



**International Symposium**

**Africa and Asia Entanglements in Past and Present :  
Bridging History and Development Studies**

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**Traditional Knowledge and Plant Genetic Resources  
Management: The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research  
case**

Sechaba Bareetseng

*the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa; Email address:*

The purpose of this paper is to disseminate the knowledge on the South Africa's policies and legislations, as well as strategies towards knowledge economy focusing on employment opportunities and income generation, optimising its rich traditional knowledge and biodiversity; and the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) case study on how it responds to such pieces of policies, legislations and strategies at different National government departments, while safeguarding and managing traditional knowledge and biodiversity for scientific research, technology development and commercialisation, and benefiting local and indigenous communities (through benefit sharing agreements).

South Africa has a rich biodiversity and cultural resource base that ranks among the top three of the world's most biodiverse countries. It is home to about 24 000 plant species and has an entire floral kingdom within its borders. South Africa's biodiversity and cultural resources underpin a large part of the economy and many rural and urban people rely on them for employment, food, shelter,



*Kansai university and Faculty of Economics*



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medicine and spiritual well-being.

It is against this background that this paper discusses the development of policies, legislations and strategies at National government and their implementation with respect to traditional knowledge and biodiversity management and protection. Moreover, the paper highlights specific case studies on access and benefit sharing. The paper further discusses what the CSIR does to comply with National Government policies, legislations and strategies (including regulations) on traditional knowledge and biodiversity management and benefit sharing, while fulling its mandate of multidisciplinary approach to science, technology development and commercialisation to impact on South Africa's socio-economic development.