

CHAPTER 1

COUNTRY AND PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Chapter is about the country of Botswana and its people. It discusses Botswana's constitutional framework, administrative structure and international links, as well as its physical features. It is meant to inform readers who are not familiar with the country.

1.2 Specifically, Section II presents the constitutional framework and the administrative structure, while Section III illustrates the physical features of Botswana. Section IV is about the people of Botswana, including patterns of settlement and main population characteristics.

1.3 A detailed review of economic developments during the last Plan period (1997/98 – 2002/03) is provided in Chapter 3, followed by the Strategy for Development during NDP 9 in Chapter 4. Public Sector Expenditure and Manpower are discussed in Chapter 5, while more information on the review and development of particular sectors is given in later Chapters of the Plan.

THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

Constitutional Framework

1.4 Botswana attained self-governance in 1965, after 80 years as a British Protectorate and became independent on 30 September 1966. It is a non-racial country and maintains freedom of

speech, freedom of the press and freedom of association, and affords all citizens equal rights. All these are enshrined in the Constitution of Botswana, which also provides for a unicameral legislature. Members of the National Assembly are directly elected from the constituencies and themselves elect additional specially elected members and a Speaker of the National Assembly.

1.5 The Presidential candidate of the Party with majority of directly elected members of Parliament assumes office. The President selects his Ministers from among the members of the National Assembly.

1.6 The President is head of the Executive arm of Government and presides over Cabinet. He/she must dissolve Parliament and hold a general election after five years, and may do so sooner. National Elections have been held in 1965, 1969, 1974, 1979, 1984, 1989, 1994 and 1999. The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has been returned to power on each occasion. The last general elections were contested by five political parties. In the 1999 elections, BDP won 33 seats in Parliament, the Botswana National Front (BNF) won 6 and the Botswana Congress Party (BCP) won 1 seat.

1.7 There is a House of Chiefs which advises on matters affecting custom and

tradition, including reviewing draft bills before their consideration by Parliament.

1.8 An independent judiciary with a High Court is presided over by the Chief Justice. Subordinate courts are Magistrates Courts, which have original jurisdiction to try all offences except capital offences such as murder and treason. Some cases are heard by local chiefs and headmen, or their representatives, and decided in accordance with customary law. The High Court is the appeals court for both branches of the judiciary.

Administrative Structure

1.9 Gaborone became the capital city of Botswana at Independence and is one of the fastest growing cities in the world. The country is divided into various administrative districts. The Central Government is represented in each District by the Department of District Administration, headed by a District Commissioner. There are ten Districts and nine District Councils. There are City Councils for Gaborone and Francistown, Town Councils for Lobatse, Selebi-Phikwe, Jwaneng and a township authority for Sowa Town.

1.10 At the local level, District, City and Town Councils have elected councillors and additional councillors are nominated by the Minister of Local Government. At the political level, a Town/City Council is headed by the Town/City Mayor, while administratively, it is headed by the Town/City Clerk. On the political side, a District Council is headed by a Council Chairperson and a Council Secretary on

the administrative side. Both the Chief Executives and their supporting staff are recruited by the Department of Local Government Service Management.

1.11 The main components of the Central Government are depicted in Chart 1.1. The Permanent Secretary to the President is the head of the Civil Service. Each Ministry is headed at an official level by a Permanent Secretary. The civil service falls under the Directorate of Public Service Management.

International Links

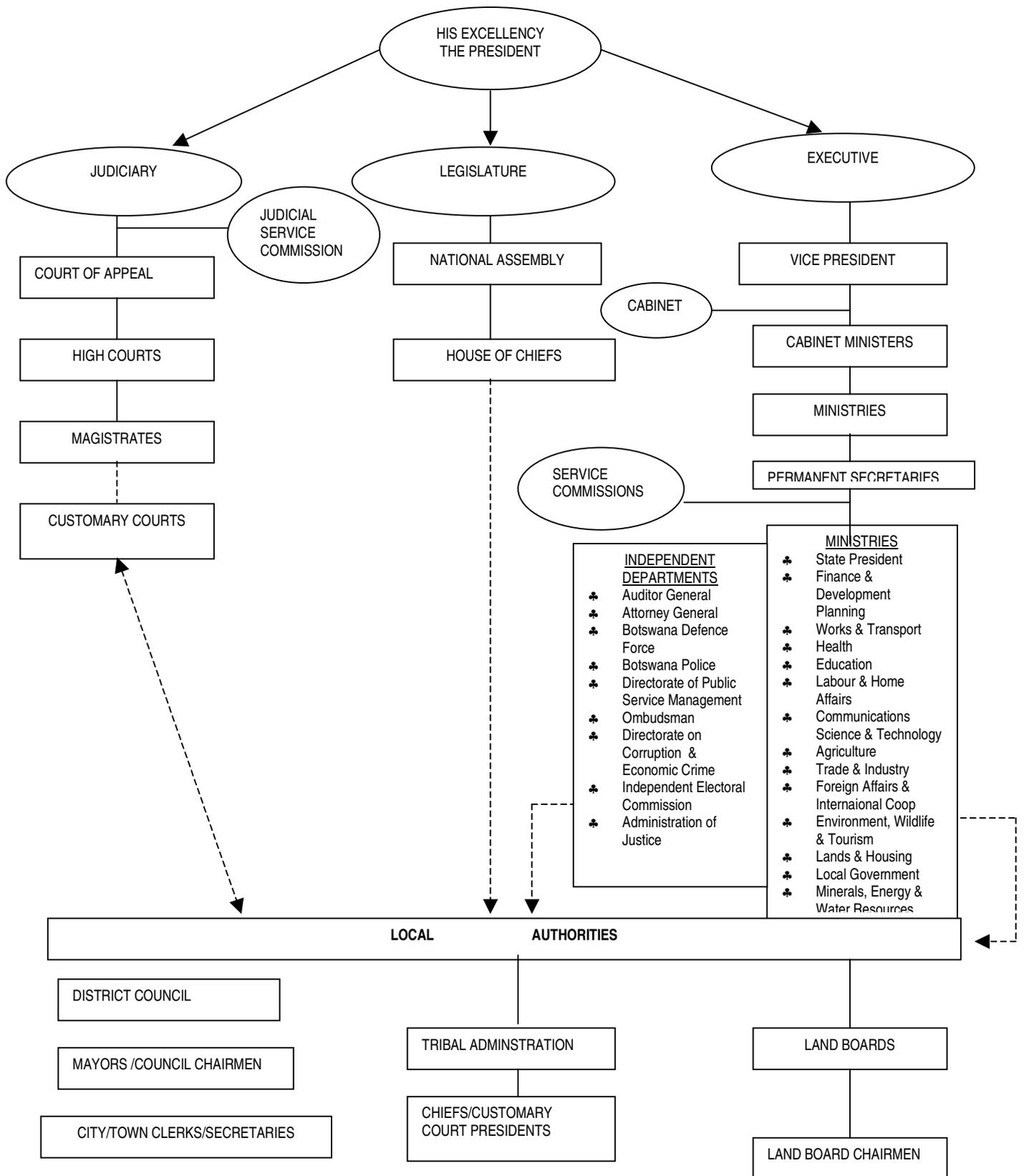
1.12 Botswana is a member of various international organisations, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the African Union (AU) and other regional bodies like the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The headquarters of SADC is in Gaborone.

GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENT

Physical Features

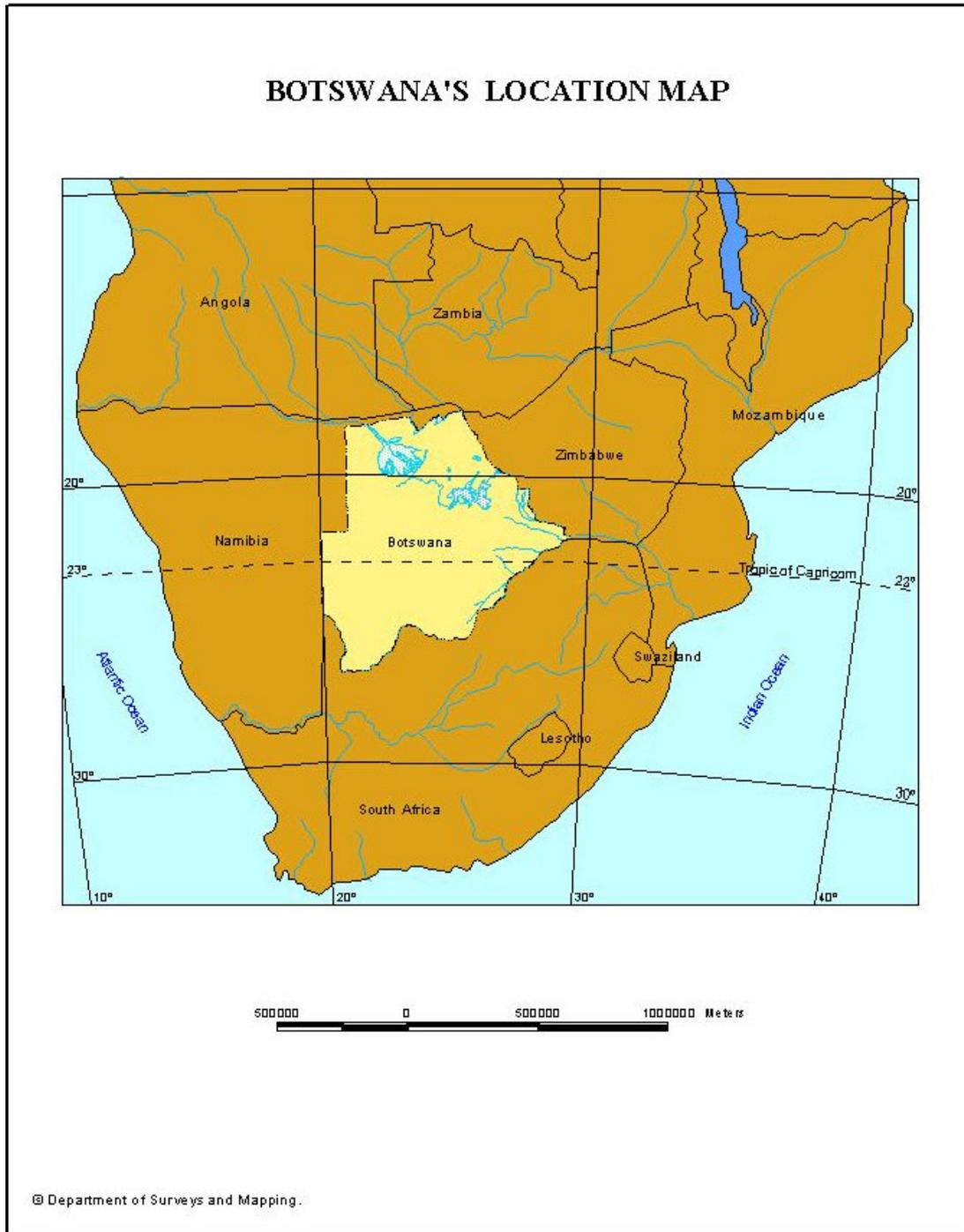
1.13 Botswana is a landlocked, semi-arid country of 582,000 square kilometres, about the same size as Kenya and France. It shares a border with Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia and Zambia. Map 1.1 shows Botswana's location within Southern Africa, while Map 1.2 provides a more detailed look at the Republic of Botswana.

CHART 1.1: THE BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Source: DPSM

Map.1.1



1.14 The country is relatively flat, with gentle undulations and occasional rocky outcrops. Botswana's physical environment of dry and poor soils accounts for its varied population

distribution. The population is concentrated in the south eastern parts of the country suited for arable production due to relatively more favourable climatic and soil conditions.

1.15 Due to the semi-arid climate, most rivers and streams in Botswana are ephemeral and as a result, most valleys are usually dry, except during the rains. Perennial rivers include the Okavango and Chobe, which have their sources outside the country. The Makgadikgadi Pans represent the inland drainage basins into which some rivers such as Mosetse, Nata and Boteti flow during the wet seasons.

Climate

1.16 Because of the country's location in the sub-tropical high pressure belt of southern hemisphere in the interior of Southern Africa and away from oceanic influences, rainfall is low and temperatures high. There is, therefore, high inter-annual variability of rainfall and drought is a recurring element of Botswana's climate. Drought adversely affects the already fragile food and agricultural situation in the country and seriously impairs the rural economy and socio-cultural structures.

Temperatures

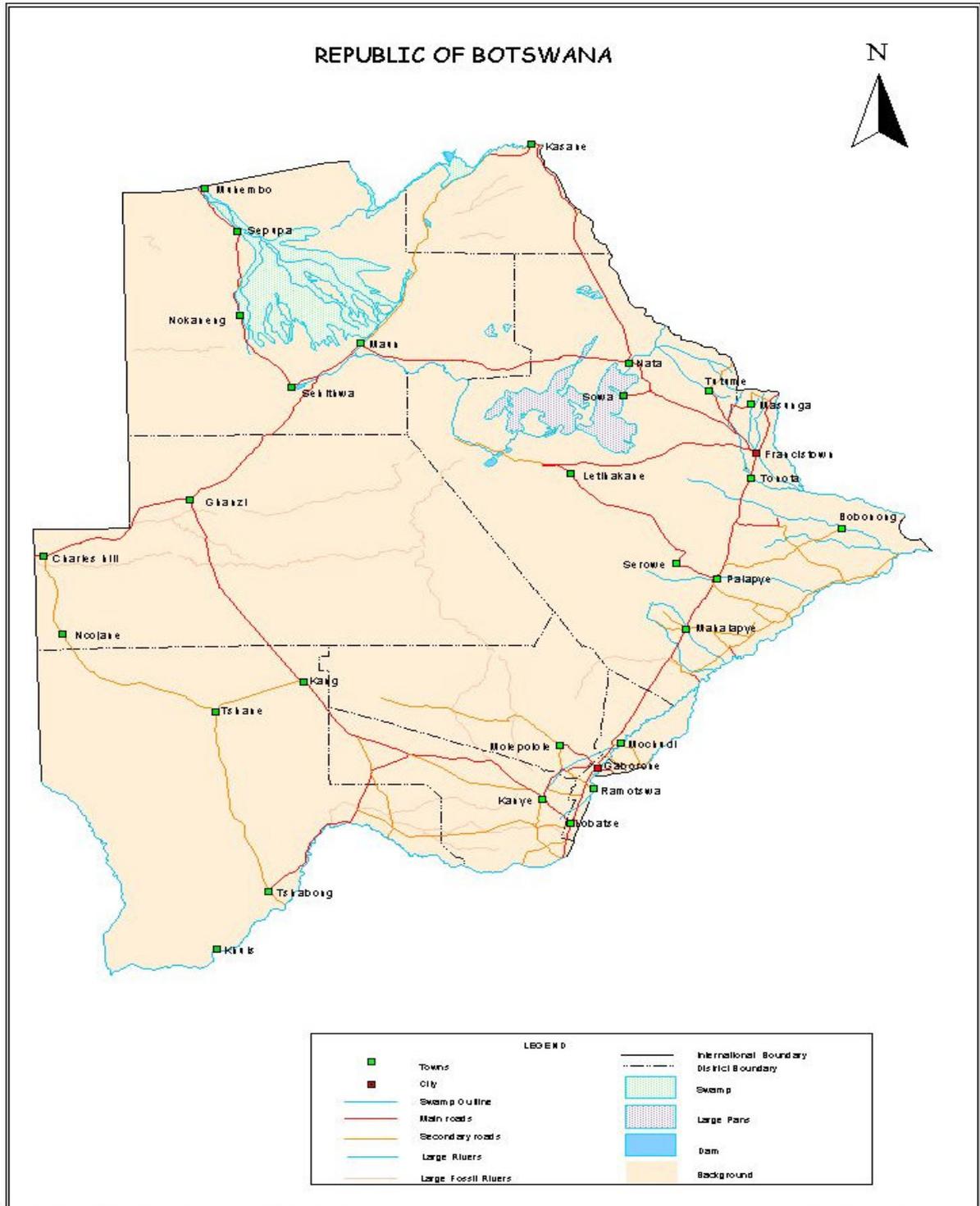
1.17 The mean monthly maximum temperatures range between 23 °C to 25 °C in the Northern parts of the country and 21 °C to 23 °C in the Southern parts. The lowest mean monthly temperatures vary between 1 °C to 5 °C over the eastern areas and 5 °C to 7 °C in the Northern parts of the country.

The highest mean monthly temperatures range between 19 °C and 20 °C and are recorded in the month of January.

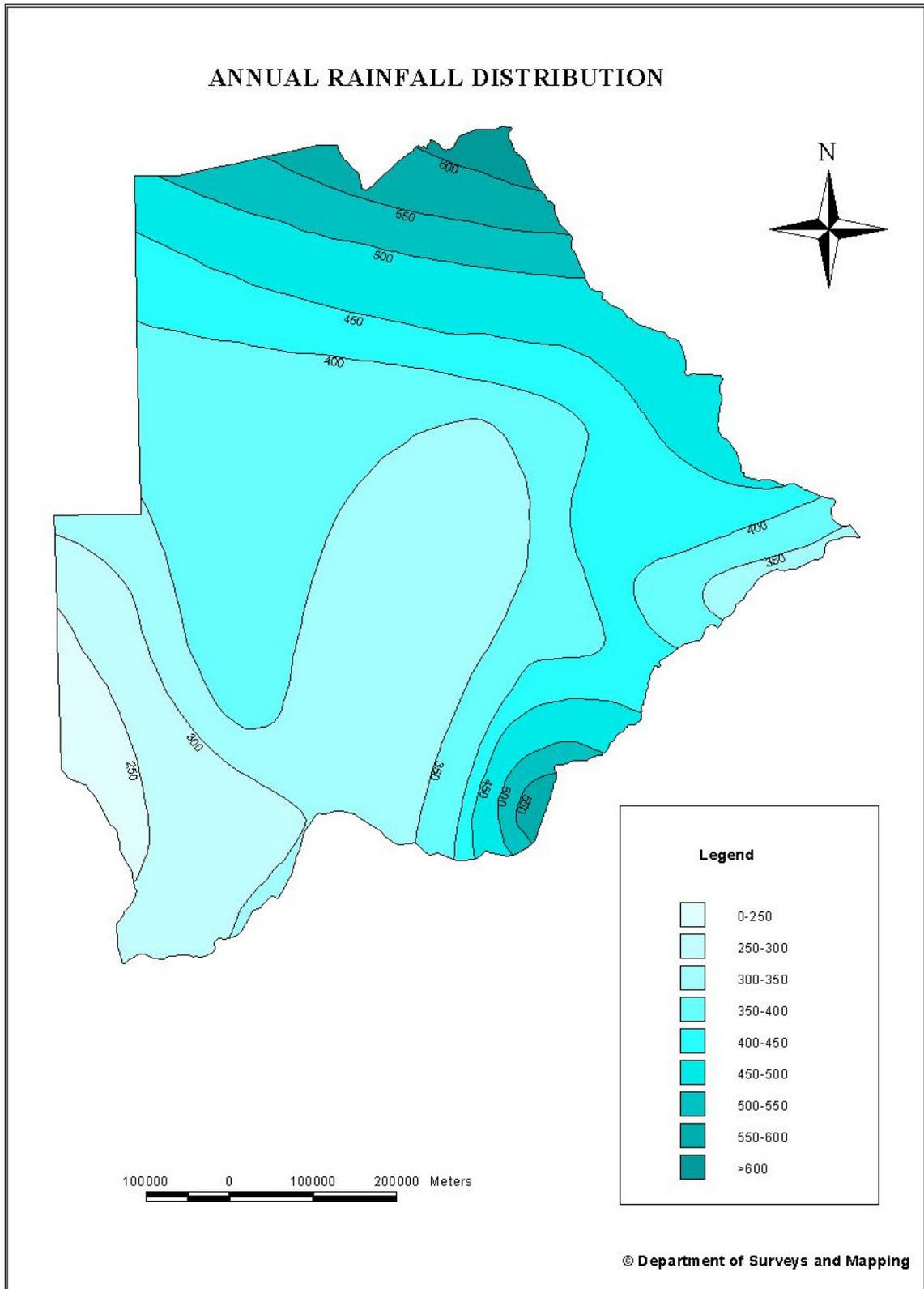
Vegetation and Soil

1.18 Vegetation types are closely correlated with climate as comparison of Map 1.3 (rainfall) and Map 1.4 (vegetation) shows. The vegetation located away from the bush swampland of the Okavango Delta, experience long, dry periods each season and recurring drought. The Chobe District in the north has comparatively high rainfall and therefore sustains belts of indigenous forest and dense bush and some exploitable hardwood resources. The Makgadikgadi pans, located further south are surrounded by treeless grass savanna. The mopane tree dominates the north-east and the hinterland of the Okavango, while more than half of the country supports scrub and tree savanna. The tallest trees and most dense forest are found in areas where there are good rains and best soils, while drier regions mostly here; in the south and west of the Kalahari supports only a low scrub savanna. Low rainfall and poor soils are found particularly in the Kalahari, so that the rangeland supports, at best, a low density livestock and wildlife. Rangeland degradation occurs when the carrying capacity is exceeded, leading to a change in the vegetation patterns of the range.

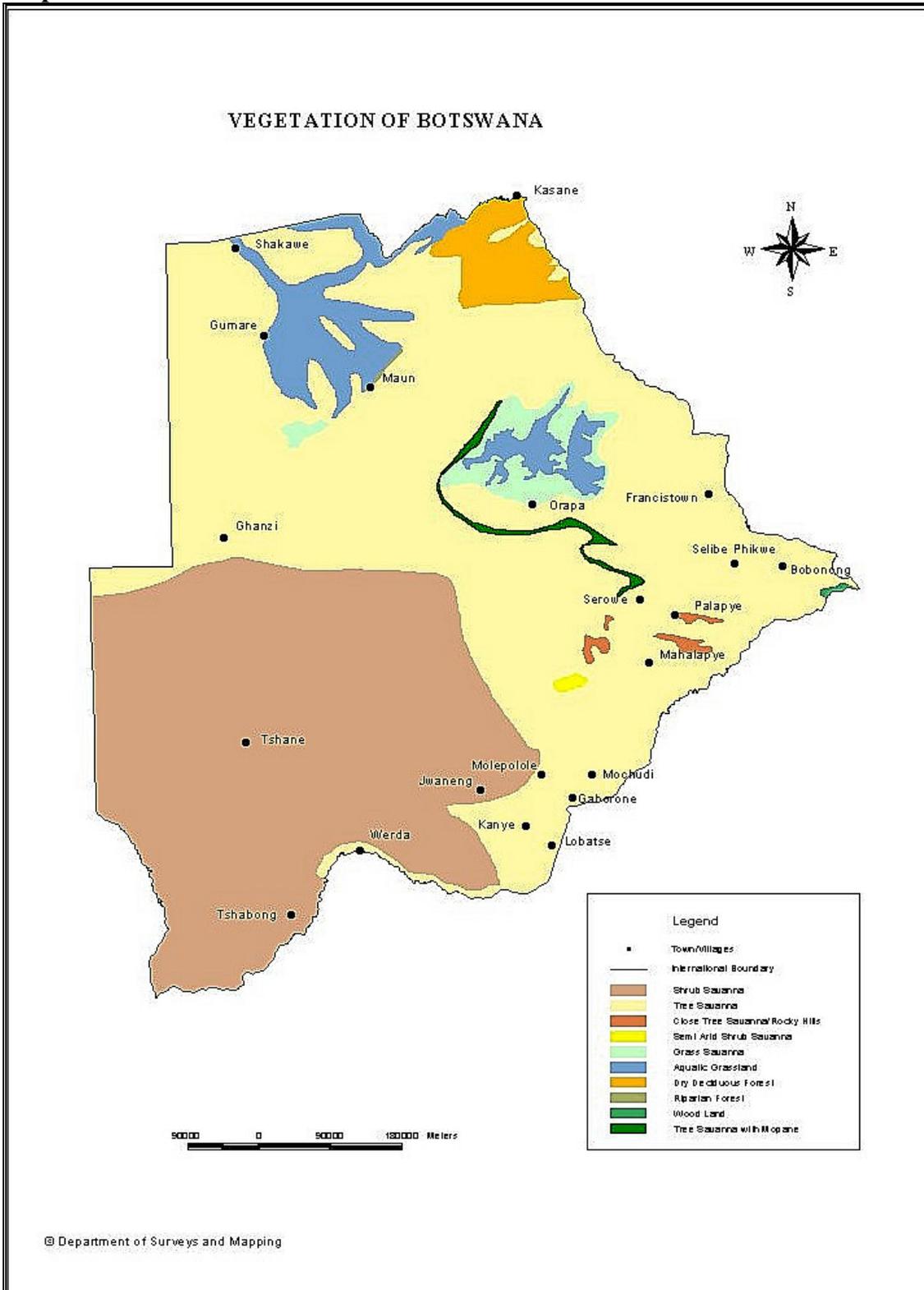
Map 1.2



Map 1.3: ANNUAL RAINFALL DISTRIBUTION



Map 1.4: VEGETATION OF BOTSWANA



Natural Resources

1.19 The natural beauty of Botswana is found in its wilderness, wildlife and cultural diversity. It includes range and arable land, a large wildlife population, and a variety of minerals. Some of the last great populations of wild animals left in Africa are found in Botswana; they constitute a tourist attraction that has yet to be fully exploited. More importantly, they make an important contribution to the subsistence economy of the country. Large areas of the country are designated as National Parks and Game Reserves as shown in Map 1.5; but a considerable number of games are found outside the reserves, though they have been depleted in the more populous areas. Of particular importance for tourism are the Chobe National Park, which contains massive concentrations of large game, and the Okavango Delta, which, besides its outstanding natural beauty, teems with wildlife. Livestock agriculture and game often represent competing uses of marginal land; careful management is required to ensure that such land is used to its best advantage.

1.20 A lot of mineral exploration has been undertaken in recent years, and much continues to be discovered about Botswana's mineral resources. The thick sand covering much of the country obscures the underlying geology, although the eastern part of the country is relatively well mapped geologically. The exploration for gold deposits in the country, particularly at Mupane, resulted

in proven reserves of approximately 795,000 ounces of gold which can be extracted in a space of at least five years. Copper-nickel is mined at Selebi-Phikwe and other potentially exploitable copper resources are known to exist. Mining of coal at Morupule is relatively on small-scale at present, but reserves of billions of tonnes have been proven. Diamond mines at Orapa, Letlhakane, "B/K pipes" near Orapa, Jwaneng and Damtshaa are in production. Salt and soda ash deposits at Sua Pan are effectively unlimited, and are now being exploited.

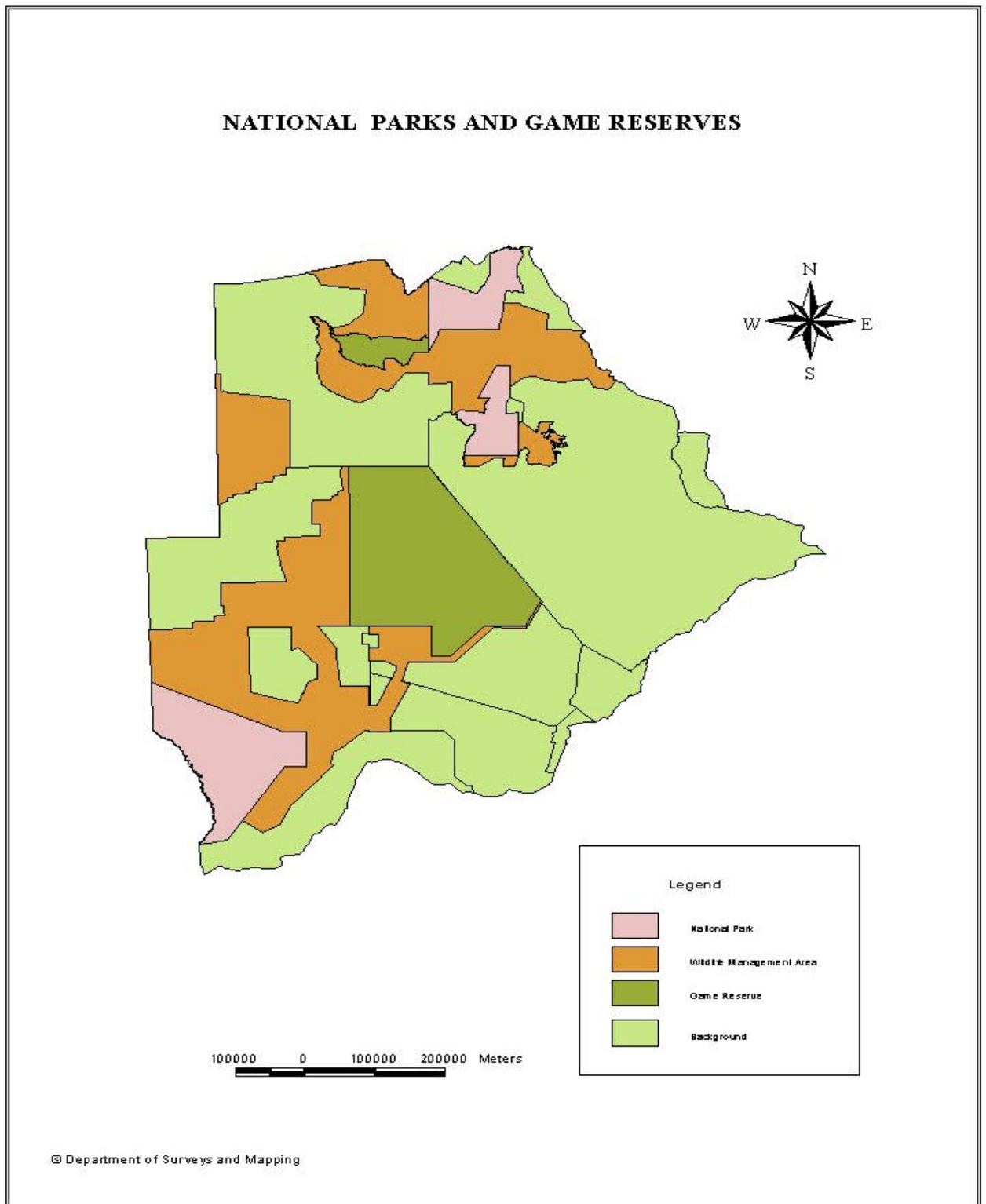
PEOPLE

Main Population Characteristics

1.21 Population characteristics presented in this profile are based on the 2001 Population and Housing Census, the most recent national census. The 2001 census yielded a de facto population count of 1,680,863, compared with 1,326,796 in 1991.

1.22 Botswana's population grew at an average annual rate of 2.4 percent during the inter-census period. The population growth rate in Botswana has been declining over the years. Annual growth rates between 1971 and 1981, and between 1981 and 1991 were 4.5 and 3.5 percent, respectively. While the AIDS pandemic might have contributed somewhat to the decline in recent years, it must be noted that there was a decline also during the pre-HIV/AIDS era.

Map 1.5: NATIONAL PARKS AND GAME RESERVES



Indeed, factors such as declining fertility rates, increased women participation in economic activities, increased literacy rates, access to better healthcare, etc., may have a profound effect on population growth. A summary of the demographic indicators that emerge from a comparison of the 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses is presented in Table 1.1. The main features of Botswana's population are: declining

fertility rate, increasing mortality rate and the declining expectation of life. Crude death rate rose between 1991 and 2001, reversing the decreasing trend recorded between 1981 and 1991, due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Life expectancy at birth also decreased from 65.3 years in 1991 to 55.7 years in 2001. Regarding fertility, there has been a notable decline in all fertility indicators.

Table 1.1 1971,1981, 1991 and 2001 Census Demographic Indicators (000s)

Population Characteristics	Census 1971	Census 1981	Census 1991	Census 2001
Enumerated Population	596.9	941.0	1 326.8	1 680.9
Male	272.5	443.1	634.4	813.5
Female	324.5	497.9	692.4	867.4
Non-Botswana	10.9	15.7	29.6	60.7
Botswana Nationals Abroad	45.7	42.0	38.6	28.3
Male	36.7	32.6	27.9	16.8
Female	9.1	9.4	10.7	11.5
Population Distribution (%)				
0-4	17.6	18.8	14.6	11.7
5-14	29.9	28.8	28.6	25.0
15-64	46.9	47.6	51.8	58.3
65 and older	5.6	5.1	4.9	5.0
Percentage of Females aged 15-49	42.8	42.9	46.5	52.2
Dependency Ratio (per 100)	113.0	110.0	93.0	71.4
Child-woman Ratio (per 1000)	759.0	819.0	602.0	432.1
Sex Ratio (Males per 100 Females)	84.0	89.0	92.0	93.8
Percentage Urban	9.0	17.7	45.7	54.2
Population Density (per km)	1.0	1.6	2.3	2.9
Crude Birth Rate (per 1000)	45.3	47.7	39.3	28.8
Crude Death Rate (per 1000)	13.7	13.9	11.5	12.4
Natural Rate of Increase (% per annum)	3.1	3.4	2.7	1.6
General Fertility Rate (per 1000) women aged (15-49)	189.0	210.0	161.0	106.7
Total Fertility Rate(births per woman)	6.5	6.6	4.2	3.3
Life Expectancy at Birth (years)	55.5	56.5	65.3	55.7
Males	52.5	52.3	63.3	52.8
Females	58.6	59.7	67.1	59.0
Mean Age (years)	23.4	22.7	23.0	24.5
Males	22.6	22.0	22.4	23.8
Females	24.1	23.4	23.5	25.2

Source: National Census 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001