant resources from, the Government of Seychelles, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the European Union (EU) and others are used to support the protection of those designated areas. Seychelles is one of few countries with the highest levels of success in removing endangered species from the red data list and for the eradication/restoration of degraded ecosystems.

However, the biodiversity and natural environment in Seychelles are threatened by direct human impacts and global impacts induced by humans - such as climate change and biological invasions. The major impacts include land use change as a result of development, pollution, biological invasions, forest fires, commercial overexploitation of certain species (e.g. fish) and climate change.

Seychelles also experienced significant coral bleaching in 1998 due to the strongest El Nino ever recorded at that time. Coral mortalities were over 90% in the Seychelles down to a depth of 20 m<sup>9</sup>. Repeated bleaching has occurred subsequently with a significant impact on inshore subsistence fisheries and the diving industry. The migration of fish stocks as a result of extreme changes in ocean temperature may also significantly affected the tuna fishing industry. Extended droughts in the last 10 years have also caused stress in tortoise and bird populations. Coastal erosion as a result of sea level rise and extreme weather threatens nesting grounds for turtles and coastal infrastructure on the islands.

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<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/?7922/Half-of-Seychelles-as-protected-area>  
Retrieved: Dec 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Wilkinson C, Linden O, Cesar H, Hodgson G, Rubens J, Strong AE (1999) Ecological and socioeconomic impacts of 1998 coral mortality in the Indian Ocean: An ENSO impact and a warning of future change? *Ambio* 28(2): 188-196.

## 1.5 Education

Since 1997, the education system in Seychelles has been directed by the policies education for all, education for life and education for social and national development. The Seychelles education system provides full access of 13 years of general education to all Seychellois children. Education in Seychelles is free of charge for all Seychellois children from crèche (early childhood) to secondary level. Primary education (from primary one to primary six) is for six years, whereas secondary education (from Secondary one to Secondary five is for five years<sup>10</sup>. It is a policy of the ministry of education that education is compulsory for all Seychellois children aged from 5 to 16 years old. The number of pupils enrolled each year for primary and secondary schools has remained fairly steady at about 1,600 each year.

There have been numerous educational reforms and structural changes since 1997. For example, there have been improvements and innovations such as the expansions and construction of infrastructure to accommodate new schools, development of support services for schools and the continued training and professional development of teachers. The launching of the National Curriculum framework in the year 2000 was among several important developments in the education area<sup>11</sup>. The evolution of further and higher education from the year 2000 onwards, led to the creation of a flexible option system of post secondary institutions. Currently, there are more than ten post secondary institutions<sup>12</sup> in the country which provide a number of higher education possibilities to the citizens of Seychelles. They are: The School of Business Studies and Accounting, the National College of the Arts, The Seychelles Institute of Training (SIT), The Seychelles Tourism Academy (STA), The National Institute of Health and Social Studies, The school of Advanced Level Studies, The Maritime Training Centre, The School of Visual Arts, The

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.acmeq.org/education-seychelles.htm> Retrieved on: 19 March 2012

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.commonwealth-of-nations.org/Seychelles/Education> Retrieved on: 19 March 2012

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.education.gov.sc/postsec.html> Retrieved on: 19 March 2012

Seychelles Agriculture and Horticulture Training Centre (SAHTC) and The Adult Learning and Distance Education Centre (ALDEC).

In September 2009 we saw the arrival of the University of Seychelles (Unisey). Unisey is now offering more than twenty undergraduate degree level courses in various fields. In March 2012, UniSey introduced its first undergraduate degree in environmental science with specific modules focused on sustainable development and global change.

## 2 Methodology

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As part of the preparation for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) to be held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, DESA/Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), in collaboration with UNDP is collaborating with the Seychelles to prepare for and effectively participate in the UNCSD.

The methodology is based upon an approach suggested by DESA, namely a national preparation process consisting of three interconnected phases:

1. the preparation of a stocktaking report based on interviews, consultations and desk review;
2. a multi-stakeholder meeting addresses the issues of the UNCSD; and
3. The outcomes of both the stocktaking report and multi-stakeholder meeting are captured in a national report.

To guide the assessment and preparation of the national report, a series of questions have been proposed by UNDESA to serve as guidance in gathering information from stakeholders.

The University of Seychelles and a national consultant was appointed to coordinate the implementation of this process. A national steering committee chaired by the Department of Environment as established with membership from government, the private sector, NGOs and the civil society. The following approach was adopted:

**Multistakeholder Workshop** – A multistakeholder workshop was organized with the aim of (i) presenting an overview of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development; (ii) explaining the SIDS preparatory process leading up to Rio+20 and (iii) obtain views on the three themes and objectives of Rio+20. Participants were divided into five groups, along the themes and objectives of the Rio+20 summit, as follows: Group 1 – Renewing Political

Commitment; Group 2 – Assessing progress to date; Group 3 – Addressing emerging challenges; Group 4 – Green economy in the context of SD; Group 5 - Institutional Framework for SD. The findings of the working groups have been incorporated in the stocktaking report.

**Preparation of the Stocktaking Report** – The preparation of a stocktaking report comprised of a desk study of reports and documentation of national strategies and plans, UN country reports and other national assessments. A list of documents consulted is presented as footnotes. The stocktaking report takes into consideration the political commitment to sustainable development, assessment of challenges and gaps, and also the national institutional framework for sustainable development and progress towards green economy. The stocktaking report will be presented to a second national multistakeholder workshop, along with the national report.

# 3 Political Commitment for Sustainable Development

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## 3.1 Political commitment to sustainable development

Seychelles has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable development in various ways and at (i) at the international level, (ii) regional partnerships and agreements, and (iii) national policies, action plans regulatory and institutional frameworks.

### 3.1.1 International commitment to Sustainable Development

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) forms a distinctive group which shares many characteristics and whose vulnerability and special situation has been recognized by the international community. The sustainability of SIDS, in particular, drew the attention of the international community in 1989 when the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution (GA 44/206) on SIDS, which later became enshrined in Agenda 21, Chapter 17G (1992). Seychelles, being Small Island Developing State, has played a leadership and active role in this process. Seychelles was among the first countries to sign the three Rio global environmental conventions – the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in 1992. At the political level Seychelles recognized the importance of these global instruments in the implementation of Agenda 21.

Seychelles was also instrumental in the development of a plan of action for small island states. This resulted in the adopted of the Barbados Programme of Action for Small Island States (BPOA) in 1994. Seychelles was involved in the preparatory process leading up to the 2005 Mauritius International Meeting of the Small island States. The Seychelles was specifically instrumental in expanding the ocean and marine components of the BPOA, drawing attention to the wider challenges of ocean governance, the continued degradation of coral reefs and the urgent need to address biodiversity issues in small island states.

Seychelles has been host to a number of regional and intra-regional meetings to develop the 'Mauritius Strategy or the Further Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States'.

Seychelles is a member of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)<sup>13</sup>, an organization established in 1990 bringing together about 39 Small Island and low-lying countries. Seychelles is an active member of AOSIS, especially in the UNFCCC negotiations but also at the United Nations General Assembly in New York.

Seychelles has a permanent mission in New York which works closely with the SIDS Unit in the UN (DESA) and contributes to the work on the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Seychelles mission in New York has co-organized many side-events during the CSD – particularly focused on food security in SIDS, island biodiversity, coral reefs and ocean governance.

The Seychelles mission has also been involved in sponsoring a number of UN resolutions, in particular a 2009 report on 'Climate Change and its Possible Security Implications (General Assembly Resolution 63/281)<sup>14</sup>. In that report the Seychelles draws the attention of the UNGA on the issue of climate change and its impact on vulnerable population as well as exacerbates water scarcity, storm surges, food insecurity, population displacement, and threatening peace and security. The report also called on the Un Security Council to discuss the implications of climate change on the human rights of the people that would be directly affected by its effects.

Seychelles was also instrumental in obtaining a resolution to address the need to tackle maritime piracy, after continued seizure of ships in the region, started to affect the Seychelles economy – namely paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 1846 (2008) and paragraph 6 of Council resolution 1851 (2008).

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.sidsnet.org/aosis/> Retrieved on: 15 Dec 2011

<sup>14</sup> [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res\\_pdfs/ga-64/cc-inputs/Seychelles\\_CCIS.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/ga-64/cc-inputs/Seychelles_CCIS.pdf) Retrieved on 15 Dec 2011.



Seychelles has also been instrumental in the development of a global initiative called ‘The Global Island partnership’ (GLISPA)<sup>15</sup> which was launched at the Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in March 2006. This initiative which has been recognized by the CBD as an effective mechanism for implementation of the islands programme of work is a significant motor in galvanizing political support for the achievement of biodiversity targets and the expansion of the world’s protected areas. GLISPA has been successful in engaging leaders from over 60 countries comprising of SIDS, coastal states, archipelagic states and overseas territories, as well as multi and bilateral agencies to advance high-level commitments and on the ground action for island conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Without formal structure or dedicated staffing, GLISPA has helped catalyse more than US\$70 million in commitments to island conservation.

Seychelles is also an active member of the UN Group of Experts<sup>16</sup> to establish a regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, in line with paragraph 209 of resolution 65/37 of the 2010 UNGA.

Seychelles is also a member of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) since 2007<sup>17</sup>. The CLCS facilitates the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) whose mandate also includes the delineation of maritime space, rights over marine resources, protection of the marine environment from pollution and other harmful effects, and conditions for the conduct of marine scientific research in all areas of jurisdiction.

Despite its small size and constraints, Seychelles plays a very active leadership role at the international level – especially in areas of environmental governance, biodiversity, climate change vulnerability and the marine environment. Seychelles has also led the creation of global partnerships for achieving the biodiversity targets.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/island/glispa.shtml> Retrieved 15 Dec 2011.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.un.org/depts/los/global\\_reporting/group\\_of\\_experts\\_65.pdf](http://www.un.org/depts/los/global_reporting/group_of_experts_65.pdf) Retrieved 15 Dec 2011.

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs\\_new/commission\\_members.htm](http://www.un.org/depts/los/clcs_new/commission_members.htm) Retrieved 15 Dec 2011

### 3.1.2 Regional partnerships and agreement

Seychelles is an active player and leader in regional affairs and a strong advocate of regional integration for sustainable development. Seychelles participates in a number of these regional organisations; the most important are discussed below in the light of the commitment of the government of Seychelles in engaging within those regional frameworks.

The **ACP (African-Caribbean-Pacific) Economic Partnership Agreement** (or Cotonou Partnership Agreement - CPA)<sup>18</sup> was agreed in June 2000 and succeeds the Lomé Convention as the new agreement for trade and aid between Europe and the 71 ACP countries. “The central objective of ACP-EC cooperation is poverty reduction and ultimately its eradication; sustainable development; and progressive integration of the ACP countries into the world economy.”<sup>19</sup> Specifically, the CPA sought to address the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and also address using donor funding the challenges faced by Seychelles and other countries in areas of food security, sustainable fisheries and coastal zone management. One regional project funded under the CPA at a cost of 14 million Euro to support the sustainable management of fisheries in the region was the Regional Tuna Tagging Project in the Indian Ocean (RTTP-IO). Seychelles, who hosts the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC), played an instrumental role in securing this support and coordinating the overall implementation of the project.

Seychelles has been relatively successful in its negotiations within the CPA on Fisheries Partnership Agreements, the first being in 1987. The last agreement, covering the period 2005 to 2011 was worth 5.3 million Euro of which 56% was dedicated to implement the national fisheries policy and strategy<sup>20</sup>. However, Seychelles has always expressed concern that fish stocks should not be exploited beyond sustainable levels at the cost of obtaining more fishing access rights. Concern has also been expressed with respect to developing

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<sup>18</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/overview/cotonou-agreement/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/where/acp/overview/cotonou-agreement/index_en.htm) Retrieved: 15 Dec 2011.

<sup>19</sup> CPA Article 19

<sup>20</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements/seychelles/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/international/agreements/seychelles/index_en.htm) Retrieved: 15 Dec 2011.

countries not receiving a fair price for their 'blue gold'<sup>21</sup> and subsidies provided by EU countries to increase fishing pressure. The new agreement 'The Protocol of the EC/Seychelles Fisheries Interim Partnership Agreement (2011-2014)' focuses on further developing the fisheries sector in Seychelles such as training in fisheries management and value-added fish processing.

The **Indian Ocean Commission** (IOC), established in 1984, brings together four states (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles) and one French Overseas Territory (Reunion) in the Western Indian Ocean. The main roles of the IOC are to strengthen links among countries in the grouping but also promote cooperation in diplomacy, economy, trade, agriculture, fishing, the conservation of resources and ecosystems, culture, science and education. The IOC is largely funded by the European Union (70% of total financial support received), for a total amount of 50 million Euros to implement three programmes: (i) regional fisheries strategy, (ii), Regional economic integration support and (iii) the Implementation of Small island Developing States Mauritius Strategy in the Eastern and Southern Africa (ISIDSMS). The ISIDSMS with 10 million Euro of funding from the EU , will supports the countries in the region towards the RIO + 20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in 2012. This project will also support one of the four pillars of the IOC (Adopted by the Heads of States in 2005) – 'Sustainable Development in a Globalisation Context'<sup>22</sup>. Seychelles, being the current President of the IOC is committed to ensure that there is adequate regional participation in this process. In line with this commitment, Seychelles hosted the Regional Preparatory Meeting for Rio+20 in May 2011.

**Regional Trade organisations** – Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) – Seychelles is member of both organisations and both organisations have implemented initiatives consistent with the principles of sustainable development, including climate change. In addition to the regional process, COMESA and SADC aim to have regional scientific and technical

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<sup>21</sup> Speech delivered by H.E. James Michel, President of Seychelles at the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly, 5 September 2008. See: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/63/generaldebate/seychelles.shtml> Accessed: 10 Feb 2012.

<sup>22</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mauritius/regional\\_integration/indian\\_ocean\\_commission/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/mauritius/regional_integration/indian_ocean_commission/index_en.htm)  
Retrieved 16 Dec 2011.

communities to increase knowledge and management support to member countries. Both organizations seeks to promote and enhance collaboration, synergy, partnerships and effective participation of Governments, business community, and civil society and other stakeholders in climate change matters and provide a framework for the establishment of an African BioCarbon Facility and COMESA Carbon Fund that combines market-based offsets, public and private funds. The overall objective of SADC's Environment and Sustainable Development programme is to ensure the equitable and sustainable use of the environment and land-based resources for the benefit of the present and future generations. The economies of SADC Member States are mainly agro based, so there is a lot of emphasis on addressing environmental degradation arising from deforestation, loss of biodiversity, pollution, soil erosion, decreasing quality and quantity of water, poor sanitation services and poor urban conditions. The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) stresses the importance of sustainable use and management of the environment in fighting against poverty and food insecurity and it identifies Environment and sustainable development as one of the key intervention areas.

With the support of Seychelles COMESA has made commitments to consider the specific needs, vulnerability and challenges of small island states, the issue of climate change, and piracy links to development in the Indian Ocean (the COMESA Regional Strategy and Action Plan against Piracy)<sup>23</sup>.

Seychelles rejoined the SADC in 2007, after leaving the organisation in 2003 due to arrears in membership payment. Seychelles has always argued that being the smallest country in the trade community, pays disproportionately higher fees than other members, an issue which was taken into consideration when Seychelles rejoined the SADC in 2007. SADC has a comprehensive 'Environment and Sustainable Development Programme' which focuses on harmonizing the policy/legal environment in the community, promoting environmental mainstreaming, capacity building and promoting regular reporting on environment in the community<sup>24</sup>. Within hat programme Seychelles is very active in the 'SADC Regional Environmental Education

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<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.nation.sc/index.php?art=25355> Retrieved: 28 Dec 2011.

<sup>24</sup> See <http://www.sadc.int/fanr/environment/index.php> Retrieved: 28 Dec 2011.

Programme’ and the ‘Environment Action Plan for NEPAD’<sup>25</sup>. Fisheries, wildlife, forestry and transboundary conservation are also key areas of focus. In May 2011, SADC member states approve a new programme “SADC Support Programme on Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)” aimed at supporting Member States in their efforts to combat climate change and achieve their development goals through reduced emissions in the forestry sector<sup>26</sup>. Seychelles will be embarking shortly on the development of a REDD+ programme.

The Nairobi Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region was signed in 1985 and came into force in 1996. The Convention provides a legal framework for countries in East Africa and the Western Indian Ocean towards addressing the key issues on the coastal and marine environments. The Convention has been involved in the implementation of several activities financed mainly through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and a number of European countries. UNEP is the Secretariat for the Nairobi Convention.

In 1999 Nairobi Convention Conference of Parties (COPs) have called for the review of the Convention and its protocols to bring them up to date as modern and dynamic legal instruments to address the sustainable management for the marine and coastal environment of the Region. Proposals for new protocols were also put forward – namely the Protocol on Land based Sources and Activities (LBSA Protocol) which is now in force, and a Protocol on Integrated Coastal zone Management which is still under negotiations.

Seychelles was one of the founding parties to the Nairobi Convention, and hosts the Regional Coordinating Unit for the Convention. Seychelles was instrumental in mobilizing political support for the convention from all the countries in the region. Seychelles plays an important leadership role in the further development of the Nairobi Convention, its protocols and activities.

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<sup>25</sup> The SADC REEP (Regional Environment Education Programme - <http://www.sadc-reep.org.za/>) - enables environmental education practitioners in the community to strengthen environmental education processes for equitable and sustainable environmental management choices, through strengthened environmental education policy, networking, resource materials, training capacity, and research and evaluation.

<sup>26</sup> SADC Ministers approve REDD+ Programme (from: <http://www.sadc.int/REDD/index.php/news/sadc-ministers-approve-redd-programme/> )

### 3.1.3 Political commitment to sustainable development at the National Level

The political commitment for sustainable development is enshrined in the Constitution of the Seychelles, reflected in policy and legal environment and implemented through long-term planning for sustainable development.

The **Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles** (1993) makes reference in the preambular paragraph to ‘...participate in the sustainable economic and social development of our society’. Furthermore Section 38 (Right to safe environment), Part (b) of the Constitution also states ‘...to ensure a sustainable socio-economic development of Seychelles by a judicious use and management of the resources of Seychelles.’ President James Michel in a statement to the UNGA in 2008 said that *‘Despite our small size, we shall continue to lead. And we shall lead by example. By our example, we have shown and will continue to show to all that sustainable development is achievable in our present generation.’*

Sustainable development is on the agenda of the Cabinet of Ministers, whose responsibility is to approve all policies, regulations and national action plans. The Cabinet also plays an important role in ensuring there is coherence between those policies and that their implementation is feasible and in line with the national sustainable development strategy. Cabinet decisions are published on the website of the statehouse, and major decisions are reported in the media<sup>27</sup>. The Ministry of Environment and Energy is the government body responsible for sustainable development, although there are considerable efforts to mainstream sustainable development across all departments of government<sup>28</sup>.

An extensive legislative and policy framework which covers all sectors is in place at the national level for environmental management in the Seychelles. These include provisions in the law for the ratification and implementation of several multilateral environment

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<sup>27</sup> See example from Statehouse website on ‘Seychelles makes major contribution to the Aichi biodiversity Targets’. [http://www.statehouse.gov.sc/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=673:seychelles-makes-major-contribution-to-aichi-biodiversity-targets&catid=36:the-press-room&Itemid=64](http://www.statehouse.gov.sc/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=673:seychelles-makes-major-contribution-to-aichi-biodiversity-targets&catid=36:the-press-room&Itemid=64) (Retrieved: 5 January 2011)

<sup>28</sup> See Seychelles Strategy for Sustainable Development 2011-2020.

agreements (MEAs), a large collection of national laws and regulations, as well as specific institutional frameworks to implement those policies and laws. This includes:

### **The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

The CBD was signed and ratified by Seychelles in 1992. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was ratified in 2004. However, Seychelles is not yet a signatory to the Nagoya Protocol and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Protocol. Seychelles is an active member of the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work under the CBD<sup>29</sup>. An in-depth review of this programme of work is currently being undertaken by the CBD.

The principles and requirements of the CBD and associated protocols are legally embodied in several pieces of national legislation, some of which are outdated. Furthermore the approach is piece-meal and there is no framework legislation in place for the conservation of biodiversity. Existing legislation include the National Parks and Nature Conservancy Act (1969, as amended), the Fisheries Act (1987), the Wild Animals and Birds Protection Act (1961) and the Wild Birds Protection (Nature Reserves) Regulations (1966) Other Acts supporting keystone species protection (marine turtles, certain sea bird species, whale sharks and marine mammals) and their habitats include: The Wild Animals (Whale Shark) Protection Regulations (2003); the Environmental Protection Act (1994); the Forest Reserves Act (1955, as amended); the Fisheries Act (1987), among others.

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan<sup>30</sup> was developed to prioritize biodiversity conservation action. A new plan is required after an appropriate review to determine what has been implemented. The more recent National Strategy for Plant Conservation, (2005-2010) needs to be reviewed and updated. Other plans include the National Plan for Conservation of Sharks (NPOA), The Seychelles Wetland Conservation and Management Policy (2005), and the Seychelles Biosecurity policy (draft).

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<sup>29</sup> See <http://www.cbd.int/island/> Retrieved: 5 January 2012

<sup>30</sup> GoS 1998 National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBSAP).

## **The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)**

Seychelles was one of the first countries to sign and ratify the UNFCCC when it was opened for signature in 1992. Seychelles also signed the Kyoto Protocol in 1998 and ratified it in 2002.

In 2000, Seychelles submitted its Initial National Communications in 2000 as a Non-Annex 1 country, with the support of the GEF. The Seychelles Second National Communication was completed and submitted for consideration by the UNFCCC in 2011. In 2010, Seychelles launched its National Climate Change Strategy which focused on climate research and monitoring, mitigation, adaptation, and mainstreaming of climate change at the national and local levels. Some components of the strategy remain unfunded.

The national legislative framework is embedded in the Environment Protection Act of 1994; the Energy Act 2011; the Road Act and the Road Transport Act. Relevant national policies include the Energy Policy of Seychelles, 2010-2030 and Seychelles Land Transport Planning & Policy Study (1997). Seychelles is also a founding party of IRENA, the International Renewable Energy Agency.

## **UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**

Seychelles signed and ratified the UNCCD in 1994 and 1997, respectively but did not implement any specific activities until the early 2000.

In 2001, Seychelles developed and adopted its first 'Sustainable Land Management Action Plan 2011-2020'<sup>31</sup>. The main national legislative framework for the implementation of the UNCCD in Seychelles are the: Town and Country Planning Act (1972), Environment Protection Act (EPA, 1994); and the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) regulations. Other relevant legislation include National Parks and Nature Conservancy Ordinance (1971, amended in 1973 and 1982); The Plant protection Act (1996) and the Agriculture and Fisheries (Incentives) Act (2005); State Land and River Reserves Ordinance (Cap 150) of 1903; Lighting of Fires (Restriction) Ordinance (Cap 232) of 1940; Breadfruit and Other

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<sup>31</sup> GoS (2011) National Action Plan for Sustainable Land Management. GoS/UNDP/GEF.



Trees Act (Cap 122) of 1917, amended in 1988 and 1994; Forest Reserves Ordinance (Cap 153) of 1955, The Coco de Mer (Management Decree) of 1979, amended in 1994 and the the Landscape and Waste Management Agency Regulations (2009).

Aside the Sustainable Land Management Action Plan 2011-2020, a number of other strategies and plans have relevance to reversing land degradation. These include the Seychelles Forest Management Plan; the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP, 1998), Seychelles Forest Fire Contingency Plan; Seychelles National Agriculture Policy 2003-2013, Plan D'Aménagement du Territoire (1992) and the National Report and Plan of Action for Sustainable Human Settlements Development 1996-2000.

#### **3.1.4 The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**

At the UN General Conference in 2000, the largest gathering of world leaders in world history agreed on a set of goals to reduce poverty, improve health, and promote peace, human rights, gender equality, and environmental sustainability by 2015 – albeit a new approach to solving some of the world pressing challenges in the new millennium and achieving sustainable development<sup>32</sup>.

The Seychelles 2010 MDG Report<sup>33</sup> concludes that Seychelles has achieved most of the MDGs<sup>34</sup> – especially MDG goals 1-5 and 7. The main areas of significant challenge however are goals 6 and goals 8.

Goal 1: Poverty as defined by the UN does not exist in the Seychelles although there some groups of society that has difficulties in meeting basic needs. Seychelles has a strong welfare programme which should be further improved to support those that cannot work or do not have access to work. Due to changes in inflation, the Seychelles Welfare Agency is also considering topping up earnings of those with large families and single-mothers.

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<sup>32</sup> ...ref MDG website

<sup>33</sup> MFA 2010 Seychelles Millennium Development Goals – Status Report. Government of Seychelles

<sup>34</sup> The eight MDG goals are: 1. Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger 2. Achieve Universal Primary Education 3. Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women 4. Reduce Child Mortality 5. Improve Maternal Health 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases 7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability 8. Developing a Global Partnership for Development

Goal 2: Seychelles has comprehensive education systems with 10 years of compulsory public schooling. Recent efforts in education reform have focused on increasing the quality of education, improving school governance and tackling social ills in the schools. School children also have access to breakfast and lunch.

Goal 3: The ratio of girls to boys attending post-secondary school continues to increase and women have become involved at all levels of society – in particular in the Cabinet of Ministers, in the National Assembly, in government and in running their own business. Seychelles has the legal framework for gender equality and participation.

Goal 4/5: Child mortality is very low and maternal health is high in Seychelles, on par with the developed world. However, efforts at improving the quality of the health services continue to dominate the national agenda. Seychelles has a network of community health centres which offer primary health care at community level.

Goal 6: HIV/AIDS remains a significant challenge, and despite efforts cases continue to rise. Some cases of HIV/AIDS are also linked to increased drug abuse in Seychelles. HIV/AIDS medication is offered free in Seychelles. Addressing HIV/AIDS is a priority under the WHO work programme for Seychelles.

Goal 7: Environment management has been subject to two decades of environment management plans, and government has just approved a strategy for sustainable development. There are institutional and legislative weaknesses, and lack of capacity hampers efforts at conservation and managing Seychelles fragile environment. Whilst the forests are largely protected, the coastal and marine environments require attention.

Goal 8: Seychelles is an active participant at global levels especially in biodiversity, climate change, sustainable development and most recently maritime security. Seychelles is also active at the regional level – presently being the president of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC).

### 3.1.5 Sustainable Development Planning in Seychelles

Seychelles embarked on its first environment management plan<sup>35</sup> in 1989 by the Government of Seychelles with the support of UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank. The Environment Management Plan of Seychelles (EMPS) 1990-2000, as it was called, raised pledges of over 40 million USD and after a decade of implementation was deemed a successful programme. Key successes was the expansion of the Department of Environment, training of environment professionals, enactment of a modern Environment Protection Act, introduction of Environmental Impact Assessment, implementation of national effluent quality standards, the elimination of the turtle shell industry and construction of the Greater Victoria sewerage system.

The success of the EMPS 1990-2000, prompted Government to embark on the preparation of a second generation action plan, aptly called the EMPS 2000-2010. With the support of the World Bank, the EMPS 2000-2010 was prepared through a national multistakeholder consultation process and national expert input. The EMPS 2000-2010 was also further closely aligned to environment and sustainability principles emerging following the UNCED Rio Summit held in 1992. EMPS 2000-2010 therefore also incorporated major global environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss. Although the EMPS 2000-2010 was successfully implemented, efforts at improved monitoring and evaluation of the benefits were limited. In 2009 a review of the EMPS 2000-2010 was undertaken in 2009 by the Government of Seychelles with the support of UNEP and the Indian Ocean Commission (COI) Regional Programme for the Sustainable Management of Coastal Zones of the countries of the Indian Ocean (ReCoMaP). The review was published in October 2009 as the *Report on the Review of the Environment Management Plan for Seychelles (EMPS) 2000-2010*. This report contained a number of recommendations which served as guidance in the preparation of the next environment management plan.

The EMPS 2001-2010 proposed an institutional framework for its implementation which focused on a coordinating agency nested within the ministry responsible for the environment. Guidance for the operation of this agency emanated from a broad-based

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<sup>35</sup> also referred to as 'The national strategy for the implementation of sustainable development in Seychelles'.

Steering Committee under the joint chairmanship of the Principal Secretary responsible for environment and the foreign affairs counterpart. The Steering committee comprised of representatives of government, the civil society and the private sector. The EMPS 2001-2010 was supported by a unit created within the ministry responsible for environment.

The EMPS has subsequently been transformed into the Seychelles Sustainable Development Plan (SSDS) 2012-2020. The SSDS 2012-2020 provided for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to sustainable development in Seychelles with equal focus given to the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development.

### **3.2 Role of UN Agencies in the implementation of sustainable development**

UN Agencies have played an important role in the implementation of sustainable development of Seychelles.

Seychelles has never had a UN country office. The UNDP Regional Office based in Mauritius serves as the UN Resident Representative for Seychelles. With the exception of the World Health Organisation country office, all of the other major intergovernmental bodies are either based in East Africa (UNESCO, UNEP, UN-Habitat, AU) or in Mauritius (UNDP, EU Commission, IOC). UNDP has a small project management unit in Seychelles.

#### **3.2.1 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

UNDP is the UN's global development network with a presence in more than 166 countries. The UNDP Common Country Assessment (CCA) is a country-driven process whereby the national development situation is assessed taking into account national priorities and plans as well as a focus on the MDGs and other global commitments and goals. Seychelles completed its CCA in 2010 and it focuses on three main goals:

1. Identification of the national institutional and legal framework: Fifteen sectors were studied to determine whether they are aligned to the international legal framework.

These sectors were land use management, tourism, fisheries, agriculture, education, health, social development, employment and labour, law and order, governance and democratic rule, transport, energy, environment, housing and finally, economy, commerce, trade and financial markets.

2. Identification of common cross-sectoral issues that can drive or be a serious impediment to national development: The key issues identified were human resource management and capacity building. Capacity gaps are exacerbated by inadequate alignment of education services with labour needs, retention of professionals and rising social ills such as substance abuse and HIV AIDS.
3. Identification of specific targets and priorities at sector-level: The energy sector, land use management, improvements in quality of education, and addressing social challenges were deemed as priorities for Seychelles under the CCA.

All these issues are strongly aligned with the competence and global strategic priorities of UNDP which focuses on 'Empowering lives. Resilient Nations'.

The strengthening of national institutional framework across sectors is in line with the theme of Rio+20 and the need to mainstream sustainable development strategies and principles across these sectors. The new SSDS 2012-2020 provides the framework for mainstreaming sustainable development across those sectors identified in the CCA. UNDP has made significant financial and technical contributions to sectors such as land use management and agriculture<sup>36</sup>, fisheries<sup>37</sup>, education<sup>38</sup>, law and order<sup>39</sup>, governance and democratic rule<sup>40</sup>, energy<sup>41</sup>, environment<sup>42</sup>, and the economy.

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<sup>36</sup> UNDP-GEF Sustainable Land Use Project

<sup>37</sup> UNDP-GEF Mainstream Biodiversity Management into Production Sector activities.

<sup>38</sup> UNDP (2009) *Assessment of Development Results: Evaluation of UNDP Contributions Seychelles* pp.42-43

<sup>39</sup> UNDP CCA (2010) support to strengthening the capacity of police officers in respecting human rights through the adoption of human rights practices and sensitizing judiciary, media and civil society on gender and human rights issues. p. 33

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. Human rights education, strengthen judiciary, Human Rights Commission, NGOs and other agencies. p.34

<sup>41</sup> UNDP support for Development of Energy Assessment and Policy.

UNDP comparative advantage in capacity development is significant and recently commissioned the preparation of the Seychelles Capacity Development Plan. The aim of the five year plan is to assist in the prioritizing of national needs to address the challenges of building capacity in Seychelles and will cover issues such as human resources development, training, technology, infrastructure and financing, taking into consideration present and future needs. UNDP was previously involved in a project entitled Seychelles National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA). The primary goal of Seychelles' NCSA was “to determine the priority needs and establish a plan of action for developing the country's capacity to meet its commitments to global environmental management.” The ‘national capacity self assessment’ process has played a dual role in not only assessing the country's environmental ‘capacity needs’ but it has also created awareness and engaged stakeholders in International Environmental Convention activities. An important element of the NCSA and in the implementation of the action plan is “Stakeholder engagement” and “Partnerships”, nationally, regionally and internationally<sup>43</sup>.

### 3.2.2 World Health Organisation (WHO)

The World Health Organization is the United Nations specialized agency for health and governed by 193 member states. WHO operates in the Seychelles through the ‘WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2008-2013’ (WHO CCS).

The Strategy outlines the strategic priorities for the WHO country office in Seychelles and a framework for WHO's technical cooperation with Seychelles. Although Seychelles has been successful in addressing key health issues, the health system still faces a number of challenges. These include improving the quality and delivery of its health care services, setting up an effective monitoring and evaluation system, addressing the high turnover of health professionals, and tackling rising levels of non-communicable diseases, HIV/AIDS and other emerging diseases<sup>44</sup>. The WHO CCS was prepared through a national consultative

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<sup>42</sup> See [http://un.intnet.mu/undp/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=category&id=42&Itemid=74](http://un.intnet.mu/undp/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&id=42&Itemid=74) for portfolio of UNDP-GEF Environment projects. (Accessed: Jan 2012)

<sup>43</sup> <http://www.nation.sc/index.php?art=5416> Accessed: Jan 2012

<sup>44</sup> WHO (2009) WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2008-2013

process and takes into consideration the National Health Strategic Framework for Seychelles (2006–2016) and is harmonized with WHO global priorities, UN Common Country Assessment (CCA), the UN Millennium Development Goals and other regional strategies.

Three major goals have been identified which reflect the national priorities and the UN global priorities. These are:

1. Support the development of integrated inter-sectoral approaches in order to prevent and reduce disease, disabilities and premature deaths from non-communicable diseases, mental health, violence and injuries;
2. Reduce the health, social and economic burden of communicable diseases;
3. Reduce health consequences of emerging disasters, crises and conflicts and their socioeconomic impact;

Improving national capacity for preventative measures and clinical management, as well as increasing community awareness on lifestyle issues is an important aspect of this programme, especially as Seychelles is seen to increasingly exhibit diseases of the developed world. Building capacity for disease surveillance, access to key health facilities such as vaccines, and addressing HIV/AIDS is key to ensuring a health and resilient population. Seychelles is inherently extremely vulnerable to natural disasters and global pandemics. Such events may seriously undermine development and jeopardize efforts in the implementation of the MDGs. Addressing the capacity and institutional framework for national disaster preparedness is an important component of the WHO CCA. These actions are being implemented through the technical network and resources provided through WHO, with significant input from the Government of Seychelles. The Seychelles invests over 10% of its GDP in health care.

### 3.2.3 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

UNEP was established in 1972 and is the designated authority of the United Nations system in environmental issues at the global and regional level. It therefore plays an essential role in the preparations to Rio+20. UNEP actions in Seychelles are undertaken primarily, but not exclusively, through the UNEP Regional Seas Programme, specifically the Nairobi Convention. UNEP has a mid-term strategy 2010-2013 focussing on six priority areas: climate change, disasters & conflicts, ecosystem management, environmental governance, harmful substances and hazardous wastes, and resource efficiency. UNEP also encourages countries to prepare national Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis – Strategic Action Plans (TDA-SAP)<sup>45</sup>. TDA-SAP is a science-based approach to identify priorities for joint action in areas of shared water environments. In that context a UNEP-GEF project was implemented in the Western Indian Ocean Region ‘Addressing Land-based Sources of Pollution in the Western Indian Ocean’ of WIO-LaB which resulted in the strengthening of the regional convention and the national implementation of the convention in the form of a protocol<sup>46</sup>. This programme implemented and was in line with a number of strategic components under the Seychelles Environment Management Plan 2001-2010.

### 3.2.4 Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is focused on alleviating hunger and addressing global food security. The FAO regional office based in Madagascar is responsible for Seychelles. The FAO uses the ‘National Medium-Term Priority Framework’ as the main instrument for identifying and implementing actions in Seychelles<sup>47</sup>. This priority framework is soon to be replaced by a more comprehensive document called the “Country Programme Framework”. This exercise is in turn linked to national processes such as the development of the Five Year Agricultural Strategy, the Fisheries Development

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<sup>45</sup> The Strategic Action Programme (SAP) for the Protection of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-Based Sources and Activities which was endorsed on 31 March, 2010.

<sup>46</sup> Protocol for the Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Western Indian Ocean from Land-Based Sources and Activities (LBSA Protocol) which was adopted on 31 March, 2010

<sup>47</sup> FAO National Medium Term Priority Framework of Seychelles 2007-2010.



Plan and Policy, as well as the Seychelles Sustainable Development Plan SSDS 2012-2020. The national priority framework focusses on five goals critical to sustainable development:

1. Reducing the country's dependence on imported food
2. Maximising revenue from fisheries
3. Optimising the use of the scarce natural resources
4. Adapting to climate change through disaster risk management
5. Strengthening capacity of sector policy monitoring

Following the recent global food crisis, a new strategy was developed to ensure Seychelles attains a sustainable level of food security<sup>48</sup>. This required a review of existing land allocation for agriculture and the introduction of numerous mechanisms to encourage local production of food.

### **3.2.5 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)**

UNESCO has unique competencies in education, the sciences, culture and communication and information which are geared towards implementation of the MDGs in developing countries – in particular Africa. Seychelles is served through the UNESCO Cluster office based in Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. UNESCO had a specific programme for small islands entitled 'Sustainable Development in Coastal Regions and Small Islands' which has now been replaced with a specific UNESCO priority area – Small island Developing States<sup>49</sup>. Under this priority area issues such as climate change, disaster preparedness, culture and tourism, education and capacity building, enabling environments, information and knowledge, natural resources, science and technology, and health – have become the focus of UNESCO. These are in line with the SIDS Mauritius Strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of

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<sup>48</sup> Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2012-2020

<sup>49</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/priority-areas/sids/> Accessed: Jan 2012.

SIDS. To implement this strategic priority UNESCO draws on its house-wide expertise and resources. In Seychelles, UNESCO is active in areas of education and climate change.

### **3.3 The European Union – Contribution to Sustainable Development in Seychelles**

The European Union is officially represented in the Seychelles through the EU High Commission based in Mauritius. The nature of EU cooperation in Seychelles consisted mainly of programmable aid, non-programmable aid and European Investment Bank (EIB) loans, and post-2008 - EU budget support. The EU is a significant partner in the implementation of sustainable development in Seychelles; wither through direct country support or regional activities.

According to the EU-Seychelles Country Strategy Report 2008-2013<sup>50</sup>, Seychelles started cooperation with the EU in 1977, and over that period benefitted from over Euro 25 million support in various sectors relevant to sustainable development such as environment, health rural development.

The environment sector was the focus of the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> EDF NIPs in the areas of solid waste management and support for the non-governmental sector. The EU has also support a number of private-public initiatives such as craft development, industrial development and a credit lie to the Development Bank of Seychelles to support the expansion of the private sector.

The EU supported the development of a number of climate change initiatives through its EU climate change fund – especially in the areas of energy policy, building development guidelines for climate proofing.

The EU was also instrumental in supporting the Seychelles to connect to the global undersea fibre optic network in an effort to provide high bandwidth connectivity to enhance education and economic development.

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<sup>50</sup> EU, 2008 EU-Seychelles Country Strategy. 2008-2013. Brussels.

## 4 Progress in the implementation of sustainable development

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Seychelles has made considerable progress in the implementation of sustainable development. Seychelles embarked on its first environment management plan in 1989 by the Government of Seychelles with the support of UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank. This early plan paved the way for the creation of the Department of Environment, training of environment professionals, enactment of a modern Environment Protection Act, introduction of Environmental Impact Assessment, implementation of national effluent quality standards, the elimination of the turtle shell industry and construction of the Greater Victoria sewerage system. However, this plan did not adequately integrate sustainable development principles although Agenda 21 formed a core part of the project proposed in the plan. The second generation EMPS, as it was called (EMPS 1990-2010) was much more focused on sustainable development leading many experts to question the appropriate reference to it as an ‘environment management plan’.

In 2009 a review of the EMPS 2000-2010 was undertaken by the Government of Seychelles with the support of UNEP and the Indian Ocean Commission (COI) Regional Programme for the Sustainable Management of Coastal Zones of the countries of the Indian Ocean (ReCoMaP). The review was published in October 2009 as the *Report on the Review of the Environment Management Plan for Seychelles (EMPS) 2000-2010*<sup>51</sup>. This report contained a number of recommendations, one of which emphasized the need to a more integrated approach and a deliberate focus on sustainable development.

The EMPS 2000-2010 Review concluded that due to a lack of suitable indicators, a proper evaluation of the effectiveness of the EMPS 2000-2010 with regard to suitable development in Seychelles could not be made. Efforts to further link biodiversity conservation and development which would entail a close implementation of the sectoral development plan

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<sup>51</sup> Government of Seychelles, 2009 Report on the Review of the Environment Management Plan for Seychelles (EMPS) 2000-2010.

within a coherent sustainable strategy framework were necessary. The report also emphasized the role of education and its links to sustainable development.

Arising from a consultative process and a team of local experts, the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS) was approved by Government in December 2011, to replace the series of environment management plan as the Seychelles blueprint for sustainable development. The new approach also entails a review of the institutional mechanism for the implementation of sustainable development at the local and national levels.

The following overview gives recent progress in the implementation of sustainable development in Seychelles from an economic, environmental and social perspective.

#### **4.1 Macroeconomic Reform Programme**

The Seychelles economy is based primarily on tourism and fisheries and as such is exposed to volatility in those markets. Economic crises in Europe as well as political unrest in the region have a significant impact on tourism arrivals in the Seychelles. The emergence of maritime piracy in the Western Indian Ocean has also caused significant reductions in cruise tourism and industrial fishing.

Despite these high levels of economic vulnerability, the Seychelles has emerged as the country in Sub-Saharan Africa with the highest UNDP Human Development Index<sup>52</sup> and the second highest GDP per capita, amongst the six upper middle-income countries – a level comparable to some OECD countries<sup>53</sup>. This has been due to the government's emphasis on education, health, housing and other social development programmes. However, persistent macro-economic imbalances and long-standing structural problems threatened these achievements. In particular, large fiscal and budget deficits have led to rising external and domestic debt, a growing foreign currency black market related to a pegged exchange rate

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<sup>52</sup> UNDP Human Development Report 2011. UNDP, New York.

<sup>53</sup> Seychelles in Figures 2011 Edition. National Bureau of Statistics, Seychelles.

system led to shortages in consumer goods, and the state's dominance in the economy further constrained the development of the private sector<sup>54</sup>.

To address those problems the government of Seychelles initiated an economic and modernization reform programme called the Macro-Economic Reform programme. However the slow pace and piece-meal nature of the reforms failed to address these imbalances ahead of the looming global oil and food crisis in 2007. Since Seychelles is heavily dependent upon imported food and fuel, increased global prices caused inflation in Seychelles to rise to 38% (year-on-year) by August 2008. By July 2008, official reserves had virtually exhausted and Seychelles started to default on its external debt repayments, thus affecting its international credit rating. In October 2008, Seychelles was downgraded to Selective Default (SD) Status by Standard & Poor Credit Ratings. In a move to prevent the country from sliding into an economic crisis, government announced a number of urgent structural reforms with the support of the International Monetary Fund<sup>55</sup>. This included the floating of the Seychelles Rupee, the removal of all exchange controls, further tightening of fiscal and monetary policies, major reforms in the public service and budget controls, comprehensive debt restricting strategy, changes in the tax policies and a programme to remove barriers to private sector development. There was concern that these measures will also undermine the strong social infrastructure of the government, so whilst subsidies were removed in some areas, government kept its support for a non-fee paying education and health system. A targeted safety net scheme was also established to support the most vulnerable segments of society. The public service, through a voluntary departure scheme, achieved a 12.5 percent cut in the number of employees.

The ambitious reform programme resulted in a rapid depreciation of the Seychelles Rupee (by 50%) and high inflation by the end of 2008<sup>56</sup>. However by the first half of 2009, the foreign

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<sup>54</sup> Seychelles - Letter of Intent, Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies, and Technical Memorandum of Understanding, Government of Seychelles, October 31, 2008.

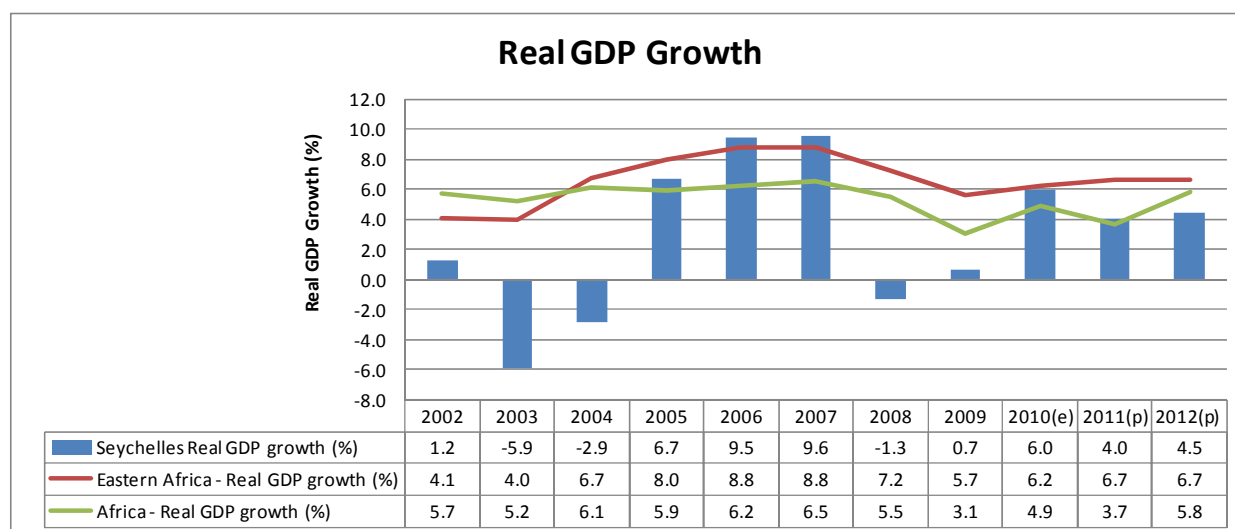
<http://www.imf.org/external/np/loi/2008/syc/103108.pdf> Retrieved: Dec 15, 2011.

<sup>55</sup> IMF Executive Board Approves US\$31.1 Million Extended Fund Facility Arrangement for Seychelles, Completes Final Review Under Stand-By Arrangement. IMF Press Release, December 22, 2009.

<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2009/pr09472.htm> Retrieved Dec 15, 2011.

<sup>56</sup> See <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&refer=africa&sid=azdGid.AnZaw> Retrieved 20 December 2011.

currency black market disappeared, central bank reserves had increased, inflation had dropped to an insignificant level and the economy was on its way to growth once again. The figure below shows the strong GDP growth experienced by Seychelles following the 2004 reforms, the decline during the 2008-2009 crisis and the rebound in 2010<sup>57</sup>. Government aggressively pursued its debt reduction strategy which had grown to an unsustainable level of 156% of GDP. In 2011, the public external debt was 75% of GDP.



The program touted as a modern success highlighted a number of important considerations in ensuring the long-term sustainability of the economy of small island states:

1. A strong political commitment is essential for any macro-economic reform. The President of the Republic and the Cabinet held umpteen local community consultations and televised talks on the reform programme, launched a ‘Wake up and Work’ Programme and maintained its focus on cutting costs and removing inefficiencies.
2. A strong social development programme is critical for long-term economic resilience. Seychelles had sufficient social capital to ensure that there were significant opportunities in the development of small cottage industries and for job reskilling.

<sup>57</sup> Seychelles (2011) Africa Economic Outlook. ADB/OECD/UNECA/UNDP Publication Online: <http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/> Retrieved: 5<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

3. A sustained foreign direct investment policy which in-turn continued to create private sector employment when government and public enterprises had to be considerably downsized.
4. An independent and robust Central Bank to ensure fiscal discipline and accumulation of foreign exchange reserves. A result-oriented ministry of finance, with a clearly outlined plan aimed at transforming the economy through better budget management and a tax regime that promotes private sector expansion.

Seychelles remains highly vulnerable and any significant changes in global economic growth, costs of food and oil will severely impact on poverty, unemployment and sustainable development in Seychelles. A recent household expenditure survey found that 13% of Seychellois are living below the USD 3.5 per day poverty line, and unemployment stands at about 2-3%, despite considerable efforts by government to reduce the population of expatriate workers. Significant community projects had to be put on hold as a result of the economic reforms. Access to some rural community hospitals had to be restricted and funding for environmental conservation suffered as a result of the crisis.

Seychelles continues to pursue a policy which seeks to ensure stability in its economy and at the same time draw attention to the inherent economic vulnerability of the country. Access to low-interest credit lines, a more favorable trade agreement on fisheries, for example, as well as a stronger involvement of the private sector will further reduce this vulnerability.

## **4.2 Social Development and Progress**

The Seychelles currently has an annual per capita income exceeding USD 10,000 per year and ranks as the highest in terms of the UNDP Human Development Index in Africa. In many respects, Seychelles compares favourably with many OECD countries and with a high investment in its social programmes has managed to achieve the majority of the MDG's. Seychelles guarantees access of its people to education and health, and has a strong

programme for housing, sanitation, access to treated water, electricity and social welfare. Significant progress in those areas has prompted government to review and enhance its social policies to allow greater participation of the people in improving the quality of the education and health services. With the macroeconomic review a number of social subsidies, such as on food products were eliminated and support directed at those living in poor conditions. Likewise the welfare system has been revised to support those in need to cope with the rising costs of living, influenced by external factors such as global food shortages, escalation in oil prices and the increased costs of shipping to Seychelles as a result of the threat of piracy. A special Fuel Stabilization Fund was established in 2009 to ensure that drastic fluctuation in the global price of oil does not affect electricity and bus fare prices, as these would have a knock-on effect on the country as a whole.

The post-macroeconomic 2008 reform objectives of the government, with respect to social development is therefore to sustain and improve the social infrastructure and at the same time increasingly encourage the population to move towards self-reliance. Whilst government will strengthen its safety net for those who remain vulnerable, it will progressively introduce policies that enable people to take an active role in health care, education, housing and community development. In fact efforts at allowing more autonomy within the education and local government system have been welcome by the people.

#### **4.2.1 Progress in population, gender and urban growth**

The Seychelles has a low annual growth rate of only 1% similar to many developed countries, in contrast to its partner countries in Africa. Mahe Island continues to be the most inhabited with almost 90% of the population located on its narrow coastal strip, in particular on the east coast of the island. Recent intensive housing development has been undertaken on reclaimed areas along the east cost of the island. The concentration of the population around the capital and along the coastline makes the country extremely vulnerable to climate change and its impacts, such as sea level rise and storm surges.



**Table 2.1: Key Development Indicators**

Indicators	Year	Value	Year	Value
Population size (mid-year estimate)	2000	81, 131	2010	86, 525
Age Distribution % (,000) (for 2010, mid-year estimates)				
0-14	2000	26.3	2010	22.7
15-63	2000	66.5	2010	68.8
64 and over	2000	7.3	2010	8.4
Dependency Ratio	2000	50.4	2010	441
Sex Ratio (per 100 females)	2000	98.5	2010	95.5
Total Fertility Rate	2000	2.1	2008	2.3
Population growth rate (%)	2000	0.1	2010	-0.9
Life expectancy at birth (yrs)	2000	72.4	2008	72.9
GNP per capita (US \$)	2002	8, 000	2009	9, 028
Human Development Index	2000	36	2007	57
Percentage of Population below national poverty line ( Pl give footnote to define it)	2000	16	2007	9
Population with access to drinking water supply	2000	82.9	2002	87
Population with access to sanitation (National Census Data)	1997	86	2002	94
Percentage of underweight under-five children	1997	10	2007	6
Adult literacy rate (%) 15 years and above	2000	90	2009	96
Net enrolment rate in primary education (%)	2000	99.6	2007	99
Ratio of girls to boys in primary education (%)	2000	0.97	2007	0.99
Under five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	2000	9.2	2009	13
Maternal mortality rate (per 100,000 live births)	2000	0*	2009	0*
Percentage of population relying on traditional fuels for energy use	2002	1.0	2009	---
Trade (% of GDP)	2000	159.6	2007	316.7

**Data Sources:** Management Information Systems Division (MISD): *Seychelles Human Development, Seychelles in Figures 2009 Edition* (National Statistics Bureau, 2008); *Human Development Report 2009* (UNDP, 2009) \* **No maternal deaths occurred in those two years.**  
*Table Source: Seychelles MDG Report 2010*

Demographic trends indicate that the population is ageing although 50% of the population is under the age of 29. This is directly related to a decrease in fertility mostly as a result of shifting lifestyles and cost of living. As a consequence, the proportion of the population reaching retirement age by 2015 will be about 10%, with a resultant impact on the social welfare budget. Women have a longer life expectancy (76 years) in Seychelles than men (67 years), primarily as a result of poor lifestyle habits (e.g. alcohol abuse) in men.

Seychelles does not yet meet the 50/50 target set out in the SAD Protocol on Gender and Development. The Seychelles Constitution of 1993 promotes non-discrimination and guarantees equal rights and protection for both men and women, and has ratified the relevant international conventions relating to gender. The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)<sup>58</sup> has ranked Seychelles the 5<sup>th</sup> highest country with 44% women in the National Assembly. Seychelles has over 45% women at chief executive or middle management levels. A number of structures exist in government and in the judiciary to protect the rights of women. Victims of family violence are protected under a specific Act of Law – the Family Violence (Protection of the Victims) Act 2000 – but family violence remains an important issue to address in practice.

Seychelles places a high level of attention and policy commitment to the development and well-being of the child. Seychelles is signatory to the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, and children are guaranteed their full social and economic rights under the Constitution as well as special protection under the Children's Act 2005. Despite these efforts, several challenges such as increasing cases of child abuse, drugs, family violence and broken families affect the well-being of children in Seychelles. Seychelles provides comprehensive and compulsory education for a period of 10 years. Until recently, students had to go abroad for tertiary education but with the establishment of the University of Seychelles in 2009, tertiary education is now available to a much larger group of young

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<sup>58</sup> See the IPU Parline Database - <http://www.ipu.org/parline-e/parlinesearch.asp> Accessed March 2012

people and at an affordable cost. Government currently provides a bursary for students attending post-secondary technical schools, and scholarships to those wishing to attend university.

#### **4.2.2 Human Resources development and employment**

The human resource base of the Seychelles is very small and impacts on the progress and development of the country. Chronic lack of professionals in all sectors affects Seychelles progress towards sustainable development. Although Seychelles has an educated population with literacy rates nearing 100%, the majority is still educated up to post-secondary level, and thus cannot access graduate jobs. The creation of jobs is a top priority for government, hence the provision of a separate ministry for human resources and employment. Whilst unemployment remains low, productivity can be improved. Government efforts to improve its services are hampered by poor productivity in the workplace. Similar challenges in the private sector have prompted this sector to import expatriate labour into Seychelles.

Seychelles has also suffered from brain-drain in the education and health sectors in particular. Following the 2008 macro-economic reform the number of employees in the public sector was significantly reduced in an effort to streamline government and privatize commercial public enterprises. The majority of those who left the public sector were immediately absorbed by the private sector. The rate of unemployment remains very low, majority of which are unskilled job-seekers.

In response to those challenges, UNDP financed the development of a Capacity Development plan for Seychelles. The plan proposes a number of strategies to address capacity gaps in Seychelles. These are:

1. Organisational development – review of institutional and legal frameworks, development of an integrated human resources management system and adoption of a more proactive approach to management of external assistance.

2. Accountability and transparency – by increasing citizen involvement in the development process and an integrated system of accountability
3. Coordinated and integrated planning, budget and monitoring – by institutionalizing planning, establishing mechanisms for stakeholder involvement, efficient use of financial resources and the establishment of an M&E framework.
4. Capacity for capacity developers – alignment of capacity development to national priorities and strengthen capacity of capacity development institutions
5. Knowledge based and innovation driven decision and development processes.

#### **4.2.3 Health and well-being**

Seychelles has a universal and free health care system catering for primary and secondary health care. Some tertiary health care service is provided at the main Seychelles Hospital, and patients requiring specialized overseas health care are often supported by government funding. Seychelles has one of the best maternal care systems, exceeding many countries in the OECD in terms of child mortality rate.

However to sustain those achievements, considerable investments needs to be made in capacity building and infrastructure. Whilst all of the diseases faced by sub-Saharan Africa have been virtually eliminated in the Seychelles, the emergence of life-style (diabetes, heart disease and cancer) type of diseases and HIV/AIDS is of considerable concern. Various plans and support programmes are in place to address those emerging issues but capacity is lacking. The Seychelles health care system also suffers from weaknesses in service quality and ability to provide effective diagnostic services. A number of private medical practitioners operate in Seychelles but there are no private hospitals or advanced diagnostic centres.

#### 4.2.4 Progress in providing shelter and housing

The government of Seychelles has a very ambitious target of providing every Seychellois with affordable housing despite land and financial constraints. According to the 2011 Budget Address, Seychelles has spent more than 100 million USD on its housing programme in the last 10 years. However, the cost of land and the cost of construction has continued to escalate, primarily due to the demand for holiday homes by the growing tourism population and pressures of local sources of aggregates and other construction materials. The development of housing has also placed pressure on existing electricity and water demand. The development of high-density housing estates especially on reclaimed areas has been a way for government to continue with its housing programmes, in view of competing uses for land in other areas.

#### 4.2.5 Water and Sanitation

The main island of Mahe depends upon rainwater for its water supply, captured into two major dams. However, protracted dry periods leads to severe water shortages around the country prompting the government to invest in desalination plants to meet demand. An ambitious pipe replacement programme is also being implemented to address loss of water through pipe leaks.

The greater Victoria area on Mahe is serviced by a municipal sewerage treatment system which meets national standards for water quality.

The solid waste collection service is still based upon a communal bin system. Solid waste is still deposited into landfills located on the coastal plateau, although there has been significant efforts at recycling. Successful recycling operations include metal, glass bottles, PET and aluminum undertaken by several private companies. However there is limited true recycling in Seychelles due to lack of economies of scale. PET for example are pulverized and then packed into containers for shipping to recycling centres in Asia. A

similarly approach is undertaken for metal waste. Local efforts in glass recycling are mainly for craft purposes.

#### 4.2.6 Energy and Renewables

As Seychelles consumption of fossil fuels continues to increase, deliberate efforts by government to shift the economy towards renewable energy has been hampered by the lack of modern legislation. With the support of EU, the Energy Act will be passed by the National Assembly in 2012. The new act makes provisions to incentives in the renewable energy sector as well as the liberalization of the energy sector to allow different power producers to operate.

As part of the Energy Policy of Seychelles (2010-2030) the objective is to achieve 100% reliance on renewable in the long-term. This would require significant investments in all forms of renewable energy, but primarily in wind, solar, waste-to-energy and biofuels. The Seychelles is already constructing a 6 MW wind farm on Mahe with financing from the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, which is expected to meet 11% of the national demand for electricity by the end of 2012.

Through funding from the EU, Seychelles will implement a USD 1 million project to equip homes with solar water heaters. To improve use of the national grid for distributed power generation, investment in smart grids is being planned, including the continuous upgrading of the existing Mahe power grid to 33 kV. Piloting of electric and hybrid cars are ongoing in the Seychelles, and there are already proposals to convert the existing fleet on La Digue to electric vehicles.

Through an MoU between the University of Seychelles and TERI University in India, a course in renewable energy will be offered in Seychelles to train middle managers in areas of energy management and planning for investments in renewable energy technologies.

Despite these efforts, implementation of renewable energy is constrained by lack of financial incentives for investment in green power, as well as lack of start-up capital to acquire such technologies.

### **4.3 Role of Private Sector and Non-governmental Organisations**

With the reform and streamlining of government, the role and involvement of NGO's in national and grassroots activities has significantly increased in the last 10 years. There is an estimate 85 registered NGOs or civil society organisations in Seychelles that is 1 NGO for every 1,000 population – making it one of the highest levels of NGO participation in Sub-Saharan Africa. LUNGOS (or the Liaison Unit of Non-Governmental Organisation of Seychelles) is the umbrella organisation representing civil society.

Despite their importance and increasing role, civil society organisations in Seychelles face a number of challenges such as lack of adequate competencies, weak management structures, lack of strategic objectives and goals, lack of facilities, inability to raise funds and same persons active in several NGO's<sup>59</sup>.

The National Strategic Plan for Civil Society (2010-2014) highlights five main areas of intervention:

1. Institutional and legal framework development
2. Improving and promoting legitimacy
3. Establishing sustainable resource mobilisation mechanisms
4. Developing partnerships with state actors and platforms
5. Active engagement in national development

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<sup>59</sup> LUNGOS 2009 National Strategic Plan for the Civil Society (2010-2014).

## 4.4 National Development Strategies

### 4.4.1 The Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2011-2020

The Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS) 2012-2020<sup>60</sup> is a new national instrument which incorporates national priorities for sustainable development and lays out a roadmap for the implementation of those priorities. Both the priority setting and development of the roadmap is a result of consultations with various stakeholders and groups, including community groups. The drafting of the SSDS 2012-2020 is being supported with the financial assistance of the Regional Programme for the Sustainable Management of Coastal Zones in the Indian Ocean Countries (ReCoMaP) and the UNDP-GEF Capacity Development for Improved National and International Environmental Management in Seychelles (CB2) Project.

The SSDS comprises of thirteen thematic areas which covers the main areas of sustainable development intervention in Seychelles. These are (i) Social and Human Development, (ii) Land Use, Coastal Zones and Urbanisation, (iii) Biodiversity Conservation, (iv) Agriculture and Food Security, (v) Fisheries and Marine Resources, (vi) Water, Sanitation and Waste Management, (vii) Tourism and Aesthetics, (viii) The Economics of Sustainability (The Green Economy), (ix) Sustainable Consumption and Production, (x) Energy and Transport, (xi) Climate change, (xii) Education for Sustainability, and (xiii) Policy, Institutional and Regulatory.

Each government ministry with the portfolio/themes listed above will take responsibility for the implementation, in collaboration with a range of stakeholders, the action plan for that particular thematic area.

The implementation of the strategy will however be coordinated by a specific body within the Ministry of Environment and Energy, who has the mandate for the implementation of sustainable development in Seychelles. The role of that specific body is to oversee the effective coordination of activities, implementation of the plan for the There is a need to

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<sup>60</sup> GoS 2012 Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2011-2020.(Two Volumes). Mahe, Seychelles.



empower and strengthen the capacity of certain ministries in order to implement the SSDS. The institutional setup for the SSDS also includes a stakeholder forum, to enable stakeholder input into the process.

All 13 thematic areas provides a thematic outlook for the period 2011-2020, the policy and stakeholder framework as well as a compendium of project outlines to implement priorities identified for the thematic sector. There is also a section on cross-sectoral linkages and performance indicators to enable implementation of activities to be integrated across sectors and effectiveness measured. The SSDS also proposes the establishment of a mechanism for its implementation.

#### **4.4.2 The Seychelles Climate Change Strategy 2009**

Within the framework of the second National Communication to the UNFCCC, the Seychelles National Climate Change Strategy (NCCS)<sup>61</sup> was initiated in part to take advantage of upcoming opportunities arising from the 15th Conference of the Parties to be held in December 2009. The NCCS provides a coherent and consolidated response to climate change. Central to the strategy is the mainstreaming of climate change into sustainable development as a national cross-sectoral programme addressing matters of policy, institutions, capacity building and civil society involvement.

Five strategic objectives have been proposed to support the Seychelles towards adaptation and developing resilience to climate change and its effects. These are dependent upon the achievement, at global level, of an agreement on GHG emissions reductions which would reduce current 'dangerous' levels of GHG gases in the atmosphere to safe levels in the least possible delay.

The strategic priority objectives proposed are:

1. To advance our understanding of climate change, its impacts and appropriate responses.

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<sup>61</sup> GoS 2009 Seychelles National Climate Change Strategy. Mahe Seychelles.

2. To put in place measures to adapt, build resilience and minimize our vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.
3. To achieve sustainable energy security through reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
4. To mainstream climate change considerations into national policies, strategies and plans.
5. To build capacity and social empowerment at all levels to adequately respond to climate change.

The NCCS also presents an action plan with an indication of priority, implementation arrangements and recommendations on the way forward.

#### **4.4.3 The Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Master Plan 2012-2020**

The Development of the Seychelles tourism master plan was launched in mid-2011 in response to the growing needs of the tourism industry and vision of the president of the republic to double the country's GDP by 2017. The Seychelles 2012-2020 Sustainable Tourism Master Plan was developed utilizing a series of public and private consultations.

Consistent with the core objectives of the new vision of tourism for Seychelles (i) going beyond the sea-sand-sun tag to strengthen Seychelles' positioning on the international market and (ii) increasing Seychellois ownership of and participation in the tourism industry, this plan points to the policy, regulatory, statistical, infrastructural, institutional, consultative and marketing gaps that need to be addressed to achieve such targets under the sustainable tourism goal. It is built on an analysis of a range of travel and tourism-related variables and assesses, where possible, the past, current and projected importance of the tourism industry for sustainable development in Seychelles.

By fostering long-term national interest, this sustainable tourism plan is guided by the principles of economical soundness, environmental and socio-cultural consciousness and should be seen as an integral component of the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy.

The vision of the 2012-2020 Sustainable tourism Master plan is:

‘Tourism in Seychelles shall continue to be developed to the highest standards to achieve the optimum social and economic benefit for the Seychellois people. This, while reaffirming and further rooting the commitment to sustainable, responsible and ethical tourism at each step of the supply chain with the balanced objectives of economic empowerment, cultural and environmental conservation/protection and socio-cultural integration.’

The priority areas for intervention are:

1. To uphold the image of Seychelles as a unique “Creole” destination by ensuring that safety/security, environmental and cultural conservation/protection as well as quality standards remain at the heart of Seychelles’ destination competitiveness
2. To diversify Seychelles’ tourism market sources and to gradually increase visitor arrivals while adopting a balanced approach for tourism bed supply, air seat supply and visitor arrival targets
3. To define and monitor tourism performance indicators, strengthen the tourism statistical apparatus and ground strategic planning for sustainable tourism on the detailed analysis of tourism-related variables and international data and reports
4. To increase daily per capita tourism expenditure while safeguarding visitor satisfaction through the promotion of Seychelles natural and cultural heritage and the delivery of diversified “value for money” products and services
5. To adopt a policy of a conservative number of beds per island and mainstream environment in tourism development notably by fostering responsible and ethical tourism and encouraging energy-saving, water, sanitation, waste and other environmental conservation/management practises in daily tourism-related operations

6. To raise Seychellois ownership of the tourism industry and the benefits accruing to them while fostering social cohesion and promoting a culture of quality service in a fair and conducive business environment
7. To address the policy, regulatory, institutional, infrastructural, consultation and enforcement gaps impairing the achievement of sustainable tourism targets
8. To reduce foreign exchange leakage, build capacity in fiscal control and strengthen the relationship between tourism and other productive sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, manufacture and handicrafts
9. To respond adequately to the challenges generated by the rapid development of coastal and marine-based tourism activities
10. To further build local human resource capacity in tourism by promoting career opportunities while guaranteeing the delivery of high standard trainings and apprenticeships, including at managerial level
11. To strengthen the domestic and international marketing and visibility of the range of Seychellois' tourism business activities

# 5 New and Emerging Challenges in the implementation of sustainable development

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## 5.1 2020 Seychelles Sustainable Development Outlook

The 2020 Sustainable Develop Outlook is a compilation of observations from experts involved in the preparation of the SSDS 2012-2020. This section provides a qualitative perspective on selected key drivers of environmental change in the coming decade. Deficiencies such as unavailability of trend data and lack of a defined national assessment process of indicators limits the merit of this outlook. The analysis does however still provide important insights into key challenges. The outlook exercise also provides critical areas in which policies and actions will be needed to address principal sustainable development challenges. It also demonstrates that the effective tackling of present-day and emerging development challenges is feasible and can be addressed by measures outlined in the SSDS 2012-2020. The impact of climate change on the potential level of implementation of these sustainability objectives is not ignored.

The Seychelles economy is very sensitive to external economic perturbations. However, Seychelles had an economic growth of 6.2 % in 2010, despite a global economic downturn, largely as a result of high FDI inflows especially in the tourism industry. The challenge to government and the private sector is to ensure there is sustainable growth in the goods and services sector so as to maximize job creation and social development as well as minimise the negative impact of industrial development, resources consumption and associated degradation on the environment.

The Seychelles population increases at a birth rate of 18.1 per 1000 persons per year and the pressures of human development on the fragile and limited resource-base of the country is expected to increase significantly by 2020. Accelerated growth in tourism arrivals will also contribute to increased pressure on local resources such as land,

beachfront property, water, food and energy. However, significant investment in tourism can yield benefits for the management, rehabilitation and restoration of these natural resources. This will indeed be a determining factor for long-term sustainability of the tourism industry in Seychelles, since the same tourism is highly dependent upon the quality of the natural environment. Global economic turmoil may affect the performance of these local activities, especially if there is a reduction in tourism receipts.

Seychelles has met all its MDGs with more than 95% of the population having access to drinking water and electricity, but it is evident that existing infrastructure will not be adequate to meet present trends until 2020. Food security will remain an issue in view of the country's dependence on imported food, and increased pressure to further convert existing agricultural land. There is an increasing trend towards consumption that creates ever larger ecological footprints, including increasing generation of wastes in the midst of weak efforts for energy, water and other forms of resource conservation. Progress in changing people behaviour may be achieved, provided there is adequate policy and institutional reforms coupled with increased education, sensitisation and awareness at all levels. Water and energy demands are expected to increase by 2020. Whilst infrastructure investments in utilities can be prohibitively costly, integrated approaches such as using waste-to-energy technologies are likely to become more common. The risk of outbreaks of certain infectious diseases, for example dengue and chikungunya, are expected to increase, in spite of efforts to prevent entry through border control and reduction of local prevalence. Of concern is also the emergence of global pandemics and other globally infectious diseases.

Coastal development and urban sprawl are expected to increase as the country aims to further develop the reclaimed zones and densify certain rural areas of the main islands. Mahé has already one of the densest coastal populations, especially along the east part of the island. Further expansion of industries, tourism and fisheries will augment further pressure on coastal resources. Conflicts will more likely arise if the highlighted institutional weaknesses and adequate consultations on development projects are not addressed. Sea

level rise, extreme storm surges and other impacts associated with climate change will affect existing coastal infrastructure, beaches and other coastal environments.

Seychelles' unique and diverse biodiversity is under threat primarily from intense tourism development pressure, environmental degradation and pollution. Impacts of climate change are likely to become more evident in the next ten years. The sustainable management of protected areas, both terrestrial and coastal/marine, will remain a challenge in view of stakeholder expectations and problems of access to resources involved. It is however expected that the area of protected areas will increase. Fishery pressure is expected to increase as well as demand for forestry products. Endemic and rare species will continue to be threatened by natural and human related hazards such as environmental degradation from development, the spread of alien invasive species, land use change and effects of climate change in the next decade.

The Seychelles is economically dependent upon its fishery resources with measures in place to ensure sustainability. However, with an EEZ of 1.44 million km<sup>2</sup>, maritime security and enforcement of illegal and unreported fisheries will remain a major challenge. The uncertainties with respect to the impact of climate change on fisheries will attract a lot of scientific attention. Coastal fisheries will continue to be threatened from overfishing and other impacts on fish habitats. The fisheries industry is expected to expand and other fish species may be commercially exploited.

The outlook show that the cost of doing nothing would be very high on the fragile national ecosystems and ultimately on the society of the Seychelles.

Table: Seychelles Sustainable Development Outlook

Macro-indicators	Positive Trend	Welcome Trends	Warning Trends
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased inclusion of environmental issues in financing development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Macro-economic reform programme</li> <li>Sustainable debt levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduced investment in environment/resource management &amp; rehabilitation</li> </ul>
Social well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low population growth</li> <li>Good education &amp; employment possibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land use plans</li> <li>Improved solid waste management</li> <li>Focus on national food security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased urbanisation</li> <li>Over-consumption</li> <li>Disease epidemics</li> </ul>
Institutions/Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reforms to increase involvement of NGOs and private sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved policy coherence and networking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor enforcement of existing laws</li> </ul>
Pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investments in water/waste treatment technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain environment quality standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pollution for highly urbanized areas</li> <li>Lack of monitoring</li> </ul>
Utilities ( energy, water, waste)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous expansion of water &amp; sanitation network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycling of some types of wastes</li> <li>Water harvesting initiatives</li> <li>Pricing which encourages conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in waste output</li> <li>Lack of water during dry season</li> <li>Increased in electricity consumption</li> <li>Increase in vehicles</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reducing risk of threatened/endangered species</li> <li>Private sector involvement</li> <li>Protected area increased</li> <li>Conservation of key species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved management and financial sustainability of protected areas</li> <li>Mainstreaming biodiversity</li> <li>Restoration of key degraded habitats</li> <li>Education for conservation and biosafety</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degradation of coral reefs</li> <li>Threat of invasive species</li> <li>Loss of critical habitats</li> <li>Encroachment by development</li> </ul>
Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Institutional and policy reforms focused on adaptation;</li> <li>Investments in Renewable Energy;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reduction of GHG emissions</li> <li>Energy, water &amp; resources conservation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coastal damage, coral bleaching, extreme droughts, forest fires</li> </ul>

( Source: SSDS 2012-2020)



## **5.2 Addressing the challenges of Sustainable Development**

The wide acceptance of sustainable development as a guiding principle for the future of humanity, its well-being and surrounding environment has gathered enormous pace at the international level, especially after the recent global economic crisis and hikes in the price of oil. Indeed the adoption of Agenda 21 in 1992, and subsequent adoption of the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 in 2002, has stimulated the global community, as well as national governments and institutions to address current environmental, social and economic problems within a framework of sustainable development. The next section will elaborate the number of elements or principles necessary for the integration of sustainable development in all forms of planning and in addressing current national challenges.

### **5.2.1 Challenges identified by the SSDS 2012-2020**

In the preparation of the SSDS 2012-2020 a number of key challenges were highlighted by stakeholders:

1. The challenges of implementing sustainable development are varied and complex, but 'no action' is not an option for consideration by Seychelles. Seychelles unique position as a small island state implies that it is particularly vulnerable on all fronts. With an economy based primarily upon tourism and fisheries, which are in turn linked to global perturbations, Seychelles remains highly vulnerable to external economic upturns and downturns. Similarly, the Seychelles has a very fragile natural environment, meaning that any environmental stress arising from over-exploitation or global phenomena, such as climate change, is immediately translated into impacts on livelihood and ecosystem health. The Seychelles has a very advanced social development network (for education, health, welfare and housing), but this could be seriously undermined by poor economic performance and environment degradation. Linking sustainable development with economic policies in the form of incentives or disincentives has been shown to be an effective approach in the

implementation of sustainable development. There is also the need to especially address the growing lacuna of financing for sustainable development.

2. The overall vision of achieving sustainable development should be re-enforced at the national level in terms of political commitment and ensure that clear linkages are indentified for better inter-thematic action. The vision of the SSDS 2012-2020 is *'To realise a knowledge-led and innovation-driven approach to sustainable development that balances the quality of life with the need to conserve the integrity and potential of the Seychelles natural environment for the present and future generations.'*
3. The SSDS 2012-2020 has been endorsed by the Cabinet of Ministers (Government of Seychelles) and each action plan (in Volume II) features a section on interlinkages and elaborates an implementation framework for sustainable development. In addition, each thematic chapter has a section on cross-sectoral issues which highlight potential linkages across thematic sectors. In fact, the SSDS should not be seen as an 'environment' document but one that seeks to mainstream environmental and sustainability issues into all the thematic sectors, policies and other institutional frameworks of the country. All stakeholders and institutions should feel part of the SSDS in such a way that they are ready to take ownership of it. A change in approach to development at all levels is an essential prerequisite to the success of the SSDS 2012-2020. The SSDS provides strategic direction and guides other national development plans. It should be seen as a guidance document on the overall national sustainable development vision and be a reference point ( in terms of sustainable development) for ongoing and future development plans of Seychelles, whether it be in infrastructure development, technology transfer or market expansion, such as in tourism.
4. The SSDS 2012-2020 should also acknowledge and respond to the limited human capacity in Seychelles for implementation. In the action plan (Volume II) 'Policy, Institutional and Regulatory' thematic sector a number of strategies to ensure effective implementation given resource and capacity constraints are proposed. In

particular synergies and linkages will need to be clearly identified to reduce duplication of effort and activities, and encourage partnerships and collaboration to achieve joint goals. The Seychelles Capacity Development Plan sponsored by UNDP will address the critical needs for a small country like the Seychelles.

5. The role and involvement of NGO's, CBO's and other organizations should be further emphasized in the new EMPS, including efforts to build capacity in those institutions. Indeed, Chapter 6 of Agenda 21 specified that countries should set priorities for action based on cooperative planning by various levels of government, nongovernmental organisations and local communities. The National Strategic Plan for Civil Society 2010-2014 addresses some of these challenges.
6. The effective establishment of systems of governance is primordial to the implementation of sustainable development. In the context of Seychelles this should primarily focus on transparent and responsible action by all parties, effective and non-discriminatory enforcement of policies and regulations, efficient delivery of services, and adequate platforms for public expression of views and participation in decision-making. The SSDS should also adopt an organizational approach to capacity building, implying that capacity building should become more institutionalized rather than limited within projects and initiatives. This approach will provide long-term sustainability and support for the implementation of sustainable development in Seychelles.

### **5.2.2 Main Institutional Challenges**

Although there is an extensive legislative and policy framework which covers all sectors in place at the national level for environmental management and sustainable development in Seychelles, there are significant gaps and challenges which are addressed by the SSDS 2012-2020. The main challenges are:

## **Stakeholder Involvement**

- Awareness of stakeholders is constrained by a lack of appropriate messages targeting various levels of society despite considerable public education and awareness campaigns.
- Poor buy-in from stakeholders in driving the necessary institutional reforms is often the result of lack of clear roles and involvement in decision-making.
- Enforcement is restricted to government agencies and stakeholders involved remains limited.
- Lack of stakeholder awareness on environmental policies and the role of tools such as the EIA in managing impacts of development on the environment, noting that decision tools needs to be made available to all levels of society.

## **Policy and Regulatory Environment**

- Institutional responsibilities are too vague and conflict between agencies minimizes impact of legal enforcement. The implementation of sustainable development should remain the sole responsibility of the ministry responsible for environment.
- Other regulatory mechanisms such as citizens and community participation in dispute resolution, as well economic incentives and disincentives need to be explored.
- Development and revision of legislation is hampered by lack of capacity to develop and draft appropriate regulations.
- Lack of capacity at all levels to implement policies and regulations and efforts at better coordination between institutions should be strengthened.
- Some legislation are outdated, penalties lenient and not coherent

- In many case enforcement of legislation is weak and does not lead to effective prosecution.

### **Research and monitoring**

- There is a poor research and monitoring framework
- In many cases there is insufficient knowledge to support science-based decision making
- National system for collection and management of population and other disaggregated data is in place but with lack of human and technical capacity.
- Use of Geodata is still in its infancy and the e-government network is incomplete.
- No national system for monitoring and evaluating sustainable development indicators and other targets such as the MDGs or national development targets.

### **Capacity & Resources**

- Lack of capacity and resources to meet the proliferation of international MEA obligations, despite efforts to harmonise reporting and institutional setups.
- Limited access to financial resources to implement and sustain required institutional reforms.

### **Planning**

- Poor mainstreaming of sustainable development considerations in cross sectoral policies
- Poor communication between sectors and agencies
- No indicators which evaluate projects in terms of their contributions to sustainable development and MDG's. There may be significant advantages in merging sustainable development priorities with MDGs.

### **Implementation**

- Proper understanding of the concept of sustainable development and how it can stimulate development towards greener approaches and technologies.
- Integrated implementation is constrained by lack of collaboration among government agencies and other organisations.
- Government project monitoring and implementation units are understaffed and lack the capacity for adequate monitoring and evaluation.
- Implementation is undertaken in silos, within sectors with not synergies for cross-sectoral issues explored.

# 6 The Green Economy

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Rio+20 will have two major themes, one of which is “*a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication...*”<sup>62</sup>. Whilst debate on the issue has been encouraged by the UN in discussions leading up to the Rio+20 summits, many countries remain divided on what it actually means and how it will be implemented.

## 6.1 Defining the Green Economy

It is argued that the concept of the green economy came about as a result of the inadequacy of current economic models and approaches to address global economic crises and environmental challenges, in particular the effects of climate change. Some view the concept of the ‘green economy’ as an attempt to replace the concept of sustainable development, whilst others see the ‘green economy’ as one of the basic tenets of sustainable development – that of an economy which takes into consideration the environmental costs and benefits as well as the transition to a low carbon and sustainable energy economy. Some countries have extended the concept to include green jobs, green technologies and green practices.

However, the concept of the ‘green economy’ has also created concerns among SIDS, and other developing countries, during various regional Rio+20 preparatory meetings<sup>63</sup>. Some of the concerns include whether use of the term could potentially be used to justify the imposition of trade conditionalities on the basis of environmental standards as well as protectionist measures to insulate countries’ own green industries. – effectively further marginalizing the world’s poor and vulnerable.

Irrespective of the various views and emerging blocs, the concept has generated much debate on how the world’s economies and indeed national economies can be transformed

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<sup>62</sup> UN General Assembly, 2009. *Resolution A/RES/64/236*. [www.uncsd2012.org/](http://www.uncsd2012.org/)

<sup>63</sup> <http://ictsd.org/i/news/biores/117254/> (accessed 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011)

to address persistent challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and abject poverty.

For small island states, the pursuit of sustainable development which emerged from the Barbados Plan of Action in 1992, the concept of the 'green economy' presents a fresh opportunity to address the vulnerability of small economies, subject to food security, energy security and vulnerability issues much more pronounced than larger states. Small island states are also important biodiversity areas and as maritime nations have jurisdiction over large areas of oceans, prompting many island leaders to refer to their economies as being transformed into 'blue economies'<sup>64</sup>.

On its part the UN and other global agencies have undertaken various studies on the issue of the green economy. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) has defined the green economy as follows:

*UNEP – 'one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. In its simplest expression, a green economy can be thought of as one which is low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive.'*<sup>65</sup>

*WRI – 'as an alternative vision for growth and development; one that can generate growth and improvements in people's lives in ways consistent with sustainable development. A Green Economy promotes a triple bottom line: sustaining and advancing economic, environmental and social well-being.'*<sup>66</sup>

Both these definitions have their origins from the concept of sustainable development and indeed focus on the three dimensions. In practical terms these concepts will need to be linked to both national, regional and global economic policies and regimes. It has

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<sup>64</sup> The Blue Economy concept should fully encompass sustainable development principles.

<sup>65</sup> <http://www.unep.org/greeneconomy/AboutGEI/WhatIsGEI/tabid/29784/Default.aspx> (accessed 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011)

<sup>66</sup> <http://www.wri.org/stories/2011/04/qa-what-green-economy> (accessed 10<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011)



implications for trade, alleviation of poverty, management of the world's resources as it implies that it is simply not a 'greening of the economy' but an alternative path.

In 2011, UNEP commissioned a study on 'Green Economy in SIDS – An Analysis of Challenges and Opportunities. The UNEP report is still in draft form but as suggested by the report, four main sectors important to SIDS are evaluated within the context of Seychelles - fisheries, energy, water, waste and tourism.

### **6.1.1 Green Economy within the context of Seychelles**

There are several opportunities for transforming the Seychelles into one which is green. These are elaborated in the various national strategies and plans, such as the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy (SSDS) 2012-2020 and the Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Masterplan 2012-2020. Both documents have been developed through an extensive stakeholder consultation process and incorporate a number of the features called for in a green economy.

For example, the development of renewable energy, the mainstreaming of sustainability in the decision-making process and innovations in the tourism sector are all areas for potential development of the green economy.

Seychelles has embarked on an ambitious plan to transform its economy, which is currently based upon 100 percent of fossil fuels. The energy strategy is to create wind farms, solar farms and financial incentives to use those technologies at the domestic level.

The fishing sector has been badly hurt by the persistent occurrence of acts of piracy in the region. An international effort to make the waters safe continues.

# 7 Recommendations

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The recommendations of the stocktaking report are based upon feedback from stakeholders during the preparatory stage of this report and issues arising from the review of reports and documents in this report. The recommendations are aligned towards the main themes of the Rio+10 Global Summit on Sustainable Development:

1. Strengthen existing institutions and create appropriate national frameworks for the implementation of the Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy 2011-2020.
2. Ensuring sectoral support for the implementation sustainable development across all government agencies, especially those related to environment, finance, social development, tourism, fisheries and so on.
3. Ensure policies developed have embedded sustainable development principles. A series of sector-specific sustainable development principles are given in the SSDS.
4. Addressing the capacity needs of the Seychelles to implement sustainable development, in particular in the areas of economic and social development, as well as meeting its international MEA obligations.
5. Establishment of necessary mechanism for increased involvement/participation and action of stakeholders and civil society organisations in the participatory decision-making and implementation of sustainable development
6. Reinforce, promote and sustain additional and new government and private sector investments in water, food security, sanitation, waste management and renewable energy (energy efficiency).
7. Strengthen coordination and integration of education for Sustainable Development at all levels and in all forms, encompassing both formal and non-formal approaches (behavior change and sustainable living).

8. Address the issue of piracy and maritime security which adds to the undermining of Seychelles developmental progress and (disproportionally escalates)/affects the cost of living, affects fisheries and tourism – the two most important economic drivers in Seychelles.
9. Increase and accelerate international financing for adaptation and mitigation to climate change and disaster management to reduce vulnerability and to contribute towards increased resilience of the natural environment, the economy and the people of Seychelles.
10. Expedite efforts to further mainstream climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in all relevant sectors.
11. Support to tertiary education institutions such as universities and other similar organisations in leading research and capacity building for sustainable development and climate change.
12. Strengthen regional cooperative mechanisms which address national priorities and needs as well as regional targets and commitments.
13. Encourage the development and adoption of innovative schemes to build resilience in the fisheries and agricultural sector for long-term food security on islands.
14. Address identified institutional weaknesses, especially in the implementation of legal enforcement and the management of protected areas.
15. Encourage initiatives that stimulate and incentivize consumers to reduce consumption and support approaches to sustainable production and consumption
16. Define the concept of the blue/green economy within the Seychelles context. Acknowledge the green economy as a tool that will contribute towards sustainable development, assist in mitigating and adapting to CC and disaster management, and which needs further debate at the global and local levels.

17. Urge the international community to remain focused on achieving sustainable development targets and utilizing the concept of the blue/green economy as a platform to facilitate implementation of sustainable development.
18. Ensure the availability of 'green financing' in the form of highly concessionary loans for investments in renewable and low carbon technologies.