**Covid-19 and Islands**

***Seychelles***

1. What actions are being taken to protect the island community from Covid 19? In particular, how are travel restrictions being put in place and enforced?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Malshi SenaratneLecturer at University of Seychellesmalshisen@gmail.com  | 22 April 2020 | * As the number of confirmed cases mounted, the public health commissioner swiftly declared a public health emergency in mid-March. This allowed for an increase in resources directed towards battling the outbreak on the ground.
* Travel advisories banned all Seychelles residents from travelling overseas for 30 days. Social distancing measures were also put in effect; a four-person limit on public gatherings has been imposed to further prevent the spread of the virus.
* With 90% of the population following the Roman Catholic faith, the Catholic Church has banned all religious services.
* The national airline Air Seychelles has suspended flights until April 2020. Most inbound flights have also ceased.
* Unlike Mauritius and Sri Lanka, the Seychelles has not declared a complete lockdown — yet.
 |
| Malshini SenaratneLecturer at University of SeychellesMalshini.Senaratne@unisey.ac.sc  | 24 April 2020 | Since early April, travel restrictions have been put in place. Seychellois citizens are banned from travelling overseas for this time period. There is also a ban on most incoming flights, although the ports and cargo flights remain open. Travel and movement between the islands is also restricted to carrying out essential services and transportation of staff in essential services.According to the Department of Health, measures also include:* All shops and businesses that do not sell groceries and food will remain closed. As per the previous guidelines, grocery stores will continue to open from 6am to 6.30pm.
* All workers not in essential services will not be required to physically come into work, instead they will work from home.
* Members of the public will have restricted movements on the roads. They will be allowed to leave their home only to access essential services such as, to buy food, for medical assistance, to go to the bank amongst others. In these instances the police will enforce these restrictions and assist with coordinating movements.
* The number of buses on the road will be limited according to the number of people in essential services requiring public transport.
* All construction companies are to cease work. This will stop the transportation of large groups of construction workers from their residence to home. Additionally, Public Health Officers will work with the companies to help them improve hygiene practices and social distancing.
 |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | * We have travel restriction on tourist, the airport is closed for commercial flights but our national airline is committing to cargo trips only.
 |
| Myron memeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 20 May 2020 | * Restriction has been very effective and properly organised
 |

1. What actions will be taken should people on the island have Covid 19?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Malshi SenaratneLecturer at University of Seychellesmalshisen@gmail.com  | 22 April 2020 | * Rigorous contact tracing and home quarantine measures were put into effect, with positive cases being isolated in the hospital quarantine unit. All learning centres, including the University of Seychelles, were shut down indefinitely
 |
| Malshini SenaratneLecturer at University of SeychellesMalshini.Senaratne@unisey.ac.sc  | 24 April 2020 | Presently, the Seychelles has reported 11 confirmed cases of the virus, out of which 6 are recovered and 5 remain active. Everyone in quarantine has been discharged.* As the 11th case was a suspected case of community transmission, the authorities have implemented more severe containment measures. All non-essential personnel were asked to stay home and prohibited of much outdoor movement until May 4 2020
 |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | If we have a second wave we will definitely go back to severe lock down with more restriction especially if we have community transmission |
| Myron memeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc  | 20 May 2020 | Severe lock down or series of restrictions |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that essential goods and services are provided to the island community?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Malshi SenaratneLecturer at University of Seychellesmalshisen@gmail.com  | 22 April 2020 | * In a bid to stem the flow of false information, the Ministry of Health has opted for social media and daily press updates to keep members of the public informed about confirmed case numbers, testing results and the status of quarantined persons. Transparency and the continuous provision of information has thus proved pivotal in stemming fears and panic buying behaviours among the populace.
 |
| Malshini SenaratneLecturer at University of SeychellesMalshini.Senaratne@unisey.ac.sc  | 24 April 2020 | * Essential services continue to operate and include shops selling necessary commodities such as groceries, banks, public utilities, health care facilities, embassies, a reduction in public transportation and district administrations among others. Presently, the country is anticipated to have enough reserves of essential stock to meet demand in the short term. However, the island nation is heavily reliant on imports as a whole.
 |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | The Government are on top of agenda to ensure essential goods and continuous essential service keeps happening. |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure that people working on the islands, not only in the tourism sector, are sustained financially in the short term and in the long term?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Malshini SenaratneLecturer at University of SeychellesMalshini.Senaratne@unisey.ac.sc  | 24 April 2020 | As a major dependent on tourism, the country is expecting the pandemic to trigger a double-digit drop in economic growth. The Central Bank of Seychelles has cut its monetary policy rate (MPR) by 100 basis points to 4.00 percent, looking to alleviate stress on borrowers. An amended budget for 2020 has been approved by the National Assembly in view of the outbreak. The Government has outlined an economic stimulus package designed to assist private sector employees during this time. The assistance comes with the requirement that private sector businesses do not lay off any employees due to the virus |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | The government will be assisting all affected personal and tourism business that are having difficulties to manage financially for at list the upcoming 3 months. |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc  | 20 May 2020 | There several steps and guidelines being offered by the high level committee |

1. What actions are being taken to ensure the mental well-being of people on the islands?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | We have the family affairs department ensuring services to that matter. |

1. If you consider it appropriate, feel free to share any data about people who have Covid 19 on your island and of people who, sadly, have passed away because of Covid 19.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
|  | 22 April | As of 20 April* 11 confirmed cases
* 5 cases have recovered and are at a quarantine centre for observation
* 6 cases are still receiving treatment
* 19 persons are in quarantine

0 deaths |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | So far we haven’t got any community case, all along the public health authority has been very active in all possible measures and awareness programs of how to manage the situation |

1. Is there anything else you want to share?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Myron memeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc  | 20 May 2020 | The lock was for 21 days only...we are in the new normal |

1. If applicable, how are lockdown measures being relaxed?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent | Date  | Response |
| Malshi SenaratneLecturer at University of Seychellesmalshisen@gmail.com |  29 April 2020 | As the number of cases continue to remain 11 for the past 20 days in the Seychelles, the President has announced that lockdown measures on non-essential personnel will be lifted from May 04th 2020. All religious services will be reinstated and all shops can remain open until 8 pm. From 11th May, all tertiary learning centres will re-open, followed by secondary and public schools on 18th May. From June 01, the airport will re-open for commercial flights as will the ports for cruise ships. Sporting activities, cinemas and gyms will also re-open at that time.The above measures are subject to the guidance from the Seychelles Department of Health. Quarantine and surveillance and detection responses will continue to be strictly observed. |
| Myron MemeMinistry of Environment Energy & Climate Changemyron.meme@env.gov.sc | 13 May 2020 | In Seychelles we are currently off lock down because all of the positive cases have been cured and we are a bit safe for now. We are now in the new normal. |

1. Resources

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Resource | Date | Link |
| “When small might be beautiful”Malashini SenaratneObserver Research Foundation website | 29 March 2020 | [Read here](https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/when-small-might-be-beautiful-63837/) |
|  | 26 March 2020 | There are reports that governments are allocating specific islands into quarantine facilities. For example, see [this report](https://travelnoire.com/maldives-luxury-coronavirus-quarantine-facility/?utm_source=Travel%20Noire&utm_campaign=666790e45f-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_26_06_06&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_4f544ad356-666790e45f-348155376) in relation to the Maldives. |
| “Seychelles and COVID-19: 8 measures taken by the island nation to protect its people”Seychelles News Agency | 2 April 2020 | [Read here](http://www.seychellesnewsagency.com/articles/12688/Seychelles%2Band%2BCOVID-%2B%2Bmeasures%2Btaken%2Bby%2Bthe%2Bisland%2Bnation%2Bto%2Bprotect%2Bits%2Bpeople) |

**

*This information has been collated by the Strathclyde Centre for Environmental Law and Governance in collaboration with Island Innovation and can be found at* [*https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/*](https://www.strath.ac.uk/research/strathclydecentreenvironmentallawgovernance/ourwork/research/labsincubators/eilean/islandsandcovid-19/)*.*