

**PRESENTATION ON THE NATIONAL STRATEGY ON  
LESOTHO'S BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**PRESENTED AT THE NBSAP WORKSHOP**

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**SOUTH AFRICA**

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## Brief background

- Lesotho's National Strategy:

Institutions, Governments (line ministries), national and International organizations having interest in the environment and quality of life in Lesotho.

- Concern:

The loss of biological resources in the country.

The strategies and action plans needed to conserve and sustainable use Lesotho's Biodiversity.

## Biological Diversity in Lesotho

Lesotho has a remarkably rich variety of plants and animals, which are very valuable to the present and future generations, and significant number of endemics.

Inventories for certain areas have been compiled particularly within the areas impacted by the LHDA, in the case of mammals the survey was confined in the highlands.

### The findings:

- i. 2961 plant species
- ii. 63 species of mammals
- iii. 315 species of birds
- iv. 40 species of reptiles
- v. 19 species of amphibians
- vi. 14 species of fresh water fish
- vii. 1279 species of invertebrates

## Protected Areas in Lesotho

There are only two nature reserve areas that are legally established to protect biodiversity.

The other four are established in the northern part of the country, within the LHDA Project area, in addition the Roma campus of the National University of Lesotho is declared as a bird sanctuary.

## The National Goal

The goal of the Environment Policy is to ensure protection and conservation of the environment with a view to achieving sustainable development for the country.

***National Vision*** : “Lesotho shall be renowned for its environmental management. The country’s diversity of life systems will be supported and protected by a nation which is environmentally conscious and whose people are in balance existence with the natural environment. Basotho will derive continuing benefits from the conservation and sustainable use of their biological diversity.”

## The guiding Principles for the development and application of appropriate biodiversity policy and strategy

- Conservation of biodiversity:

It is important to the requirement of human life through agriculture, medicine scientific research and cultural practices,

- Sustainable use of resources:

Resources being used at a sustainable rate within their capacity for renewal.

Maintaining the ecological integrity of natural systems which produce the resources.

# **General measures for conservation and sustainable use**

**Identification & monitoring**

**Sustainable use of components of biodiversity**

**Incentive measures**

**Research and Training**

**Public Education and Awareness**

**Impact Assessment and Minimizing Adverse Impacts**

**Access to Genetic Resources**

**Access to and Transfer of Technology**

**Handling of Biotechnology**



## Lesotho and CBD: Why ratify?

### Reasons for loss of biodiversity:

- Uncontrolled game hunting
- Expansion of human settlement
- Bad land husbandry practices
- Frequent wildfires
- Overgrazing
  
- Environmentally inconsiderate development plans

## The first *National Environmental Policy* for Lesotho

It was formulated in 1996 and revised in 1998.

The purpose was to ensure protection and conservation of the environment with a view to achieving sustainable development for Lesotho.

## Localization of the convention/Benefits

### Enabling Projects:

#### *Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho (CMBSL) 1999 -2004*

MDTP is a bilateral project between Lesotho and South Africa which seeks to foster joint management of the Drakensberg/Maloti mountains bioregional diversity.

It also seeks to empower local communities to venture into eco-tourism activities which co-exist with biodiversity resources or are underpinned by presence of well managed biological diversity. The project began in 2002 and phased out in 2007.

*SABONET project* facilitated establishment of herbaria and record keeping of plant species in Lesotho, and networking with other countries in the region. This was a regional project for ten nations.

*LHDA project* for transfer of water to South Africa from the wetlands of Lesotho.

It has however contributed in rescuing some of the biodiversity in the project area which could otherwise inundate under the water to either extinction or diminished population.

Three Nature Reserves were established and one botanical garden- These are Tsehlanyane, Bokong and Liphofung nature reserves and one botanical garden at Katse village. Preparations are underway to gazette these nature reserves.

*The Lesotho Biodiversity Trust* was established in December 2004 as a bilateral Trust between Lesotho and South Africa.

One of its objectives is to support the government in meeting its obligations in terms of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as other conventions and protocols related to biodiversity matters.

**Benefits**  
obtained from the convention

**Southern Africa Biodiversity Support program (SABSP)**

**Objective to ensure that the biodiversity in the Southern African region is conserved and sustainably utilized and the welfare of SADC citizens is improved.**

## **The role of Local Authorities in Biodiversity Conservation**

**Establish appropriate structures for implementation National Strategy and Action Plan**

**Empower local structures to manage own natural resources**

**Engage in intensive public awareness campaign on management of biological resources**

**Ensure that biodiversity conservation benefit local communities**

## Challenges/Constraints

- i) Conflicting Policies and laws
- ii) Poor coordination of development activities
- iii) Lack of funds for execution of national program for biodiversity conservation
- iv) Insufficient expertise
- v) Lack of information on state of biodiversity
- vi) Obsolete laws, guidelines and non-deterrent penalties
- vii) Lack of political will

## Future Plans

Review and harmonize laws and policies that relate to proper environmental management.

SADC countries

Improve staff competence through attachments or exchange programmes  
Preparing

To join the IUCN and GEF Small Grants Programme

Engage in more enabling projects

Capacitate Local Authorities

Determine national capacity to adequately implement the 5 conventions at national level

*THE END*



*THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION*