



Republic of Botswana
Ministry of Environment, Natural
Resources Conservation and Tourism

STATEMENT ON THE 2022/2023 RECURRENT AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET PROPOSALS

**By Honourable Philda Nani Kereng
MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES
CONSERVATION AND TOURISM**

**16
MARCH
2022**

**TO THE COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
HEAD 2000**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

1. **Mr. Chairperson**, I have the honour to present to this Honourable House the 2022/23 recurrent and development budget requests for the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism. I will start by providing an overview of the 2021/2022 budget performance.
2. The Ministry's total provision for the 2021/2022 financial year amounted to **One Billion, One Hundred and Eighty-Seven million, One Hundred and Seventy Thousand, Six Hundred and Ten Pula (P1, 187,170,610.00)**. This budget was composed of **Three Hundred and Thirty Nine Million And Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pula (P339,150,000.00)** for the development budget and **Eight Hundred and Forty-Eight Million, Twenty Thousand, Six Hundred and Ten Pula (P848, 020,610.00)** for the recurrent budget. However, the Development budget was reduced to **P239, 650,000 by P99, 500,000** to augment COVID-19 budget.
3. **Mr. Chairperson**, out of a total amount of **Two Hundred and Thirty-Nine Million, Six Hundred and Fifty Thousand Pula (P239,650,000.00)** for the development budget, a total of **Two Hundred and Twenty Million, Two Hundred and Seventy-Four Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty-Five Pula, Eighty Thebe (P220,274,155.80)** has been spent so far. This translates to **92%** of the budget. As for the recurrent budget, out of **Eight Hundred and Forty-Eight Million, Twenty Thousand, Six Hundred and Ten Pula (P848, 020,610.00)** allocated

for the financial year 2021/22 an amount of **Seven Hundred and Twenty-Two Million, Nine Hundred and Thirty-Five Thousand, Eight Hundred Fifty-Three Pula (P722,935,853.00) or (85%)** has been spent.

4. As you may be aware, when I started leading this Ministry in 2019/20, I reported Development Expenditure of **12.5%** which by the end of the financial year had increased to **25.6%**. The expenditure then increased exponentially in 2020/21 to **87.4%** and now I am happy to report over **90%**. I am confident that next financial year I will report expenditure ranging between 90% and 98% of the allocated budget.
5. Having said that, **Mr. Chairperson**, allow me to highlight to this Honourable House successes as well as challenges and interventions in implementing my Ministry's policies, programmes and projects during the year 2021/22.

II. SUCCESSES

Financial and Technical Support Mobilisation

6. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry continues to facilitate activities geared towards resource mobilization through collaboration with international donor agencies like the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), which to date has provided funding resources in excess of **US\$100 million** and further financial resources are expected as from July 2022.
7. My Ministry in collaboration with the UNDP, through funding from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) is implementing a multi-sectoral project in the Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Districts (the Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Drylands Ecosystem Project (KGDEP))

which seeks to improve the livelihoods of communities and improve natural resources conservation through promotion of sustainable natural resources utilization. The two have invested over **Four Million Pula** (P4,000,000.00) towards law enforcement activities within the Kgalagadi and Ghanzi Districts. Additional funds have also been availed for Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) projects in the two Districts.

8. To this end, implementation of the Kgalagadi – Ghanzi Drylands Project funded by Global Environment Fund (GEF) and other partners like Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) as well as capacity building on fodder and charcoal production and donation of equipment were done for the communities of BORAVAST (Bokspits, Rappelspan, Vaalhook and Struizedam). The Ministry is also collaborating with the UNEP in the implementation of the “Cross-Cutting Capacity Development (CCCD) project which seeks to capacitate stakeholders on crosscutting issues on sustainable development; and thus, enable Botswana to fulfill her developmental and environmental management obligations.

9. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry has also benefited financially from the Kavango Zambezi (KAZA) Trans-Frontier Conservation Area initiative through the procurement of three (3) customized vehicles worth **Two Million Pula** (P2,000,000.00) to support law enforcement operations under the Department of Wildlife and National Parks; procurement of a grader worth **One Million, Nine hundred Thousand Pula** (P1,900,000.00); and funding for repair and maintenance of roads along the Chobe River Front.

10. Furthermore, KAZA provided financial resources amounting to **Eight Hundred Thousand Pula** (P800,000.00) each for both the construction of Department of Wildlife and National Parks offices and staff houses at Seronga; and for the procurement of camping equipment. Additionally, KAZA continues to provide food rations worth **Fifteen Thousand Pula** (P15,000.00) per month to support wildlife law enforcement operations, and funding to facilitate the satellite tracking of eight (8) elephants within the KAZA landscape in Botswana. The support will go a long way in ensuring sustainable management of wildlife and the growth of the tourism sector, within the KAZA landscape in Botswana.

11. We have also collaborated with United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to develop Management Plans for Chobe National Park and Moremi Game Reserve. The USAID funded the project to the tune of **USD 124,810** which is equivalent to **One Million, Four Hundred and Eighty-five Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty-Six Pula** (P1,485,236.00) for the development of the two management plans. The management plans have been completed and will be launched mid-March 2022.

12. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry continues to support sustainable environment/natural resources and development projects by availing necessary resources from various development partners and funding facilities. National Environmental Fund (NEF) has to date funded Motlhware Nature Reserve at Letlhakeng in Kweneng District, Boitekoo Recreational Park at Serowe in the Central District, Habu Elephant Development Trust in Ngamiland District and Mazibakufa Trust

in the North East District, amongst others, at a cumulative figure of **Six Million, Seven Hundred and Three Thousand, Nine Hundred and Twelve Pula Thirty Thebe** (P6,703,912.30).

13. Furthermore, my Ministry continues to support community projects that facilitate elephant conservation and community development by providing financial resources through the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF). From 1999 when the CTF was set-up to date, a total of 94 projects have been funded to the tune of **One Hundred and Four Million, Nine Hundred and Thirteen Thousand, Nine Hundred and Ninety-One Pula Three Thebe** (P104,913,991.03). The projects have had and continue to have a positive effect on the lives of members of the communities that live side by side with elephants, which in turn incentivize co-existence between humans and wildlife.

Wildlife Management

14. **Mr. Chairperson**, as a strategy to mitigate Human-Wildlife Conflict, notably due to elephants, in June 2021 my Ministry completed a 60 km fence on the western Makgadikgadi/Nxai National Park. The fence has reduced the human-elephant conflict in the Boteti area through containment of elephants on the park side.

15. These wildlife-proof fences are complemented by other interventions, including equipping of boreholes. To date, four (4) out of the targeted eight (8) boreholes have been completed and are operational in the Ngwasha area. These are meant for water provision to wildlife to ensure constant supply of water so as to reduce the numbers of elephants moving into communal areas in search of water. In an effort to systematically

manage the country's elephants, Government coordinated the development of a Botswana Elephant Management Strategy and Action Plan, which was launched on 30th April 2021, and its implementation commenced from May 2021.

Climate Change Mitigations

16. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry through support of Development Partners, developed a National Climate Change Policy which Parliament adopted in April 2021. A National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan has also been developed to operationalize the Policy. Furthermore, the Ministry in implementing the Policy Recommendations established a Climate Change Unit and a Coordinator has been appointed to oversee and guide the policy implementation. The Unit has prepared an implementation roadmap and is to reach out to all stakeholders so as to enable smooth implementation of the Policy.

17. Through the support of the United Nations Development Programme **Mr. Chairperson**, Botswana's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) review, as mandated by the Paris Agreement, is ongoing and hopes to conclude by March, 2022. It is expected to determine the economic impacts of climate change on Botswana's GDP addressing key economic sectors as well as developing an effective tracking and monitoring tool and resource management guidelines.

18. **Mr. Chairperson**, Botswana signed Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASSCAL) treaty and continues to benefit from it. SASSCAL II projects are being finalized and under which Botswana has up to **Thirty Million Pula** (P30,000,000.00)

allocated for Research. SASSCAL has also established Centers of Excellence and graduate school programme where we have been allocated three (3) fully funded PhD scholarships. Furthermore, Botswana has also been allocated **Thirteen Million Pula** (P13,000,000.00) for the construction of the Node office to be constructed on the same plot as the Department of Meteorological Services headquarters. The Ministry's contribution is to avail land and continue to meet our obligations to SASSCAL.

Sustainable Utilization of Natural Resources

19. **Mr. Chairperson**, forest and range resources products continue to play a critical role in improving the livelihoods of the rural communities. Efforts towards poverty eradication and economic diversification have renewed the interest in these resources as an economically active sector. During the financial year 2021/22 a total of **8,652** Batswana were engaged in the harvesting and/ or utilization of veldt products, and the revenue accruing to such activities amount to **Thirty Seven Million, Nine Hundred and Fourteen Thousand, Six Hundred and Nine Pula** (P37, 914 609.00) which greatly contributed to improving their livelihoods. The veldt products in demand were grapple plant, firewood, phane and thatching grass.

20. My Ministry has concluded the development of the Management Plans for the Chobe and Kasane Forest Reserves. These outlines compatible activities that can be allowed in the Reserves such as ecotourism to improve the livelihoods of the people especially adjacent to them. Through collaboration with the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) a Consultant has been engaged to develop the management plan

for the Kazuma forest reserve.

21. The Ministry collaborated with JICA to conduct Fire wise community training in Shakawe on 5th -10th December 2021. The Daily fire bulletin (Fire Danger Index and Active Fires) was reported on the Botswana national television through the Department of Metrological Services from August to December 2021.

22. **Mr. Chairperson**, we continue to encourage environmental conscious behavior through the intensification of tree planting initiatives geared towards enhancement of environmental conservation. To this end, a total of **52 727** trees were planted during the financial year under review against a target of **150,000**.

23. It is worth mentioning to this Honourable House **Mr. Chairperson**, that the Land Degradation Assessments/ data collection has been completed. A total of 11,535 /11,535 (100%) plots were assessed through satellite imagery (Google Earth Engine) in Chobe, Central, North East, Kgatleng and South East districts as at October 2021.

Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM)

24. **Mr. Chairperson**, it is my Ministry's desire to diversify the tourism product and also to create opportunities in areas that are not traditionally known for tourism. To that effect, my Ministry is working with Mokopi Community Trust in the development of a predator park in Mokoboxane. The development is at an advanced stage with the Lion enclosure completed and already hosting two lions, a male and a female which attract visitors to the site. Other components of the components of the park

will be completed during the 2022/23 financial year.

25. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry has made significant progress in facilitating the development and stocking of the Motlhwane Nature Reserve in Letlhakeng. To date all requisite infrastructures for the stocking of the reserve including the construction of the game-proof fence, drilling and equipping of boreholes, construction of artificial water holes and the construction holding-boma have been completed.
26. Furthermore, my Ministry has provided the reserve with the first initial stock of wildlife comprising of 41 impalas, 14 elands and 5 zebras. Additional wildlife species will gradually be introduced to increase the diversity of wildlife in the reserve. This will make the reserve attractive to tourists hence generate better income for the community of Letlhakeng and consequently improve lives through employment creation and development of industries associated with the reserve.
27. **Mr. Chairperson**, following the allocation of the Ngoma Campsite to PALEKA Trust, My Ministry has made strides in renovating the campsite for eventual operations. To date, a Business plan for running the campsite has been developed. Moreover, two (2) ablution blocks and two (2) braai stands have been completed. Furthermore, signage has been installed at the site gate at Ngoma, and Kazungula, to guide the prospective users of the site on its location.
28. It is anticipated that the campsite will diversify the revenue streams for PALEKA Trust and augment the revenues generated from hunting operations. It will further create jobs for members of the community hence contribute to improvement of livelihoods. We anticipate the campsite to be operational by April 2022.
29. My Ministry is in the process of developing a Tourism Park at Khuis. The project, which was launched in February 2020, forms part of the projects that were identified in the greater Kgalagadi Heritage trail. The feasibility and business plan for the project along with preliminary layout drawings have been developed, and funding for the development of a gatehouse and perimeter fencing has been secured.
30. **Mr. Chairperson**, hunting quotas for the 2022 hunting season comprising of citizen-hunting quota, community-managed quota, concession quota and the Special Elephant Quota have already been issued. The Special Elephant Quota with a total of 70 elephants has been auctioned generating **Twenty Four Million, One Hundred Thousand Pula (P24,100,000)**. The funds have been deposited into the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) for use by communities in development projects aimed at sustainable utilization of natural resources and for elephant conservation.

Tourism Development

Expo Dubai 2020

31. **Mr Chairperson**, I am glad to announce that My Ministry is participating at the ongoing Expo 2020 Dubai. Our participation was informed by research that was conducted to understand the Middle East market and guide our promotional activities towards exploring this market with vigour both during and post the Expo. In order to showcase Botswana's products while also reassuring the global market

about the country's preparedness to host guests post the COVID-19 pandemic, my Ministry has embarked on a CNN Television Advertising campaign which is done as part of Destination Botswana launch at the Middle East Market. Our participation at the Expo is structured according to the following activities:

- a) **Global Botswana Tourism Conference**
- b) **Media Launch**
- c) **Botswana Sundowner**

32. A Global Botswana Tourism Conference was conducted to set the tone for the rest of the promotional activities. The conference was attended by Seventy-Two (72) Agents from the Middle East Market as well as others from around the world. As the Minister responsible for tourism, I addressed the delegates virtually, sharing high level insights on Botswana's Tourism Policy drive and the country's development agenda as well as the strategic interventions for tourism recovery. The conference also featured presentation on the global tourism performance and recovery strategy, as well as insights on the Middle East outbound travel. Botswana based operators made presentations on Botswana as a destination including insights on how to package destination for the markets. This conference was broadcast live on various local and global online platforms.

33. A Media Launch was also conducted, and it was attended by Thirty (30) media houses both physically and virtually. This media launch was intended to share plans for the country's participation at the Expo and to enable the media to disseminate information about Botswana to their various readers/audients.

34. **Mr. Chairperson**, a Botswana Sundowner was also hosted, featuring Botswana Food and dance. This Sundowner provided a relaxed atmosphere for further engagement between Botswana and Middle East Agents.

Tourism Product Diversification

35. **Mr. Chairperson**, the contribution of tourism to GDP is largely derived from the wildlife-based tourism product, therefore, there is need to transform this sector by developing new tourism products that are less dependent on wildlife. In this regard, my Ministry has completed the Tourism Master Plan for Kasane and Kazungula with the assistance of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). While compensation of the affected properties is ongoing, planning of all land earmarked for new tourism investments and upgrading layouts for all affected neighbourhoods have also been completed. This will avail Forty-one (41) tourism concessions in both Kasane and Kazungula for citizen economic empowerment.

Dams Tourism

36. In the implementation of Dams Tourism, and in fulfilment of citizen inclusion in the tourism sector, the Ministry has managed to award three (3) sites at the Gaborone Dam, and three (3) sites at Shashe Dam to 100% Citizen owned companies. My Ministry has further reserved tourism sites at Shashe. Letsibogo and Thune Dams for communities that reside adjacent to these dams in order to facilitate the improvement of their livelihoods through the meaningful participation in tourism.

Agro-Tourism

37. The agro-tourism guidelines have been translated into Setswana for improved

outreach to a wider portion of Botswana for them to participate and benefit from the tourism industry for improved livelihoods. There are currently 10 licensed agro-tourism enterprises employing over 40 people. Botswana are continuously being encouraged to use their farms for agro-tourism.

Keeping of game in Masimo

38. **Mr. Chairperson**, following the launching of the guidelines for keeping game in the fields (masimo) in April 2021, the initiative was rolled out to the public countrywide. The response to this initiative has been positive and to date, sixty-seven (67) applications have been received of which 20 were approved. The non-approvals were mainly due to non-conformity to the prescribed fencing requirements for keeping game in masimo. The applicants have therefore been advised to appropriately fence their fields for their applications to be successful. My Ministry has made a commitment to facilitate successful applicants to the extent possible with the provision of wildlife from fenced government facilities to stock their fields, resources permitting. This initiative is part of the economic diversification and citizen economic empowerment through natural resources management.

Zebra Migration

39. **Mr. Chairperson**, during the month of November and December, thousands of zebras traverse the Moremi Game Reserve and Chobe National Park to find more grazing further south. They enter the vast Makgadikgadi Salt Pans, and they spend the rest of the rainy season, before turning back to reach the Okavango delta and Chobe National Park by the start of the next dry season. Conveniently though, the migrations start and end in two of

Botswana's most spectacular national parks; the Chobe National Park in the north, and Makgadikgadi Pans National Park deep in the interior to the south. This offers excellent coordination of tours for viewing this impressive migration. This, **Mr. Chairperson**, adds great value to Botswana tourism economy.

Botswana Live

40. Botswana Live, which is a virtual showcase of Botswana in line with the digitalisation agenda, was commissioned in August 2021. This is part of my Ministry's efforts to take advantage of technological advancements to defy the odds and continue reaching out to the global markets during this difficult time. The project which was done by a citizen owned company will recommence soon with the involvement of Botswana influencers.

Tourism Investment Forum

41. **Mr. Chairperson**, Botswana will be hosting its first Tourism Investment Forum in July 2022. This will be a platform where potential investors in the tourism sector will be engaged to showcase available investment opportunities in the sector and provide possible partnership opportunities with the citizens.

Africa Cultural Carnival

42. **Mr Chairperson**, Botswana will also host the inaugural Africa Cultural Carnival and the Tourism Investment Forum in September 2022. This will be done in collaboration with the Africa Tourism Board. The aim of the event is to unite the African continent annually through showcasing its diverse cultures and harness the tourism potential of the cultural product through the different elements that make up culture. Subsequent

to this year, the event will be held on a rotational basis among the member states of the Africa Tourism Board. To date, over 20 African countries have shown interest in participating in the Carnival through the Africa Tourism Board.

Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) and Awards

43. The Africa Tourism Leadership Forum (ATLF) and Awards is a Pan-African public-private tourism leadership forum convened by and hosted annually in Africa for Africans, and hosts over 500 delegates over three-days. The Objective of the ATLF and Awards is to stimulate and increase Intra-Africa Travel through innovation, collaboration and Thought Leadership. Botswana submitted a bid to host the 2022, 2023 and 2024 events and was successful in its Bid. The 2022 event is scheduled for November 2022 and will be graced by the UNWTO Secretariat. The Awards present an opportunity to motivate the Youth, and vulnerable groups, as the future investors in the tourism sector, as well as the existing operators.
44. The Ministry has released calendar of events for the whole year. Key to this calendar events is the BW Desert Invasion 2000 Rally which seek to take the race to a higher level. In addition, some of the events will be led by the Government, some by the Private Sector, some by the Community and others in partnership with the International Community.
45. **Mr. Chairperson,** In February 2022 the fourth Biodiversity Symposium was held in Lobatse. The Symposium served as a platform for experts in the field of Biodiversity Conservation to share their research findings, experiences and challenges. It is

through such researches that we believe we can all make meaningful contribution to the Reset Agenda that informs policy making on environmental and natural resources conservation matters.

46. My Ministry hosted the 2nd Waste Pitso on the 10th and 11th March 2022 themed "Turning Waste to Wealth, a way for Sustainable Environment". The theme highlights the significance of waste as an economic resource. The platform was created to facilitate exchange of information and knowledge amongst different players in the waste management and value-chain including ways that contribute to environmental conservation, pollution reduction and also improvement of livelihoods.
47. **Mr. Chairperson,** I am also pleased to announce that, the government is working with other stakeholders to develop incentives for waste collection and separation. The programme will entail the use of a voucher system that anybody interested in keeping the environment clean can collect waste and transport to drop-off centres earn a voucher that will accumulate points that can be redeemed into airtime, groceries and or pay bills such as electricity and water. We believe that this initiative will benefit both small man and established operators to all benefit from waste management and contribute significantly to keeping Botswana clean whilst generating wealth.

III. CHALLENGES AND BOTTLENECKS

Effects of Covid-19

48. **Mr. Chairperson** despite the above achievements, my Ministry is facing a number of challenges. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has negatively

affected service delivery and this includes failure to monitor and carry out inspections of ongoing development projects; inability to conduct public consultations for Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA) for large projects due to COVID 19 restrictions and related protocols.

49. However, mitigation measures have been devised to minimize the challenges experienced. Some of these measures include amongst others; waiving of public consultations for EIAs while maintaining adherence to COVID-19 protocols; holding of virtual meetings to monitor progress in National Environmental Fund (NEF) funded Projects and other development projects; collaboration with other sectors' district technical officers and decentralization of some of the responsibilities to the District Coordinating Offices.

50. Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the tourism industry and caused a number of setbacks and delays in the implementation of planned projects as well as decline in the numbers of tourists and losses of revenue and jobs within this financial year. **Mr. Chairperson**, travel restrictions on gatherings affected implementation of a number of initiatives and the growth of the tourism market.

51. My Ministry, however, had to adapt to the current times and come up with initiatives to mitigate the impact such as intense outreach programme through the available media to sensitize Batswana on the investment opportunities in tourism, as well as to educate them on the requirements for investing in tourism in order to boost the uptake of the identified tourism opportunities that are restricted

to 100% citizen companies, consortia and communities.

52. **Mr. Chairperson**, closure of tourism enterprises commenced on the 24th February 2020. By the end of April 2020, **90.7%** of the facilities were closed and only **9.3** were open to guests. No new bookings or inquiries were made during this period of closing. Only operators who were engaged to provide accommodation services for mandatory quarantine and Essential Service Personnel were operating. Loss of jobs was registered as a result, with **8.1%** of employees that were employed in these facilities laid-off.

53. It is estimated that, at the time, facilities had already lost revenue amounting to **Two Billion, Eight Hundred and Sixty-Four Million, Five Hundred and Ninety Nine Thousand, Five Hundred and Fifty-Six Pula (P2,864,599,556)** as a result of postponements and cancellations. This survey was instrumental in guiding interventions by Government on supporting the tourism industry. My Ministry has partnered with VISION 2036 to conduct a more comprehensive study to appreciate long-term effects of the pandemic.

54. The closure of tourist enterprises has also led to a recess in the implementation of grading standards. My Ministry has therefore embarked on grading advisory exercise to bring the industry up to speed with the set hospitality grading standards for the tourism industry to remain globally competitive during the year 2022/23.

55. To this end, Botswana has depended on three markets to sustain the tourism sector being the domestic, regional and

international markets. Travel restrictions have however brought the inbound travel to a near halt necessitating a strategic shift to adapt to the situation and focus more on domestic market while at the same time reassuring other markets. Hospitality prices were reduced in order to encourage and support the domestic market.

Effects of Climate Change

56. **Mr. Chairperson**, increased temperatures and unreliable rainfall due to climate change threatens performance of key economic sectors derailing us from a sustainable developmental path way.
57. In an effort to counter the negative impacts of climate change, my Ministry through support of Development Partners, developed a National Climate Change Policy which this Honourable House adopted in April 2021. A National Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan has also been developed to operationalize the Policy.

Wildfire

58. However, the country received good rains in the previous rainy season, which led to accumulation of combustible materials hence experienced wildfires. The total burnt area from April to December 2021 is **One Million, Five Hundred and Sixty Four Thousand, Eight Hundred and Seventy (1,564,870)** hectares compared to **Six Hundred Ninety-Seven Thousand and Twenty-one (697,021)** hectares for the same period in the year 2020. This means an increase of **125%**. The following districts were mostly affected; Kgalagadi **622,956** hectares; North West **509,053** hectares and Central **140,651** hectares.

59. **Mr. Chairperson**, the Kgalagadi district

was hard hit as farmers experienced loss of forage for their livestock and also loss of livestock in the form of goats and sheep. The Tourism sector was also affected as Polentswa Lodge in the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park was also burnt down by raging fires.

60. The Ministry continue to manage and maintain firebreaks prior to the fire season. Firebreaks were maintained at the following Districts: Kgalagadi (970km), Central (1,917km), Kweneng (62 km), Ghanzi (1,370km) and Southern (836km) to reduce the spread of wildland fires. Prescribed burning was also done at Chobe and Kgalagadi Districts as management practices. The Kgalagadi District Bush Fire Risk Management Plan was developed and launched in August 2021.

Human Wildlife Conflict

61. **Mr. Chairperson**, despite that wildlife resource is a valuable development asset in our economy, Human-Wildlife Conflict continues to be a challenge to livelihoods of rural communities. Overall, the interventions that my Ministry have put in place to address Human-Wildlife Conflict are bearing fruit because during the 2019/20 financial year, a total **9,905** cases were reported, with a cumulative **P27,946,905** paid out or owed to farmers. In the following financial year, 2020/21, a cumulative **6,581** cases were recorded, and a total **P21,459,575.92** incurred as part of the compensation. These trends represented a 33% reduction in the number of cases and a 23% reduction in the compensation amount paid or owed when contrasting the 2019/20 to the 2020/21 financial year, respectively. However, due to an increase in the elephant range southwards, cases of

damage due to this species have recently increased such that during the current financial year 2021/22, a total of **7,016** human-wildlife cases have been reported, although overall costs continue to decline as an amount of **P18,229,545.99** was disbursed as compensation as at December 2021.

greatest challenges faced by my Ministry in the management of wildlife. For instance, a total of **184** poaching incidences were recorded between January and December 2021, while a total of **220** poaching incidents were recorded in the 2020 calendar year, compared to **162** cases in 2019, and **51** poaching incidents in 2018.

62. **Mr. Chairperson**, the Ministry continues to encourage communities in wildlife-rich areas to organize themselves into legally registered community-based organization to benefit from the use of the resources in their areas, including consumptive-use of wildlife where such legal off-take can mitigate Human-Wildlife Conflict, such as done through the Special Elephant Quota. Additionally, my Ministry is exploring new quota systems for 'Problem Animals' that cause damage to farmers crops or kill livestock. This new programme would permit farmers to sell the offending 'problem animals' as part of hunting packages in and around farming areas. It is expected that this strategy would derive higher levels of income from the 'problem animals' as opposed to the current 'problem animal' control measures where the animals are killed but without any financial value derived from their trophies. The details of this scheme, which will cover both carnivores and large herbivores such as elephants, will be announced by June 2022 so that the scheme is put into use in the 2022/23 financial year.
64. In addressing this escalating threat, the Ministry continues to collaborate with other law enforcement agencies as well as other stakeholders under the ambits of the National Anti-poaching Strategy. My Ministry and the other law enforcement agencies are also collaborating with neighbouring countries within the ambits of the SADC Law Enforcement and Action Plan (SADC LEAP) framework.

Pollution

63. **Mr. Chairperson**, wildlife forms the foundation of tourism in Botswana hence forms part of national assets which need to be conserved and carefully managed. However, poaching remains one of the
65. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry continues to monitor the ambient air quality to safeguard environment and public health from adverse impacts associated with Air Pollution. The Ministry currently operates a network of spatially distributed air quality monitoring stations. However, efforts towards expansion of coverage across the country is affected by challenges associated with procurement and delivery of equipment from overseas manufacturers who are the sole suppliers of this equipment and budgetary constraints. The Ministry is reviewing its procurement strategies to improve efficiency.
66. **Mr. Chairperson**, plastic pollution continues to be nuisance in the environment as it blocks waterways, creates conducive environment for mosquito breeding and poses a health hazard to animals after ingestion. In 2021, my Ministry in

collaboration with Ministry of Investment Trade and Industry started to impose a plastic levy based on the plastic litter challenges in the country. The levy will assist in generating revenue for development of infrastructure for recycling waste.

67. **Mr. Chairperson**, Covid-19 pandemic has led to a substantial increase in the generation of health care waste especially resulting from the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), masks, disposable gloves and other health care waste. This has posed a great challenges to manage this type of waste which is infectious. My Ministry in collaboration with stakeholders like Ministry of Health and Wellness are currently working together to come up with strategies for the sustainable management of this type of waste.

Delays in Project Implementation

68. **Mr. Chairperson**, Covid 19 has caused an unprecedented level of disruption and this negatively affected project implementation both in terms of delivery and financial support. My Ministry's development budget reduction amounting to **Ninety-Nine Million, Five Hundred Thousand Pula (P99,500,000.00)** which was made in July 2021, affected implementation of most of my projects. Out of a total of 34 development projects, 17 were deferred. Reprioritisation, and transfer of funding were made to allow progress of ongoing projects. In order to supplement funding for critical Government initiatives, my Ministry is continuing to source funding from national and international donor agencies.

IV. POLICIES AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS

69. **Mr. Chairperson**, during the last financial year, this Honourable House approved the following policies and my Ministry is in the process of implementing them:

- **National Climate Change Policy**
Approved in April 2021 in an effort to counter the negative impacts of climate change.
- **Tourism Policy**
Approved in April 2021 and is expected to elevate the recognition of tourism as a priority growth area as well as to position Botswana as a destination of choice.
- **Integrated Waste Management Policy**
Approved in September 2021 and it seeks to create an enabling environment and transform the management of waste in the country from traditional practices to a more sustainable approach of deriving value from waste with the potential to create job opportunities.

70. My Ministry has started the development of the following bills and slot available will be presented to this Honourable House for adoption:

- Integrated Waste Management Bill to improve environmental compliance.
- Forest and Range Resources Act to facilitate better coordination and implementation of policies and programmes dealing with the country's flora resources and to harmonise the legislation with international treaties and conventions to which Botswana is party.
- Botswana Museums and Monuments Bill which will repeal the associated Acts including the National Museum and Art Gallery Act Of 1967, the Anthropological and Research Act of 1958 and Monuments and Relics Act of 2001 to incorporate the domesticated Conventions that Botswana

is party to.

V. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

71. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry's Senior Management and I met at Francistown to strategically re-align the Ministry performance to the national priorities as articulated in the HE's Roadmap, Reset and Reclaim Agenda and the Transformation Agenda. The team identified and prioritized five (5) flagship projects which are aimed at unlocking opportunities for new, high-growth companies in the private sector, youth employment as well as citizen economic empowerment, job creation, and import substitutions. The projects are expected to start during the financial year 2022/23 and each project is estimated to create more than one thousand (1,000) jobs. These projects are:

- i. Wildlife Utilisation
- ii. Waste Reclamation
- iii. Digitisation of Ministry's services
- iv. Rehabilitation of Degraded Lands (charcoal production, etc.)
- v. Utilisation of Veldt Products

72. In addition, the following projects are expected to create more jobs to Batswana:

- Motlhwane Nature Reserve
- Mokopi Predator Park
- Borolong (Francistown)
- Old Ngoma Camp Site
- Old Palapye
- Lake Ngami charcoal
- Tsodilo World heritage site
- Tropic Capricorn
- Kolobeng and Domboshaba
- Museums
- Refurbishment of National Museum
- Leasing of camp sites at Khutse and CKGR
- Construction of Makgadikgadi

fence (Package B and C)

- Up-scaling Backyard Seedling project
- Waste segregation
- Makgadikgadi Epic
- Khawa Dune challenge

VI. 2022/2023 BUDGET PROPOSALS

73. **Mr. Chairperson**, my Ministry's total proposed budget estimates amount to **One Billion, Two Hundred and Fourteen Million, Six Hundred and Nineteen Thousand, Nine Hundred and Fifty-Five Pula** (P1,214,619,955.00). The budget is composed of **Three Hundred and Eighty-Two Million, Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty-Five Pula** (P382,459,235.00) for the Development Budget and **Eight Hundred and Thirty-Two Million, One Hundred and Sixty Thousand, Seven Hundred and Twenty Pula** (P832,160,720.00) for the Recurrent Budget.

74. The Development Budget has increased by **One Hundred and Forty-Two Million, Eight Hundred and Nine Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty-Five Pula** (P142,809,235.00) or about **59.6%** from the 2021/22 budget. The Recurrent budget has, on the other hand, decreased by **Fifteen Million, Eight Hundred and Fifty-Nine Thousand, Eight Hundred and Ninety** (P15,859,890.00) from 2021/22 budget. Out of the proposed Recurrent Budget, a total of **Ninety Million, Nine Hundred and Thirty Thousand, Three Hundred Pula** (P90,930,300.00) or (**45%**) goes to Botswana Tourism Organization as Subvention while the remaining balance will be distributed to the

rest of the Departments.

75. The proposed Development budget which amounts to **Three Hundred and Eighty Two Million, Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty-Five Pula** (P382,459,235.00) is for projects funded under the following programmes;

11501- Broadening the Tourism Base

76. **Mr. Chairperson**, a provision of **Seventy-Two Million, Four Hundred Thousand Pula** (P72,400,000.00) is requested for various projects under this programme such as Commercialisation of the Gaborone Plantation, Ntsweng Museum, Old Palapye Museum, Botanical Garden, to mention but a few.

11502- MENT Infrastructure

77. **Mr. Chairperson**, during the 2022/2023 financial year, the Ministry intends to complete the engineering designs for the redevelopment of the two towns and commence procurement of contractors; commence construction of new government offices to replace the ones being relocated; commence land advertisement process for phase 1 land release; and complete the construction of the relocated Water Treatment Plant. Therefore, **Two Hundred and Fifty-Five Million, Three Hundred Thousand Pula** (P255,300,000.00) is required for such.

11503 – MENT Computerisation

78. **Five Million, Seven Hundred and Twenty Thousand Pula** (P5,720,000.00) is required for emerging projects like Digital Migration of the exchange of Operational Meteorological Data, Upgrading of Satellite Distribution System, Development of the

National Screening Tool as well as completion of Integrated Wildlife Management System.

- 11504 – Wildlife Species Management**
79. **Mr. Chairperson**, I request an amount of **Thirty-One Million, Two Hundred and Thirty-Four Thousand, One hundred and Ninety-Four Pula** (P31,234,194.00) for various projects under the Wildlife Species Management programme. The funds are meant for projects such as Kang Anti-Poaching Unit, Mechanical workshops, APU Camps, DWNP Fence Maintenance & Development and Wildlife Borehole Drilling and water reticulation among others. The ultimate goal in undertaking these projects is to reduce human-wildlife conflict including the incidence of poaching and trafficking of wildlife.

11505 – Environment Protection

80. Finally, I request for an amount of **Seventeen Million, Eight Hundred and Five Thousand, and Forty-One Pula** (P17,805,041.00) for various projects intended to safeguard and protect the environment including the Establishment of a Centralised Hazardous Waste Treatment & Disposal Facility, Upgrading of Automatic Weather Observing Systems (SSKIA and Maun), Land Degradation Monitoring System, Tree Planting, among others..

V. Conclusion

81. **Mr. Chairperson**, this concludes my presentation of the 2022/23 Development and Recurrent budget proposals for the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism. I therefore move that the sum of **Eight Hundred and Thirty Two Million, One Hundred and sixty Thousand, Seven Hundred and Twenty Pula** (P832,160,720.00)

under the Recurrent Budget and that the sum of **Three Hundred and Eighty-Two Million, Four Hundred and Fifty-Nine Thousand, Two Hundred and Thirty-Five Pula (P382,459,235.00)** under the Development Fund Estimates for Head 2000 be approved and stand part of those estimates.

82. I move accordingly.

83. I thank you **Mr. Chairperson**.