

# Lesotho



Lesotho is landlocked and is completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. Due to its mountainous terrain and its subtropical position under the global high pressure belt, Lesotho has low levels of weather activity in winter, when temperatures fall to as low as  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$ . In summer, low pressure systems dominate southern Africa and bring rain bearing, moist, tropical air and temperatures of up to  $28^{\circ}\text{C}$ . There are four geographic zones in the country – the lowlands, the foothills, the Senqu River Valley and mountainous areas. Common to all of these areas is the population's dependency on agriculture and livestock production to support domestic food supply. The agriculture sector is a major employer, but the sector's contribution to GDP has declined steadily over the last three decades, in part due to soil erosion.

The main environmental vulnerabilities that Lesotho faces are drought, land degradation, desertification and biodiversity loss. It is estimated that over 85% of the population is exposed to the risks of climate change. Lesotho is developing an overarching climate change strategy with the aid of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA). At COP 18 in Doha, the Lesotho delegation informed the assembly that there had been more droughts and floods in the last decade than since 1978. As a result, the Prime Minister has had to declare a state of food emergency and appeal for international assistance. Energy security and access is also an important consideration in Lesotho. At COP 18, it was re-affirmed that Lesotho would be pursuing a goal of 100% power generation from renewable resources.

## Projects and Actions

### Support for a climate change response strategy

#### Agriculture, energy and food security

The GCCA is funding a EUR 4 million project, which aims to set up the policy and institutional framework required to reverse environmental degradation in Lesotho. Specifically, the project is supporting the development, finalisation and implementation of the National Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy, and a national renewable energy strategy.

Budget support will be provided in the form of two fixed phases. The first is linked to the completion of a number of actions: These include:

- The 'zero draft' of the implementation strategy for environment and climate change
- The related public sector investment programmes and their endorsement by Cabinet
- The first meeting of the 'sector' coordination group and nomination of a working group to draft terms of reference
- Finalising terms of reference for technical assistance to help the Government in the development of a national policy on climate change.

The second phase is linked to the preparation of a national climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy, and a national renewable energy strategy – including estimates of implementation costs. By then, it is also expected that the climate change and environment coordination group will meet regularly and that a climate change and environment monitoring and evaluation framework is in place.

The National Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Strategy is expected to focus on improving soil and nutrient management, water harvesting and retention, water use efficiency, and the management of eroded lands and wetlands.

## National Strategies and Reports

- Second National Communication to UNFCCC (2013)
- National Adaptation Programme of Action (2007)

Population:

**1.9 million**

GDP per capita:

**USD 2,100**

Annual carbon dioxide emissions:

**0.02 Mt**

Carbon dioxide emissions per capita:

**8 kg**

UNFCCC groups:

**G77**

Last NatComm:

**2013**