

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

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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.*

A wide range of other stakeholders was consulted by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, including the following:

Nine provincial authorities of South Africa dealing with the environment  
Botanical Society of South Africa  
Agricultural Research Council (Plant Protection Research Institute)  
South African Environmental Observatory Network (SAEON) of the National Research Foundation Mountain Club  
Ukuvuka Campaign  
Working for Water  
National Botanical Institute  
Department of Water Affairs and Forestry

## 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	x	c) Limiting	d) Severely limiting
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					
b) yes, please provide details	<p>Yes. There are two major projects where assistance from GEF has been sought and obtained. Firstly, the Cape Peninsula Biodiversity Conservation Project has considered conservation of biodiversity throughout the Cape Floristic Region (CFR), including the Cape fold mountains in the winter rainfall region. GEF provided \$12.5 million for the establishment of the Cape Peninsula National Park, protecting the Cape Peninsula mountain chain, for the Table Mountain Fund, a fund dedicated to the conservation of biodiversity in the CFR and for the preparation of the Cape Action Plan for the Environment (C.A.P.E) C.A.P.E prioritised a number of mega-reserves including the Cederberg and the Baviaanskloof mountains, as well as a conservation corridor through the Gouritz region. Some funds have been allocated from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund for work in these mega-reserves.</p> <p>Secondly, the GEF has awarded a grant of \$16 million for the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation and Development Area Project, to be implemented by Lesotho and South Africa jointly. This covers the extensive mountain ecoregions between the two countries.</p> <p>The North West Province is currently discussing funding possibilities with Finland for special planning purposes.</p>				

### 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	<p>No coherent assessment of direct and underlying causes of degradation and loss of biodiversity of mountain ecosystems has been undertaken. However, in various studies the major threats have been identified, inter alia:</p> <p><b>Easy Access</b> Many largely unspoilt public mountain reserves are being developed to provide funds for management which has a negative impact on wilderness areas.</p> <p><b>Economics</b> Some private landowners are exploiting the areas to gain short term benefits to survive.</p> <p><b>Politics</b> Some commercial farmers are apprehensive about their future in South Africa. Insecurity of title then leads to exploitation of land in the short term, which could have an impact on the mountains</p> <p><b>Lack of knowledge / education</b> on the</p>

	<p>importance of these areas.</p> <p><b>Climate change</b> If carbon dioxide levels double by 2050 , some of the Cape fynbos biome will disappear where it will be unable to adapt.</p> <p>Other threats include inappropriate agricultural practices, alien plant infestations, inappropriate tourism development, plantation forestry, and extensive and unsustainable use of rangeland.</p> <p>In addition fragmented and unco-ordinated planning and development control have been root causes, as has poverty in marginal rural areas.</p>
<p>c) If yes, please specify the measures your country has taken to control the causes of loss of mountain biodiversity</p>	<p>There are legislation and policies and agreements that deal with the mountain management in South Africa, such as:</p> <p>Mountain Catchment Areas Act ( Act 63 of 1970)</p> <p>National Forest Act (Act 84 of 1998)</p> <p>National Veld and Forest Fire Act (Act 101 of 1998)</p> <p>National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998)</p> <p>National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998) (NEMA)</p> <p>Environment Conservation Act (Act 73 of 1989)</p> <p>The Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act (Act 43 of 1983)</p> <p>Since 1971 eleven wilderness areas have been designated in terms of the Forest Act.</p> <p>There are also three protected natural environments in mountain ecosystems, namely Cape Peninsula, Magaliesberg and Lourens river.</p> <p>World heritage sites are the Ukhahlamba – Drakensberg Park.</p> <p>The C.A.P.E project recommended three mega conservation areas ( 400 000 - 600 000 ha ) be established in the Cederberg, Little Karoo and Baviaanskloof.</p> <p>Three biosphere reserves have been registered with UNESCO and there is a move to establish conservancies with private owners.</p> <p>In addition, there has been a long-standing process of ensuring that fragile mountain ecosystems are included in mountain catchment management areas, involving both state, private and communal lands. Mountains in South Africa are largely included in state forest protected areas, and are therefore relatively well conserved.</p> <p>The Working for Water programme has been an innovative programme to remove alien plants, protect biodiversity and ensure sustainable employment, and it has targeted many mountain catchment areas with positive impacts for biodiversity.</p>

5. Has your country identified taxonomic needs for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity of mountain ecosystems?	
a) no, (please specify the reasons)	
b) yes, please specify	<p>Yes. An application for eight representative constellation sites is currently being prepared for the Cape Floral Kingdom ( Fynbos ) and the Cape fold mountains</p> <p>The GEF supported C.A.P.E and Maloti-Drakensberg programmes have identified gaps in knowledge and have allocated resources to improving the understanding of the components of biodiversity in these project areas.</p>
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	<p>Yes The impact of fire on species in terms of frequency and /or fire season assesses the vulnerability or fragility of the mountains. Forest ecotones ( margins) have been negatively affected by controlled burning.</p> <p>A project is proposed for the Magaliesberg (North West Province), however, it is in its infant stages and no funding yet has come forth.</p>
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	
b) yes, some assessments or monitoring undertaken (please specify)	<p>Yes. The Brotherton grassland burning trails at Cathedral Peak are maintained.</p> <p>Some analyses were done, such as the Berliner et al ( 1993) report on the development of a grassland evaluation and management system.</p> <p>These results can be integrated into a fire management programme.</p> <p>Some information is also available through project related EIA's, but not holistically.</p> <p>Some assessments have also been undertaken in the Cape Floristic region, the Succulent Karoo region and the Maloti-Drakensberg.</p> <p>Most assessments have been undertaken at the landscape and ecosystem level, some at the species level, but few at the genetic level.</p>
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	<p>Yes. Apart from the legislation mentioned above, Mountain Management Guidelines for private landowners exist, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fire management</li> <li>Invasive alien plants</li> <li>Compatible land-use in mountains</li> <li>Footpaths construction and maintenance</li> <li>Eco-friendly developments</li> <li>Zoning of mountainous terrain</li> </ul> <p>In the North West province conservation ordinances exist.</p> <p>Regulations have also been developed for the Magaliesberg Protected Natural Environment.</p> <p>There have been other attempts to develop regulations for a Special Case Area Plan for the Drakensberg mountains in Kwa-Zulu Natal and for the protected natural environments of the Magaliesberg and the Cape Peninsula.</p> <p>There is a mountain zoning policy that has been proposed, but currently no formal policy that is specifically aimed at mountain conservation exists.</p>

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	No
b) yes, please provide some cases or examples	<p>There has been no coherent application of the ecosystem approach, although the conservation authorities have made progress in consolidating mountain catchment areas, state forests and other protected areas into large blocks managed by single agencies, which has had the effect of management being undertaken at the landscape/ecosystem level.</p>

10. Does your national biodiversity strategy and action plan cover mountain biological diversity?

a) no, please specify why	<p>No - the national biodiversity strategy and action plan is not in existence yet and is currently being initiated by the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.</p>
b) yes, please give some information on the strategy and plan, in particular on mountain biodiversity	

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	
b) yes, please provide details where information can be retrieved concerning management practices, plans and programmes	Yes. Provincial Authorities who are managing State Forests ( Mountain Catchment areas ) and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's (DWAF) regional offices have received the relevant information concerning management practices, plans and programmes from DWAF. Private landowners are also made aware of the Mountain Management Guidelines mentioned above.

### 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	
b) yes, please specify the objectives of this collaboration and achievements	Yes. Management Guidelines were given to provincial authorities after the assessment of management of state forests in 2000 to adhere to the principles of sustainable forest management as set out in the National Forest Act (Section 3 (3 ) (Guidelines in Drawing up of Management plans)).  One of the North West Province's projects on the biodiversity of the Magaliesberg requires collaboration with Finland  There has been extensive cooperation with the government of Lesotho concerning the shared mountain ecosystem of the Maloti-Drakensberg. The two countries have signed a bilateral memorandum of understanding committing them to the cooperative protection and development of these mountains.
13. Has your country signed or ratified any regional or international treaty concerning mountains?	
a) no	No
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	Yes
d) if yes, please specify details	Mountain conservation strategies are included in implementing the following: Wilderness Areas National Parks Provincial Reserves Indigenous Forests Protected Natural Environments World Heritage Sites Mega Reserves Transfrontier Conservation Areas Biosphere Reserves Natural Heritage Sites Conservancies Private Reserves Natural Heritage programme
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)	Partly through the EIA process and specific regulations if an area is declared a Protected Natural Environment.
c) in advanced stages of development (please specify the reasons)	In the North West province the mountain areas are managed in terms of legislation.
d) relatively comprehensive measures being implemented (please specify the reasons)	This would not specifically apply to mountains, but on the whole, the development of tourism is well-regulated in South Africa, and particularly in mountain regions, there has been excellent attention paid to ensuring that the environmental impacts of development are critically assessed and measures taken to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated.  South Africa , through the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism has developed guidelines for responsible tourism.



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	Yes. Examples include the Mnweni Donga erosion reclamation project-co-ordinated by the Mnweni community trust, community formed partnership e.g. the Workingfor Water Programme, and the Zululand Trail Project.
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	
b) yes, please provide some information in the programmes	<p>Yes. The Natural Heritage Programme which is currently being revisited.</p> <p>The Ukahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site was inscribed on the World Heritage List as a mixed site on the basis of the outstanding rock art and its natural significance.</p> <p>A management plan was developed as part of an application to have the site declared a World Heritage Site.</p> <p>The Maloti-Drakensberg mountains has a programme for the protection and co-management of cultural and natural resources. The area has been listed as a mixed world heritage site (natural and cultural property).</p>
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	<p>Yes. The Magaliesberg was declared a Protected Natural Environment.</p> <p>The area of mountain catchments on state land is 1.7 million hectares, about 15% of the total area of major catchments. 85 % of mountain catchments, about 9.7 million hectares, is privately owned. Of the privately owned areas, 5.5% are proclaimed catchment areas. 79.5% is undeclared (Rabie and others , 1992 )</p>

19. Has your country undertaken any activities to celebrate the International Year of Mountains and Eco-tourism?

a) no

b) yes, please specify

Yes. The Mountain Club of South Africa has prepared a State of the Nations report and made a presentation to the biodiversity group of MINMEC to raise awareness on the IYM.

#### *Case-studies*

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

Examples of case studies in conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems include:

The Riviersonderend Private Mountain Farm

A proposal has been developed for the Magaliesberg mountain but no funding has yet been secured.

The most extensive literature on conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in mountain ecosystems has been the work conducted in the C.A.P.E and for the preparation of the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation and Development Area Project. The full set of reports for C.A.P.E are obtainable from [www.capeaction.org.za](http://www.capeaction.org.za) and the Maloti Drakensberg from [www.kznwildlife.com](http://www.kznwildlife.com).

#### *Further comments*

Although many stakeholders were consulted, the response on the information requested in the national report was poor. The report might not be a true reflection of all the activities that are being undertaken in the conservation and sustainable use of mountain ecosystems.