

African Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Natural Disaster Management in North West Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT Contrary to the western view the Batswana were not mere victims of natural disasters. The case study of their indigenous knowledge systems on natural disaster management, demonstrates the wide knowledge they had on environmental management. Using participatory and interactive methods the study found that the Batswana utilised the behaviour of natural phenomena of biotic and abiotic factors, as early warning indicators of natural disasters. However, much of this knowledge is not documented and hence vulnerable to loss when the older knowledge holders die. The study recommends the following: further research should be done on these knowledge systems so that they contribute to policy development and the search for sustainable solutions to natural disaster management and climate change; the knowledge should be integrated into the educational curriculum for sustainability; and appropriate legal and policy frameworks should be enacted to protect the intellectual property rights of the indigenous knowledge holders and practitioners.