

## Towards an African mountain biodiversity assessment

**Conveners:** Peter Taylor, Davnah Urbach

**Abstract:** In recent years, the amount, coverage, and accessibility of biodiversity data and knowledge have been steadily increasing. This is the case also for mountains, where long-term monitoring programs, research projects, citizen science initiatives, as well as BioBlitz and remote sensing campaigns are contributing to an increasingly detailed mapping of species and their distributions. Such developments are particularly timely in view of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Agenda and the new targets agreed upon in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which call for reporting on biodiversity protection also in mountains.

With the increasing availability of mountain biodiversity data, local, national, regional, and global assessments of biodiversity facets and research have become possible. Whereas some of these data and knowledge have already been explored in previous IPBES assessments and in particular in the IPBES regional assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services for Africa, no systematic assessment of mountain biodiversity has yet been performed. The Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment (GMBA) network of the Swiss Academy of Natural Sciences and Future Earth has set itself the goal of filling this gap and is in the process of designing a first of its kind comparative assessment of biodiversity across our world's mountain. This tremendous endeavour is a collaborative effort with the GMBA regional hubs, the first of which has been established in April 2024 at the Afromontane Research Unit of the University of the Free State.

This session and workshop aim at convening mountain biodiversity scientists interested in participating in an assessment of the status of and trends in African mountain species and in African mountain biodiversity research. Our specific objectives are to (1) bring together African mountain biodiversity specialists and map existing expertise onto taxonomic groups and mountain systems, (2) share examples of ongoing African mountain species accounts and assessments, and (3) identify research questions and hypotheses as well as policy needs underlying an African synthesis of mountain biodiversity knowledge and trends. Finally, we will seize the opportunity to celebrate the establishment of the southern African regional GMBA hub.

**Abstract submission:** To submit your abstract go to <https://2025.samc.africa/#> and select the tab "Abstracts/Proposals". Once you have created your profile, submit your abstract on "The Open Call". In order to identify your abstract as part of this Special Session, please insert "Towards an African mountain biodiversity assessment" as part of the keywords. Deadline: 16 September