

Mahe (Seychelles)

Located northeast of Madagascar and east of Kenya, Seychelles is an island nation spanning over 470km². It is the smallest country in Africa, not only by area but also by population. In 2014, Seychelles had a population of approximately 0.1 million. Also, Seychelles is considered to be the highest-ranked sub-Saharan African country in the 2009 UN Human Development Report. According to the World Bank (2016d: 3), nearly 40% of the country's population resides in urban areas, while the United Nations Statistics Division estimates this figure significantly higher at 55%. The main settlement is off the main Seychellois islands of Mahé and Praslin, showing how the highest population densities are concentrated around the city of Victoria and the east coast of Mahé. The tourism and fisheries sectors are expected to remain the main drivers of economic growth, along with information and communications technology (ICT) (African Development Bank et al., 2017: 287).

Seychelles, on the other hand, is exploring the blue economy as a model for sustainable development (Celliers, 2016). The impacts of sea-level rise are expected to have substantial negative impacts on Seychelles fishing and tourism, which are the main sectors of socio-economic importance (Brown et al., 2011 in Bosire, 2015: 186). The ports and airports which have been built on the reclaimed low ground would also be severely affected (Brown et al., 2011). Also, increasing sea level rise results in more erosion, which may lead to increased landslides. Beaches would be inundated, resulting in severe damage to freshwater aquifers systems (Bosire, 2015: 186).

According to a risk assessment done by the World Bank, Mahé and the Inner Islands of Seychelles experience approximately USD 2.8 million in combined direct losses from earthquakes, floods and tropical cyclones annually (World Bank, 2016d: 2). Of these three events, flooding is considered to have the most significant risk, causing about 88% of the damage.