

National Range Resources Management Policy

Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation



2014

FOREWORD

Lesotho's land surface area is roughly 30,055 km² (3 million hectare), of which about 60% are rangelands. Rangelands play a pivotal role for Lesotho as a country and for Basotho as a nation. The pride and wealth of Basotho are rooted and reflected in the rearing and ownership of livestock which depends entirely on rangelands. Rangelands are also very important regionally and globally as a major source of clean water, bio-resources and they are a life form support for a variety of plants, animals and humans. Some of this water coming out of the catchments is used locally by Basotho while the excess is supplied to South Africa; this water that is exported to South Africa contributes significantly to the country's GDP in a form of royalties.

Lesotho's rangelands are however, under severe stress or rapid loss of productive and very fertile soils derived from the mineral-rich basalt rock which has over the years sustained palatable grass species such as *Themeda triandra liremo*).

The National Range Resources Policy translates vision 2020 into concrete and discrete actions. Preparation of this policy has been an all-encompassing exercise, prepared through an open and consultative process and involving wide and diverse range of stakeholders particularly initiation schools, farmers and herders. It is part of the process of transforming the Lesotho's rangelands so that they serve, in all their elements, the needs of all the people of Lesotho.

The prerequisite for an effective legal framework is the clear National Policy on range resources. Therefore, an integral part of the National Range Resources Policy will be the amendment of the Range Resource legislation to facilitate sustainable and equitable management of Lesotho's range resources.

Over the past years, a vast number of people have given their time, energy and commitment to the development of the National Range Resources Policy. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed in this process because the fate of this country's rangelands and wetlands lies entirely in our hands as Basotho nation.



Hon Minister Khotso Matla
Minister of Forestry and Land Reclamation



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation (MFLR) is composed of three line departments, which are Forestry Development, Range Resources Management and Soil and Water Conservation. The Ministry is mandated to forge ahead planning and implementation of various interventions in a comprehensive manner. In 2008 the Ministry successfully completed development and approval of the National Forestry Policy.

Extreme environmental degradation characterised by severe degradation of rangelands resources in the country triggered the process of formulating the National Range Resources Management Policy. Among main causes of this alarming rate of rangelands degradation are outdated and fragmented policy and legislation which are used to administer and regulate rangeland resources. These policies and legislation cannot effectively respond to current challenges. Range resources sector is comprised of all sorts of stakeholders that include government line ministries, local authorities, communities, and non-governmental organisations. Rangelands have deteriorated over the years hence, the current resources hardly sustain socio-economic and cultural demands as well as the ecological demands. Specific problems contributing to the negative state of affairs were identified as poor legislation enforcement, poor grazing controls, reduction in area of rangelands, uncontrolled wild fires, degraded rangelands, and ineffective institutional arrangements, fragmented legal instruments and outdated range resources management policy and legislation.

The degradation of rangelands has been a major concern to the Government of Lesotho for years. In response to this, a variety of legal measures have been put into place to control and remedy dire situation. The National Range Management Policy is compatible to National Developmental priorities and strategies as well as Multi-governmental environmental conversions. The policy is aligned with Macro-economic Policies and also recognises and complements the existing Lesotho National Environment Policy.

The resultant framework of the National Range Resources Policy consists of the Purpose, Goal, Objectives, Key Policy Areas and Guiding Principles. The key policy areas or options have been unpacked to cover the goal, objective(s) and strategies. The policy framework and options are summarised as follows:

Purpose: To provide guidance for the development of effective strategies that combats land and vegetation degradation and motivate for improved legislation and implementation thereof.

Goal: To attain sustainable development and management of rangeland resources for an enhanced biodiversity, optimum productivity and improved livelihoods of the people of Lesotho.

These cover the institutional, legislative and financial arrangements. The institutional arrangements envisage policy level advisory and coordination at the national level and policy implementation at the district and community levels. Consequently, there shall be established a three-tier structure, comprising the National Grazing Association committee (NGA) at the national level; District Grazing Association Committee (DGA) at the district level; and Grazing Association Committee (GA) at community level.

Legislative arrangements recognise the need to review and enact an enabling legislation for policy enforcement and application. This also calls for review and repealing of current Range Management and Grazing Control Regulations (as amended) and development of new Range Resources Management Regulations.

The policy document concludes with the provision for monitoring and evaluation. It examines the rationale for establishment/enhancement of a National Monitoring and Evaluation System, the objectives and the strategies for the system to be effective.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD.....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	4
LIST OF ACRONYMS.....	6
GLOSSARY □.....	7
1.0 BACKGROUND.....	8
1.1 Features of the Sector.....	8
1.1.1 Existing Situation.....	8
1.1.2 Previous Interventions on Range Resources Management.....	9
1.1.3 Institutional Arrangements.....	9
1.1.4 Stakeholders Involvement.....	9
1.1.5 Assessment of Beneficiaries.....	9
1.1.6 Demand and Supply for Rangelands.....	10
a) Socio-economic and cultural demands.....	10
b) Ecological demands.....	10
1.1.6 Legislative and Regulatory Framework.....	11
1.1.7 Funding arrangements.....	11
1.1.8 Environmental, Socio-economic and Cultural issues.....	12
1.2 National and Sectoral Policy.....	12
2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS.....	13
3.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK.....	15
3.1 Purpose.....	15
3.2 Goal.....	15
3.3 Objectives.....	16
3.4 Key Policy Areas.....	16
3.5 Guiding Principles.....	16
4.0 POLICY OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES.....	17
4.1 Sustainable management of rangeland resources.....	17
4.1.1 Goal.....	17
4.1.2 Objectives.....	17
4.1.3 Strategies.....	17
4.2 Conservation and protection of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem.....	18
4.2.1 Goal.....	18
4.2.2 Objectives.....	19
4.2.3 Strategies.....	19
4.3 Rangeland monitoring and research.....	20
4.3.2 Objectives.....	20
4.3.3 Strategies.....	20
4.4 Maintenance and protection of wetland area.....	21
4.4.1 Goal.....	21
4.4.2 Objectives.....	21
4.4.2 Strategies.....	21
4.5 Socio-economic dimensions.....	22
4.5.1 Goal.....	22
4.5.2 Objectives.....	22
4.5.3 Strategies.....	22

5.0	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY	23
5.1	Institutional Arrangements.....	23
5.2	Legal Framework.....	24
6.0	MONITORING AND EVALUATION	25
6.1	Goal.....	25
6.2	Objectives	25
6.2	Strategies.....	25
	REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY	26
	ANNEXES □.....	28

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AU	Animal Unit
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
CMBSL	Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho
CNRM	Community Natural Resource Management
DGA	District Grazing Association
DRRM	Department of Range Resources Management
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GoL	Government of Lesotho
LAPIS	Lesotho Agricultural Production and Institutional Support
LCRD	Land Conservation and Resource Development
LHDA	Lesotho Highlands Development Authority
MAFS	Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security
MCA-L	Millennium Challenge Account- Lesotho
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MFLR	Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation
MLGCA	Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NGA	National Grazing Association Committee
PES	Payment for Environmental/Ecosystem Services
RMA/GA	Range Management Area/Grazing Associations
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United State Agency for International Development

GLOSSARY

Biological Diversity: Variability among living organisms from all sources and the ecological complexes of which they are part.

Browse: Twigs or leaves of shrubs and trees those are available for animal consumption

Carrying capacity of rangelands: The balance between animal and plant productivity on rangeland is its carrying capacity - “the maximum animal numbers which can graze each year on a given area of grassland for a specific number of days without inducing a downward trend in forage production, forage quality,”

Conservation: Protection, maintenance, rehabilitation, restoration and enhancement of natural resources and includes the management of the use of natural resources to ensure sustainability of such use.

Development: The process of improving the quality of all human lives. Important aspects of development are raising people’s living standards, creating conditions conducive to the growth of people’s self-esteem and increasing people’s freedom of choice.

Ecosystem services: The benefits people obtain from ecosystems.

Ecosystem: Biological environment consisting both biotic (living things) and abiotic (non-living things) components, interacting with their environment (soil, water, climatic factors etc.) as a functional unit.

Gender mainstreaming: The process of assessing the implications of women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies and programmes, in any area and at different levels.

Gender: The socially and culturally constructed roles, privileges, responsibilities, power and influence, social relations, expectations and value of males and females, boys and girls.

Grazing capacity: The maximum number of animals which can be allowed to graze sustainably in a given area of rangeland without causing deterioration.

Liremo: All grass and grass-like species, shrubs and trees that are found in the rangelands

Participatory approach: A planning approach in which all stakeholders, and in particular the envisaged beneficiaries, are part of the decision making process.

Policy coordination: Voluntary and largely unenforceable alignments of national policies and measures in particular fields.

Policy harmonisation: Agreement on the manner in which each member /institution will exercise or use a particular instrument over which it retains control.

Range resources: include grazable forage, non-palatable grasses, wildlife, medicinal plants, water and other beneficial resources.

Range: include forestlands that have grazing resources, or seeded lands that are managed like rangelands.

Rangelands: a broad category of land comprising more than 40% of earth’s land area, are characterised by native plant communities, which are associated with grazing, and are managed by ecological, rather than agronomic methods.

Trophic level: energy storage level in the ecosystem

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation (MFLR) was established in 2003. It is mandated to provide policy and strategic leadership in three (3) key areas, *viz*: Forestry Development, Range Resources Management and Soil and Water Conservation.

In order to guide its mandate, the MFLR embarked on the process of reviewing existing policies, strategies and legislation. This was pioneered by review of relevant documents and development of the National Forestry Policy approved in 2008. Similar policy review and development work pertaining to management and use of rangeland resources started around the same time but was delayed due to other institutional constraints. Amongst other constraints, it was established that the current instruments of policy and legislation were outdated. These refer, *inter alia*, to Land Husbandry Act No.22 of 1969, Range Management and Grazing Control Regulations 1980 and subsequent amendments, and Livestock Range Management Policy of 1994.

The DRRM has therefore opted to conclude revision and development of an appropriate policy on range resources management. The policy is intended to be all inclusive by recognising all range resources, alignment to other existing policies, wide stakeholders' consultations as well as take into account recent developmental challenges and priorities.

1.1 Features of the Sector

1.1.1 Existing Situation

Lesotho has a total land area of 30,355 square kilometres of which around 60% is estimated to be rangeland. The country has four distinct agro-ecological zones, *viz*: lowlands, foothills, mountains and the Senqu River valley. Lesotho has temperate climate varying throughout the four seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter. The mean temperatures vary from 25°C in summer to 15°C in winter. The annual mean precipitation is between 700 and 800 millimetres. Most of the rainfall is experienced between October and April whilst snow is common between May and September especially in the higher peaks.

The rangelands in Lesotho are dominated by grass and are in a poor condition. They have been deteriorating over the years largely due to weak institutional arrangements and poor grazing management practices. The last Lesotho National Rangeland Inventory was carried out from 1983 to 1986, estimated rangelands to comprise about 60% of the total land area or 2 million hectares (Ministry of Agriculture and Marketing, 1988). The predominant vegetation types were broadly classified in the study as *Hyparrhenia*, *Eragrostis/Aristida*, *Themeda*, *Festuca*, *Chrysocoma/Artemisia*, *Leucosidea*, *Rhus* and *Merxmuellera*. Although the study dates over 20 years, the MFLR estimates that the soil erosion occurs at the rate of 40 tonnes per hectare/annum.

Based on the carrying capacity of 8 hectares/animal unit (AU), the study had concluded that overstocking rate ranges between of 40-80%. Overstocking is therefore recognised as one of the contributing factors towards land degradation resulting in overgrazing.

Degradation of the natural grazing lands of Lesotho is largely due to changing land use patterns, such as encroachment of cultivation and settlements into rangelands, partial breakdown of traditional seasonal grazing patterns due to increased stock theft, less mobility of herds as a result of new settlements, loss of authority of traditional chiefs, confusion about authority concerning land use, and Government of Lesotho's policy of discouraging transhumance, decrease of fallow grazing land, because of a fear of loss of traditional right of use if not cultivated, and uncontrolled burning, and excessive livestock numbers.

Other factors include climatic changes such as prolonged winters, droughts and erratic rainfall which affects rangelands rehabilitation; poor law enforcement; institutional arrangement.

The current infrastructure and services on range resources management include technical offices for Range Management Staff (MFLR) and complimentary offices from the ministries of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS), Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs (MEMWA), Tourism, Environment and Culture (MTEC), and Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs (MLGCA). These ministries are represented at central and district levels, collectively provide oversight, technical advice and support, capacity building to communities, monitoring and evaluation services on range resources management.

1.1.2 Previous Interventions on Range Resources Management

In addition to what the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation through the Range Management Department has done, several interventions on range resources management regarding determination of rangeland condition were done by The Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), Drakensberg Maloti Mountains Conservation and Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in the Southern Lesotho (CMBSL), Wetlands restoration and Conservation Project under Millennium Challenge Account (MCA). For further details and analysis refer to annex 3.

1.1.3 Institutional Arrangements

The management of rangelands was vested in chiefs under the Laws of Lerotholi 1939 to regulate grazing, whereas the pressure put on rangelands by livestock continued to mount. The range management issues were spread between the Division of Soil and Water Conservation and Livestock of the Ministry of Agriculture. In recognition that institutional strategies needed to be streamlined, the Range Management Division was established in 1979 to focus on rangelands management. Realignment of the Ministries in 2003 saw the Range Management division being moved to the newly created Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation and was renamed Department of Range Resources Management.

1.1.4 Stakeholders Involvement

There are various stakeholders involved in the regulation, control, administration and utilisation of range resources. Other than the government ministries, the other key stakeholders include: Community Councils, Chiefs, herders, livestock owners and Grazing Associations. Institutions providing finance and/or technical support comprise: development partners, institutions of higher learning, Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA), Millennium Challenge Account-Lesotho (MCA-L) and non-governmental organisations. A list of stakeholders for the sustainable management of rangelands in Lesotho is attached as Annex 1.

1.1.5 Assessment of Beneficiaries

The main beneficiaries from proper management of range resources can be categorised into primary and secondary groups. The primary beneficiaries are range resources users including livestock owners, herders and communities. The secondary beneficiaries from the national to the global scale include: the state, utility companies, downstream population, tourism industry, urban populations, private companies and international communities.

1.1.6 Demand and Supply for Rangelands

The real demand for rangelands is best explained by examining the importance of the resource. Rangelands are a life support for human beings, plants, birds and animals. These demands can be classified into socio-economic and ecological as follows:

a) Socio-economic and cultural demands

Livestock grazing

Productivity of livestock for most rural communities depends on the quantity and quality of forage available for grazing. The high yield of rangelands provides the living and income opportunities from utilisation and sale of livestock to honour social, cultural and economic demands.

Water supply

The rangelands are an important source of water. They purify and filter water for sustenance of life. In the case of Lesotho, the high quality and abundant water is affectionately termed the 'white gold' as it generates royalty income through the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Treaty and export arrangements with South Africa. Since life on earth depends on water, sound rangeland management is essential to increase the productivity of water in general and maintain an ecological balance.

Eco-tourism

Rangelands in good condition provide the aesthetic beauty and recreational opportunities that are conducive to ecotourism development. Communities are expected to sustainably meet their essential needs while conserving their environment and generating income from eco-tourism activities.

Medicinal plants

Medicinal plants form part of the rangeland resources. The plants are harvested for cure by individuals and traditional healers as well as for sale. It is imperative that harvests are regulated on the basis of careful study of wild stocks concerned and monitored so that any over-use can be swiftly corrected. Local communities must have a part in management of wild resources in their areas, and should benefit from economic returns.

b) Ecological demands

Biological diversity

Rangelands provide for species diversity of plants and animals. Good rangeland management including protection and conservation of plant and animal species helps to maintain a healthy ecosystem. In addition, rangelands provide habitat for many species of wildlife. It is therefore essential to maintain or restore desired wildlife habitat through ecologically sound rangeland management practices.

Soil stability

Rangeland provides a vegetative cover on the land. Good cover is essential to minimise soil erosion through protection of land from heavy rainfall, overland flow and wind.

Hydrologic function

Catchment areas are important sources of water. Good vegetation cover provides a cushion for water catchment as more water is absorbed thereby reducing runoff and increasing ecological balance. Healthy rangelands are responsible for storage, retention and slow release of water. It is therefore necessary to provide for integrated management of water and land uses in order to enhance productivity of catchment areas.

Nutrient recycling

Healthy rangelands provide for conservation, and recycling of nutrients available for growth of the plants and animals.

In order to satisfy the above demands and ensure sustainability of supply, it is essential to develop sound policies and strategies on rangeland and range resources management.

1.1.7 Legislative and Regulatory Framework

The founding legislation on rangelands is the Laws of Lerotholi 1939 which provided for land as a birth right to every Mosotho and access and control of rangelands under the Chiefs administration. This legislation was reinforced by the promulgation of the Land Husbandry Act 1969. These gave birth to the Range Management and Grazing Control Regulations of 1980 and subsequent amendments. Since then several policies and legislation have evolved to cover the general environment including rangeland resources.

Administration and regulation of the rangeland resources now rests with the Community Councils within their jurisdiction as per Local Government Act 1997. The Range Resources Management Department plays the role of public awareness, communication and advisory in the implementation of regulations.

A comprehensive list of relevant policies and legal frameworks is attached as Annex 2.

1.1.8 Funding arrangements

The Government of Lesotho is responsibly funding range management activities as per budget allocations to the MFLR. This budget is supplemented from projects and non-governmental organisations, development partners and international organisations. The provision of establishing a Development Fund, through introduction of grazing fees in 1992, was subsequently revoked as per Range Management and Grazing Control (Amendment) Regulations of 1993. This implies that there is no sustainable funding for rangeland management. However as the system is running, the payment for ecosystem services envisioned in this policy will sustain funding in the management of rangelands. It is envisaged that the proceeds shall remain with the community structure for utilisation in rangeland improvement programmes (rangeland reseedling, wetland areas protection and control of invader species).

1.1.9 Environmental, Socio-economic and Cultural issues

Rangelands and range resources are part of the broad environment. Poor management of the rangelands and range resources affects the entire environment. Consequently, management of the environment, protection and conservation of the biodiversity is a shared national responsibility. The key ministries responsible for natural resources, tourism, environment and culture, local government and chieftainship affairs; justice and human rights, and agriculture and food security have a stake in good management of rangelands and range resources.

Socio-economic and cultural issues on rangelands and range resources relate in particular to access. The communities at large believe that they have entitlement to unlimited access and use of rangelands and range resources for their economic, social and cultural requirements. Linked to the economy is the ability to grow and sell livestock as well as harvest various range resources for sale. Production of livestock and access to rangeland and range resources, are equally important to perform social functions, rituals, initiation school as well as for traditional medication.

It is therefore important to ensure development of policies and strategies which are sensitive to environment and socio-cultural issues.

1.2 National and Sectoral Policy

1.2.1 Policy environment

The government of Lesotho has been concerned about degradation of the rangelands for a long time. In response to this, a variety of legal measures have been put in place to control grazing and reduce the number of livestock on the rangelands. Due to the fragmentation of the legal instruments and lack of enforcement, the problem has continued unabated. To date two policy documents were developed by the Range Management Division under the Ministry of Agriculture that relate directly to rangelands. The first (Range Management Policy) was developed in 1985. This was more focused as it covered almost all the aspects and products of rangelands. This was never tested or used to guide the implementation strategies to solve the problem of degradation even though objectives and strategies were clearly set. The 1994 policy (Livestock and Range Management) focused mainly on livestock production rather than rangelands. Only one of the nine strategies addresses rangeland issues.

1.2.2 Compatibility with National Development Priorities and Strategies

The National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) provides the overall national strategic thrust and guides towards the achievements of the National Vision 2020.

The national development priorities as articulated in the Millennium Development Goals are as follows:

- a) Social and economic dimensions
- b) Management and conservation of natural resources
- c) Promotion of community participation

1.2.3 *Regional and International Commitments*

The Government of Lesotho is party to several regional and international commitments. Consequently, the country endorses and adheres to the following relevant conventions and protocols: United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD); United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR); Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES); Convention on Fishing and Conservation of Living Resources of the High Seas; United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and Montreal Protocol for the Protection of the Ozone Layer. The Government also accede to the internationally accepted principles of the 1972 Stockholm Declaration and the 1992 Rio Declarations as adopted by the United Nations.

1.2.4 *Linkages with Macro-economic Policies*

The Government of Lesotho advocates for alignment of sectoral policies to the macro-economic policies. This is intended to ensure that policy development is consistent with national priorities.

1.2.5 *Adherence to Environmental Policies*

Rangeland resources are considered as part of the broad environmental resources. Consequently, the development of the current policy recognises and complements the existing Lesotho National Environment Policy.

2.0 **PROBLEM STATEMENT AND ANALYSIS**

Livestock in Lesotho plays an important role in the livelihood of rural communities. Livestock provide meat, milk, draught power, transport and other subsistence needs. The sale of the animal products is the source of income. The rearing of livestock for this variety of purposes has contributed negatively towards management of natural resources. This is because the rangelands have been overgrazed or over-utilized thereby removing vegetative cover and exposing soil to erosion. The continued mismanagement of livestock within the rangeland ecosystem has rationed out the wild herbivores due to removed vegetative cover. The wild life populations have been reduced drastically which has caused extinction of the big game. Equally the population increase has put pressure on the rangeland as demand for residential sites and cropland increased, resulting in the reduction of grazing land.

Over the years the situation of rangelands deterioration has worsened; communal utilization of rangeland where individuals compete with one another for access to limited amount of forage is believed to be one of the myriad causes of land degradation. This, in turn has rendered the natural resources inability to sustain themselves.

Specific problems that affect the productivity of the range resources were previously identified by Portillo *et al.* (1991) and complemented by wider stakeholders' consultations:

a) Poor legal control

Legislation relating to range management is weak and ineffective. There are however policies and legislative frameworks that, if implemented can contribute to protection and sustainable use of the rangelands. The practical limitation to existing laws is lack of enforcement.

b) Poor grazing control

Overexploitation of rangeland resources over the years is believed to be the results of poor grazing control practices.

c) Reduction in area of rangelands

The acceleration of human occupancy and livestock population has intensified pressure on the rangelands. The demand for establishing home-stead and need for more food from field crops has resulted in encroachment into the land that was previously used as rangelands. The grazing area is then reduced. The rangeland size continues to decrease due to infrastructural works e.g. construction of big dams.

d) Uncontrolled wildfires

Fire is a valuable management tool to be used in conjunction with proper grazing practices, the objective being to maintain plant diversity. However, continued uncontrolled and sporadic fires have contributed to deterioration of rangelands significantly.

e) Degraded rangelands

Rangelands in Lesotho are primarily used for livestock grazing. Injudicious wild fires, cultivation and over harvesting of resources reduce the functionality of the rangelands thereby threatening their sustainability. The reasons for the deteriorating rangelands include overstocking, premature grazing, and continuous grazing that result in over-grazing, as a consequence of these, there is depletion of some species. Over-harvesting of rangeland resources has also become a problem; loads of certain grass species are harvested for sale in towns. While it is believed rangelands are decreasing in size, livestock numbers on the other hand are increasing. Livestock population expressed in Animal Units for twenty years show increased figures from about 700 000 to 720 000 (Figure 1).

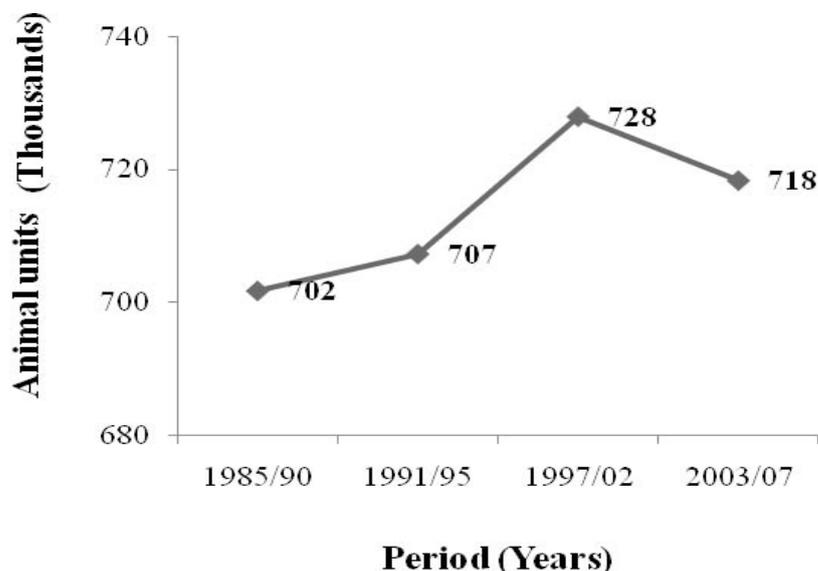


Figure 1, Livestock population from 1985 to 2007 (Bureau of Statistics Lesotho)

f) Ineffective institutional structures

The other problem that affects the productivity of rangelands relates to the ineffective institutional arrangements. There is often confusion on authority, roles and responsibilities among local government structures which often leads to uncoordinated management of rangelands.

g) Fragmented legal instruments

Problems have also been noted in the existing legal and planning frameworks. The laws of Lerotoli and Land Husbandry Act were geared more to improve the management of land and grazing. Most of the existing legislative instruments relate indirectly to rangeland resources. However, these are currently fragmented, ineffective and are not adequately enforced. Therefore there is a resultant lack of control in all aspects of rangeland management. The challenge is the harmonization of these so as to ensure that the proposed policy is consistent with other existing sectoral laws and policies.

It is therefore the role of the Government of Lesotho through the Department of Rangeland Resources Management policy to attain, through actions consistent with other sectoral policies and development goals, the sustainable development and management of rangeland resources for the enhanced biodiversity, optimum productivity and improved livelihoods of the present and future generations.

h) Climate change

Rangelands are severely affected by prolonged drought, erratic rainfall as well as both early and late frost. They result in deterioration of the rangelands and thus poor condition. Additionally they result in changes in distribution of species whereby more tolerant species such as resprouting Karoo bushes increase in abundance.

3.0 POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.1 Purpose

The Government of Lesotho, through the MFLR, identified the need to revise the current policy in order to develop a more comprehensive framework to address the poor state of rangelands. The continuing fast deterioration of rangeland resources, as evidenced by loss of valuable flora and fauna, drying of wetlands and other negative changes in the ecosystems, has provided a compelling case for urgent and appropriate policy intervention. The policy is therefore intended to provide guidance for development of effective strategies to combat land and vegetation degradation and to motivate for improved legislation and effective implementation thereof.

3.2 Goal

The overall goal of the policy is to attain sustainable development and management of rangeland resources for the enhanced biodiversity, optimum productivity and improved livelihoods of the present and future generations.

3.3 Objectives

The key objectives of the policy are:

- To raise public awareness and promote community and wider stakeholders' active participation in rangeland resources management,
- To develop and implement efficient and effective strategies to avert land and vegetation degradation,
- To improve and maintain productivity of rangeland resources at optimum level so as to promote ecosystems balance,
- To rehabilitate and improve the quality of rangeland so as to enhance productivity of livestock and wildlife habitat,
- To conserve and increase the availability of native plant species for economic, social and cultural utilisation,
- To protect water resources and improve the water quality and yield,
- To enhance the aesthetic beauty of the landscape to increase opportunities for sustainable recreation and ecotourism,
- To improve income opportunities and quality of life of the rural communities, and
- To promote disaster, risk reduction, gender equity, as well as HIV and AIDS mainstreaming in range resources management.

3.4 Key Policy Areas

Based on the policy issues, the key focus areas have been identified as follows:

- Sustainable management of rangeland resources,
- Conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem,
- Rangelands monitoring and research,
- Maintenance and protection of wetland areas, and
- Socio-economic dimensions.

3.5 Guiding Principles

The overall guiding principles to ensure successful implementation of the policy directives are:

- Effective and efficient governance system at local level,

- Sound technical support and advice,
- Cooperation, collaboration and partnership among key stakeholders,
- Community participation and involvement,
- Gender equality and mainstreaming,
- Effective policy and legislation enforcement, and
- Harmonisation of public sector policies and strategies.

4.0 POLICY OPTIONS AND STRATEGIES

4.1 Sustainable management of rangeland resources

Rangelands resources are renewable, however due to factors such as overexploitation, uncontrolled wild fires, climatic changes, cultivation of rangelands and poor management, the rangelands are severely degraded. The situation results in loss of palatable species and voluntary replacement by less palatable and invader species to fill the void, destruction of microenvironment in which other species flourish, loss of protective vegetative cover, decline in biomass production, and accelerated soil erosion. It is therefore necessary to ensure proper and systematic management of rangelands for optimum plant and animal productivity by putting into place mechanisms that allow for equitable access and participation of various stakeholders.

4.1.1 Goal

The government shall ensure sustainable management of range resources to curb land and vegetation degradation through development and implementation of appropriate strategies for rehabilitation of lost rangeland resources and also by ensuring equitable access and participation of stakeholders in the sustainable development of rangeland resources.

4.1.2 Objectives

- To develop strategies for proper management of rangeland resources,
- To promote integrated approach to planning and management of rangeland resources,
- To develop appropriate policy and strategies for rehabilitation and possible restoration of lost rangeland resources, and
- To promote effective stakeholders participation in the planning and implementation of rangeland management programmes.

4.1.3 Strategies

- Foster integrated planning for sustainable management of range resources,

- Develop and facilitate implementation of grazing management plans, which promote livestock grazing system that recognises rest and rotation and variations of deferment of grazing areas,
- Review and/or strengthen existing guidelines and regulations on grazing control management,
- Strengthen and resuscitate existing Range Management Associations and where necessary, promote establishment of new structures,
- Promote fodder production and storage for stall feeding programmes,
- Restore degraded rangeland through ecologically sound methods by stakeholders including communities and herders,
- Provide relevant information and education and also to integrate indigenous knowledge to the various levels of stakeholders on proper planning, management and implementation of rangeland resources management programmes,
- Explore options and benefits for provision of environment services on the rangelands, and
- Work with the ministry responsible for environment, advocate for resuscitation of The National Environment Council or to establish as appropriate an environment coordinating body for coordination and co-operation among relevant stakeholders including local authorities, private sector and other organizations that are engaged in environmental protection programmes.

4.2 Conservation and protection of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem

The rangeland is a natural home for various plants and animals. Co-existence of various species complements each other and enhances energy flow through trophic levels in the food chain and biogeochemical nutrient cycling. The shared physical environment for the biodiversity comprises the wetlands, rivers, indigenous forests and man-made settlements. It is therefore important that a healthy and balanced ecosystem is maintained to sustain the biodiversity.

4.2.1 Goal

The Government in liaison and collaboration with appropriate ministries and institutions shall ensure healthy biodiversity through proper conservation of plant and animal species in the rangelands through:

- Protection of water sources against destruction and negative exploitation for sustenance of rangeland and riverine habitats,
- Protection and conservation of threatened indigenous vegetation against overexploitation to maintain balanced ecosystem,

- Maintenance of natural grasslands and other vegetation and management of invasive species, and
- Development of guidelines for establishment of rangeland infrastructure and cattle post areas to avoid compromising the rangeland ecosystems.

4.2.2. Objectives

- To promote conservation and maintenance of valuable species of flora and fauna,
- To promote sustenance of rangeland riverine livelihoods,
- To improve energy flow throughout trophic levels in the food chain and nutrient cycling, and
- To enhance the aesthetic beauty of the country and stimulate potential growth in sustainable recreation and ecotourism activities.

4.2.3 Strategies

- Provide information and educate communities, grazing associations, herders and other resource users on the importance and protection of rangeland ecosystems,
- Implement the National Biodiversity Strategic and Action Plan targeted at conservation and protection of vulnerable ecosystems in liaison with the ministry responsible for environmental matters and other key stakeholders,
- Promote establishment and capacity building of conservation groups at community level including youth, herders, traditional healers and other key resource users,
- Devise or identify and implement mechanisms that encourage mandatory compensation for utilisation of rangeland resources (environmental services/ecosystem services – PES),
- Uphold designation of hot spots for conservation and protection of threatened and endangered species,
- Develop guidelines for economic and sustainable utilisation and harvesting of plant and animal species without compromising food chain and quality of biodiversity,
- Promote establishment of community gardens through collection and propagation of seeds for threatened and endangered species,
- Support systematic reintroduction of lost valuable species of plants, birds and animals to appropriate habitats,
- Regulate development of man-made ecosystems in the rangelands.
- Develop national rangeland management fire policy,

- Work in unison with key stakeholders including the ministries responsible for rearing and registration of livestock to prohibit utilization of rangeland resources by stock that are deemed unproductive, unsuitable and unregistered, and
- Develop guidelines and procedures to be followed when developments/infrastructural works deemed destructive to rangeland resources e.g. Mining and Road construction are carried out on rangelands. Based on set guidelines and procedures, liaise with relevant authorities to hold developers or persons responsible for infrastructural works liable for restoration of disturbed rangeland resources to near pristine or pre-development conditions.

4.3 Rangeland monitoring and research

The last national rangeland inventory was undertaken in 1982-1986. There is currently no reliable information on the current situation of the rangelands that is available for observations and qualitative assessments. There is limited information on the current stocking and destocking levels. Limited research on the rangelands situation and alternative strategies was undertaken almost 10 years ago. There is therefore a need for more research to inform strategies and decision-making processes.

4.3.1 Policy Statement

The Government shall, in collaboration with relevant ministries, institutions and development partners, ensure inventory of rangeland resources, monitoring and evaluation of rangelands resources utilisation, and promote research and development for better understanding and informed decision making on rangeland strategies and interventions.

4.3.2 Objectives

- To ensure availability of and access to information on rangeland situation;
- To determine capacity of rangeland to support livestock production,
- To determine the level of exploitation and effects of mitigation measures, and
- To stimulate and coordinate research from professional individuals and relevant research institutions and key partners on rangelands management and resources.

4.3.3 Strategies

- Monitor rangelands on regular basis and establish a reporting system to capture rangelands programme implementation from the district level and other key stakeholders,
- Develop and disseminate information products on key strategies and implementation progress,
- Develop a National Research Agenda to prioritise research on range resources and use it to mobilise required resource from the government and development partners,
- Undertake periodic research and propose appropriate strategies on rangelands management, conservation and rehabilitation of ecosystem,
- Promote collaborative research with local and international research partners, institutions and individual researchers,

- Collaborate with institutions, research institutes and educational centres for training and educating specialized human force,
- Mobilize and establish grant program to provide assistance to expand the professional education of range resources scientists, and
- Determine rangeland health status and recommend appropriate remedial measures that until the rangeland has recovered.

4.4 Maintenance and protection of wetland area

Wetlands are important source of water into major rivers and also serve as a habitat for both flora and fauna. Compared to the 19th century, the estimation for wetland loss is 50%. The major activities responsible for wetland area loss are development activities and over exploitation of wetland resources. Environmental impacts on wetland area loss are changes in water regime, changes in water quality and introduction of exotic and alien species.

4.4.1 Goal

The Government shall ensure that information on the location, status, extend, characteristics and function of the wetlands is provided to promote the understanding and conservation of this resources.

4.4.2 Objectives

- To produce, maintain, and deliver current and historical geospatial wetland data and information for the Nation, in partnership with others,
- To analyze and report on status, trends, threats, and assessments of wetlands and related habitats, with a focus on habitats that have experienced substantial wetland change or that are changing rapidly, and
- To promote sound decision making and policy formulation through the development and dissemination of wetlands data and information through a variety of media.

4.4.3 Strategies

- Formulate and disseminate information on importance of wetland and wetland areas protection and maintenance,
- Develop guidelines on cattlepost adjudication for protection of wetlands,
- Identify degraded wetland and wetland areas and determine appropriate reclamation activities,
- Develop guidelines on infrastructural developments on rangelands for wetland areas protection,
- Promote declaration of major wetland catchments as protected areas,
- Uphold coordination and collaboration on wetland areas management,

- Collaborate with key stakeholders to foster diversification of alternative livelihood coping strategies, to reduce pastoral communities' dependence on cattle posts and wetland areas thus enhancing resilience of rangeland resources,
- Explore international climate change funding opportunities to support emerging climate change smart initiatives, and
- Collaborate with relevant stakeholders to improve livestock nutrition programmes (e.g. fodder production, hay making, fodder banking), and promote construction of water harvesting structures for livestock drinking to minimize direct use of wetlands.

4.5 Socio-economic dimensions

The rangeland resources play an important role in the social, cultural and economic setting of Lesotho because they are utilised to perform various social (food for men and livestock, shelter, household amenities, handicrafts and fuel wood) and cultural requirements such as traditional medicines and rituals. Therefore a clear policy direction is necessary to balance the requirement.

4.5.1 Goal

The Government shall ensure proper management and control for harvesting of rangeland resources to meet social, cultural and economic requirements for improvement of the livelihoods of the rural communities and without compromising the status of biodiversity.

4.5.2 Objectives

- To provide for controlled utilisation of rangeland resources for biomass energy development and socio-economic and cultural, and
- To provide scope for economic and recreational exploitation of rangeland resources to alleviate poverty in the rural areas.

4.5.3 Strategies

- Review and develop guidelines in consultation with other relevant stakeholders for harvesting rangeland resources by various resource users,
- Review and promote local structures to be equipped with skills for effective management and control of rangelands resources exploitation,
- Improve participatory grazing management planning
- Work in collaboration with relevant authorities to strengthen curriculum in tertiary institutions to integrate Climate Change and Range Science
- Provide technical support for enhanced productivity of rangeland resources in selected areas and exploitation for income generation purposes,
- Promote opportunities for private sector, institutions, non-governmental organisations and development partners' involvement in the development and management of rangeland resources; and

- Mainstream gender and HIV and AIDS in planning and implementation of rangeland management programmes.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Management of rangeland resources by user communities under which detailed plans are developed and agreed to by concerned stakeholders is a deliberate means by which the Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation devolves rangeland management authority to local users. This approach ensures that communities managing the resources have the legal rights and the economic incentives to take substantial responsibility for sustained use of rangeland resources. Under this approach, the communities become the primary implementers, assisted and monitored by technical services.

The Ministry is therefore supporting Grazing Associations formation and strengthening in the country while on the other hand sustains administration of rangeland areas outside grazing association jurisdictions by different local authorities' structures.

5.1 Institutional Arrangements

The Ministry of Forestry and Land Reclamation, through the Department of Range Resources Management, shall be the custodian of this policy. The Ministry shall therefore provide an enabling environment for effective conservation and sustainable use of rangelands and range resources. The Department of Range Resources Management shall drive the implementation of the National Rangelands Programme including drafting of the enabling legislation, mobilisation and coordination of the resources required for implementation as well as providing capacity building and technical support to the various implementing stakeholders including rural communities.

The Ministry shall work with relevant line ministries responsible for Agriculture and Food Security, Natural Resources, Mining, Tourism, Environment and Culture, Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs, Justice, Human Rights and Rehabilitation and Law and Constitutional Affairs, Education and Training, Home Affairs and Public Safety, Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation, Public Service, and their corresponding institutions/agencies to ensure harmonisation of the policies and streamline implementation. The Ministry shall also coordinate the implementation initiatives by the private sector, NGO's and community based organisations.

In order to promote synergy in the approach, there shall be established a three-tier structure comprising the National Grazing Associations Committee (NGA) at the national level, District Grazing Associations Committees (DGA) at the district level, and Grazing Associations Committee (GA) at the community level as illustrated in Figure 1. The key mandate of NGA shall be to advise MFLR on policy and implementation strategies. The composition of the NGA shall be drawn from District Grazing Associations Committees, MFLR Senior Management, Local Government, other relevant key Ministries, Development Partners, and Educational and Research Institutions.

The DGA shall provide the strategic directions for the range resources programmes at district level. The DGA shall report and make recommendations to the NGA. Representation to the DGA shall be drawn from the Grazing Associations, MFLR, Local Government, other Line Ministries, Non Governmental Organization and relevant Community Based Organization.

The implementation of the foregoing structures shall recognise the existing structures, recommend reviews where appropriate after due consultations with relevant stakeholders.

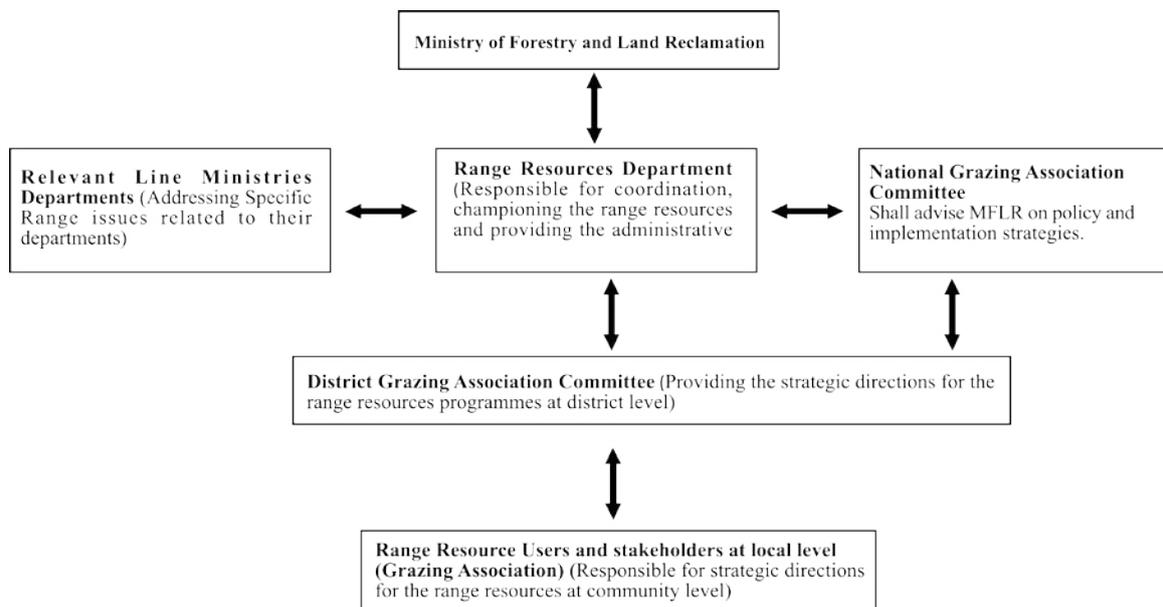


Figure 1: Proposed Institutional Arrangement

Legend: The double-headed arrows illustrate a reporting, liaison and feedback mechanism.

5.2 Legal Framework

This Policy shall require enactment of an enabling legislation for its enforcement and application. It is therefore necessary to review the current Land Husbandry Act No.22 of 1969 and remove relevant sections pertaining to rangelands and range resources management for incorporation into a new Act informed by this Policy. A next sensible step is to review and revoke the current Range Management and Grazing Control Regulations (as amended) and develop new Rangeland and Range Resources Management Regulations. These regulations shall cover protection, land use and utilisation of rangelands and range resources. Protection and/or conservation regulations shall cover environment and biodiversity, soil and water resources, nature and landscape as well as social and cultural values. The land use regulations shall cover zoning of rangelands. The utilisation regulations shall provide for rangelands rehabilitation, production and access to range resources, eco-tourism and recreational uses, management and control of grazing areas including protection of grazing areas, and general guidelines on management of rangelands and range resources.

6.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

6.1 Goal

The Government recognises the importance of monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of the National Range Resources Policy. It is essential to determine on an on-going basis whether there is progress in implementation of rangelands and range resources management programmes and if the desired results are achieved. It is therefore necessary to establish a National Rangeland Monitoring and Evaluation System.

6.2 Objectives

- To provide the Government and other key stakeholders with an up-to-date information on progress made in the implementation of the National Range Resources Policy,
- To make informed decisions on choice of implementation strategies,
- To review and strengthen on the basis of monitoring results, the implementation strategies so as to ensure effective policy implementation, and
- To make proposals for appropriate policy and legislative review.

6.3 Strategies

- Establish and maintain a monitoring and evaluation system in consultation with the stakeholders,
- Develop appropriate national indicators to monitor progress on attainment of set policy objectives,
- Harmonise national indicators with those proposed at regional and international levels,
- Review progress on implementation of rangelands and range resources programmes on monthly basis at the community level, on quarterly basis at the district level and on annual basis at the national level through multi-stakeholders,
- Develop and implement a mechanism to ensure that reports on monitoring and evaluation are generated at the community level, district level and national level are made available to the stakeholders and the public at large,
- Establish a multi-stakeholder technical committee to monitor progress made in the implementation of the Policy, and
- Undertake periodic review of the Policy after five (5) years to bring it in line with new challenges and developments at various levels.

REFERENCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Agency of International Development of United States of America 1995: Community Natural Resource Management- Final Report.
- Bonham, C.D. 1989. Measurements for Terrestrial Vegetation. New York: John Wiley and Sons
- Chapeyama Oliver; USAID 2004: “Rangeland Management in Lesotho”. Report on Assessment of Needs to Reintroduction of Grazing Fees
- Child R. Dennis *et al* 1984: Arid and Semiarid lands “Sustainable use and management in developing countries”
- Du Toit, P.C.V. 1997. Description of a method for assessing wild condition in the Karoo. African Journal of Range and Forage Science 14(3):90 – 93 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA). 2005. Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Synthesis. Island Press, Washington. 155pp
- Furstenburg, D. 2002. Optimising game production in a new era: the road to financial success. Grootfontein Agric vol 5(2002): 17 – 27
- Hartley Dawn for PARTICIP GmbH Consultants 2001: “Synthesis Report on Preparing Integrated Natural Resource Management” for the Government of Lesotho, Ministry of Environment, Gender and Youth Affairs
- IUCN 1995: Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Natural Resource Management in Southern Africa
- Kingdom of Lesotho (1984) (1984): Melao ea Lerotholi
- Kingdom of Lesotho 1987: Report of the Land policy Review Commission
- Kingdom of Lesotho 1989: National Environmental Action Plan
- Kingdom of Lesotho 1994: National Action Plan to Implement Agenda 21
- Kingdom of Lesotho 1996: Agricultural Sector Investment Programme: policies, Institutional frameworks and strategies
- Kingdom of Lesotho 2000: Land Policy Review Commission
- Kingdom of Lesotho 2000: Lesotho Vision 2020
- Kingdom of Lesotho 2001(Draft): Energy Policy Framework for the Kingdom of Lesotho
- Kingdom of Lesotho 2003; Programme for Implementation of Local Government in Lesotho
- Kingdom of Lesotho 2005: Poverty Reduction Strategy
- Kingdom of Lesotho: National Environmental Action Plan
- Kingdom of Lesotho: Range Management and Grazing Control Regulations Legal Notice No. 39 of 1980
- Kingdom of Lesotho: The land Act No 17 of 1979
- Kingdom of Lesotho: The Land Husbandry Act of 1969
- Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA), 2005: Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Synthesis. Island Press, Washington. 155pp

Ministry of Agriculture and Marketing 1985: Range Management Policy

National Environment Secretariat 1997: The State of the Environment in Lesotho

National Environment Secretariat 2000: National strategy on Lesotho's Biological Diversity: Conservation and Sustainable Use

Portillo E. M *et al* 1991: Planning for Management of Communal Natural Resources affected by Livestock

Smith, E.L. 1994a. Class notes for Range Management RAM 456/556. Fast Copy, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Smith, E.L. 1994b. Class Lectures (1 November-30 November, 1994) for Range Management RAM 456/556. School of Renewable Natural Resources, University of Arizona, Tucson.

Stoddart, L.A., A.D. Smith, and T.W. Box. 1975. Range Management. New York: McGraw-Hill, 532 pp

UNEP 1990: Rangeland and Soil Conservation

UNEP 2000: From Policy to Implementation

ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of stakeholders for the sustainable management of rangelands in Lesotho

Annex 2: List of Relevant Policy and Legal Frameworks

Annex 3: List of previous interventions related to rangeland management in Lesotho

Annex 1: List of stakeholders for the sustainable management of rangelands in Lesotho

Stakeholder	Role/ Responsibilities
Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security	Livestock improvement and fodder production
Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture	Ecotourism development; mainstreaming environmental issues into the National Environment Policy; National Parks management; culture and heritage preservation
Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship Affairs	Regulation, control and administration of rangelands and range resources through Chiefs and Community Councils
Ministry of Energy, Meteorology and Water Affairs	Promote conservation and management of water resources; and promote biomass energy
Ministry of Home Affairs	Law enforcement through the police
Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sports and Recreation	Gender mainstreaming; promotion of youth participation; and promotion of sports and recreational activities
Ministry of Education and Training	Integration of rangelands and range resources management in the curriculum
Ministry of Justice, Constitutional Affairs and Human Rights	Development of legal framework for management and application of laws
Ministry of Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and Marketing	Marketing of destocked and culled animals to ease pressure on rangelands
Ministry of Mining	Collaboration on mining and quarrying locations
Ministry of Correctional Service and Law	Development of legal framework for management and application of laws
Wool and Mohair Growers Association	Responsible for productive livestock products with particular reference to wool and mohair
Grazing Associations/Range Management Areas	Implementation of strategies for best management practices for sustained rangelands and promote conservation and sound management
Traditional healers & herbalists	Promote the sustainable use of indigenous plants used for medicinal purposes
Herders	Responsible for the health and sustained use of the rangelands

Women	Ensure participation of women in programme implementation
Community based Organizations	Sharing of indigenous knowledge on the use and management of rangelands
Local council	Ensuring implementation of rangeland activities as part of their programme of work
Community councils	Delivery of programme activities and implementing management plans
Lesotho Highlands Development Authority	Promote community participation and sustainable use of resources within the catchments of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project
Lesotho Agricultural College	Capacity building at tertiary technical level
Department of forestry	Regulation of sustainable use of forestry resources
Non Governmental Organizations	Implementation and monitoring of rangelands programmes in areas of operation Educate and raise awareness of the public
Development Partners (UNDP, E.U IRELAND AID, USAID, FAO, GIZ)	Streamlining funds for development of policies and planning frameworks for management of resources

Annex 2: List of Relevant Policy and Legal Frameworks

Policy & Legal Framework	Details in relation to Range management	Evaluation
Lesotho Constitution	Lesotho shall adopt policies designed to protect and enhance the natural and cultural environment of Lesotho for the benefit of both present and future generations and shall endeavour to assure to all citizens a sound and environment adequate for their health and well being	Recognises the protection of rangelands and range resources
Vision 2020	Lesotho shall be renowned for its environmental management. The country's diversity of life systems will be supported and protected by a nation which is environmentally conscious and whose people are in balanced existence with the natural environment. Basotho will derive continuing benefits from conservation and sustainable use of their biological diversity. There shall be institutional frameworks to promote and protect a healthy and sustainable environment	Advocates for the institutional frameworks as management tools
Poverty reduction strategy	Chapter 5; improve agriculture and food security In areas better suited to extensive animal husbandry the focus will be on improving range management through community based associations. Government will also promote fodder(grasses) production on marginal land, especially in the southern districts as a substitution crop and means of restoring soil fertility Chapter 10;manage and conserve the environment; A powerful indicator of severe environmental decline is loss of biodiversity. This manifests itself through changes in flora and fauna and by loss or decline of habitats such as grasses, bogs, marshes and reed marshes. For those rural people whose livelihoods depend on livestock, the replacement of grass species by invading unpalatable shrubs is a major concern. As range land lose their diversity their quality declines as does the productivity of the livestock and hence the income of their owners.	The emphasis is more on animal husbandry than range resources Recognises the loss of rangeland productivity to which the rural people livelihoods depend

Policy & Legal Framework	Details in relation to Range management	Evaluation
Land Policy review commission 2000	Range Management Areas and Grazing Associations must be established throughout the rangelands of Lesotho under the land boards as a matter of urgency to manage and control all rangelands in Lesotho. However they must be given teeth to bite such as powers to declare reserved pastures, power to have their own pounds and to impound trespassing livestock as well as power to arrest offenders and take them to court including power to sue and be sued in their own names	Recommends legal framework to enforce grazing control
Mines and Mineral Act 2005	Section 58 1(a)The holder of a mineral right shall, in accordance with this act or any other law in force and good mining industry practices, conduct his operation in such a manner as to – preserve the environment 58 (4) the holder of the mineral right shall ensure that his mineral right area is rehabilitated and ultimately reclaimed in a manner acceptable to the commissioner and the Authority 58 subsection 5- without prejudice to the generality of section (2) during and at the end of the operations in any mine, excavation, waste dump, or pond the holder of the mineral right shall take such measures as are required to maintain and restore the topsoil of affected areas and other wise to restore the land substantially to the conditions in which it was prior to the commencement of the operation.	Section 58 subsections 4 and 5 require rehabilitation programmes on disturbed areas by mining operations to be undertaken.
Range Management policy 1985	It shall be the policy of the Government of Lesotho to ensure that the nation’s rangelands be managed so as to obtain, on a sustained yield basis maximum quality production from the renewable vegetative resources	Objectives and strategies relate directly to rangeland resources in their entirety.
National Environment policy	Promote proper management of the rangeland and mountain ecosystems and resources for sustainable and environmentally friendly development	
Melao ea Lerotholi, Part III Section 8(1) (r) subsection 5(10) reprinted 1984	Land is a birth right to every Mosotho. Access and control to the rangelands is administered by the Chiefs with the advice of the Agricultural officer. It was a requirement that rangelands in the mountain grazing zone be assessed, demarcated according their potential so as to avoid over-utilization.	Promotes wise use and sustainable range management practices

Policy & Legal Framework	Details in relation to Range management	Evaluation
National Environment Action plan 1989 :Chapter 3.1	The causes of range land degradation in Lesotho are overstocking, poor livestock management and poor range management, exacerbated by population expansion and communal land tenure system	Mindful of the cause of deterioration ,prescribes strategies to address the issues of poor range management
The Environment Act 2008	The Authority shall in consultation with relevant line ministry issue guidelines and prescribe measures for the sustainable management and utilisation of rangelands	Does not adequately address the problems on the range as there is no cause of action for non compliance
Local Government Act1997, First schedule	Local authorities are empowered to control and administer all matters as set out in the first schedule. Related to Range Management is the grazing control	Much as the local councils are empowered to administer grazing control activities, they still lack the authority to enforce the regulations
Land Husbandry Act 1969	Section 4subsection (1) and(2) (h) – provide for control of grazing and the introduction of veld and pasture management	Encourages provision to make regulation in respect of use
Lesotho National action programme in natural resource management in combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought	Rangelands have seriously deteriorated. Carrying capacities have declined to levels where rearing animals in large numbers is becoming very difficult. The decline in the quality of rangelands has affected the special and fragile ecosystems in the mountain areas. Adequate vegetation cover to be maintained to promote and stabilise the hydrological balance and maintain land quality	This call for protection of special ecosystems through legislative frameworks. The programmes recognises that rangelands are declining
National strategy on Lesotho’ biological diversity : Conservation and sustainable use 2000	Establish Range Management Areas to improve community natural resources management through established grazing associations and village grazing schemes	Promotes full participation of the stakeholders at grassroots level

Policy & Legal Framework	Details in relation to Range management	Evaluation
Lesotho Water and Sanitation policy 2007	Promote integrated water resources management with a view to reducing the negative impacts of human activities and natural processes on sensitive ecosystems	Wetlands are found on rangelands. Measures for conservation and sustainable utilisation of wetlands will apply to the rangelands
Energy policy framework for Lesotho 2001	The continued depletion of biomass cover is related to Agricultural activities, in particular overgrazing	Overgrazing cause biomass depletion. Fuel wood collection is important for heating rural homes.
State of the Environment in Lesotho 1997	While livestock converts rangeland resources into useful products and other benefits, high and unmanaged stocking rates lead to long term range deterioration	Advocates for specific legislative framework for range management initiatives
Roads Act 1969	A road authority may cut and remove trees or vegetation within the limits of a road reserve where necessary for construction and maintenance of a road	The roads authority is not required to re-vegetate or rehabilitate any area denuded by construction or maintenance works
Forestry Act 1998	Section 15 subsection 3: protection reserves shall be managed for the primary purpose of protecting and conserving the soil, water, vegetation and other natural resources of the reserves and only such harvesting of any forest produce shall be allowed as compatible with the primary purpose of the reserve.	Recognises management and control of range resources within forest reserves.
Range Management and grazing control regulations 1980, legal notice no.39	Every chief, after consultation with and on the advice of the Agricultural officer , shall set aside special areas within his area of jurisdiction for leboella	The department has no authority and legal enforcement except for supervision of grazing(section 7(1)

Policy & Legal Framework	Details in relation to Range management	Evaluation
Livestock and Range management policy(1994)	The overall livestock and range management policy goal is to achieve greater self reliance and increased incomes for livestock owners through animal husbandry and health services while protecting and generating the underlying natural environment and resource base. The policy will be implemented primarily through village level institutions, private sector animal health initiatives.	Of the ten identified strategies mentioned (9) nine are mainly focused on improving the livestock productivity and only one relate directly to Range
Agricultural Sector investment programme 1996	Communal grazing has been blamed for large herds and overgrazing. Government has attempted to reduce overgrazing by adopting donor supported policy initiatives such as rangeland adjudication , breed exchange and culling programme	Identifies absence of enabling legal framework that threaten efforts to implement remedial measures for range management

Annex 3: List of previous interventions on range resources management

Drakensberg Maloti Mountains Conservation Programme (EDF)		
OBJECTIVE: To test a tentative integrated natural resources management plan for a pilot area located in Mokhotlong-Sanqebethu Valley		
SUCSESSES	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Initiated Transfrontier collaboration in sustainable utilization of natural resources in the Maloti Drakensberg area. •Conducted biological survey in the project area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Land degradation due to soil erosion. •Stock theft – which results into some farmers overstocking in the process of minimising risks. •Marketing problems – both in terms of poor prices and lack of proper marketing facilities. •Overpopulation – both human and livestock and hence putting up stretched demands on the remaining resources. •Lack of fodder production to supplement grazing among others is associated with limited arable land. •Lack of proper accountability and responsibility for institutions responsible in the management and protection of natural resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There should be deliberate efforts especially from the government to initiate a participatory process amongst stakeholders that would bring a solution to the deteriorating resources. •A vigorous training programme should be undertaken for all stakeholders to enable them to interpret legislations and identify their roles and those of others correctly. Such training should include ecological aspects of resources, resource conservation, leadership roles and conflict resolution skills. •Revisit the current governing legislations in order to determine whether they address the present environmental conditions. If they are to be rewritten such a process should accommodate the concerns of all stakeholders. •The power structure for resource management should be formulated with the input of all stakeholders. •Clear policy on issues of resource management needs to be put in place with inputs of all stakeholders.

Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project

OBJECTIVE: To facilitate conservation of the globally significant alpine and sub-alpine biodiversity as well as to improve community livelihoods through nature based tourism in the districts of Botha-Bothe, Mokhotlong and Qacha's Nek.

SUCSESSES	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Stakeholders trainings were conducted to enable them to interpret legislations and identify their roles and those of others correctly. •The power structure for resource management was formulated with the input of all stakeholders. e. g •Alternative livelihoods were introduced with emphasis on ecotourism activities. •Conducted biological survey in the project area •Development of MRA Management Plans and grazing plans •Development of Grazing Associations •Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Programme 20 year strategy and 5 year Action plans develop. •Initiated Transfrontier collaboration in sustainable utilization of natural resources in the Maloti Drakensberg area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of proper accountability and responsibility for institutions responsible in the management and protection of natural resources. • Perception of community towards new innovations •Political influence on certain initiatives proposed • Insufficient financing for implementation of the Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future stakeholder trainings should include ecological aspects of resources, resource conservation, leadership roles and conflict resolution skills. •Revisit the current governing legislations in order to determine whether they address the present environmental conditions. If they are to be rewritten such a process should accommodate the concerns of all stakeholders. •Clear policy on issues of resource management needs to be put in place with inputs of all stakeholders.

Conserving Mountain Biodiversity in Southern Lesotho (CMBSL)

OBJECTIVE: To develop a network of protected areas and conserving biodiversity in sustainable use areas. Funding by Global Environment Facility (GEF)

SUCSESSES	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Supported existing group governance structures through workshops and trainings. •Development and support of Grazing Associations •Conducted biological survey in the project area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lack of proper accountability and responsibility for institutions responsible in the management and protection of natural resources. •Perception of community towards new innovations •Political influence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Empowerment for sustainability should be the central aim •Steering committees need to be well informed, be committed, and able to influence progress if required. •Strong efforts should be made by project management to hand over activities in priority sites to other projects e.g. Qacha's Nek and Southern Quthing could be taken on by MDTP. •Project staff at national level should consolidate existing scattered project documentation. •Project management should forge stronger links with the private sector (including SDTFCA) and GoL ministries particularly Department of tourism in order to encourage ecotourism investment at project sites and link willing communities on the ground with possible investments

Wetlands restoration and conservation project Millennium Challenge Account – Wetlands Protection

OBJECTIVE: to assist the country in addressing widespread overgrazing and degradation of alpine wetlands, which are vital ecological and economic resources

SUCSESSES	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Experimental plots that demonstrate veld conditions in the absence of disturbances such as grazing. •Demonstration of application of biophysical rehabilitation measures in wetland ecosystems. •Monitoring of discharge/river flow as a measure of effectiveness of rehabilitation/conservation measures. •Supported existing group governance structures through workshops and trainings. •Building the capacity of rural communities on alternative livelihoods with the objective to reduce grazing pressure on rangelands. •Involvement of subject matter specialists from line Ministries. •Developed a wetlands conservation strategy that maps a way forward in coordination of wetland conservation activities. •Development of integrated catchment management plan for Letseng La Letsie. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Yet to establish a structure for implementation of the wetlands conservation strategy. •Vandalism of monitoring equipment •Failure of some biophysical structures/ some biophysical structures not performing well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Future stakeholder trainings should include ecological aspects of resources, resource conservation, leadership roles and conflict resolution skills. •Revisit the current governing legislations in order to determine whether they address the present environmental conditions. If they are to be rewritten such a process should accommodate the concerns of all stakeholders. •Clear policy on issues of resource management needs to be put in place with inputs of all stakeholders.

Lesotho Highlands Development Authority (LHDA)		
SUCSESSES	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Developed a Rural Development Plan (RDP) to promote the social and economic well-being of the affected population. •Developed an Animal Husbandry and Range Management Project Business Plan. •Supported existing group governance structures through workshops and trainings. •Development and support of Grazing Associations •Conducted biological survey in the project area and developed grazing plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Rescinding of Grazing fee in 1993 made it difficult to implement range management regulations as their plans assumed the National Grazing Fee would be in place. •Very little or no effort by the local leaders to encourage and or enforce compliance with the grazing management plans. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •There should be an ongoing campaign of sensitizing and educating communities about the condition of their natural resources and the potential increased benefits of improved management of these resources. Wide participation of stakeholders and particularly the communities through bottom-up approach results in the sense of ownership of all those involved.

SANREMP (IFAD)

OBJECTIVE: To support the government of Lesotho in restructuring and decentralization of agricultural services (extension, research, marketing and regulatory) and institutional capacity building as a contribution to the Agricultural Sector Investment Programme (ASIP). The programme focused on crop and livestock production in the three districts of Quthing, Mofale's Hoek and Mafeteng. The objective is to harness the potential for increased agricultural production through reclamation and rehabilitation of degraded land coupled with the introduction and adoption of improved and ecologically sound crop and livestock production technologies in the project area.

SUCSESSES	CHALLENGES	RECOMMENDATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •400 ha was reseeded to improve degraded rangelands, while about 9700 ha of grazing areas have been demarcated for controlled grazing and grazing plans were developed for these areas •Five new grazing associations were formed and four are registered. Three other grazing associations that had previously been registered but not fully functional were revived. •Association member were retrained on proper management and conservation of natural resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Frequent staff transfers in the MFRL affected continuity of implementation, supervision and reporting. •Incomplete base line data for monitoring activities on rehabilitation of denuded land •Not enough interaction between and among departments and ministries •Expectancy of handouts or payments to implement rehabilitation measures (communities expected to be paid for reseeded and brush control) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To increase sustainability regular trainings for local leaders and community. Successful implementation requires improved staff capacity. •Participation of all stakeholders in the planning •The community capacity building has contributed significantly to the beneficiaries understanding of the importance of rehabilitation of degraded areas. The result has been willingness to participate in the implementation of measures to improve productivity of rangelands (reseeded and brush control) and joining grazing associations. Managed grazing by the associations resulted in improved quality of their stock while also improving the quality of the local environment.



**Department of Range Resources
Management**

P.O. Box 92
Maseru 100
Tel: (+266) 22315108 or (+266)22325187
Fax: (+266)22315707
Website: www.forestry.gov.ls

Printing supported by

giz



On behalf of

Bundesministerium für
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit
und Entwicklung

