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The Ever-Disappearing Role of ATR Values in Ecological Sustainability: The Case of Bolobedu in the Limpopo Province, South Africa.

A number of factors determine the success of local based ecological sustainability efforts. In this paper an interdisciplinary approach is used to analyse the potential role for African Traditional Religious (ATR) values in promoting ecological sustainability. Using the local area of Bolobedu in the Limpopo Province of South Africa as a case, factors that limit the role of these values are highlighted. First, the paper will analyse the legal context within which ecological sustainability efforts are to occur, and secondly, based on fieldwork research conducted in Bolobedu, an analysis of aspects of African Traditional Religious values that promote ecological sustainability will be discussed. Lastly, it will be argued that a number of internal (being socio-economic, religious and political factors within the area of Bolobedu) factors and external factors (being the legal framework and the manifestation of cooperative governance) limit the practical applicability of whatever role ATR values would contribute towards ecological sustainability in Bolobedu.

Keywords: African Traditional Religion, ecological sustainability, values, Bolobedu, Limpopo Province, South Africa