

Transdisciplinary Case Study 2023

“Sustainable Land Use in the Seychelles II – Rethinking the Sustainability of Tourism”

Objectives

The tdCS is a problem-oriented and research-based teaching activity. Students learn how to plan and implement research work. Objectives include:

- structure ill-defined problems
- identify research questions
- design research plans
- apply qualitative and quantitative methods
- collect, analyse and report data/results
- work in interdisciplinary and inter-cultural teams
- organise transdisciplinary collaboration between science and practice

In addition to these learning objectives, the tdCS also aims to produce valuable results for the local community. Intensive collaboration with local partners from the public and the private sectors, as well as the civil society is key. Joint problem framing before the study starts, mid-term validation through local experts, and joint field work with students from the local university are further characteristics.

Study Area

The Seychelles, located in the southern part of the Indian ocean, is a small state of 450km² land mass spread over some 115 islands within a sea area of 1.4 million km². The archipelago shares most of the other Small Island Developing States' (SIDS) challenges like size; isolation from global markets; limited resources and small domestic markets. Furthermore, they are exposed and highly vulnerable to effects of climate change and international disturbances; face side effects typical of rapidly developing societies; have limited capacities for long-term planning and infrastructure management; and are often dependent on few economic activities such as tourism and fishery.



Topic

Tourism is the most important economic pillar of the Seychelles. It brings in 70% of foreign exchange, creates numerous jobs and generates considerable tax substrate. Tourism in Seychelles is known for its exclusivity; with recent diversification, it also offers facilities for tourists in the middle and lower price ranges. Arrivals have increased dramatically over the last decade at rates of 10% per annum. Tourism-related facilities and infrastructure take up a lot of land, especially along the coastal strip, where they compete with infrastructure, housing and agriculture.

According to the Strategic Plan 2040 and the Tourism Master Plan, tourism should become more sustainable while growing. The general theme is "rethinking the sustainability of tourism". The study may include e.g.: Synergies between agriculture and tourism; social impacts of tourism on local society; (environmental) impacts of tourism use and development of mountain areas and offshore tourism; the relationship between tourism and transport; circular value and resource chains; effects of climate change on tourism.

Partners

- University of Seychelles
- Seychelles Planning Authority
- Ministry of Tourism

Dates

- Starts on 22 February 2023 and meets every Wednesday 8–9h (online) and 14–18h (classroom)
- 2 block days in Zurich (21–22 April 2023)
- 3 block weeks in the Seychelles (3–21 July 2023)

Eligibility/requirements (limited number)

The tdCS is a 7 ECTS elective master's course. All master's students can apply by sending a two-page motivation letter by 2nd January 2023 to Pius Krütli (pius.kruetli@usys.ethz.ch) and Michael Stauffacher (michael.stauffacher@usys.ethz.ch).

The letter should address the following:

- Why are you interested?
- What do you want to learn?
- What can you contribute to? The latter can also include special skills you have that the case study could benefit from.

Info-Event

Monday, 5th December 2022, 17:15-18:00, CHN building, room G 42