

General Discussion of Botswana

The Republic of Botswana is situated in Southern Africa, with a land area of 582 000 square kilometers. It is situated between the Republic of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Zambia. The country's population was estimated at 1.611 million in 1999, with a growth rate of 2.8% and more than 50% of the population living in rural areas (MFDP 2000). Although the national population density is 2.8 persons per km², the population is concentrated in the southeastern part of the country where 80% of the population resides, creating a density of about 10 persons per km².

Table 1: Population Indicators

Indicator	Year		
	1981	1991	1999
Population Size (000)	94.1	1,327	1,611
Population Density	1.6	2.3	2.8
% Urban	18.2	45.7	49.2
Population growth rate %	4.7	3.5	2.3

Source: MFDP 2000.

The discovery of large deposits of diamonds in the 1960s has enabled Botswana to achieve a remarkable economic and social transformation since Independence in 1966. GDP growth has averaged 6% per annum in real terms over the post-Independence period and per capita GDP has grown six fold. By 2000 GDP per capita had reached US\$ 3,300 (World Bank 2001).

Revenue earned from the mineral sector has enabled the government to undertake major developments in terms of infrastructure and social services. Botswana is classified as upper middle-income country although some of her development indicators do not compare favourably with the average for the class, in particular those related to health (Table 2.b).

The 1999 UNAIDS Report indicates that over 30% of Botswana's population had HIV infection. This has negative impact on progress made so far in the health sector and overall economy. Government projections indicate that due to the impact of HIV and AIDS in 2021, the economy, measured in terms of GDP, would be 24-30% less than what it would be without HIV and AIDS.

Table 2: Development indicators

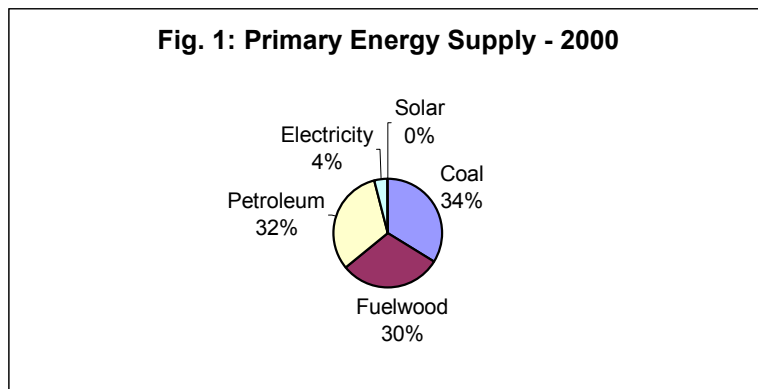
Indicator	Botswana	Sub-Saharan Africa	Upper middle income countries
Life expectancy at birth (years)	39	47	69
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	58	92	28
Child nutrition (% of children under 5)	17	-	-
Access to improved water source (% population)	70	55	87
Illiteracy (% of population age 15+)	25	38	10
Gross primary enrolment (% school-age population)	108	78	107
GDP/capita (PPP)	7,190	1,560	9,170

Source: World Bank, 2001 (www.worldbank.org/data), World Development Indicators Database, World Bank (2001).

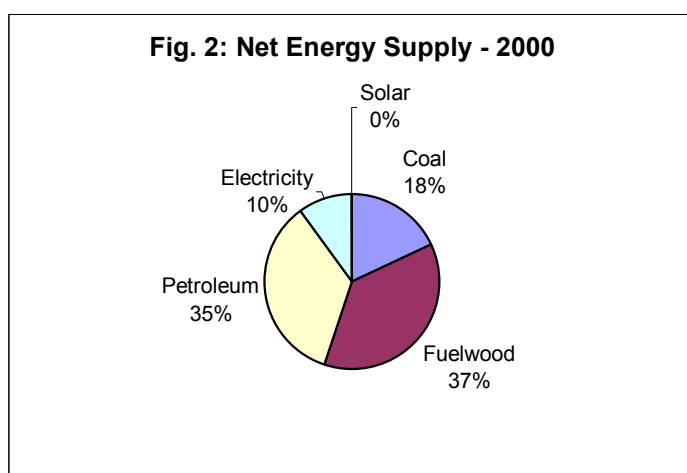
At Independence in 1966, agriculture was the predominant sector of the economy contributing 40% to the GDP. The overwhelming rural population depended on agriculture for a livelihood and beef production was the mainstay of the economy in terms of output and export earnings (MFDP, 1997). However over the years the GDP share has declined reaching 2.5% in 2000 mainly due to the rapid development of the mining sector and slow growth of the agricultural sector (MFDP, 2002). Despite the decline of the sector it is still an important source of food, income and employment for the majority of people living in rural areas.

Botswana's climate is marginally suited for crop production except in areas where irrigation is possible. About 25% of the total land area is classified as state land mainly comprises of national parks, game reserves, wildlife management areas and forest reserves. Communal or tribal land and freehold farms form 70% and 5% of the total area respectively. Productivity in the arable sub-sector is very low, particularly in communal areas, and this is further worsened by poor rainfall.

Coal, petroleum products and biomass dominate Botswana's primary energy supply. In 2000 coal accounted for 34% of the primary energy supply followed by petroleum product and fuelwood at 32% and 30% respectively (EAD 2000). Most of the coal is used for power generation.

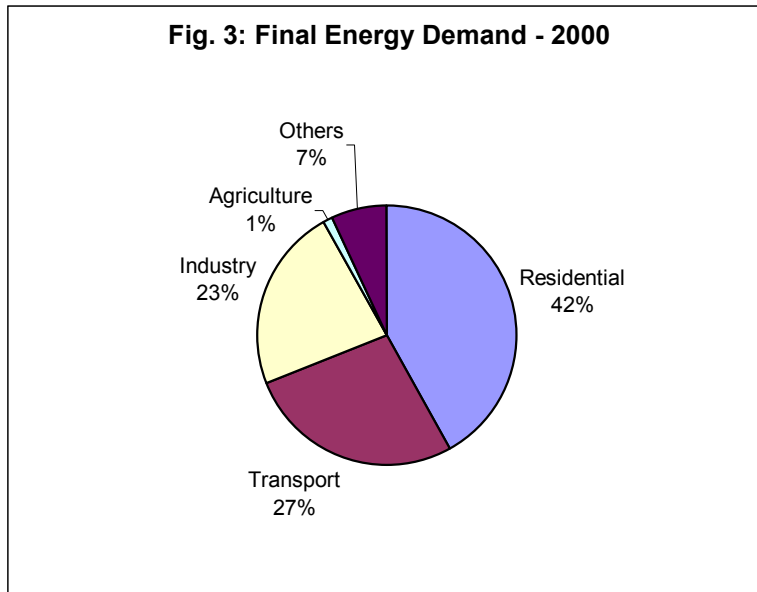


Source: Energy Affairs Division 2000



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The major energy consumers are the residential (mainly fuelwood), transport, and industry at 42, 27 and 23% respectively.



Source: Energy Affairs Division 2000.

The main sources of emissions from the energy sector are power generation from coal, transport and industry.

The major environmental issues identified under the National Conservation Strategy are:

- Growing pressure on water resources
- Degradation of rangeland pastures resources
- Depletion of wood resources
- Over exploitation of some veld products
- Pollution of air, water, soil and vegetation resources (National Conservation Strategy Agency 1990)