

Thematic Report on Mountain Ecosystems

Please provide the following details on the origin of this report.

Contracting Party:	Oman (Sultanate of)
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Date of submission:	

Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report.

This document was prepared under the supervision of:-

- Mr Salim Al-Saadi - National-Coordinator of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of the Sultanate of Oman;

and the participation of the following stakeholders:-

- Mrs. Fatma Al-Farsi - Environmental Planning Expert (DG of Environment – Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources)
- Mr. Ahmed Al-Shukaii – Nature Reserves Specialist (DG of Nature Conservation - Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources)
- Mr. Salah Al-Saadi – Head of Endangered Wildlife Permits Section (DG of Nature Conservation - Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources)
- Mrs. Samira Al-Ojaili – Head of Biodiversity Database Section (DG of Nature Conservation - Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources)

And it was reviewed by :-

- Mr Ali Al-Kiyumi – Director-General of Nature Conservation (Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources).

A discussion approach were adopted in the preparation of this report whereby all the above mentioned stakeholders were actively involved.

Mountain Ecosystems

1. What is the relative priority your country accords to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	
2. How does your country assess the resources available for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems, both domestic and international?					
a) Good		b) Adequate		c) Limiting	X
3. Has your country requested financial assistance from GEF for funding the activities for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems?					
a) no					X
b) yes, please provide details					

Assessment, Identification and Monitoring

4. Has your country undertaken any assessment of direct and underlying causes of degradation and loss of biological diversity of mountain ecosystems?	
a) no, please specify the reasons	
b) yes, please specify major threats and their relative importance, as well as gaps	X
c) If yes, please specify the measures your country has taken to control the causes of loss of mountain biodiversity	
5. Has your country identified taxonomic needs for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of mountain ecosystems?	
a) no, please specify the reasons	X
b) yes, please specify	
6. Has your country made any assessment of the vulnerability or fragility of the mountains in your country?	
a) no, please specify the reasons	
b) yes, please specify the results and observed impacts on mountain biodiversity	X
7. Has your country made any assessment important for conservation of biological diversity of mountain ecosystems at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels? (You may wish to use the Annex I of the Convention for categories of biodiversity important for conservation)	
a) no, please specify the reasons	X
b) yes, some assessments or monitoring undertaken (please specify)	
c) yes, comprehensive assessments or monitoring programmes undertaken (please specify where results can be found, and opportunities and obstacles, if any)	

Regulatory and Information System and Action Plan

8. Has your country developed regulations, policies and programs for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems?	
a) no	
b) yes, please specify sectors	X
9. Has your country applied the ecosystem approach (adopted at COP 5) in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems?	
a) no	X
b) yes, please provide some cases or examples	
10. Does your national biodiversity strategy and action plan cover mountain biological diversity?	
a) no, please specify why	
b) yes, please give some information on the strategy and plan, in particular on mountain biodiversity	X
11. Has your country disseminated the relevant information concerning management practices, plans and programmes for conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems?	
a) no	X
b) yes, please provide details where information can be retrieved concerning management practices, plans and programmes	

Cooperation

12. Has your country undertaken any collaboration with other Parties for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems at the regional level or within a range of mountains?	
a) no	X
b) yes, please specify the objectives of this collaboration and achievements	
13. Has your country signed or ratified any regional or international treaty concerning mountains?	
a) no	X
b) yes, please specify which treaty and provide as much as possible a report on the progress in the implementation of the treaties, including any major constraints in the implementation of the treaties	

Relevant thematic areas and cross-cutting issues

14. Has your country taken account of mountain ecosystems while implementing thematic programmes of work on agricultural; inland waters; forest; and dry and sub-humid lands biological diversity?	
a) no	
b) yes – but in only one or two thematic programmes of work	
c) yes, included in all programmes of work	X
d) if yes, please specify details	
15. Has your country taken any measures to ensure that the tourism in mountains is sustainable?	
a) no , please specify why	
b) yes, but in early stages of development (please specify the reasons)	
c) in advanced stages of development (please specify the reasons)	
d) relatively comprehensive measures being implemented (please specify the reasons)	X
16. Has your country taken any measures to protect the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems?	
a) no	
b) not relevant	
c) yes, but in early stages of policy or programme development	X
d) yes, in advanced stages of development	
e) some programmes being implemented	
f) comprehensive programmes being implemented	
17. Has your country developed any programmes for the protection of natural and cultural heritages in the mountains?	
a) no	X
b) yes, please provide some information in the programmes	
18. Has your country established protected areas in mountains?	
a) no	
b) yes, please specify the percentage of mountains under protected areas out of total mountain areas in your country	X
19. Has your country undertaken any activities to celebrate the International Year of Mountains and Eco-tourism?	
a) no	X
b) yes, please specify	

Case-studies

Please provide case-studies made by your country in conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems.

Not available.

Further comments

Assessment, Identification and Monitoring

Q4: The major threat causing degradation and loss of biological diversity of mountain ecosystems is overgrazing.

Q5: The limited resources is behind the delayed identification of taxonomic needs for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of mountain ecosystems.

Q6: The assessment of the vulnerability or fragility of the mountains in this country resulted in finding out the major threat; overgrazing. Overgrazing resulted in decrease of some endemic species, increase in some exotic species, desertification, loss of the environmental balance, etc.

Q7: Limiting resources is the main reason behind the lack of any assessment at the different levels.

Regulatory and Information System and Action Plan

Q8: The sectors who developed regulations and/or policies and/or programs for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems are: Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Q10: The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) of the Sultanate of Oman focused on 15 themes. Out of these there were theme 5 “agriculture Resources” which mentioned the mountains with special interest; these were Jabel-Al-Akhdar mountains and Dhofar mountains. The objectives focused mainly on several points some of these were:

- To introduce watershed management measures
- To prepare adequate land use plans before starting the implementation of the proposed development plans in the area and before the building of new infrastructure, particularly roads.
- To introduce ecological farming especially shelter-belts and to improve on contour farming practiced in the Jabel.
- To translocate commercial fodder farms from the mountains to an assigned area for this purpose.
- To motivate big pastoral producers to shift to another area outside the mountains and practice mixed farming after proving its success through a pilot project.
- To reintroduce the autumn rotation in the foot of Dhofar mountains and to persuade and motivate herdsmen to adapt to rotational grazing to stimulate regrowth of valuable grass species.
- To link subsidies to herdsmen and farmers with their acceptance and implementation of the proposed reforms and innovations.

Cooperation

Q15: Although there is no specific measures to ensure sustainable tourism in mountains, there are general objectives mentioned in the NBSAP of Oman which is applicable to all tourism development projects. These are:

- Ensuring environmental factors are fully taken into account in the development of tourism strategies and masterplans.
- All tourist projects to be subject to environmental assessment prior to grant of environmental permit.
- Promotion of environmentally friendly tourism projects to demonstrate the economic benefits of nature protection.

Relevant thematic areas and cross-cutting issues

Q18: Data on the percentage of mountains under protection out of total mountain areas in Oman is not available.
