



## **Sectoral Integration of Biodiversity in Swaziland**

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## 1. Introduction

Swaziland reported<sup>1</sup> that mainstreaming biodiversity can be viewed as the incorporation and integration of biodiversity as an important aspect of planning, decision - making, land use and production methods to achieve sustainable development, particularly in those sectors whose core business is not biodiversity conservation. Factors that contribute to successful mainstreaming of biodiversity include good scientific information and understanding; institutional capacity and commitment; strategic cross - sectoral and public - private partnerships; and a willingness by the scientific and biodiversity community to take advantage of opportunities to demonstrate that biodiversity - friendly policies can provide socio - economic opportunities for the poor.

Although it still faces challenges, Swaziland is making steady progress towards mainstreaming biodiversity in both the public and private sectors. This is achieved mainly through the use of EIAs during project formulation and ensures to some degree that the biological resources likely to be affected are assessed and where necessary mitigated for.

The responsibility for managing and conserving biodiversity cuts across national and local government structures as well as government agencies, NGOs, the private sector and communities.

The Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, which houses the Swaziland Environment Authority (SEA), the Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC) and the Forestry Department, is the primary custodian of biodiversity in Swaziland and governs laws pertaining to environmental management, protected areas and plant resources in and outside of protected areas. Both the SNTC and SEA are parastatal organizations funded by government but operating under independent boards appointed by the Minister of Tourism and Environmental Affairs. The King's Office is also a key custodian of biodiversity and governs laws pertaining to game as well as CITES.

The limited institutional understanding of the role and importance of biodiversity affected by sectoral plans and programmes has led to limited consideration of biodiversity related impacts that could result from the implementation of the sector policy, programme or plan. The SEA attempt to provide guidance and assistance to national structures in the formulation of their development plans but this is ad hoc. The Environmental Management Act does provide for a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be carried out on all such initiative, but to - date no such assessment has taken place despite numerous sectoral policies, plans and programmes being developed.

The national policy framework includes the 1999 National Development Strategy (NDS) and the 1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan (SEAP). The long - term development Vision 2022 is contained

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<sup>1</sup> Swaziland (2009). Swaziland's Fourth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity, The Swaziland Environment Authority, Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, December 2009, 56 pp.

within the NDS. All other policies and strategies have been formulated to facilitate the vision of the NDS. The NDS identifies environmental protection as a cornerstone in the national development process.

Swaziland's policy response to environmental issues is presented in the following tables:

Existence of national policies, strategies and action plans for the environment	
Policy	Review (strengths and weaknesses)
<p>Key Swaziland national policies, strategies and action plans for the environment are the following:</p> <p>National Development Strategy (1999)</p> <p>Swaziland Environment Action Plan (1997)</p> <p>National Land Policy (2000 draft)</p> <p>National Environment Policy (1999 draft)</p> <p>National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2001 )</p> <p>National forestry Policy (2003)</p>	<p>The National Development Strategy sets out the framework for sustainable development in a comprehensive manner across all sectors. It is the umbrella strategy for all other policies and strategies. The Swaziland Environment Action Plan focuses inter alia on prioritizing environmental issues and solutions.</p> <p>Although the other key national environment related policies and strategies exist they do provide important guidance and support on environmental matters.</p>

Swaziland has responded in its national policy framework with respect to addressing global environmental issues, of which the most relevant in this context are land degradation and desertification, decline of biodiversity, climate change, food security, health, and poverty. However, it does not always have the technical or financial capacity to fully address these global issues. All the policies mentioned in connection with responding to national sustainability issues also cover the major global concerns. The related Millennium Development Goals of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and ensuring environmental sustainability are represented in Swaziland's policy framework.

Policy response to environmental issues	
Environmental issue	Review of policy response
<p>Land Degradation &amp; Desertification</p> <p>High levels of land degradation are having a significant impact on resource management and productivity, in particular on rangelands.</p>	<p>The national policy response to land degradation has been to sign and ratify the Convention to Combat Desertification and to prepare the CCD National Action Plan. Countering land degradation is adequately addressed through the following national and sectoral policies and strategies:</p> <p>2005 draft Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy</p> <p>2005 draft National Food Security Policy</p> <p>2003 National Rural Resettlement Policy</p> <p>2002 National Forest Policy</p> <p>2002 draft National Forestry Programme</p> <p>1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan</p> <p>1995 Livestock Development Policy</p>
<p>Biodiversity degradation</p> <p>Unsustainable exploitation of biodiversity, conversion of ecosystems, loss of habitat, invasive alien infestations are rapidly reducing biodiversity. Less than 4% of the country is formally protected and managed.</p>	<p>The national policy response to biodiversity degradation has been to sign and ratify the Convention on Biological Diversity and some protocols as well as the preparation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, still in its 2001 draft form.</p> <p>Biodiversity conservation is adequately addressed in the following national and sector policies and strategies:</p> <p>2008 Access and Benefit Sharing Bill</p> <p>2008 Biosafety Policy</p> <p>2005 draft Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy</p> <p>2005 draft National Food Security Policy</p> <p>2002 National Forest Policy</p> <p>2002 draft National Forestry Programme</p> <p>2001 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan</p> <p>1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan</p>

<p>Climate change High vulnerability to climate change impacts particularly on vegetation, soils, biodiversity, productivity and livelihoods.</p>	<p>The national policy response to climate change has been to sign and ratify the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol and the preparation of the First National Communication to the UNFCCC.</p> <p>Climate change impacts are partially addressed in the following national and sectoral policies and strategies: 2005 draft Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy 2005 draft National Food Security Policy</p>
<p>Land management Unsustainable land management practices are resulting in the rapid depletion of natural resources with impacts on productivity and livelihoods.</p>	<p>The national policy response to land management is through the related UN Conventions and the Millennium Development Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability.</p> <p>The issue of unsustainable land management is addressed comprehensively in the following policies: 2005 draft Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy 2003 National Rural Resettlement Policy 2000 draft National Land Policy 1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan</p>
<p>Water management Poor management of surface water resources resulting in over utilization, reduced quality and quantity.</p>	<p>There is no specific national policy response to water management.</p> <p>The draft SADC Water Policy is serving as a guide for water management in Swaziland. A National Water Policy is due to be finalised by the end of 2009. An Integrated Water Resources Master Plan has been prepared and is being circulated for comment. The finalised Plan should be ready by mid-2010.</p> <p>The Water Act of 2003 currently provides legislative support for water management. Policy development is needed for rural water.</p> <p>Water management for irrigation purposes is adequately addressed in: 2006 draft National Irrigation Policy</p>
<p>Natural forest and woodlands Deforestation and degradation of forest resources for fuel wood, medicinal plants and land conversions is reducing the total area annually. Alien invasive plant species are infesting increasing areas of natural forest.</p>	<p>The national policy response to forest management is related to the signing and ratifying of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Forest management is adequately addressed in the following national and sector policies and strategies: 2002 National Forest Policy 2002 draft National Forestry Programme 2001 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan</p>
<p>Energy National energy demands are increasing pressure on forest resources for fuel wood resulting in deforestation.</p>	<p>The national policy response to energy is related to the signing and ratifying of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.</p> <p>Energy is adequately addressed in the following national and sector policies and strategies: 2009 National Biofuels Development Strategy and Action Plan 2003 National Energy Policy 2002 draft National Forestry Programme 2001 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan</p>
<p>Pollution &amp; waste management Lack of management, control and monitoring</p>	<p>The national policy response to pollution &amp; waste management is related to the signing and ratifying of the 1992 Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.</p> <p>Pollution &amp; waste management is adequately addressed in the following national and sector policies and strategies: 2003 National Solid Waste Management Strategy 1997 Swaziland Environment Action Plan</p>

## **Cross - sectoral coordination**

A description of the extent to which biodiversity has been integrated into sectoral and cross - sectoral strategies and plans providing concrete examples

There are three key institutions with environmental responsibilities: the Swaziland Environment Authority (SEA), the Swaziland National Trust Commission (SNTC) and the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA).

The supreme institution is the Swaziland Environment Authority, established in 1992 and responsible for environmental policy making, legislation, planning, environmental protection, monitoring and enforcement using provisions of the Environment Management Act. The SEA is a parastatal institution that exists both within and outside government control. It is responsible for coordinating all national environmental responses and is the official national representative at international environmental fora.

Supporting the SEA, SNTC and MOAC are numerous government and non - governmental institutions with varying levels of responsibility for environmental management.

## **2. Cross - sectoral biodiversity coordination in national plans and strategies**

The Biodiversity Conservation and Management Policy recognises that to implement the CBD successfully requires integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

For Swaziland to manage its biodiversity effectively and meet its obligations under the CBD requires the participation and co - operation of various national Ministries. These Ministries should incorporate relevant biodiversity issues into their strategic and annual development plans and allocate appropriate budgets for biodiversity management activities. The SEA should play a central coordinating and monitoring role to ensure Ministries have considered biodiversity (and the many other environmental issues) in their work plans, strategies, policies and plans.

In terms of the Environmental Management Act, each Ministry is to submit to the SEA for approval an Environmental Management Strategy (EMS).

Each Strategy shall include the following:

1. a description of the principal effects that the activities regulated by the Government Ministry have or may have on the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources;
2. a description of the principal effects that the activities of the Government Ministry have or may have on the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources;
3. a statement of the objectives of the Strategy, which shall be designed to further the achievement of the purpose of this Act and the National Environmental Action Plan referred to in section 30; and

4. a description of the practical measures that the Government Ministry will take to give effect to the purpose of the Act and to ensure that it exercises its functions in a way that helps to achieve the objectives of the Strategy.

Each Government Ministry is expected to review its Environmental Management Strategy at least once every three years and shall publish a report on that review in the Gazette. Each review report shall include:

1. an assessment of the effects that activities in the sector regulated by the Government Ministry have had on the environment and the sustainable management of natural resources over the previous five years, and an assessment of future trends in this regard;
2. an assessment of the effects that the activities of the Government Ministry have had on the environment and on the sustainable management of natural resources, over the previous five years;
3. an assessment of the extent to which the objectives of the Strategy have been achieved and the effectiveness of the Strategy in assisting the Ministry to apply the principles set out in section 5;
4. recommendations for improving the Strategy; and
5. proposed amendments to the Strategy or a draft of a new Strategy that takes into account the assessments noted in the review.

To date no EMS's have been prepared by any ministry.

### **3. The adoption of the ecosystem approach in sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes**

At COP 5 in 2000, the ecosystem approach was endorsed and it was recommended that parties apply this approach. The CBD defines the ecosystem approach as “a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. Application of the ecosystem approach will help to reach a balance of the three objectives of the Convention: conservation; sustainable use; and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources”.

The COP 5 decision further notes that the ecosystem approach is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organization which encompass the essential processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognizes that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems. The approach requires adaptive management to deal with the complex and dynamic nature of ecosystems and an incomplete knowledge or understanding of their functioning.

An ecosystem approach to the management of environmental resources has been adopted by Swaziland however, its formal application or implementation is gradually taking place through regional programmes under the Trans - frontier Conservation and Resource Area Protocol.

There is recognition within Swaziland of inter - linkages between biodiversity and business and the need to mainstream biodiversity priorities into the policies, plans and activities across a range of stakeholders whose core business is not biodiversity, but whose day - to - day activities impact on biodiversity. This recognition is reflected in the NBSAP which includes several objectives and targets aimed at key production sectors, with agriculture, forestry and mining highlighted as production sectors with a significant impact on biodiversity.

To reduce the pressure on biodiversity caused by the agriculture, the biodiversity sector has in recent years started to engage with businesses to establish partnerships with the initiatives aimed at enhancing sustainable production through the development and implementation of best practice guidelines and other mechanisms.

The guidelines seek to increase long - term productivity without compromising the environment while also contributing to socio - economic development. The sugarcane sector is the most important sector at this time as its direct impact on terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems is highly damaging. Various initiatives to better manage local environmental resources are being discussed. Irrigated agriculture, particularly the cultivation of virgin soil, has been the single biggest cause of irreversible habitat loss in the Lowveld area of Swaziland. However, a complex legislative environment and administrative fragmentation inhibit the coherent, consistent and effective incorporation of biodiversity considerations in agricultural decision - making. EIAs remain the only tool available to consider and assess the scale of impact but as mentioned the level of detail, scope and analysis of field surveys, varies widely allowing for agricultural developments to proceed when perhaps they should not, particularly as originally conceived.

### **Bioregional and ecosystem programmes**

Swaziland has been included in several bioregional and ecosystem programmes in priority biomes under threat.

These multi - stakeholder initiatives aim to secure the conservation of priority biodiversity within a specific biome or bioregion and include a high - level vision, strategy and action plan that co - ordinates several site - specific projects that address conservation, social and economic needs.

A funding proposal for biodiversity conservation targeted at the NGO and private sector has been prepared that will be used to help prioritise projects for funding by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). CEPF is a large international fund that provides grants specifically for NGOs and private sector based on project proposals submitted to help protect the Earth's biologically richest and most endangered regions (global hotspots). The CEPF is designed to facilitate rapid and flexible funding to areas where globally significant biodiversity is under the greatest threat in a way that adds incremental value to existing initiatives and that the outcomes realized through its investments are sustained.

The CEPF Donor Council is reviewing the funding proposal for the Maputaland - Pondoland - Albany Hotspot that includes southern Mozambique, Eastern Cape Province, eastern Swaziland and Kwa - Zulu

Natal as a priority for funding starting in 2010 and an Ecosystem Profile for this has been prepared as part of the funding request.

The success or otherwise of this funding proposal is not yet known.

CEPF investment will complement existing funding in these priority areas and support the following strategies as investment priorities:

- Strengthening protected area management effectiveness through civil society partnerships that unblock current constraints to achieving conservation objectives;
- Development of conservation agreements that expand protected areas, improve land use and management outside protected areas, and provide landowner benefits. This includes piloting innovative payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes;
- Improving enforcement of development and other environmental regulations to maintain functional ecosystem corridors, particularly rivers, within the production matrix; and
- Engaging business to actively contribute to conservation outcomes through improved practices and conservation set - asides.

If funding is secured, yet to be identified parts of eastern Swaziland, notably the Lubombo Conservancy area in north east Swaziland, will receive funding to better conserve and manage biodiversity hotspots. Exact details of how this will happen are pending and being discussed.

With its partners, Swaziland has been able to access funding secured by South Africa, particularly from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to initiate and undertake the Transfrontier Conservation and Resource Area (TFCA) programmes.

Swaziland is participating in the regional Transfrontier Conservation and Resource Area programme and is working with neighbouring countries to declare and operationalise four trans - frontier parks - the Lubombo Conservancy - Goba TFCA, the Lubombo Nsubane - Pongola TFCA, Usuthu - Tembe - Futi TFCA and the Songimvelo - Malolotja TFCA.

TFCA's offer opportunities for community involvement and private sector participation which is critical in the design and implementation of TFCA initiatives. The active involvement of the different tourism authorities from the three countries in the initiative successfully complements their implementation. The cross border collaboration presents an opportunity for the country to tap into tourism flows to and from South Africa and Mozambique, e.g. the upcoming 2010 world Cup. The Bulembu Asbestos Mine tourism developments present an opportunity to be part of the initiatives of this TFCA. The Maguga Dam and surrounding areas present another opportunity to further activate the TFCA.

The four TFCAs are:

Lubombo Conservancy-Goba TFCA

The major objective is to promote sustainable economic development and the sustainable utilization of natural resources in the Area for the benefit of present and future generations by identifying and establishing appropriate and viable economic activities and initiatives in the area.

#### Achievements

- Malarial Control Program is successful, making the area more visitor - friendly
- Completion of Mhlumeni Border and Siteki - Mhlumeni Road
- Tourism Complex at Mlawula Nature Reserve
- Shewula Camp and Nature Reserve is representation of community - based conservation and development.
- Appointment of TFCA Programme Manager beginning August 2004
- Reconstitution of Task Team
- Finalization of Concept Document and Action Plan
- Held preliminary meetings with stakeholders on future of the TFCA
- Opening of the Mhlumeni - Goba border

#### Nsubane-Pongola TFCA

The major objective of the Nsubane Pongola TFCA is to realize economic returns from tourism and associated activities within the Area, while safeguarding its ecological integrity, and to promote the sustainable socioeconomic development of the Area, for the benefit of all Parties and to develop, market and promote the TFCA to this end.

#### Achievements

- Appointment of TFCA Programme Manager beginning August 2004
- Malarial Control Program is successful, making the area more visitor - friendly
- Reconstitution of Task Team
- Finalization of Concept Document and Action Plan
- Held preliminary meetings with stakeholders on future of the TFCA
- The launching of the E3.5 Royal billion Jozini Big 6 project (see [www.royaljozini.com](http://www.royaljozini.com))

#### Songimvelo-Malotja TFCA

The Songimvelo - Malolotja TFCA is located on the South Africa - Swaziland border between Barberton (SA) and Pigg's Peak (Swaziland) and covers an area of approximately 700km<sup>2</sup>, with potential extensions of another 500km<sup>2</sup>. The core of the TFCA is formed by the 49 000 ha Songimvelo Game Reserve (SA) and 18 000 Ha Malolotja Nature Reserve (Swaziland) which share a common border. The other identified core areas on the Swaziland side are three protection - worthy areas, namely the Bulembu, Makhonjwa, and Sondeza National Landscapes. The local communities within and around these areas also form part of the initiative. This TFCA is to be incorporated as part of the greater Lubombo TFCA.

The major objective is to collaboratively establish and manage on a sustainable basis a viable trans - frontier conservation area with stakeholder participation, including local communities, fostering regional cooperation, biodiversity conservation, and cross - border socio - economic development. This TFCA was formalized in March 2004 by the trilateral Ministerial Committee in Swaziland, making it part of the Lubombo TFCRA.

#### Achievements

- Appointment of TFCA Programme Manager beginning August 2004
- Reconstitution of Task Team
- Finalization of Concept Document and Action Plan
- Held preliminary meetings with stakeholders on future of the TFCA
- Cooperation on elephant management and control already underway
- Joint tourism master plan, zonation and management plans are currently under development under the auspices of the Peace Parks Foundation

Usuthu-Tembe-Futi TFCA incorporating Usuthu Gorge Covering an area of approximately 22958.39 acres (9290.97 hectares or 92.9 km<sup>2</sup>), this area lies in the Lubombo region, along the south of the Lubombo mountains and is bordered by the Greater Usuthu river in the South where it dissects the Ubombo mountain, thus the name "Usuthu Gorge". The core tourism area covers an area of approximately 5892.39 acres (2384.57 hectares or 23.85 km<sup>2</sup>). The Great Usutu River (Lusutfu) carves an impressive gorge through the Lubombo Mountains as it exits Swaziland. High cliffs adorned with cycads and abundant birdlife are features of this 8km long gorge, which is wild and uninhabited. Important wildlife species that have been spotted in this area include kudu, side - striped jackals, oribi and mountain reedbeek, among others. The river itself is Swaziland's largest watercourse and its waters are navigable by raft or canoe for most months of the year, although huge crocodiles are known to frequent the long pools between rapids. Sandy beaches occur at frequent intervals. The major vegetation types include mixed forests and woodlands, including bushveld. The Mowane gorge in this area is also a sacred site in Swazi culture.

#### Songimvelo-Malolotja TFCA

The Usuthu Gorge, apart from being a link for the Usuthu - Tembe - Futi Transfrontier Conservation Area and the Lubombo Spatial Development Initiative, is in itself a fantastic area with wilderness qualities that are rare in Swaziland. The Lunkuntfu (Mambane) community, who live predominantly at the base of the Lubombo Mountains under the Nkilongo Inkhundla are well positioned to benefit from development in this area.

The Usuthu - Tembe - Futi TFCA links to the eastern end of this area. At its exit from Swaziland, the Ndumo - Tembe area is visible a few kilometres downstream and with the potential for border crossing formalities to be accommodated by the LSDI process, there exists a unique opportunity for water rafting, canoeing or walking trail linkages to this area, as well as Southern Mozambique. The area falls almost alongside the Manzini - Big Bend - Lavumisa road, which is a major tourism route through Swaziland.

As expected in a rural area such as this, there are few roads. In terms of community needs, all there is need for is infrastructure as relates to water, schools and health - care facilities. The main land uses are cattle rearing and arable farming, maize being the major crop, most of which is for subsistence consumption. Natural resources such as thatching grass and firewood could be availed on a limited basis to the community in specific areas.

Achievements to date including a marked improvement in road networks within and between the TFCAs, the signing of the Lubombo Malaria Protocol which has seen a decline of some 90% in the incidences of malaria, commitment of investments within the TFCAs (a multi - billion Emalangenani (Rand) project currently under development on the Swaziland side of the Nsubane - Pongola TFCA is gradually developing infrastructure and facilities including purchase of stocking game), to ease the movement of people between the three countries, visa requirements were also dropped, thus enhancing cross - border tourism, and a process has started on developing area - specific Integrated Tourism Master Plans which involve all partner countries and stakeholders (Songimvelo - Malolotja TFCA plan and the joint management plans for the Songimvelo - Malolotja and Nsubane - Pongola TFCA).

#### **4. Biodiversity aware impact assessments**

Swaziland has not integrated biodiversity inclusive assessments into its existing EIA regulations. However, each EIA submitted to the SEA for review and approval has to include an assessment of biodiversity impacts that could result from the implementation of the activity being addressed by the EIA.

Problems surround the level of detail and scope to which biodiversity issues are identified and integrated into the EIA. It is common for EIAs to take a purely project focus to biodiversity impacts and rarely assess these in terms of the wider ecosystem or continuous threats to biodiversity.

Consultants who commonly undertake the preparation of these projects focused EIAs are not provided with much guidance from the SEA and other relevant agencies, on how to approach the biodiversity impact assessment resulting in various assessment approaches.

Swaziland researchers have continued to publish research papers, biodiversity related atlases and co - authored regional and international publications on a wide range of biodiversity topics. There are national publications describing the various components of biodiversity and ecosystems and research which now includes several books like the 2005 publication of the Swaziland Tree Atlas - including selected shrubs and climbers (Loffler, L. & Loffler, P. Southern African Botanical Diversity Network Report No. 35. SABONET, Pretoria), the 2009 Annotated Checklist of the Trees of the Lubombo Conservancy. (Loffler, L. & Braun, K. Natural History Society of Swaziland and Panasonic Swaziland, Mbabane), and the 2005 Nesting distribution of vultures in relation to land use in Swaziland (Monadjem A. & Garcelon D.. Biodiversity and Conservation). Recently Monadjem A. et al published a report on the roost selection and home range of an African insectivorous bat in and around the Mlawula Nature Reserve in north east Swaziland. There is now quite a diversity of literature relating to biodiversity in Swaziland much of which has been referenced in this report and can be found in the references.

## **5. Analysis of the outcomes**

The mainstreaming of biodiversity into national initiatives and development plans has not consistently taken place. There is broad recognition of the overall importance of mainstreaming biodiversity but the tools and guidelines to facilitate such are lacking.

Swaziland's biodiversity, like that of its neighbours, is facing increasing threats from habitat destruction, fragmentation, alien invasive species, climate change and others and its becoming increasingly important to ensure that biodiversity protection and management are adequately reflected in national policies, plans and programmes.

The SEA supported by other national agencies, need to step up their engagement with national government structures, research institutions and national and regional experts to develop guidelines and procedures by which biodiversity is mainstreamed into national activities.

The NBSAP remains a draft and due to the lapse in time between its formulation and today, will require updating. This should provide an opportunity to improve its strategic objectives or integrating biodiversity in national programmes.

The link between healthy functioning ecosystems, economic development and social well - being is generally not well understood by planners and decision - makers and this lack of understanding is allowing activities to be implemented at a cost to biodiversity and ecosystem function. Apart from the lack of awareness about biodiversity, poorly capacitated institutions with inadequate corporate governance and individuals lacking relevant experience and skills hamper effective decision - making.