

**COUNCIL OF WOMEN WORLD LEADERS SENDS HIGH-LEVEL LEADERS ON AFRICA—U.S. EXCHANGE - Feb 1, 2007**

Washington, DC, Feb 1, 2007 – Through the Council of Women World Leaders' Ministerial Fellows Exchange Program, women leading at the highest level in government get a rare opportunity to get first-hand experience in the offices of their counterparts in the United States.

Dr. Parker, Assistant Director of Fisheries and Habitat Conservation for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will travel to Lesotho on February 3, 2007. As part of the exchange, she will shadow Mrs. Nthabiseng Majara, Principal Environment Officer for Lesotho's Ministry of Tourism, Environment, and Culture, and will meet officials in the Ministry of Gender and Youth to learn about gender issues in Lesotho.

On her return to the U.S., Dr. Parker will stop in South Africa to speak at The Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls. She will give a talk about women in leadership to students of the newly opened school.

Mrs. Majara of Lesotho visited the United States as a Ministerial Fellow last fall to complete her exchange visit with Dr. Parker's office in the U.S. Department of the Interior. She and Dr. Parker also participated in an executive training program at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government and The Ministerial Fellows Exchange Program aims to promote and support women's governmental leadership and gender-aware policy development through cross-cultural exchange. The Program is sponsored by the Council of Women World Leaders and funded by the U.S. Department of State.

The Council of Women World Leaders is a network of 37 current and former women presidents and prime ministers. Mary Robinson, President of Ireland (1990-97) is Chair of the Council, and U.S. Secretary Madeleine Albright (1997-2001) is Chair of the Women's Ministerial Initiative.