Contribution ID: **60** Type: **ORAL**

Eswatini's Shift Towards Sustainable Cultural and Natural Heritage Management

Tuesday, 14 June 2022 09:00 (20 minutes)

Eswatini's rich natural and cultural heritage have received little attention from researchers over the years until in the late 1960 when excavations began in the Old Ngwenya Iron-ore Mine. Although more than 100 archeological sites have been identified through work done by researchers like Beaumont which demonstrated deep history of human occupancy spanning as far as the Early Stone Age (ESA), little had been done to sustainably manage such rich cultural and natural heritage sites [1]. This is despite the fact that the country is known for its rich culture in the Southern African region. The current paper identifies sustainable public policy gaps in the administration of archeological sites amid a growing economy that exerts enormous pressure on archeological sites. As a middle income country, the main goal is economic development which when coupled with lack of knowledge on the importance and benefits of natural and cultural heritage has led to the distraction of valuable heritage sites including their information. This highlight the need for a sustainable and comprehensive cultural and natural heritage management plan in line with the National Trust Commission Act of 1972 as amended which provides the foundation for heritage management in the country. The comprehensive plan covers key aspects of cultural heritage management including identification of heritage sites, proclamation, management (preservation and conservation), public awareness and community engagement, financing and marketing. This enables eco-tourism development, community-based tourism and nature-based tourism across the spectrum of art centers, museums and monuments. Key success factors for the implementation of the plan include a clear science-policy interface, strengthening of cultural and natural heritage management institutions, budget allocation and the implementation of sustainable management practices.

Primary author: SIKHOSANA, Hlobsile (Eswatini National Trust Commission, Eswatini)

Presenter: SIKHOSANA, Hlobsile (Eswatini National Trust Commission, Eswatini)

Session Classification: TC Africa

Track Classification: Track 6: Sustainable Heritage Management policies and modalities