



Republic of Namibia

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND TOURISM

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Press Release

03 December 2022

Editors and Journalists

Update on the state of the, Roads and other Infrastructure in the Etosha National Park

The Ministry wishes to clarify misconceptions and widespread perceptions that the ENP is in disarray, with roads and other facilities in a bad state. We want to clarify that the roads in the ENP are largely in good condition, with the majority of them being rehabilitated or maintained on a continuous basis.

The Ministry, in collaboration with stakeholders, has invested funds in the park's tourist roads. From this end a total of 195 has been constructed and completed consisting of 69 km between Sonderkop and Olifantstrui and 126 km between Olifantstrui and Galton gate including the dolomite detour to the cost of N\$35 million.

The Ministry is currently constructing a 86-kilometer stretch of road from Ozonjuitji M'bari to Okaukweujo, which is expected to cost N\$71.3 million. At the same time the Ministry is also facilitating the implementation of a recent cabinet-approved road maintenance strategy to cater for other road sections totalling 213 kilometres. The road construction project includes a low volume seal road, emergency borehole drilling and infrastructure for borehole pumping.

While this is true, we admit that there are a few exceptions, particularly in the park's eastern sections between Okaukweujo, Halali and Namutoni, where the roads require maintenance. This is primarily due to the fact that all our graders used for road maintenance, are being repaired. As soon as the graders are repaired, work on levelling the roads and bringing them up to acceptable standards will begin, targeting the worst sections first.

At this point, we would like to remind all our road users, particularly those driving heavy vehicles, to adhere to the speed limit set in the park. Over speeding leads to a shorter lifespans of park roads.

We have noticed that some prominent people have gone around the park sniffing for bad things. "If you look for it, you will find it," as the saying goes. There is never a day that will go by without the need to maintain something in any of national parks. The same individuals have also spread lies that fires in the ENP are not attended to. There

haven't been any fires in the park in the over a month and that all fires previously reported in the ENP and close by areas were attended to.

The Ministry has a comprehensive fire management strategy that addresses both fire suppression and prevention. It is possible that officials will pre-burn an area ahead of the fire season as a management tool.

Our waterholes are generally in good condition as with any infrastructure or facility, there might be some technical issues affecting pumping of water, but these are quickly attended to by our officials whenever they are observed or reported.

Finally, we would like to appeal to and remind tour operators who conduct tours in the park that they are equally responsible for ensuring that the park infrastructure is preserved by adopting responsible behaviors. We are noting disturbing trends where tourists are allowed to drive off road, over the speed limit, litter, and jump out of vehicles. All of these tarnishes the reputable and image of our flagship park.

--ENDS--

Media Contact: Public Relations Office; +264 61 284 2840, info.pro@mef.gov.na, 0811407844.

Issued by:
Romeo Muyunda
Chief Public Relations Officer/ Spokesperson

