



Government of Swaziland

COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR POLICY (CASP)

FINAL DRAFT

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations and the
Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland (TCP/SWA/2907)

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FOREWORD

It gives the Ministry some courage to present this policy for the Agricultural Sector in Swaziland which has been formulated to give direction to the development of the sector in a harmonized and coordinated manner.

The Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy is a tool that will be used to propel the sustainable development of the sector in order to enhance poverty reduction and food security at both household and national level. Widespread poverty and food insecurity are currently a major concern for the Government of Swaziland and the Agricultural Sector is seen as a vehicle to turn the situation for the better.

All aspects of production, consumption and marketing have been addressed in this document through relevant policies and strategies. Issues that are cross-cutting in nature such as HIV/AIDS, gender, credit and marketing have been addressed to ensure that desired outputs can be achieved.

Since development is a continuum, it is envisaged that the contents of this document, such as the policies that have been outlined, will change with time and thus the strategies. This highlights the need to continuously review the document as and when the need arises. Since the development of this policy document has been achieved through stakeholder participation, it is envisaged that any changes that will have to be made will be the product of further and continuous participation and contribution of our stakeholders, which my Ministry deeply appreciates.

My Ministry's deepest appreciation goes to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for its technical and financial support towards the development of this policy. My Ministry is also indebted to the United Nations Development Programme which has also generously contributed towards the financial requirements of the policy formulation process. Last but not least, the Ministry would also like to extend its appreciation to the members of the Task Force, the National and International Consultants and other members of the staff who afforded to shoulder the burden of contributing towards the development of this policy in addition to their normal duties.

Further, the Ministry is also grateful to the members of the public and especially those who have a special interest in the agricultural sector, its development and sustenance, and hopes that the policy will give the required guidance and direction for the benefit of all concerned and affected.

N. M. Nkambule

**Principal Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives (MOAC)**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AEZ	Agro-ecological Zone
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BSAP	Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
CASP	Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination against All Women
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
KDDP	Komati Downstream Development Project
LDP	Livestock Development Policy
LUSIP	Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning & Development
MHUD	Ministry of Housing & Urban Development
MNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources & Energy
MOAC	Ministry of Agriculture & Co-operatives
MPWT	Ministry of Public Works & Transport
MTEC	Ministry of Tourism, Environment & Communications
NDS	National Development Strategy
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NERCHA	National Emergency Response Committee on HIV/AIDS
NFP	National Forest Policy
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLP	National Land Policy
NMTIP	National Medium Term Investment Programme (NEPAD-CAADP)
NPDP	National Physical Development Plan
NSDI	National Spatial Data Infrastructure
PRSAP	Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan
PSMP	Public Sector Management Programme
RPDP	Regional Physical Development Plan
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEA	Swaziland Environment Authority
SEAP	Swaziland Environment Action Plan
SKPE	Swaziland Komati Project Enterprise

SME	Small & Medium Enterprises
SNL	Swazi Nation Land
SPEED	Smart Programme on Economic Empowerment and Development
SSA	Swaziland Sugar Association
TCP	Technical Cooperation Project (FAO)
TDL	Title Deed Land
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNISWA	University of Swaziland
USD	United States Dollar

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 AGRICULTURE IN THE ECONOMY

Swaziland is a landlocked country with an area of 17,364 square kilometres, of which 15-20 percent is estimated to be arable. Swaziland has a total population of about 1.1 million and a current population growth rate close to zero as a result of AIDS. More than 70 percent of the population is living in rural areas. With a GDP per-capita of about US\$2250, Swaziland is classified as a lower middle-income economy. However, it is estimated that 69 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. On the UNDP Human Development Index, Swaziland ranks 133rd out of 175 countries. An estimated 42.6 percent of the adult population (age 15-49) is living with HIV/AIDS. Although Swaziland has one of the higher GDP's per capita in Sub-Saharan Africa, gains do not benefit everyone equally. With the overall Gini Coefficient of 60.9, income distribution in Swaziland seems to be more unevenly distributed signalling a polarization of the society regarding availability of income

Swaziland attained rapid economic growth and significant social development from its independence in 1968. With the emergence in the early nineties of South Africa from economic isolation and relocation of investments from Swaziland to South Africa, the economic performance has deteriorated, and the downward trend is accelerating. Low growth rate in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), the decline in manufacturing output, and low agricultural productivity resulting from successive droughts played major role in the economic slowdown. These developments have further exacerbated the high levels of unemployment, income inequality and poverty.

Agriculture is the backbone of the Swazi economy and is critical for achieving the overall development objectives of the country. The agriculture sector of Swaziland is acutely dualistic. A dynamic commercial sub-sector established on Title Deed Land (TDL) that occupies 26 percent of the land, holds an estimated 90% of available irrigation infrastructures, and uses modern technologies to produce mainly cash crops. A traditional sub-sector, based on communal tenure in the Swazi Nation Land (SNL) involves semi-subsistence smallholder agriculture with communal grazing. The majority of the population in Swaziland live in farm households located on communal Swazi Nation Land (SNL) and most of them (70 percent) are engaged in low-productivity subsistence agriculture and animal husbandry.

Agriculture sector accounts for about 9% of the GDP and employs about 70 percent of the population. Agriculture is far more important for Swaziland's population and for national economic development than its contribution to GDP suggests. Crucially, agriculture plays a key role in the lives of the majority of the population, since most households rely on agricultural output as a major source of income and food security, either as small-scale producers or as recipients of income from employment on medium and large-scale farms and estates.

Although the contribution of agriculture to GDP is substantially less than the contribution of manufacturing sector (about 35 percent), national agricultural output forms the raw material base for about one third of value added within the manufacturing sector. Agriculture and agriculturally-based manufacturing also contribute substantially to national export earnings, thereby allowing increased

government expenditure through their contributions to the direct and indirect tax base. Furthermore, agriculture also underpins much of the service sector.

1.2 PERFORMANCE OF THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

A trend analysis of Swaziland's agricultural (crop and livestock) production reveals that the sector did not perform well during the 1990-2003 period. Both total and per-capita agricultural production fluctuated over the period 1961-2003, but show a long-term trend of declining relative importance, and even a decrease in per capita food production in recent years. In fact, the agricultural sector's share of GDP decreased from about one-third at independence in 1968 to less than nine percent in 2002. The situation is compounded by inadequate infrastructure and little investment in the rural areas. Moreover, the agricultural sector, in particular rainfed crop production, is vulnerable to drought. Although impossible to predict with certainty, evidence is increasing that the recent spate of droughts may become a long-term feature here, due to changes in global climate patterns. The current rate of HIV prevalence also has enormous implications on the development of the agriculture sector and its capacity to contribute to economic growth.

Since 1980 Swaziland has not been self sufficient in its cereal production: in the 1990s it produced only 60 percent of the domestic food requirements for its staple food (maize), and in the early 2000s the food production has further declined to only 40 percent. The serious gap in supply of maize has contributed to a 45 percent food price increase since 1998, which has further eroded the purchasing power of poor households, and reduced their access to food. Previously, costs of food imports were often covered by remittances of workers to their rural extended families, but with the decline in mining activity in South Africa remittances have also decreased. Currently, 12 percent of the population is malnourished, and nearly one-third of the population need food aid to survive.

Persistent shortages in satisfying domestic food requirements have caused a significant proportion of the population to suffer from under-nutrition, which has the greatest impact on children. This has not only caused a high death toll in extreme cases, but also has permanently reduced children's capacity to learn during childhood and to earn during adulthood. According to emergency food security assessments, approximately 40 percent of all children are stunted (chronic malnutrition), more than 2 percent are wasted (acute malnutrition) and 11 percent are undernourished. It is estimated that up to 348,000 people are vulnerable and food insecure in the country. The main contributing factors are the high poverty rate, inequality of the income distribution, and the extremely high incidence of HIV/AIDS. Other factors specific to rural areas include: chronic drought and consequent water shortages resulting in death of animals and crop failures, widespread soil erosion and land degradation, lack of agricultural land and isolation from markets, limited income generating opportunities, gender restrictions for women to access land and resources, and lack of implementation of appropriate policies.

1.3 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A major challenge in Swaziland to attaining food security and reducing poverty is to create an enabling environment for increasing rural and agricultural productivity and competitiveness. Swaziland has good potentials and opportunities to achieve new millennium development goals. Swaziland has relatively diverse physical features with variety of climatic conditions. This diversity in climate, soil and other

conditions result in several agro-ecological zones. The existence of such agro-bio-diversity allows the country to grow a variety of annual and perennial crops and sustain pastoral activities. The country has good water resources that provide a big irrigation potential. Swaziland has large number of livestock population. Despite the huge size and inherent potential, the livestock remains underdeveloped. However, under better management the productivity of the livestock sub-sector can be significantly improved. These opportunities, together with the new market opportunities in the global economy, can maximize the benefits to farmers of increased agricultural productivity.

However, there should be no illusion of quick paths towards agricultural development. Achievement of a productive and competitive agriculture will require addressing a complex set of constraints. Swaziland is one of the Sub-Saharan African countries where the HIV/AIDS infection is high. There is no doubt that the HIV/AIDS pandemic has the potential to seriously increase poverty and hunger and reduce the capacity for accelerating economic growth. At the macroeconomic level, it seriously reduces the quantity of skilled labour through both death and morbidity and reduces private savings. At the household level, the impact can be severe. Poor households have little margin in terms of savings and income. An AIDS illness can result in increased time spent on caring for the sick person, the loss of labour from the AIDS-infected family member, increased expenditures on health care and on funerals.

The land resource of Swaziland is being denuded of its top soil at a very fast rate as a result of poor land management, overgrazing and soil erosion. This has exposed the country to a very serious ecological and environmental degradation. Increasing agricultural productivity depends, among other factors, on reliable access to water. Water shortage, however, is a serious impediment to intensifying and diversifying agriculture and bringing new land into production, particularly on SNL. The most reliable means of water supply is irrigation; however its potential in the country is constrained by international obligations and high demand on financial, water and human resources.

To varying degrees, both irrigated and rainfed agriculture are also under threat from current and predicted climate changes. However, the land tenure in TDL holding gives a potential for refinancing, land consolidation, sale or other measures to address lean years, while SNL holdings are severely constrained in that context. TDL also has some advantages over SNL regarding infrastructure to address water supplies for livestock. While the value of the national herd on SNL is a significant asset, it is currently subject to inappropriate and unsustainable livestock practices. Small-holder agriculture, which is the predominant source of livelihood for most of the population, is characterised by limited access to mechanization and technology. A similar situation exists in the livestock sub-sector, the large number of livestock, with sub-standard quality, together with land mismanagement, has a deleterious effect on grazing land. Overgrazing has no doubt created soil erosion. Feed and fodder are in short supply, productivity of the indigenous breed is very low, and health conditions are low. This situation has also adverse consequences on the quality of livestock and livestock products.

The insufficiently developed infrastructure of the country has been one of the constraints to agricultural development. This leaves most of farmers poorly connected to markets. Many farmers can neither procure agricultural inputs at affordable prices nor market their own products effectively. Similarly, poor access to

health and education services diminishes agricultural productivity, contributes to the spread of infectious diseases, and locks rural people into a poverty trap. The present institutional set up is inadequate to support accelerated agricultural growth. Rural institutions have not yet effectively developed. The institutions for research, extension and credit lack adequately qualified staff, facilities and logistical support. In addition, coordination between institutions leaves much to be desired. Furthermore, Swaziland will also need to improve the policy and regulatory framework for agriculture to make it more supportive of both local community participation in rural areas and commercial private sector operations.

However, the political and economic realignments caused by globalization over the past decade have caused many changes in Swaziland that offer new opportunities for agricultural development and food security. First, the country is more firmly committed to reducing hunger and poverty than at any other time in the past. Second, the country is experiencing institutional reforms to improve the efficiency and the cost effectiveness of the public services and finance. Third, the country is committing to more liberal trade and marketing policies, and have begun to create the conditions necessary for private sector involvement. These opportunities, together with the new market opportunities in the global economy, can maximize the benefits to Swazi farmers of increased agricultural productivity.

1.4 REVIEW OF EXISTING POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND PLANS

Swaziland has formulated and adapted several policies, programmes, strategies and action plans that aim at creating an enabling environment for achieving food security, alleviation poverty and attaining economic development. Key policies and strategies that are relevant and closely related to agriculture are reviewed under the following headings: (1) National development strategies and programmes, (2) policies on the environment including bio-diversity, and (3) policies on renewable natural resources, including forestry and livestock.

1.4.1 National Development Strategies, Plans and Programmes

The *National Development Strategy 2022 (NDS)* approved in 1999 guides the long-term socio-economic development of the country and gives direction for the development of key economic sectors development including agriculture. The NDS highlights the need to raising the capability of the agricultural sector to generate a higher volume of goods and services for given factors of production, without destroying the environment. It emphasizes the importance of food security at the household and community levels, commercialisation of agriculture on Swazi Nation Land, efficient water resource management and usage, and rational land allocation and utilization.

The implementation of a *Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (PRSAP)* is seen as crucial in achieving the goals of the NDS. As poverty is more prevalent in rural areas, smallholder agricultural development is vital to its alleviation. The revised 2005 draft PRSAP presents a poverty reduction framework which consists of six pillars: (1) rapid acceleration of economic growth based on broad participation, (2) empowering the poor to generate income and reduce inequalities, (3) fair distribution of the benefits of growth through public expenditure, (4) ensuring food security, (5) improving the quality of life of the poor, and (6) strengthening good governance. The most essential parts of the PRSAP are consolidated under the empowerment of the poor to generate income through (1) improving access to land, (2) increasing income from agriculture, and (3) reducing unemployment. The

strategies proposed under the human capital development focus on (1) education, (2) health, (3) food security and nutrition, and (4) safe water and sanitation.

As a matter of urgency for implementing the NDS, the Prime Minister has launched the *Smart Programme on Economic Empowerment and Development* (SPEED) in 2004. The programme provides a short- to medium-term framework for prioritizing development interventions in the country. It focuses on development of a sustainable economy and enhancing economic growth through expanding the private sector, encouraging foreign direct investment (FDI), the growth of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), industrialisation, the provision of infrastructure and regional development. Government and public sector reform are considered essential preconditions. SPEED includes elements and sub-programmes for achieving food security through increasing agricultural production, increasing the maize and cotton production, improving veterinary and livestock services, and maximising land use planning.

While the NDS envisions what should happen and how, the *National Physical Development Plan 1996-2006* specifies where development should happen. The NPDP main purpose is to spatially interpret national economic planning and implementation currently driving all major developments in the country, and to strengthen inter-sectoral coordination of the overall development within a spatial framework and ensuring balanced use of land and natural resources. Plan proposals have been formulated for six sectors: the physical environment, rural land use and agriculture, non-agricultural productive sectors, human sector hierarchy, infrastructure and community facilities. Each of the plan proposals has a goal and a set of objectives. In 2004 the Government has initiated the preparation of *Regional Physical Development Plans* (RPDP), which seek to bridge the gap in the planning hierarchy that exist between the NPDP and local town planning schemes. The RPDP is an instrument to integrate the planning of urban centres and rural districts.

The guiding vision of the *National Rural Resettlement Policy* (NRRP), which has been approved in 2003, is to establish a durable, practical and participatory framework for the planning and sustainable management of land, and the appropriate application of resettlement strategies in rural Swaziland, in order to increase agricultural production, promote the sustainable utilisation of natural resources and improve livelihoods. Key institutions involved in the formulation and implementation of this policy are MOAC and the Rural Planning, Development and Resettlement Board. Policy objectives focus on transparent, orderly, legitimate and equitable land allocation in both social and legal contexts, fair compensation and appropriate treatment of displaced and other people affected by resettlement, and an effective legislative framework for resettlement, resolution of land disputes and sustainable land management. In addition it emphasizes the promotion of optimal and sustainable land use and the identification of suitable land use strategies for local communities and their full participation and involvement.

1.4.2 Policies on Environment and Bio-Diversity

The *National Environment Policy* has been formulated to promote the enhancement, protection and conservation of the environment to attain sustainable development. The *Swaziland Environment Action Plan* (SEAP) was officially approved and endorsed by the government in 1997. The Swaziland Environment Authority, which is an autonomous body within the Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Communications (MTEC), is entrusted with the implementation of the SEAP. The main objectives of the SEAP are to provide an overview of the

Swaziland environment, prioritise environmental issues and problems, suggest solutions to these problems, establish a clear indication of the government's priority areas with respect to the environment, establish a framework with coherent direction for future planning and monitoring, and provide a framework for continuous development and policy dialogue. The *Environmental Management Act, 2002* turned the Swaziland Environment Authority (SEA) into a body corporate and established the Swaziland Environment Fund.

Although emerging from the International Convention on Biodiversity, the draft *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan* (BSAP) is an integral part of the SEAP. The purpose of the BSAP is to conserve the biodiversity of Swaziland, encourage the sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure that the benefits accrued from the use of biodiversity are shared equitably. The BSAP establishes six goals, and makes recommendations towards their achievement. The goals are to: conserve a viable set of representative samples of natural ecosystems, sustainably use of biological resources of natural ecosystems outside protected areas, conserve the genetic base of Swaziland's crop and livestock breeds, minimise risks associated with the use of modified organisms, establish effective institutional, policy and legal frameworks, and enhance public awareness and support for biodiversity conservation.

1.4.3 Policies on Renewable Natural Resources Including Forestry and Livestock

A draft *National Land Policy* (NLP) was prepared in 1999 with a view to improving access to land and security of tenure on SNL including tenure on irrigation schemes, as well as clarifying roles and responsibilities for land administration. The draft policy considers the possibility of leasehold arrangements and transferable user rights for individual farmers and farmer groups on SNL. It proposes that the 99-year leasehold concept, already being applied on SNL by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (MHUD) in an urban context, be also applied to rural SNL. It also proposes changes to systems of land allocation to allow women to have equal access. However, further development of the NLP has been temporarily suspended pending the finalisation of the Constitution.

The *National Irrigation Policy* is currently being drafted. The overall goal is to ensure that the irrigated agriculture sub-sector in Swaziland contributes fully to economic growth and poverty alleviation. It has three specific objective: to optimize the productivity of water in the country's agricultural sector and broaden the scope for agricultural intensification and diversification; to establish an irrigation sector institutional landscape characterised by transparent regulation and strong, participatory and/or responsive and accountable institutions in Swaziland; and to enhance the structure of the irrigated sub-sector by promoting new public and private investment opportunities for emerging farmers. The *Water Act of 2003* is developed to harmonise the management of water resources in the country through the establishment of a National Water Authority and formulation of a Water Resources Master Plan.

The *National Forest Policy* (NFP) was approved in 2002. The Vision of the NFP is "to achieve efficient, profitable and sustainable management and utilisation of forest resources for the benefit of the entire society, and to increase the role of forestry in environmental protection, conservation of plant and animal genetic resources and rehabilitation of degraded land". The policy objectives include the development of forest resources and its sustainable balance with other land and water uses, the improvement of forest productivity, to improve living conditions and alleviate

poverty, to conserve the biodiversity of forest resources and to enhance forest management. Its action plan, called the *National Forestry Programme*, which is awaiting approval, proposes six action programmes covering industrial forestry, community forestry, urban forestry and natural forests and woodlands.

The goal of the *Livestock Development Policy* (LDP) approved in 1995 is to achieve an efficient and sustainable livestock industry contributing to economic development. The policy objectives relate to improving the national herd and animal health, nutrition, meat hygiene standards, marketing, processing industries, commercialisation and promotion of entrepreneurship, range management, research, legislation and communication. Proposed strategies for achieving these objectives focus on improving livestock extension, raising off-take levels, promoting marketing, commercialising the livestock industry on a cost recovery basis, promoting entrepreneurship, maintaining good range and pasture management practices, ensuring adequate research, improving the national herd, raising livestock nutrition levels, developing competent manpower, guaranteeing meat hygiene standards and sanitary requirement, preventing diseases through animal health care, developing appropriate legislation, and branding cattle. The *Livestock Identification Act of, 2001* provides for the compulsory marking of livestock with registered identification marks. It is potentially necessary for livestock development. However, difficulties are encountered in its implementation particularly with respect to the required training and equipment for marking.

1.5 THE NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURE SECTOR POLICY

The situation of food security and poverty in Swaziland is dire and deteriorating. Although there are many contributing factors, the poor performance of the agricultural sector lies at the heart of the problem. Strengthening agriculture sector is the key to addressing the root causes of poverty and food insecurity. A major challenge for attaining food security and alleviating poverty is, therefore, to create an enabling environment for increasing rural and agricultural productivity and competitiveness. An immediate challenge is to put in place a policy framework to address urgent issues, remove major constraints, and utilize existing opportunities for the development of the agriculture sector.

While the National Development Strategy (NDS) provides a broad national vision, and underlines the need to define and strengthen sectoral policies and strategies geared towards food security and poverty alleviation, agriculture sector development as yet has not been guided by a sector-wide policy and strategy. Agricultural development programmes and projects are still being formulated and implemented without a comprehensive agricultural sector development policy and strategy framework in place. In addition, Swaziland has formulated and adopted a set of scattered and un-integrated sub-sector policies and action plans that relate to its agriculture in particular and linked to its renewable natural resources in general.

For these reasons, and because of the importance of agriculture for the livelihoods of the majority of the population in Swaziland, the pressing need for an integrated and comprehensive policy for the development of the agriculture sector is understood by various stakeholders in both the public and private sectors.

CHAPTER 2 CASP FRAMEWORK

2.1 CASP GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Vision 2022 aims to build a truly Twenty-First Century Kingdom of Swaziland, culturally united, integrated and stable, economically prosperous and socially well organised with equal opportunities for all, irrespective of gender, and responsibility from all. Vision 2022 has been incorporated into the national development planning process through the development of the National Development Strategy (NDS) which intends to inspire and direct long-term socio-economic development of the country. The goal of the NDS is that by the year 2022, the Kingdom of Swaziland will be in the top ten percent of the medium human development group of countries founded on sustainable economic development, social justice and political stability. NDS gives directions for the development of various economic sectors including agriculture.

The Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy (CASP) goal and objectives have been formulated in accordance with the national aspirations as stated in the Vision 2022 and the NDS. CASP aims to focus on the contribution of the agriculture sector to the realization of the country aspiration of the Vision 2022 and to the achievement of national development goals of the NDS. The goal of CASP is, therefore, to ensure that the agriculture sector contributes fully to the socio-economic development of the country. The broad objective is to provide clear guidance on policy options and measures necessary to enhance sustainable agriculture sector development and its contribution to overall economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable natural resources management. Specific objectives are set to be pursued by CASP:

- To increase agricultural output and productivity.
- To increase the earnings for those engaged in agriculture by promoting adoption of diversification and sustainable intensification and use of appropriate technology.
- To enhance food security.
- To ensure sustainable use and management of land and water resources.
- To stabilize agricultural markets.

2.2 SCOPE AND NATURE OF THE CASP

The majority of Swaziland's agricultural output derives from irrigated land. Thus, policy towards irrigation must necessarily form an integral part of the CASP. The elements of an outline irrigation policy have been developed as a component of the CASP. A more detailed irrigation policy that fully complements the CASP is being prepared with support from FAO.

Forestry is an important activity in Swaziland and is of importance to agriculture due to its impact on micro-climates and on the flow in the streams and rivers that supply water for irrigation. However, given the existence of a National Forestry Policy, forestry is not covered by the CASP. The CASP also does not cover fisheries, although the fresh-water fishery potential in Swaziland has been growing as additional lakes have been formed by the construction of dams.

Thus the CASP covers the crop and livestock sub-sectors on both rainfed and irrigated land. Throughout this policy paper, 'agriculture' is used to refer to crop and livestock production. The emphasis is on small-scale production, but the CASP also

covers large-scale production since the greater importance to Swaziland of such production as a generator of agricultural value added means that it has immense potential to contribute to food security and poverty reduction.

2.3 CASP FORMULATION PROCESS

Recognizing the importance of attaining a broad-based consensus on the policy and the need to reflect national aspirations, the CASP was developed via an extensive participatory and comprehensive consultative process involving all major stakeholders in the agricultural sector and sub-sectors. The key stakeholders that participated in the process included those in the public and private sector: government ministries, parastatal organizations, cooperatives and unions, University of Swaziland, NGOs, FAO, development partners and donors, extension officers, and Farmers Associations.

A task force was established by MOAC to lead the policy formulation process. Project Team composed of eleven international and local consultants were recruited to carry out various activities necessary for the successful completion of the project outputs under the technical guidance and support from the FAO.

Extensive literature review was carried out for a number of relevant documents, including relevant international agreements to which Swaziland is signatory, policy documents from other countries, and the recommendations from previous studies and relevant consultative processes of Government over the previous decade. The process was undertaken in a manner that ensured gender balance in the views expressed. Consultative discussions and meetings with several key informants from the government and other stakeholders were undertaken to illicit their views, concerns and expectations. Several workshops were conducted at regional and national levels to gather the views of stakeholders.

The results of the above processes were then consolidated into eleven sub-sector technical papers, reviewing the situations within their respective domains, and making recommendations towards the CASP. The findings of these sector reports were included in a comprehensive report. The combined reports were used as the main source for this policy.

2.4 CASP PRINCIPLES

All policy statements and strategies included in the CASP fall within and are in accordance with the provisions imposed by the 1968 Constitution, particularly clauses with natural resources and agriculture-related provisions. They are also in conformity with relevant regional and international conventions, agreements and protocols to which Swaziland is signatory. All the statements constituting CASP are based on fundamental principles governing the successful achievement of policy objectives:

- Equitable access to land and water resources within the full recognition of existing property rights, both formal and customary.
- Environmentally sustainable agricultural production, through maintaining productive capacity and minimizing negative externalities.
- Engagement of private and public sector agencies where most effective.

CHAPTER 3 CASP OUTLINE: ISSUES, STATEMENTS AND STRATEGIES

This chapter outlines the key policy issues in the agricultural sector, states relevant policies to address these issues, and proposes strategies for achieving the policy objectives. After extensive discussions and consultations with key stakeholders, policy issues and statements are discussed and presented the following categories: rainfed crop production sub-sector, irrigation crop production sub-sector, livestock production sub-sector, support services, and food security. However, there is not always a sharp distinction between these categories and hence issues may be overlapping.

3.1 POLICIES ON RAINFED CROP SUB-SECTOR

3.1.1 *Crop Productivity in High-Rainfall Zones¹*

Issues

- In most years, the high rainfall zones of Swaziland have sufficient rainfall for sustainable crop production.
- Most of the current cropping systems in the high-rainfall zones show poor management practices and low productivity.
- Unsustainable rainfed crop production practices in high-rainfall zones lead to soil erosion and land degradation.
- Dominance of acid soils with low inherent fertility in the high-rainfall zones.

Policy Statement

It is national policy that adoption of sustainable rainfed cropping systems and management practices in the high rainfall areas be stimulated.

Strategy

- Identify and advocate sustainable crop management practices and adoption of appropriate technology packages in high-rain zones.
- Promote and introduce semi-commercial and commercial agricultural management activities on SNL.
- Promote and enforce soil conservation measures in rainfed arable areas, and in particular maintain grass strips and terraces as important conservation measures.
- Develop a programme to build farmers capacity on how to ameliorate acid soils through gypsum, liming and fertilisers.
- Promote where appropriate the introduction of agro-forestry, intercropping, conservation agriculture, crop rotations, planting of leguminous crops and other management measures that will improve the soil properties and productivity.

¹ Swaziland can be divided in two parts with respect to rainfall patterns and length of growing period, namely high-rainfall zones and dryland zones. Areas with relatively high rainfall include the Highveld, the Upper Middleveld and the plateau parts of the Lubombo.

3.1.2 Crop Productivity in Drylands²

Issues

- Drylands experience frequent occurrence of drought, and mostly annual rainfall is not sufficient for sustainable crop production.
- More frequent and severe droughts are expected as a result of climate change.
- The poorest and most vulnerable segment of the population lives in the Drylands.
- Most of the current cropping practices in the Drylands are not sustainable.
- The potential of water-harvesting is under-utilised in the Drylands.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that alternative sustainable livelihoods in the Drylands are to be explored and that adoption of drought tolerant crop varieties is encouraged.

Strategy

- Develop drought-adaptation strategies in the Drylands and promote the mainstreaming of the National Drylands Development Programme for Swaziland.
- Enhance the capacity for community-based natural resources management and improve property rights and institutions in the Drylands.
- Promote sustainable alternative livelihoods through food processing and developing non-agricultural activities, such as gathering of forest products, aquaculture, bee keeping, handicrafts, manufacturing, etc.
- Adopt appropriate dryland cultivation technologies, diversify the cropping pattern, and focus on drought tolerant crop varieties - in particular crops suitable for processing and value-adding.
- Investigate the suitability of alternative crops including cassava, pigeon pea, sisal, hemp, sorghum and oilseed crops such as cotton, sunflower and groundnuts.
- Promote and introduce conservation agriculture, with minimal tillage, crop rotation, soil cover and soil amelioration to improve soil moisture holding capacities, and promote planting of leguminous crops to improve the nutrient status of the soil.
- Introduce water-harvesting techniques in the Drylands.

3.1.3 Land Use Efficiency in Rainfed Areas

Issues

- The biophysical potential of the land is not always taken into consideration with respect to its use, e.g. some land with high potential for crop production is used for extensive grazing or human settlement.
- The proportion of arable rainfed land that is not utilised has significantly increased in recent years.

² Dryland zones or Drylands are areas with relatively low rainfall, which occur in the Lowveld, the Lower Middleveld and the lower parts of the Lubombo.

- Conflicts over the use of rainfed land are increasing, particularly the competition between grazing and settlements.

Policy Statement

It is national policy that land in rainfed areas be used efficiently according to its biophysical suitability and socio-economic viability.

Strategy

- Promote the application of the agro-ecological zoning (AEZ) methodology in rainfed agriculture, and revise the system periodically to respond to climate changes.
- Advocate that rainfed crop production be linked to land suitability.
- Investigate the possibilities for converting currently extensively grazed land with high potential for rainfed crop production to arable land.
- Investigate the opportunities for alternative land uses in under-utilised land.
- Promote land use planning based on AEZ to improve land use and resolve land conflicts.

3.1.4 Diversification of the Rainfed Crop Production Base

Issues

- Opportunities to diversify crop production have not been fully researched and exploited.
- Rainfed agriculture on SNL is dominated by cultivation of maize and lacks diversification towards other crops.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that the diversification of the rainfed crop production base be promoted and attained.

Strategy

- Investigate options and opportunities to diversify crop production, including options of indigenous and exotic crops such as oilseeds, medicinal plants, hemp, and fodder crops.
- Investigate options and opportunities for crop processing and value-adding activities.
- Establish mechanisms that will improve marketing, processing, infrastructure and services in order to be able to respond to the commercialisation process.
- Focus crop diversification in the first place on crops for the more secure local and regional markets and in the second place - only after professional market research - on crops for the less secure and demanding remote exports markets.
- Assess economic potential (gross margins) of common crops that have a good yield potential in all or part of the higher rainfall zones.

3.1.5 Mechanisation of Rainfed Agriculture

Issues

- Most of the SNL farmers' fields are not large enough to warrant the use of tractors.
- The vast majority of farm households in SNL do not have enough resources to privately own tractors and other farm machinery.

- Use of draught animal power among SNL farm households is noticeably very low.
- SNL farmers in general lack technical know-how and skills for operating and maintaining agricultural machinery.
- Access to mechanization services under current tractor hire scheme is often unreliable and service delivery is not timely.
- Poor performance, poor maintenance and poor monitoring undermine the functioning of the current tractor hire scheme.
- The subsidized rates and charges of the government tractor hire scheme are uneconomical and do not promote entrepreneurship and sustainable private tractor ownership.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that mechanization of rainfed agriculture should be improved and that the involvement of the private sector be promoted and facilitated.

Strategy

- Formulate a national mechanisation strategy and action plan.
- Evaluate the demand for and availability of draught animal power and assess its role and efficiency as an alternative source of power for SNL smallholders.
- Investigate the options for land consolidation on SNL and promote the enlargement of farmers' fields to make mechanisation more economical.
- Promote group formation of a scale and mix that will allow the optimum use of machinery.
- Promote the setting up of maintenance and repair units for tractors and farm implements in rural areas, and stimulate private sector initiatives.
- Develop a training programme of SNL farmers in all aspects of mechanised farming.
- Investigate a gradual transition from and phasing out of the current tractor hire schemes to a sustainable privatised service.

3.1.6 Cotton Production and Processing

Issues

- Production of cotton is one of the few prospective farming opportunities in the Drylands and potentially suitable land is available in the Lower Middleveld and Lowveld.
- The recent collapse of the cotton production has had a very negative effect on the cash income of small farmers and poor households in the Drylands.
- Low yield of rainfed cotton production decreases farm household income and causes failure to paying back credits.
- Attractive gross-margins can be expected in years when rainfall is average or above.
- Swaziland has a secure market for cotton.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that sustainable smallholder production of cotton be financially and technically supported and that a functional processing and marketing system be established and ensured.

Strategy

- Secure the selling of the farmers' output by the rehabilitation of the existing ginnery.
- Research the introduction of GM cotton varieties, in particular its influence on the profitability of rainfed production.
- Evaluate the systems of giving credit and loans to small-farmers and establish a cost-effective method reducing the financial and risk constraints for farmers.
- Introduce an appropriate pre-financing mechanism and extension service delivery system controlled by the ginning company.

3.1.7 Maize Marketing System

Issues

- The vast majority of households are net maize purchasers, yet only a small proportion of the output enters formal marketing channels.
- The rapid growth of modern small-scale maize milling techniques has resulted in alternative marketing channels.
- The current maize marketing system no longer performs in a manner that contributes to food security.
- In contrast to the NMC, the regional grain trading system has developed in terms of sophistication and transparency, with benefits to national food security.
- The effect of current levies on maize imports is too low to provide any effective protection to Swazi producers.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that the maize market be liberalised subject to remaining conducive to improving food security.

Strategy

- Periodically examine and adjust regulations and mechanisms to adapt to changes in the maize market.
- Remove monopoly control of maize imports and import permits and subject imports only to phytosanitary and quality control legislation.
- Investigate removing or changing existing levies on maize and liberalising imports taking into account the agreement with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) partners on anti-dumping legislation for maize meal.
- Review the current maize marketing system through a consultative process with the participation of all major stakeholders, including producers, commercial and small millers, consumers and retailers, disaster and other food aid agencies, and the Government.
- Establish an efficient market information system for the maize sector.

3.2 POLICIES ON IRRIGATED CROP SUB-SECTOR

3.2.1 Water Management

Issues

- The 2003 Water Act regulates catchments management through River Basin Authorities.

- Current unsustainable irrigation practices in catchments heavily eroded and degraded the soil and resulted in the siltation of water bodies.
- Wetlands are not appropriately used and protected.
- Often the water available is less than the water allocated resulting in the depletion of environmental flows.
- Water consuming alien invasive species are spreading in some catchments resulting in the reduction of water resources available for irrigation.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that productive and healthy watersheds be established and sustained.

Strategy

- Implement catchments management and protection according to the provisions of the 2003 Water Act through the River Basin Authorities.
- Identify, evaluate, demonstrate and promote effective catchments management practices.
- Enforce soil and water conservation measures in irrigated areas, require the use of appropriate drainage, and promote the adoption of soil erosion mitigation measures.
- Protect wetlands and restrict their use as sources of irrigation water according to existing sustainable natural resources and environmental rules and regulations.
- Establish programmes to remove and control alien invasive species from infested watersheds.

3.2.2 Water Allocation, Productivity and Efficiency

Issues

- Water availability is not adequate for every user, even though its use is supposedly regulated through the issue of irrigation permits.
- During the months of peak irrigation demand, the water allocations outstrip the available amount of water in the river.
- Increases in irrigation application efficiency do not necessarily result in increased availability of water, as water saved through improved on-farm-water-management or more efficient technology can be reinvested locally.
- Informal trading with irrigation water permits is often leading to disputes rather than to the improved allocation expected from a permit-based allocation system.
- Guidelines, regulations or mechanisms that deal with questions of how and where water saved as a result of improved practices, and/or higher application efficiencies should be utilized or reallocated are lacking.
- Poor water management practices and use of inappropriate technologies result in low water productivity.
- High rate of water application due to lack of consideration to soil and topography and use of low efficiency irrigation systems.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that sustainable water productivity and efficiency in irrigation water application be maximised and appropriate irrigation technology and management techniques be adopted.

Strategy

- Develop strategies and mechanisms for improved and dynamic water allocation in order to increase irrigation application efficiency.
- Establish procedures to tie water permits to defined land parcels and subject any permit holder who fails to use or abuses permit to the provisions of the 2003 Water Act.
- Regulate irrigation water abstractions via the appropriate institutions and agencies.
- Develop procedures to assist Irrigation Districts and Water User Associations to prepare water permit applications, to identify options for and encourage flexible intra-group water allocations that increase water productivity as required and allowed by the Water Act.
- Advocate the use of water saving irrigation technology and sustainable water management practices.
- Establish an appropriate water allocation system, taking into account soil characteristics and topographic conditions.

3.2.3 Water Quality

Issues

- Water quality is currently not taken into consideration in the issuance of water permits for irrigation.
- The use of agricultural chemicals in irrigated areas results in deterioration of the water quality in the river system and affects downstream users and health standards.
- Some irrigation water permits are not or not fully utilized.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that sustainable levels of water quality be restored and maintained and that environmental flow requirements be recognised and considered in the issuance irrigation water permits in catchments.

Strategy

- Allocate irrigation water permits on the basis of appropriate technical, hydrological and economic considerations.
- Consider both the water quantity and quality when issuing water permits for irrigation.
- Set and enforce and monitor quality standards for any return flows from irrigation.

3.2.4 Improving Participation of Smallholders in Irrigation Schemes

Issues

- The participation of smallholder farmers in the planning, designing and management of irrigation schemes is limited.
- The level of organisation of smallholders in water user groups is insufficient.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that the formation of smallholder water user groups be promoted and that their participation in planning and management of irrigation schemes be enhanced.

Strategy

- Establish procedures to ensure and increase smallholder participation in the process of project design, planning and implementation.
- Facilitate the formation and strengthening of water user groups corresponding with Irrigation Districts.
- Develop an appropriate legislative framework for the establishment and operation of water user groups.

3.2.5 Development of Irrigation Infrastructure

Issues

- Infrastructure development has not reached the stage where every potential irrigator has easy access to irrigation water.
- The capacity of the existing dams is not enough to capture excess runoff, leading to a low assurance of supply of irrigation water.
- Potential diversion weir sites have not been developed sufficiently to take advantage of gravity irrigation.

Policy Statements

It is National Policy that irrigation infrastructure be continuously developed and equitable access to irrigation water be improved.

Strategy

- Prepare an inventory of economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally feasible irrigation and water-harvesting development opportunities
- Devise a irrigation strategy and prepare an action plan for its implementation
- Formulate and implement a program for the development of irrigation infrastructure including dam construction.
- Facilitate the development of water conveyance infrastructure to ensure equitable access to irrigation facilities.
- Develop diversion weirs and canals in potential irrigation sites, and strengthen farmer capacity to implement irrigation infrastructure.

3.2.6 Operation, Maintenance and Cost Recovery of Irrigation Facilities

Issues

- The responsibility of operation and maintenance of the irrigation schemes and infrastructure has been left with the government.
- Dams, weirs, canals and other irrigation infrastructure are misused and not adequately maintained.
- Inappropriate or lacking of financial mechanisms for recurrent cost recovery.
- Water permits for irrigation are issued free of charge, while costs are incurred during the processing of applications.

Policy statements

It is National Policy that sustainable operation and maintenance of irrigation facilities and infrastructure be improved and recurrent cost of irrigation be recovered.

Strategy

- Encourage the participation of the users in the operation and maintenance of the irrigation facilities and their appurtenant infrastructure and gradually transfer this responsibility to the users, except where such infrastructure is of a scale beyond the capacity of the users to operate and maintain.
- Establish a transparent irrigation service tariff structure in accordance with the Water Act which requires that such tariffs are set, at least in part, by user groups.
- Ensure that irrigation service tariffs are disbursed for the purpose that they are levied, and do so in a transparent and accountable fashion.
- Establish and enforce a transparent system of fines and other regulatory measures to discourage the misuse of irrigation infrastructure, over-abstraction of water, and pollution of watercourses.

3.2.7 Commercial Sugarcane Production

Issues

- In order to remain competitive, there is a continuous pressure on the sugar industry to produce more efficiently.
- The segment of the preferential sugar markets is expected to decrease in the coming years, both in volume and price level.
- Average real world price received by Swaziland exports have been less than 60 percent of the weighted real average price realised by Swaziland for all sugar in the last four years.
- World market prices are very volatile and have decreased for the past 10 years.
- The appreciation of the South African Rand against the US Dollar has a negative influence on the profitability of the sugar industry.
- Neither one of the current farming systems - estate or smallholder - in Swaziland, nor any of the three irrigation systems that are in operation, are capable of producing sucrose below the world market price, yet the large majority of the production increases of sugar over the last four years was sold on the world market.
- The development of value-adding activities in the sugar industry is insufficient.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that a viable and efficient sugar industry be pursued and maintained.

Strategy

- Develop an equitable and efficient sucrose sales system aimed at minimising the loss-making segment of sales to the world market and maximising the segment to supply the EU, USA, SACU and other premium-priced markets.
- Review the operation of the present Swaziland Sugar Association (SSA) pooled payment system for sugar and sugarcane, i.e. pricing into-mill deliveries of cane on the basis of the mean national net realisation from sale of the sucrose and cane by-products.
- Continuously improve the profitability of the sugar industry through improved management, more efficient irrigation methods and cost-reducing measures in the cultivation and processing of the sugar cane.

- Investigate the options and opportunities for developing value-adding activities in the sugar industry.

3.2.8 Smallholder Cane Growing

Issues

- The present share of total production of smallholder cane producers is in the order of only ten percent.
- Large-scale farming units currently produce sugar more cheaply than the smallholders groups – by eight percent on average.
- In years when there is a shortage of irrigation water, farmers with drip irrigation are in a much better position to receive sufficient water.
- Interest charges have a very significant impact on profitability - in particular to smallholders without equity - to such effect that margins after interest charges are very small and not sufficient to cover any significant loan repayment.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that efficient and competitive smallholder sugarcane production be encouraged.

Strategy

- Increase the efficiency and competitiveness of commercial smallholder sugarcane growers through continuously improved and cost-effective productions methods.
- Monitor the profitability and financial situation of smallholder sugarcane growers groups and develop contingency plans to be implemented in the event of financial failure, including plans that minimise disruption to lending agencies.

3.2.9 Options to Diversify Irrigated Crop Production

Issues

- The share of irrigated crops other than sugarcane is diminishing.
- The diversification of irrigated crop production is not sufficient.
- The local consumption of fruits and vegetables is mainly supported by imports, whereas local conditions are conducive for the production of these commodities.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that diversification of irrigated crops be promoted in order to increase preparedness to change to alternative crops when economically desirable.

Strategy

- Assess and evaluate the economic performance of major irrigated crops.
- Explore the options and opportunities for diversification of irrigated crops.
- Improve marketing conditions and agro-processing possibilities for locally produced fruit and vegetables.

3.3 POLICIES ON LIVESTOCK SUB-SECTOR

3.3.1 *Animal Husbandry and Range Management Practices*

Issues

- Poor and unsustainable management of communal animal husbandry.
- Unsustainable stocking rates and overgrazing in the communal rangelands cause severe soil erosion and widespread serious land degradation.
- Climate change and frequent bush fires impact on current range management.
- Poor range management practices such as excess cattle movements to dipping tanks, watering points and night kraals have led to detrimental environmental effects.
- An increasing proportion of arable land in the Dryland zones, which is suitable for grazing, is fallow or used for unsustainable crop production.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that improved communal grazing management and sustainable utilisation of the rangelands be introduced and promoted.

Strategy

- Identify and introduce sustainable management practices for improved communal grazing and promote the formation of community livestock groups.
- Investigate the current status of the rangelands' utilisation and management and develop rangeland degradation monitoring indicators.
- Investigate and recommend proper animal stocking rates, fencing and rotational grazing.
- Develop animal husbandry and range management adaptation strategies following the recommendations and findings of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other leading organisations.
- Promote bush control, enforce soil conservation measures in communal rangelands and implement appropriate land rehabilitation measures in degraded areas.
- Apply the agro-ecological zoning (AEZ) methodology to identify areas suitable for grazing in Dryland zones and promote the development of intensive sustainable animal production systems in areas with high potential.
- Investigate shifting extensive grazing activities from peri-urban areas and areas with high suitability for crop production in the Highveld and Upper Middleveld towards the Lower Middleveld and Lowveld.
- Define and formalise communal grazing rights.

3.3.2 *Commercialising the Beef Industry*

Issues

- Beef production on SNL is low and constrained by inadequate supplies of suitable animal genotypes and poor general animal feeding conditions compounded by mismanagement, drought and water shortages.
- Pests and endoparasites cause major constraints to beef production.
- The level of domestic beef consumption is relatively low and the beef industry is not taking advantage of export opportunities.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that the beef industry be commercialised to meet domestic demand and to increase exports.

Strategy

- Promote increased and affordable domestic marketing of quality beef to stimulate off-take and domestic consumption.
- Stimulate entrepreneurship among SNL farmers in beef production.
- Increase beef production to satisfy EU quota and local demand.
- Encourage financial institutions and the private sector to support animal production, rural processing, and delivery of veterinary services.
- Assist in the formation of livestock marketing interest groups and provide training in the valuation of beef and value-adding to products, including the standards of grading livestock, beef, and hides.
- Improve the production of quality fodder and feed for beef production.
- Improve animal health and quality

3.3.3 Commercialising the Small Ruminants, Pigs and Poultry Industries

Issues

- Production of small animals is a still neglected part of the sub-sector, although development of small ruminants, pigs and poultry is showing potential.
- The poultry industry has several bottlenecks, especially its complete dependence on imported inputs from South Africa, e.g. hatcheries.
- The pig industry suffers from difficulties related to the availability and functioning of abattoirs and the shortage of breeding stock for pig production.
- Lack of commercial and sustainable goat production.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that production of small ruminant, pig and poultry be promoted and developed.

Strategy

- Investigate and explore potentials and constraints for the small ruminants, pig and poultry industries, and formulate a programme for their development.
- Develop local poultry breeding stations and resuscitate hatcheries.
- Establish or revive abattoirs, and establish pig-breeding centres.
- Assess the constraints to sustainable commercial goat production and promote smallholder goat production by improving quality and removing constraints such as diseases and poor nutrition.
- Support the formation of small ruminants, pig and poultry production groups.

3.3.4 Dairy Production

Issues

- The output of dairy production is far below national demand.
- Attempts to use indigenous cows for commercial dairying in the SNL production system have not been successful due to the low level of milk production and the low genetic potential of indigenous cattle for lactation.
- Shortage of breeds, quality fodder and feed for dairy production.
- Insufficient development of value-adding dairy activities.

- Inadequate marketing information services and limited collection, processing and storage facilities in the rural areas.
- A general lack of credit facilities with affordable terms for small-scale dairy development.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that an efficient dairy industry be developed to meet domestic demand and provide increased rural income.

Strategy

- Undertake a detailed assessment of the major constraints to dairy production, demarcate suitable SNL areas into potential milk-producing areas, and encourage increased smallholder dairying by removing constraints such as diseases and poor animal nutrition.
- Support the formation of farmers groups for milk collection, processing, distribution and acquisition of inputs.
- Introduce milk-handling techniques that enhance milk quality and small-scale processing.
- Investigate the opportunities for developing value-adding activities in the dairy industry.
- Upgrade the quality of the national herd for dairy production by facilitating selective breeding programmes.
- Upgrade good quality rangeland to improved pastures.
- Enhance the production of quality fodder and feed for dairy production.
- Encourage dairy farmers to make use of available credit facility providers to finance the dairy industry.

3.3.5 Fodder and Animal Feed Production

Issues

- Frequent shortages of fodder and feeds, in particular during winter and droughts.
- Limited production of on-farm forage production for animal feeding, and lack of on-farm fodder conservation.
- Crop residues are not optimised for livestock feeding, and there is no individual farmer's control over the use of residue from their own fields.
- Lack of an accessible fodder and feed information system.
- Limited use of agro-industrial by-products for feeding animals on SNL.
- High feed cost from monopolistic suppliers.
- Increasing evidence of the local production and marketing of low and sub-standard quality animal feed.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that the domestic production and marketing of animal fodder and feeds be supported, and its availability and quality improved.

Strategy

- Investigate nutritionally balanced low-cost fodder and feed production options for SNL cattle and small-stock farmers, including fodder production from traditional agro-pastoral systems and selected forage legumes.

- Promote rainfed and irrigated production, conservation and diversification of fodder crops with a high nutritional value in SNL production systems and government farms.
- Improve information systems and dissemination of fodder and animal feed information.
- Improve the availability of fodder and feeds during drought and other emergencies by building strategic reserves.
- Investigate and promote alternative sources of energy and protein that are not in direct competition with human consumption, including agro-industrial by-products.
- Remove monopolistic market structure for animal fodder and feed production.
- Introduce and regulate quality control of animal feeds.

3.3.6 Improving Animal Quality

Issues

- Poor genetic quality of the national herd in commercial terms and poor breeding practices restrict productive capacity.
- Indigenous breeds have better tolerance to heat, pests and parasites, but lower intrinsic productivity potentials compared to genetically improved exotic breeds.
- Implementation of a meaningful breeding strategy is hindered by poor livestock management practices that encourage uncontrolled mating at communal grazing pastures, inadequate training of extension workers, and lack of on-farm record keeping.
- Traditional farmer' perception of good animals for selection may not be consistent with production potential.
- Lack of individual animal identification and record keeping.
- Inefficient research-extension-farmer linkages.
- General lack of artificial insemination services.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that the local herd be improved through breeding, the indigenous gene pool be protected, and internationally acceptable animal quality assurance standards be applied.

Strategy

- Encourage optimal management, conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources.
- Promote genetic improvement, breeding and multiplication of farm animal biodiversity for multi-purpose production by maintaining minimum livestock breeding standards and conserving national animal genetic resources.
- Undertake a livestock inventory combined with a national branding and individual identification and training programme.
- Recommend breeds that can contribute to realizing the overall goal in targeted production zones and environments.
- Promote breeding methods (selection, breed substitution, cross-breeding or breed synthesis) that best support the national animal genetic improvement strategy.
- Register breeders and breeders groups.

- Protect the national herds and flocks from genetic contamination by controlling and registering imported material.
- Develop and improve artificial insemination services.

3.3.7 *Improving Animal Health*

Issues

- The performance of SNL animals is low, and losses as a result of poor animal health are unacceptably high.
- Livestock health is at risk due to regionally increasing occurrence of trans-boundary diseases, which have a negative impact on trade.
- Inadequate animal health control measures expose the public to health hazards.
- Emerging animal health problems (infertility, zoonoses, lameness, deficiencies) caused by intensifying production systems that pose problems to extension staff.
- Animal health is influenced by the lack of clarity of the public and private sector roles in the delivery of services, and weak linkages between research, extension, and farmers.
- The quality of the delivery of veterinary services is constrained by budget limits, which affects procurement of laboratory equipment, chemicals and vaccines, transport, and staff training.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that animal health be improved through efficient delivery of veterinary services.

Strategy

- Develop cost effective animal health and management packages relevant to the needs of farmers.
- Utilise and apply external research findings and cooperate with international agencies to prioritize and better define the need for local livestock research.
- Strengthen and improve the existing programme of trans-boundary disease control and prevention, and enhance animal disease early warning systems.
- Review existing livestock legislations and provide an enabling environment for private delivery of services, progressively limiting Government's presence in areas where providers get established.
- Investigate, confirm and respond to (by quarantine, slaughter, vaccination, etc. as need arises) outbreaks of diseases.
- Increase public awareness of the importance of zoonoses, survey the prevalence, fund the control, and test and certify meat inspection services and other control measures of animal products.
- Rehabilitate and equip the central reference laboratory, and develop regional laboratories' capability to undertake most preliminary analyses.
- Investigate and recommend avenues for cost recovery associated with tick and other pest control programmes, and participate in tick-borne disease and other pest control research.
- Monitor the importation and distribution of veterinary drugs, vaccines and other veterinary supplies, including quality assurance, registration, and licensing.

3.4 POLICIES ON RESEARCH, EXTENSION, MARKETING AND CREDIT

3.4.1 Research

Issues

- Agricultural research is missing a clear vision, mission and strategy.
- Deficiency of current agricultural research programmes in co-ordination and focus.
- Limited agricultural research capacity, research skills and research facilities.
- Insufficient linkages between national, regional and international agricultural research intuitions and organizations.
- Inadequate information management systems and mechanism for communicating and disseminating scientific research results.
- Weak linkages for research and technology transfer and lack of collaboration among government research institutions, government extension services, the University of Swaziland, NGOs, farmers, the private sector and other stakeholders.
- Insufficient research on plant breeding (particularly on indigenous plants), drought tolerant varieties, water use efficiency and soil fertility, agro-biodiversity, conservation and preservation of local plant genetic resources, and farming systems.
- Inadequate research programmes on animal breeding, microbiology and protozoology, and seasonal range resource condition, in particular resilience of indigenous browse species.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that agricultural research be strengthened and focused on identifying major bottlenecks to agricultural productivity and on generating improved and appropriate technologies.

Strategy

- Define the aims, objectives and strategies of agricultural research in Swaziland, using a broad forum of stakeholder consultation.
- Establish training and research development programmes to enhance the current research capacity and improve research facilities, including laboratories.
- Establish an Agricultural Research Board to foster coordination and cooperation between research organizations, and to assist in developing agricultural research priorities.
- Strengthen linkages and formalise collaboration on research and technology transfer between government departments and institutions, the University of Swaziland, NGOs, farmers and the private sector.
- Establish and maintain a functional information management and dissemination system, and link the scientific database with other information systems.
- Establish linkages and research exchange programmes with regional and international agricultural research institutions – in particular with those in the SADC region - to enhance access to their latest findings.
- Expand and improve research on plant breeding, particularly on indigenous plants, and enhance research on drought tolerant varieties, water use efficiency and soil fertility.

- Initiate research programmes to maintain agro-biodiversity and establish a breeding programme for food crops that fits local conditions, for example open-pollinated varieties and to control and eradicate harmful alien invasive plants
- Establish procedures to collect, conserve, preserve and utilize local plant genetic resources.
- Strengthen and enlarge the scope of the present animal breeding programme with emphases on beef and dairy production, small ruminants, pigs and poultry.
- Strengthen research on range resources and browse species based on animal preferences and nutritional values and the resilience of indigenous species, and develop a research programme on microbiology and protozoology.

3.4.2 Extension

Issues

- Lack of a clear vision and mission statement on extension services delivery, in particular with respect to planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Inadequate capacity and performance of extension staff.
- Inadequate linkages with research institutions.
- Unsatisfactory interaction between extension agents and farmers, resulting in poor acceptance of new farming methods and technologies
- Inadequate financing of extension services.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that more efficient and comprehensive extension services be provided to the farmers in order to enhance agricultural productivity.

Strategy

- Develop a clear vision and mission statement for extension services that will act as the framework for planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of extension activities.
- Review and reform organizational and staff placement protocols that will act as incentives to extension services personnel to carry out mandates professionally.
- Introduce appropriate approaches for extension services redelivery, e.g. integrate desirable aspects of participatory approaches into government extension programmes.
- Introduce a comprehensive range of extension services, including marketing, financing and other business management requirements,
- Provide adequate training for extension agents and strengthen institutional capacity.
- Improve linkages between extension and research institutions.
- Analyse the financing of extension services and formulate a resource mobilization strategy.

3.4.3 Marketing

Issues

- Market infrastructure is insufficient and not efficient in catalysing improvements in production.
- Local input and output market systems are underdeveloped
- Market information is inadequate and not readily accessible to producers.
- Government price control on certain agricultural produce does not encourage production and monopoly in the supply and distribution of farm inputs increases the prices.
- Insufficient access to lucrative export markets restricts local entrepreneurs in taking advantage of such markets.
- Activities related to marketing are fragmented within various departments of the MOAC and there is lack of coordination among these departments.
- Some regulatory mechanisms limit access by local farmers to markets.
- Inadequate facilities to grade quality of crop produce.
- Cattle producers and traders are not fully informed and trained on cattle and carcass grading and pricing systems.
- Lack of value-adding and marketing of animal by-products, such as hides.

Policy statement

It is National Policy that market systems and infrastructure be developed and that access to local and export markets be improved.

Strategy

- Evaluate the existing agricultural market infrastructure and establish mechanisms to improve domestic and export markets.
- Develop an integrated market information system and support agricultural fairs.
- Improve capacity for trade negotiations and facilitate formal and informal trading systems to link producers and domestic consumers.
- Coordinate with SACU and SADC to take measures for removing existing phytosanitary and other non-tariff barriers faced by horticultural and other exporters.
- Investigate possibilities to terminate monopolies in input supplies and review regulatory mechanisms that hinder and limit access to markets.
- Promote and enhance linkages among departments and institutions involved in agricultural marketing and establish a coordinating marketing body to combine all marketing activities in MOAC.
- Review the existing grading and pricing systems and develop an appropriate grading systems and pricing policy.
- When feasible, privatise livestock auction sale yards and markets.
- Promote processing, value-adding activities and marketing of livestock by-products through the relevant government agencies.
- Create an enabling environment to promote and support private sector engagement in marketing activities.

3.4.4 Credit

Issue

- Insufficient affordable credit opportunities are a major problem in agricultural development.

- Small farmers on SNL have only limited access to credit facilities.
- The current land tenure system, in particular the status of SNL, is not conducive to using land as collateral.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that smallholder access to credit be improved.

Strategy

- Facilitate the training of smallholders to improve their capacity in preparing a business plan and meeting other requirements of lending institutions.
- Facilitate the incorporating of communities and farmers into groups that have the legal entity to obtain credit.
- Facilitate access to flexible credit services for small farmers.
- Facilitate economically viable mechanisms for the private sector to lend with confidence to smallholder agricultural sector on SNL.

3.5 POLICIES ON FOOD SECURITY

3.5.1 Food Security and HIV/AIDS

Issues

- HIV/AIDS has dramatically changed the population structure, in particular in the rural areas where the youth forms the majority of the population and the active middle-age group - especially males - is largely disappearing.
- Social life and other functions in the rural areas have been disrupted by the decimation of the adult population by HIV/AIDS and the high absence of males.
- HIV/AIDS has weakened the rural household's labour output required to undertake farming and has reduced the household's pool of knowledge and skills in farming.
- As a result of HIV/AIDS and poverty, current SNL farming systems are to a large extent neither sustainable nor feasible, which has increased food insecurity.
- High incidence of HIV/AIDS has reduced household capacity to mobilise resources to access food due to loss of productive family members and assets.
- Youth and women in rural communities are becoming increasingly more vulnerable, in particular orphans and other children, creating huge social and food-security problems.
- The majority of farmers on SNL in the rainfed sub-sector are women with limited access to resources and production factors, including irrigation and finance.
- The participation of the youth in both rainfed and irrigation farming is very little.
- Lack of a comprehensive agricultural sector response to HIV/AIDS.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that gender-sensitive measures to mitigate the impact of HIV/AIDS on poverty and food security be promoted and developed.

Strategy

- Facilitate the implementation of the agriculture-related activities of NERCHA, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (PRSAP) and programmes of UNICEF, UNAIDS, etc.
- Develop programmes and social measures for direct assistance to the most vulnerable groups (elderly, widowed, children, orphans, disabled, and ill) to access food.
- Ensure that women and youth have access to arable land, facilities and services, including irrigation and appropriate credit services.
- Promote careers and participation of youth in agriculture, provide training programmes in agricultural production and marketing, and support agricultural income-generating activities for youth and other vulnerable groups at community level.
- Create and strengthen partnerships at local level to support affected households to mobilise resources for food production (labour, seeds, fertilisers, etc.).
- Develop agricultural systems and special programmes that are adaptable to the weakened capacities of rural communities to sustain agricultural production, and investigate in particular options for nutritional and less labour-intensive crops such as fodder crops,.
- Support and encourage sharecropping practices to enable affected households to access food and keep land under cultivation.
- Investigate the options of using animal draft power as an alternative to improve the farming capability of poor and vulnerable rural households.
- Ensure provision of essential farm inputs (seeds and fertilisers) and agricultural services (mechanised farm operations) to vulnerable households and groups and involve traditional leadership and local administration in the delivery.
- Develop a comprehensive agricultural sector response to HIV/AIDS.

3.5.2 Food Security and Climate Change

Issues

- Areas of highest vulnerability to climate change – predicted to result in drier and hotter conditions in Swaziland - include maize production, plant and animal biodiversity, water resources, and rangelands.
- Climate change leads to an increased risk of desertification and more frequent bush fires that will negatively impact on animal husbandry, range management, and biodiversity.
- Climate change studies indicate that climatic change in Swaziland would reduce maize production in the next 25 years by up to 30-60 percent, in all of the agro-ecological zones.
- Several of Swaziland's ecosystems, such as rangelands and riverine areas, are already heavily stressed and as such their capacity to adapt to climate change impacts is reduced rendering these ecosystems susceptible to further degradation.
- Current research efforts and co-operation between extension, NGO's, para-statals and other services do not to focus at all on climate change issues.
- Early-warning capability in agriculture is insufficient and the management of climatic information is unsatisfactory.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that rapid climate change adaptation strategies be developed to increase crop and livestock productivity, enhance food security and sustainable livelihood.

Strategy

- Develop climate adaptation mechanisms and identify possible drought mitigation and prevention techniques, as well as alternative production systems and livelihood strategies.
- Promote implementation of the recommendations made under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climatic Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD).
- Introduce and promote the use of drought tolerant crop varieties for maize and other crops, including beans and sorghum.
- Strengthen the existing early-warning capability and establish a climate information system to provide farmers with information and advice on climate conditions and change.
- Develop measures to adjust animal husbandry and range management to adapt to the effects of climate change.

3.5.3 Food Security and Access to Land and Water

Issues

- Limited access to water on SNL.
- Farm sizes too small to provide a household's livelihood on SNL.
- Inadequately defined and enforced property rights on SNL.
- Lack of transparent criteria for establishment of business enterprises on SNL.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that homesteads on SNL gain improved access to land and water resources, together with concomitant rights over them, to enhance household food security.

Strategy

- Establish procedures for homesteads requesting chiefs and competent authorities to provide more land and water to those fully utilising their current allocations, and to advise on the use of land currently not utilised, allowing productive farmers to make use of it.
- Advocate the removal of legislative impediments restricting the use of SNL for commercial agricultural enterprises.
- Encourage the formation of chiefdom-based cooperatives or associations to facilitate the community working together on SNL agricultural enterprises.

3.5.4 Food Security and Rainfed Crop Production

Issues

- Low agricultural production and restricted rainfed crop diversification are major causes of food insecurity on SNL
- Scarcity of affordable food reduces the nutrition status, in particular of rural households.
- The overall decrease in maize production.

- Youth and unemployed are insufficiently participating in food production.
- Emergency food aid has a negative effect upon local production and marketing of maize.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that the diversification and intensification of rainfed crop production on smallholder SNL be promoted to increase rural income and food security.

Strategy

- Identify options for the diversification of the agricultural production base and develop alternative sources of rural income to sustain rural livelihood increase.
- Improve rainfed crop productivity by diversifying smallholder SNL production and promoting fruits, vegetables and other nutritional produce.
- Promote intensifying local maize production at competitive commercial rates.
- Improve access to agricultural inputs on SNL.
- Facilitate and encourage the youth and unemployed to engage in food production.
- Promote the incorporation of local cereal production and distribution in donor food aid.

3.5.5 Food Security and Irrigated Crop Production

Issues

- Inadequate supply of irrigation water for food crop production on SNL.
- Inadequate irrigation infrastructure to support smallholder agriculture.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that water supply and management systems be improved for smallholder irrigated crop production to increase food security on SNL.

Strategy

- Give priority to dam and irrigation development in dryland areas.
- Balance smallholder cash cropping with subsistence cropping to enhance household food security.
- Reduce dependence on rainfed agriculture through expansion of smallholder irrigation schemes managed by viable co-operatives and farmer groups.

3.5.6 Food Security and Animal Production

Issues

- Strongly reduced carrying capacity of land through overgrazing and range degradation.
- Limited and inefficient use of supplementary feeding and crop residues.
- A large part of the rural population is lacking a reliable and affordable supply of dairy products.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy to diversify animal production to enhance food security, keeping stocking rates within sustainable levels.

Strategy

- Reverse range degradation through community-based management programmes.
- Provide advice on the scale and balance of livestock required to sustainably optimise incomes and nutritional levels.
- Promote the production of small ruminants, pigs and poultry for domestic consumption as well as for sale to boost income.
- Increase the production and use of locally available fodder and feeds.
- Promote the production and distribution of dairy products, in particular to improve the diet of the poor and vulnerable.

3.5.7 Food Security and Agro-Industries

Issues

- Shortage of identified opportunities for processing crop and animal products.
- Deficiency of market information and technologies suited for smallholder agro-processing.
- Poor storage and handling of products to maintain quality and to assure adequate marketing of agro-processed products.
- Value-adding activities currently play an insignificant role with respect to the income of smallholder households and rural communities.

Policy Statement

It is National Policy that agro-processing and value-adding activities be promoted and developed.

Strategy

- Investigate commercial opportunities for value-adding activities in all crop and animal production zones to increase incomes of smallholder households and rural communities.
- Promote the establishment of institutes that will facilitate and control commercially viable standards and quality of products.
- Put in place a multi-sector programme to facilitate and monitor the development of agro-processing industries that will be competitive in the market.
- Facilitate studies that promote application of lessons learnt from successful agro-industrial enterprises to a broader context.
- Support farmer training in produce handling and storage techniques to enhance quality of crops.

CHAPTER 4 CASP IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

4.1 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

After formal endorsement by the Cabinet, this Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy is to be implemented via an implementation strategy and action plan. The Ministry of Agriculture and Co-operatives (MOAC) is expected to have the responsibility of taking the lead in implementing the CASP, but it needs to act in coordination with relevant public and private institutions and key stakeholders at international, national, regional and local levels. Implementation of the CASP will take place through:

- Establishment of an implementation secretariat or another high-level committee designated as responsible for managing the execution and monitoring of the policy.
- Development of an implementation plan that clearly identifies priorities and needed actions, and that oversees steps to be taken to put proposed actions into effect.

To effectively implement the CASP, the existing institutional capacity and structure should be enhanced and strengthened accordingly.

4.2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

For the timely implementation of CASP, a carefully structured implementation monitoring system is to be developed with frequent and rapid reporting to the implementation secretariat of progress and problems in each area. The monitoring system should be in a position to recommend modifications of the policies as needed, on the basis of feedback received from the implementation process, and to develop solutions to problems encountered along the way.

To ensure consistency and relevance, CASP should be reviewed and evaluated every three years to coincide and inform successive national development plans and efforts

4.3 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

At the Maputo Summit of July 2003, Heads of States, including of Swaziland, pledged to allocate at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources for support to agriculture. This commitment comes at a time when national reserves have been seriously diminished. There are also reduced prospects for increased revenue from the traditional sources such as SACU. Nevertheless, Swaziland is striving to reach the commitment under NEPAD within the next five years.

Additional resource mobilisation will therefore pose a challenge to the government in order to facilitate implementation of this CASP. Partnerships should be forged with development partners, international finance institutions and donors in order to realise this commitment to increased financing of the agricultural sector.