



Swaziland

Joined the Commonwealth 1968 - visited by the Queen as Princess Elizabeth in 1947



Swaziland is a small landlocked nation in southern Africa

Pop: (2013) 1,250,000 Capital: Mbabane Area: 17,364 sq km

Swaziland is a developing country heavily dependent on its neighbour South Africa for 90% of its imports and 70% of its exports. Although most of its farmers are subsistence farmers, sugar is an important crop and sugar related industries (such as soft drinks) help the economy.

Swaziland's western Highveld which rises to 1,862m, is a continuation of the Drakenberg range of mountains and occupies the western half of the country. Here, the climate is near-temperate and humid changing to near tropical in the east where the land is much lower. Swaziland is one of the better watered African countries though rainfall can be unreliable.

Usutu pines grow in the Highveld but the Lowveld is covered in grass and scrub. There are eight national reserves inhabited by indigenous species, many, such as the black and white rhino, are endangered elsewhere. There is a vast variety of birdlife including storks and vultures.

A modern sugar mill with young cane plants in the foreground

