

## Mozambique

The Republic of Mozambique (República de Moçambique) with its capital Maputo (966.837 inhabitants, 1997) is located in the eastern part of Southern Africa and is bordered by Tanzania to the north, South Africa and Swaziland to the south, and Zimbabwe, Zambia and Malawi to the west. Mozambique comprises an area of 799.380 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of about 16,95 million. The population density is about 21 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup> while urban population amounts 38 percent.

Until June 25, 1975 Mozambique was ruled by Portugal. A revolt against Portuguese sovereign began in 1964 and was followed by a war for independence which finally ended Portugal's colonial rule of 470 years. The first president, Samora Moises Machel, had been the head of the National Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) in its guerrilla war for independence. In 1985, after a decade of independence, again a war with antigovernment guerrillas started. Finally, in October 1992, an peace-agreement was signed and ended up 16 years of civil war. In November 1995, the country was the first non-former-British colony to become a member of the British Commonwealth.

While Mozambique posted some of the world's largest economic growth rates in the late 1990s, it has suffered enormous setbacks, caused by natural disaster like several floods in the winters of 2000 and 2001. The country depends on foreign assistance to balance the budget and to pay for a trade imbalance in which imports greatly outnumber exports. The trade situation should improve in the medium term, however, as trade and transportation links to South Africa and the rest of the region have been improved and sizeable foreign investments are beginning to work out.

Mozambique is a country, mostly relying on hydropower to cover its electricity needs. The overall electricity consumption of 2000 turned out to be 307.000 MWh and was produced with a hydropower share of 86,9 percent and a remainder of 13,1 percent, covered with fossil fuels. Due to international studies on the environmental impact of inefficient fossil fuel combustion, the country is making up plans to enlarge the hydropower sector.

Mozambique has proven natural gas and coal reserves but up to date, no oil resources were discovered. Therefore the consumption of 3,28 million barrels has to be imported from Angola and South Africa. Mozambique's natural gas consumption of 60 million cubic metres in 2000 was totally covered by regional production, using the proven reserves of about 65 milliard cubic metres.<sup>1</sup> Likewise, the coal reserves of 240 million metric tons were exploited to cover Mozambique's coal consumption in 2000 which was about 82 thousand tons.<sup>2</sup> Due to the country's relatively small urban population, the access to commercial energy sources is limited. Therefore, the majority of the population still relies on the use of wood as its primary source of energy.

Mozambique is one of fourteen countries that make up the Southern African Development Community (SADC) which was founded in July 1992. The other members are: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Seychelles,

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<sup>1</sup> EIA 2002.and <http://www.mbendi.co.za>

<sup>2</sup> EIA 2002.

South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Current SADC objectives include harmonisation and rationalisation of policies and strategies for sustainable development in all areas. The utilisation of biomass for energy and electricity generation is still not as important as it should be in this forum, but single countries like Mozambique, Senegal and South Africa are taking the advantage of being members in international networks working on the promotion and implementation of bioenergy. Therefore it could be possible, that these countries will act as regional pioneers in the promotion of renewable bioenergy.