

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY IN LESOTHO
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

**FIRST COUNTRY REPORT
TO THE COP**

A. INTRODUCTION

Lesotho is a Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity and as such has been active in implementing the requirements of the Convention, particularly Article 6. Needless to say that Lesotho has been concerned about the status of its biological resources and has over a long time shown these concerns in a number of fora. The first such a forum was held in 1989 when a group of concerned persons from Government, non-government and local and international institutions and organizations met in Maseru and drafted the first National Environmental Action Plan within which are measures to conserve Lesotho's biodiversity. This effort and many others that followed were the impetus for environmental planning in Lesotho. They were further reinforced by the international efforts that began in 1990 when the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) held a meeting of experts from around the world to initiate a global programme that would determine a biodiversity present in all countries of the world. The conference was to identify conservation requirements and determine the legal instrument for the conservation of the planet's biological diversity. The Nairobi meeting was the start of the world initiative for conserving the world biological resources and the meeting bore a world conference for the adoption of the text for the Convention on Biological Diversity which was signed by many nations at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992.

Lesotho through its own efforts and further reinforced by the efforts of many around the world agreed to the convention willingly and is aware of its obligations in respect of the its articles. The first of the Convention's articles to be adhered to is *Article 6* which requires the drafting and implementation of the Strategies and Action Plans for the conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of biological diversity and its components including genetic resources and to integrate these conservation and sustainable use measures of biological diversity into sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

Lesotho, with the assistance from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Lesotho country office has started the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity by addressing the requirements of Article 6. The process of formulating national Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (BSAP) started in January 1997. It started with the collection and analysis of information on the status of biodiversity in Lesotho, the threats facing biodiversity in the country and current efforts to protect and conserve biodiversity in the country. The initial phase culminated in the production of a country report on biodiversity and is titled *Biological Diversity in Lesotho: A country Study*. The second stage of the BSAP process was a consultative process through workshops involving all possible biodiversity stakeholders and it culminated in the drafting of the strategies and action plans for the conservation and sustainable use of Lesotho's biodiversity and is based on the information contained in the country report.

The vision of Lesotho in biodiversity planning is to have a country rich in diversity of life and life forms, economically prosperous, environmentally conscious, and people who are in balanced existence with their natural environment, caring, appreciating and understanding the complexities

of nature, while deriving benefits from the conservation and sustainable use of its diversity of lives.

Although there are a number of gaps existing in knowledge, understanding and conserving Lesotho's biodiversity, this initial country report indicates our commitment to the principles set out by the nations of the world and contained in the Convention on Biological Diversity.

B. PARTICIPATION IN THE PLANNING AND REPORTING PROCESS

In Lesotho, biodiversity issues are a concern of a wide spectrum of people and organizations. Biodiversity loss is a concern to pastoralists, farmers, traditional healers (medicine-men and herbalists), fuelwood gatherers, ecologists and conservationists and Government. The Government institutions most concerned with biodiversity are the Ministry of Agriculture with its various departments (Conservation, Wildlife, Forestry, Crops, Research, Livestock and Range), Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and many NGOs. These line Ministries and respective NGOs were involved in the national BSAP planning process and relays to each organization involved were made. A list of Lesotho biodiversity stakeholders is shown in Table 1 below.

The process of formulating the Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans was very interactive as consultations were made with every possible stakeholder. Two national consultative workshops were held in the country. Many participants; including farmers, pastoralists, herbalists and medicine men, conservationists, home makers, educators, planners, Government officials, non-governmental organizations, and community-based organizations attended the workshops. The first workshop was to elicit a common understanding of the status of biodiversity in the country and the threats facing it, review policies and legislation intended for the protection, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the country. The second workshop drafted the strategies and action plans for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and its components including linkages with other conventions to protect the environment and enhance the management of Lesotho's natural resources.

Table 1. List of biodiversity stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Biodiversity Concern	Corrective measure
Pastoralists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of vegetation cover and biodiversity 2. Loss of farm animal genetics 	Establishing Range Management areas with the associated Grazing Associations and improving the genetic purity and performance of farm animals
Farmers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of crop genetic diversity 2. Land degradation and soil erosion 	Catchment management and reduction of soil erosion by implementing appropriate land husbandry practices
Medicine-Men	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of faunal and floral medicines due to overharvesting 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public education and awareness of values of biodiversity 2. Home gardens for medicinal plants
Educators	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Loss of Lesotho's biodiversity and value to future generations to live and survive on. 2. Lack of public awareness on biodiversity issues 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public outreach in schools and home gardens 2. Include biodiversity education in schools curriculum
Conservationists	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Protecting the biodiversity of Lesotho especially the endangered and threatened species and ecosystems 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishing wildlife reserves and biospheres in sensitive areas and according to the conscious of Basotho

C. STATUS AND TRENDS OF MAJOR BIODIVERSITY COMPONENTS

Lesotho forms the greatest part of the globally recognised biodiversity hot spot - the eastern mountains or as are commonly known in the region, the Drakensberg-Maloti mountains of Southern Africa. Seventy percent of these mountains are in Lesotho. The vegetation of these mountains is divided into two types, the Afro-montane and Afro-alpine. The Drakensberg-Maloti mountains are important for their high altitude flora, estimated at 3,094 species; of which 30% is endemic to the mountains. The eastern alpine areas of Lesotho also support a network of unique high altitude bogs and sponges, a system of wetlands found nowhere else in the world. These high altitude wetland systems include hydrophilous, aquatic and semi-aquatic communities, with a high proportion of endemic species. The wetland systems also play a crucial role in the hydrological cycles. Particularly, their retention and slow release of water, these high altitude wetlands help stabilise the stream flow, attenuate flooding, reduce sedimentation loads and absorption of nutrients.

Lesotho is a small mountainous country with no significant big game presence known elsewhere in Africa. But for its size, Lesotho boasts a wealth of taxa, most of it found in the high altitude areas of the country. A number of the species are world renown endemics to the area. They include the rare and endangered maloti lance craig lizard, the ice rat (*Otomys sloggetti*), the umbruculate frog, maloti minnow, bearded vulture, water lily (*Aponegeton*) and the spiral aloe.

D. MAJOR CAUSES OF BIODIVERSITY LOSS

1. Direct causes of *in-situ* Biodiversity loss

a. Destruction of habitats and ecosystems

Lesotho is typified by two distinct grassland type ecosystems: the highveld and the mountain grassland ecosystem, each with unique features of montane, alti-montane and alpine vegetation. Minor ecosystems within major ecosystem are the unique alpine wetlands, bogs and tarns and patches of woody vegetation. The alpine areas of Lesotho are home to many endemic species of the sub-region. In these areas are found the rare and endangered water lily (*Aponegeton*), spiral aloe (*Aloe polyphylla*), the ice rat, the umbriculate frog, the maloti minnow, and the bearded vulture. All these Lesotho endemics and a host of other near-endemics have special habitats upon which they depend. The water lily thrives only in the Sehlabathebe National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary; the only montane ecosystem with a sandstone underlying parent rock in the country. The spiral aloe is an endemic species of the alpine and montane areas of the country with a habitat mostly on the northern facing slopes. These areas are also the grazing areas for the livestock owners. Overgrazing is prevalent in these areas and the destruction of the vegetation is accompanied by loss of habitat for the spiral aloe.

The ice rat is found in specialized wetland areas in the alpine regions. The predominant species in its habitat are the bordering species of the high altitude *Merxmuellera* species. These habitats are being destroyed by overgrazing and trampling by livestock and over harvesting of the *Merxmuellera* for making brooms and other tourist souvenirs. The umbriculate frog and the Maloti Minnow are inhabitants of the high altitude rivers and rivulets in the alpine areas of Lesotho. They inhabit the clean waters of the mountains and thus serve as indicator species of the quality of the mountain waters. Their habitats are continually threatened by the pollution of the head waters in the form of siltation caused by soil erosion from overgrazed rangelands. The bearded vulture is a scavenger bird of the maloti mountains. Its survival depends on the presence of the pastoral communities where bones are discarded after meat has been picked from them. The destruction of the nesting habitats of these birds by Basotho herdsmen is the major threat to the survival of the bearded vulture.

There are other subtle ways where habitat destruction has an impact. The destruction of shrubs and grass meadows have left many birds, snakes and other fauna vulnerable. These have nowhere to roost, nest, and forage. Unfortunately, these observations are not properly documented and researched.

b. Over-exploitation or non-sustainable use of biological resources

The intimate link between local community's socio-economic systems and biodiversity is largely pronounced in various economic and social activities such as the passage of rites and rituals undertaken at the community level. Many communities in Lesotho utilise biodiversity

components in various ways. Basotho derive their medicines from wild plants and animals of the range as they utilise more than 60 and more than 20 species of plants and animals, respectively to treat and cure various ailments. Basotho also harvest many woody and shrub species for their fuel needs. And in the process endangering many life forms in their territory.

Recently, there is also an alarming rate of over-harvesting of these biological resources as ethno-medicines and sources of fuel wood. Truck loads of plant medicines are seen crossing the boarder to the neighbouring states and in particular into South Africa. The medicinal plants mostly harvested and sold in the markets of neighbouring states and urban areas of Lesotho are the *Alepidea amatymbica* (**Lesoko**), *Urginea capitata* (**Moretele o moholo**), *U. basutica* (**Moretele o mofubelu**), *Pachycarpus ridigus* and *Phytolaica heptandra* (**Poho-Tšehla**), *Dicoma anamola*, *Teedia lucida* (**Hloenya**), and *Aloe polyphylla*. The ethno-faunal medicinal species include the vultures, weasels and skunks. These are harvested to extinction by unscrupulous Basotho acting on own account and in some instances acting as agents of foreign biodiversity merchants. For instance, the world reknowned Lesotho true endemic, the spiral aloe has been sited in home gardens of South Africa and as far afield as in southern California, USA.

c. Invasion of alien species

Recently, the rangelands of Lesotho have been degraded to levels of non-recovery through overgrazing due in part to overstocking. Overgrazing of the rangelands has led to decrease in diversity of species and invasion of non-palatable species. With the degradation of the rangelands, there is an accompanying invasion of the Karoo species like *Chrysocoma*. Although the extent of *Chrysocoma* invasion has not been quantified, these shrubs are now being observed in areas where they were not previously known to occur. Although *Chrysocoma* provides ground cover against rain induced soil erosion, it is an indicator of deterioration of the rangelands, loss of useful biological components and a sign of increasing desert-like conditions.. In essence, Lesotho is progressively becoming a desert.

Other alien species with some economic and habitat importance are the *Xanthium* species; *Xanthium stromarium* and *X. spinosum*. These are weedy species of both rangelands and cultivated fields causing millions of Maloti¹ in production losses. These weeds have strong burrs on their seeds which cling to wool and mohair rendering it useless. The infected crops, wool and mohair lose in productivity and market value.

There is, however, little documentation of these effects of the alien species invasion into economically important ecosystems in the country; be they cultivated fields or rangelands. This also presents a serious information gap that would handicap efforts to control these alien species.

¹Maloti is a Lesotho currency traded *at par* with the South African rand. The name is derived from the Lesotho mountains commonly known as the Maloti in the country.

d. Loss of genetic diversity.

From the recent history of Lesotho, it is evident that large game animals used to be present in the present day Lesotho. From reported history and from Basotho poems and folklore there used to be hyenas, lions, antelopes and African buffaloes in Lesotho. These large game animals are nowhere to be found within the boundaries of Lesotho. The disappearance of these animals has signalled the fragility of the Lesotho ecosystem given the current land use patterns.

At the farm level, genetic diversity is much reduced. At present there are few varieties and breeds of animals used by Basotho farmers and pastoralists. The purity of the existing stocks is very much in doubt as Basotho mate their animals indiscriminately. Farm animal genetic resources are not properly documented within the country and worse off they are being polluted and diminished on a daily basis.

2. Driving Forces of *in-situ* Biodiversity loss

Human Activities are the primary forces driving biodiversity losses in their natural environment. Primary amongst these are poor agricultural and energy consumption practices. In Lesotho, natural ecosystems and habitats are over-exploited and over-utilized. Overgrazing of the rangelands, mismanagement of sensitive ecological systems, over harvesting of medicinal plants and animals poor agricultural practices such ploughing on marginal and sloping lands, use of and loss of genetic resources in favour of foreign hybrid varieties and breeds and misguided biological diversity conservation are significant but few of the activities of Basotho causing biodiversity loss in the country.

The root cause of biodiversity loss however is the increasing population putting greater demands on the finite biological resources. Lesotho has a human population of 2 million, increasing at a rate of 2.6% per annum. If current trends were to continue unabated, Lesotho's human population will double in the year 2020. Matters are made worse by the limited land resource and mismanagement of the natural resource coupled with the land tenure system where everybody has the access rights to land. Lesotho has less than 10% arable land, no more than 70% of rangeland and greater than 20% inaccessible land or eroded lands in the form of dongas and rivulets. The deleterious effects of soil erosion are far more evident and pervasive in Lesotho than are the effects of managing the land effectively and controlling erosion. Unfortunately, biodiversity values are being eroded with soil and are depleted as much as soil erosion even in places where soil erosion is not as effective.

Causes of biodiversity loss in Lesotho are both proximate and fundamental. Most of the population of Lesotho reside in the less mountainous western $\frac{1}{3}$ of the country. In this area, competition for limited land resources is intense, soil erosion is widespread and care for the land and its resources is a misnomer. Ninety percent of the household energy needs for cooking and heating in Lesotho are derived from biomass in the form of fuel wood which is derived from woody shrubs which are almost non-existent, from dung and crop residue in the form of maize

stover. As a consequence, stocks of woody vegetation have been greatly diminished. The beneficial effects of manuring crops are also limited. The soil is therefore left to the elements and is highly eroded.

E. ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE THREE OBJECTIVES OF THE CBD

General Approaches

Lesotho NBSAP stipulates the Establishment of Protected areas as an ecosystem approach to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Currently there are 6,475 ha of gazetted protected areas in the country. There are additional proposed protected areas in the Lesotho Highland Water Project area; The Tšehlanyane *Leucosidea* reserve, the 'Muela reserve and the Bokong Biosphere reserve. The three reserve are in the process of legalization and their establishment will increase the protected area system in Lesotho by 4,012 ha. Together with the established and gazetted areas the protected area system within Lesotho will be 0.7% of the country land mass.

The system of rotational grazing known as *Maboella* is being undermined by political instability as new methods of including participation of local people into governing structures is being introduced. *Maboella* are a system of sustainable use areas used in Lesotho for many years and has proved successful in maintaining lands productivity while maintaining the land cover and species composition of the area.

Other sustainable use areas are the recently introduced group grazing schemes known as the Range Management Areas (RMAs). Usually these area or catchment based rotational grazing areas for a group of organized individuals forming a Grazing Association (GA). The purposes of the RMAs and their associated GAs are to provide and sustain improved grazing for livestock, increase animal productivity and maintain vegetative cover and species composition of the specific area. Currently there are seven RMAs in the country and other five are proposed.

Perhaps the greatest threat to Lesotho's biodiversity is the over harvesting of the woody and shrubby vegetation which by virtue of its presence provides a natural cover for many flora and fauna species. The Government, having realized this problem has opted for forest plantations as a strategy to relief of reduce the pressure on harvesting of the naturally growing indigenous species.

There are now 487 existing forest reserves owned and operated by government, communities and individuals.

Priorities for Action

Lesotho has three main areas of concern in terms of protection, preservation, conservation and sustainable use of its biological resources and as a consequence its biodiversity. These are establishment of an ecosystem based protected area system, public education and awareness of

biodiversity issues and increased capacity for nature and biodiversity conservation. The establishment of protected areas beyond the presently established areas is a priority of the Government of Lesotho. Public involvement in matters that affect them, especially in natural resource management is a priority of the Government of Lesotho. The ability to conserve and sustainably use biological components by Basotho is also a priority area.

Targets

Activity	Current Situation	Target
1. Establish Protected Area system	10,507 ha established protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish the Peace Park in association with the Natal Parks Board by 1998 b. Establish the Drakensberg-Maloti Conservation area - 5,000 ha by year 2002 c. Gazette the three reserves in LHWP area - 4,120 ha by year 2000
2. Establish additional Sustainable use areas	184,600 ha established within RMAs system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish additional RMAs with 200,000 ha by year 2007. b. Establish a sustainable use wood and grazing area in the Quthing and Seapala catchments with 25,000 ha area by 2002
3. Implement public education and awareness programmes	< 1% of the Lesotho populace is aware of biodiversity and its values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Increase the knowledgeable population to 10% by year 2000, 25% by year 2005, and 50% by the year 2010.

Review of Sectoral and Cross-sectoral areas

Sectoral areas that have been reviewed include 1) forestry sub sector, 2) agriculture in context with the Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (ASIP), 3) land use, 4) tourism, and 5) urban development. In terms of biodiversity values, land tenure issues were discussed and land allocation review proposed. Land tenure issue in Lesotho is a very tenuous issue and as such discussions on it were limited to pointing to its effects on biodiversity. No concrete actions were stipulated. Other cross-sectoral issues reviewed in context with biodiversity were economic development, production patterns, law enforcement particularly with illegal cross border trade of endangered species, and the trade patterns.

Integration of Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use into Sectoral and Cross-sectoral Areas

Measures planned to integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral areas are:

1. Policy reviews in sectoral and cross-sectoral planning to include aspects of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
2. Increased cooperation between sectors in biodiversity planning
3. All economic planning to recognize the importance of Lesotho's biological diversity and
4. Biodiversity planning to be included in the environment bill to be submitted to Parliament early next year.

Sustainable Use

To conserve and use biodiversity sustainably in Lesotho, the following issues should be brought to the forefront so as to enable decision making. The costs and benefits of conserving biodiversity and the associated negative impacts on biodiversity must be weighed in and brought to the front. The Government also understands that to attain the objective of conserving and using biodiversity sustainably, there must be an understanding of common issues amongst Basotho. These understanding, though not all inclusive, are:

- Natural vegetation and animal species (wild and domestic) diversity is diminishing due to decreasing land resources, poor land use policies, highly variable climate and the resultant desertification.
- Land and animal husbandry practices are mostly unsustainable; especially when participation of local communities is secondary or nominal.
- There is no financial and human capacity to conserve biodiversity
- There is no formal requirement for project formulation to include environment impact assessment prior to implementation.

Therefore, to attain sustainable resource use, there must be 1) a conservative natural resource use, 2) eliminate unsustainable land husbandry practices, 3) a coordinated research and extension programmes on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use and 4) environmental impact assessments prior to sectoral and cross-sectoral project implementation.

Equitable Benefit Sharing

The third objective of the CBD expounded under *Article 6* is the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources whose origins are both within the country and outside the country. The strategies set forth here are 1) adoption of national ecological security to guard against loss of biodiversity within the country, 2) regional and international sharing of information on biodiversity management and protection to ensure sustainable development and 3) sharing of *in-situ* research and biotechnology research results on biodiversity components with interested parties.

The specific indicators of benefit sharing will be the establishment of a transfrontier “Peace Park” in the Maloti-Drakensberg area, the active participation of the mountain Research Group (a group of Lesotho and South African scientists concerned with the biodiversity of the Maloti mountains) and active participation of Lesotho in the regional Biodiversity Network (SABONET). All these to occur with 1998.

Public Outreach and Awareness

Current knowledge among Basotho about biodiversity values is limited to areas where direct benefits are being realized by the affected communities and/or individuals. Examples here include the value of medicinal fauna and flora to medicine-men and herbalists, the farmers and pastoralists. Although these groups are aware of the loss of biodiversity associated with land degradation, they are unable to halt the loss of biodiversity from whose values they derive benefits. The national strategies are therefore set out to address public awareness on the values of biodiversity. The following are the programs to reach people and raise their consciousness about the values of their biodiversity.

1. Include biodiversity education into national schools curriculum whilst at the same time increasing awareness at non-formal institutions such as education outside of classrooms and the circumcision schools.
2. Increase biodiversity issues in the print and electronic media by radio broadcasts, farmers magazines, women’s magazines, and TV programmes.

On-the-ground Implementation

The participatory process developed by Government during the plenary stages in the development of biodiversity strategy and Action Plan for Lesotho has established strong partnerships with interested and affected persons and group of people. This would make implementation easier and more effective. Strong links were developed between implementing bodies such as the 1)Wild life Society of Quthing (a CBO), 2)Botha-Bothe Society for the Conservation of Nature, 3) Lesotho wildlife club, 4) Lesotho Highlands Water Project Environment Department, 5) the National University of Lesotho, and 6) the Lesotho Traditional Medicine-men and Herbalists Association.

All these groups have strong links with the communities from which they emanate. The Government institutions will act as coordinators in many instances with limited implementation role except in cases where there is greater government concern such as the Sehlabathebe National Park and wild life Sanctuary and others soon to be established.

Coordination and Follow-up Process

National Environment Secretariat (NES) has the legal mandate to protect the environment and environmental components of Lesotho. However, programme implementation is with the respective line Ministries and Departments. In essence, NES is a focal point for environmental protection programmes within the country. As such, NES plays a coordinating role for all activities in Lesotho. NES will establish a National Biodiversity Unit whose responsibility will be to oversee and coordinate all programme activities aligned with biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

The National Biodiversity Unit will be comprised of an on-desk officer supported by a National Biodiversity Committee. This will be established by March 1998. Members of the committee will represent various interest groups from Government, Non-Governmental Organizations and Community Based Organizations. The expertise of the Committee members will be varied to cater for interests such conservation, preservation, utilization, and research. Periodically, the committee will assess progress and determine further needs.

F. CAPACITY TO ACHIEVE THE THREE OBJECTIVES OF THE CBD

Human Capacity

Lesotho has limited capacity to implement the three objectives of the CBD as are expounded in the Convention; however there is greater commitment to adhere to the principles of the Convention. The three objectives will be implemented in a wider context of natural resource management which includes measures for water, soil, plant and animal protection and the associated organisms that live on them. There are few people working directly with Lesotho's biodiversity in its strictest sense. In fact they are less than 10 in the whole country including researchers from the National University of Lesotho and elsewhere. However there are a number of people involved with natural resource management. Together, they form a core team for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use if and only if their efforts could be wisely coordinated.

Lesotho is still handicapped in skills to enable adequate environmental assessment. Although the country is developing methods for environment impact assessment, there are no skilled local personnel that could carry such works to fruition.

Institutional Capacity

The focal point for Lesotho biodiversity is the National Environment Secretariat under the Prime Minister's Office. Although appropriately placed, the NES is a young Department with limited institutional capacity to implement most of the desired programmes. However, with a legislative and policy back-up the institution can effectively coordinate with other well established institutions to enable effective biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The National Environment Bill within which biodiversity conservation and sustainable use are embodied. The following Departments are presently working with biodiversity in its various forms and will have to be oriented towards better natural resource management:

Institution	Current Activity	Future Activity
Conservation and Land Use Planning	Structural water conservation methods	Catchment management
Forestry	National and community forest plantations	Community forest and individual community plantations
Range and Livestock	Communal grazing Communal breeding programmes	Range management areas aligned with catchment management. Better management of livestock genetic material
National University of Lesotho	Ecological research	Ecological research, data management

Financial Capacity

There is no financial allocation towards biodiversity by Government. However, the associated programs in natural resource management such as agriculture, wildlife and forestry, range management and land use planning receive Government funding and in their context biodiversity conservation and sustainable use is funded. There however must be a policy reorientation to enable adequate attention to biodiversity within each sub-sector.

G. CONCLUSIONS

Lesotho biodiversity issues have been discussed in the country report (a draft report now) and as has been evidenced, are far from being adequately addressed. The major constraints in this

respect are the obvious lack of complete data sets, lack of public awareness and concern on biodiversity and its components, and the apparent lack of capacity; both human and financially. In any event, Lesotho as a party to the CBD is trying by all means at its disposal and ability to adhere to the articles of the convention; particularly *Article 6*.

At the moment, as has been mentioned above, the NBSAP for Lesotho is in a draft form; awaiting further reviews from all stakeholders. Further consultations with all probable stakeholders would give the NBSAP wider ownership and acceptability to those affected and interested persons and/or groups of people. Within the NBSAP are contained proposals to better manage our natural resources; especially the diversity of ecosystems, habitats, species, populations, genes and genomes in a wider and inclusive context of human development.

The NBSAP for Lesotho is incomplete in many ways due to different and varied reasons. Among the major reasons why it would be seen to be incomplete is the very nature of the BSAPs to be cyclic, iterative, and interactive. The Lesotho BSAP has not climbed to the highest bodies in the nation whose support would give it further credibility and impetus to be realised as an implementable and living document. Lesotho BSAP still awaits to reach the Cabinet and the legislature; two bodies that are important for its realization. Once the document has been reviewed, it will then be forwarded to the Cabinet for approval and passage to the parliament. It is then that the components of budgeting and time frame implementation will be included.

However, for the purposes of this report, the Lesotho BSAP is submitted as a preliminary document whose purpose is to indicate the intentions of Basotho people and their Government in abiding by the principles of the CBD and in alignment with the Rio Agenda 21 spirit.