



Republic of Namibia

Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism

Namibia's National Parks Programme

# NAMPARKS



2006 – 2021

NAMIBIA'S NATIONAL PARKS





Elzanne McCulloch



Republic of Namibia  
Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism

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# 1 INTRODUCTION



## Introduction and Perspective

Honourable Minister of Environment,  
Forestry and Tourism

### Pohamba Shifeta



In Namibia, environmental protection is a derivative of our Constitution. Chapter 11 Article 95L calls upon each and every person in Namibia to protect the environment for the benefit of all generations, even future generations. Therefore we look to expand on what we already have, and increase protected areas and communal conservancy programmes. We believe here that there will not be proper and successful conservation without the involvement of communities. Namibia's conservation programmes are entrusted to the communities. They derive benefits from a type of conservation known as Community Based Natural Resource Management programmes (CBNRM). We currently have 86 communal conservancies. Our parks are also very important. We have 15 National Parks, and 5 reserves in the country. The parks cover about 17% of our land mass. If you combine our conservancies and other protected areas, you will get more than 41% of our land mass in Namibia that is under some sort of protection. It is a major achievement and helps us to protect the fragile ecosystems and biodiversity found here.

This is why it's important that with the support of our stakeholders and development partners like the Federal Republic of Germany, we came up with the National Parks Development Programmes. The NamParks Projects are vital to us. Under this project we have already started developing in the North East Parks: Khaudum National Park, Bwabwata National Park, Nkasa Rupara and Mudumu National Parks. We have also begun work in the Southern Parks, the Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park, and in the Coastal Parks. We will ensure we bring all these Parks to the same standard. This is an important part of demonstrating that we really mean what we say, when saying environmental protection is important in Namibia, and a constitutional imperative.

We began with the infrastructural development in the Parks; building accommodation facilities for our Park staff, who need to be comfortable in their environment, they need to feel appreciated because they are risking their lives. We've also built offices and reception areas for tourists, plus other Park infrastructure development. It's a programme initiated by the Namibian Government, and co-funded by the Federal Republic of Germany, through Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). It's critical for the operations of the National Parks.

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**We believe here that there will not be proper and successful conservation without the involvement of communities.**

For us, as a developing country, we need development partners and Germany is currently one of our biggest development partners when it comes to development programmes in protected areas. Germany is also very passionate about the environment, and our biggest source market for international tourists.

The NamParks Programme has had a big impact on our National Parks. It has improved our infrastructure, as well as the way we do things in the Parks. These are very important stakeholder efforts which we appreciate.

Namibia is a vast country and it requires many resources to ensure that our protected areas are really protected. We couldn't achieve all this without partners like the Federal Republic of Germany. But obviously we needed to have a success story for them to want to support us. This brings us back to our conservation story in Namibia, which is lauded everywhere in the world. Something I always tell people, if you have not visited our National Parks or our protected areas then you don't know what you are missing. Namibia is unique, it's extraordinary.



# The Development Relationship between Namibia and Germany



Head of Cooperation,  
German Embassy

**Dr. Gabriele Geier**

Namibia is more complex than it looks at first glance. It's a very beautiful country, and many tourists will share this view. The landscape is gorgeous, Namibia has got good infrastructure, people are very friendly and cooperative. Living seems to be easy, but the more I get to know, the more complex and complicated it seems to become. It is not easy to understand the different forms of land use - communal land, commercial land, National Parks, conservancies - and their implications or the different institutional settings. This makes it more difficult but I am also curious to learn more and understand better. In Namibia there is engagement towards not making a living against nature, but making a living with nature. This means accepting all the uncertainties which come along with that. It's not a shiny blue sky all the time, and it comes with costs. Everything has a flip side, and you have to see both. Living with wild animals like elephants or lions is at times quite dangerous for the local population. To find a good balance to manage human wildlife conflict is a huge challenge. This is something which I don't get tired of sharing especially with those in Germany who are focusing on protection of wild animals exclusively. In my view we can learn some things from Namibia here, especially when I listen to stories in Germany of wolves threatening farm animals or bears causing problems. I really believe in learning from each other. We also have cooperation with countries like South Africa or Kenya. I hope to foster regional exchange. Sharing different experiences and views and engaging in finding good solutions for challenges is key.

My advice to anyone coming to see the Namibian National Parks would be: take your time. Don't just speed through the different areas, take your time and dwell on the beauty and wonders of nature. Come and see the Big and the Small Five. In addition, take your time to talk to the people working and living here. Thus, you'll get not only a glimpse of the wildlife but of the spirit of the Namibian people as well.



**One of the highlights for me has been meeting the people on the ground, and seeing how this cooperation made a difference in their lives.**

**W**hat really stood out for me about the NamParks Programme is that it is supporting an integrated approach. It's not just building a fence around an area. It's about retaining and increasing biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. Parks are attracting tourists, but at the same time they are improving the livelihoods of the people, especially for those living near to the parks.

One of the impacts of this programme is a diversification of the attractions for tourists. That tourists don't only go and see Etosha or Sossusvlei, but Bwabwata for example is now also a very popular attraction. This is creating new jobs and contributing to sustainability at the same time. One of the highlights for me has been meeting the people on the ground, and seeing how this cooperation made a difference in their lives. That's what we are aiming for, to contribute to making a difference in the lives of those people living in rural communities.

A success story is not only about the participation of the local population, it's more than that. It is about giving the local population - men and women, old and young alike - a voice and listening to their ideas, requirements and possibilities. It is about empowerment. In the long run every concept or strategy has to be deeply rooted and it has to be in the interest of the local people. I think this is the core of Namibia's conservation success story.

What is amazing to me is that there is not only a Ministry (of Environment, Forestry and Tourism) but also community members and civil society driving the agenda. I think this collaboration and engagement is really extraordinary in Namibia and Southern Africa. To share a common goal and to look at how best to achieve it, coming together and joining hands.

# KfW, the Funding Partner of the NamParks Programme



Senior Project Manager  
KfW Development Bank

**Lydia von Krosigk**

Germany and Namibia decided to work together in the field of development cooperation. Both sides came up with the focal sectors. The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism put forward the suggestion of supporting the National Parks and state protected areas, which didn't receive much support. This was how the NamParks Programme was conceived. Namibia has a very convincing new model of doing conservation, not only focusing on wildlife but focusing on nature and people, where people who are living in that area are also benefiting from nature. After Independence, Namibia put these approaches into law, and I think this is the big difference in Namibia compared to other countries.

Namibia has such incredibly beautiful nature. It is unique in Southern Africa, from the deserts up to the river wetlands systems. Namibia also has good wildlife numbers, but with two deserts and a low population density it was not going to be an agricultural hub of Southern African. Being rich in nature and in wildlife, we wanted to support the concept that puts value into and generates economic revenue from nature.

As KfW, we are the mediator between the Namibian Government and the German Government. As the mediator, we would have to advocate for these funds. This was done because we were convinced it is the right approach.

The purpose was two fold, to support conservation and to develop attractive National Parks which would then attract tourists and tourism would create the need for hotels, for lodges, for supplies, and so create employment and bring economic development. National Parks are the hubs for conservation, they are the safe havens, or special protection zones where the animals can breed.

NamParks started in the North East of Namibia in 2006, in what was one of the most underdeveloped regions in the country. If you look at the North East in the mid nineties there was a lot of poverty. Katima Mulilo was a very small town and there was not even a tarred road going there. Very few tourists were going there and very little development took place. The North East had also experienced war and in the year 2000, Angolan troops were still operating from the area. It's also an area that is rich in nature, but when we did our first trips

there, you would be camping in the old army barracks where there was no electricity. It was obvious that something had to be done for the people who work in these dangerous areas with elephants and buffalos. So much development has now taken place in terms of tourism, new lodges, employment and income generation. Wildlife numbers have grown since the start of the NamParks Programme. It was not only the National Parks, but this played a major role. It shows that the approach is right and that conservation has been done right. It has not shared the same fate as many African countries with declining wildlife numbers.

We started with Bwabwata National Park, Mudumu National Park, and at that time Mamilili National Park which is now Nkasa Rupara National Park. Next was the Khaudum National Park. It was then that the current Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, brought forward the idea of development for the Sperrgebiet (Tsau //Khaeb National Park) to the German Minister of Economic Corporation at that time. With all the German history in that area, she asked could Germany not assist here. That is how the project moved to the Southern Parks.

The NamParks Programme started with infrastructure development, but it's also important to have a plan for how to manage these parks. That's how the Park Management Plans and the Tourism Management Plans came about. It's about not only thinking about fauna and flora, but also the people in and around the parks. To integrate them in the planning, that's what this integrated approach means. It's not seeing parks as islands, but ensuring that the communities who live in and around the parks have legal rights to their resources and are thereby legally entitled to use them sustainably.

It's commendable that the Namibian Government takes this approach. It has a lot of natural resources and wants to use them sustainably but it knows that it can only use them sustainably when people benefit. For sustainable use you also have to have the support of the people who share their living space with wildlife. Namibia also has a highly developed tourism private sector. The German Ministry of Economic Corporation and Development also found the transboundary aspect of conservation here, another important aspect.

KAZA (The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area) is a great example of this, where the borders are artificial and animals do not see the borders. It's an amazing story, and one we found worthwhile supporting. KAZA is now an area of 829 000 km<sup>2</sup> that was contributed to by the five countries.

You also find this connectivity in the coastal parks. In the South of Namibia shared with South Africa you find the /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park area and in the North there is the Iona Skeleton Park shared with Angola. It is transboundary between countries that allows the free movements of animals.

Namibia has set up a large protected area system. National parks cover an area twice the size of Austria. Just the coastal parks alone are almost the size of Germany. The fact that Namibia sets aside these areas and this huge amount of land is just amazing. It allows Western people, who do not have many natural spaces left, an experience of a lifetime, i.e. to see an elephant in the wild a few metres away.

We see it in wildlife numbers as well as the wildlife counts. Within the parks, the number of animals is just amazing. It's also amazing how it has grown over the time. It's a success story showing that conservation is working and that the parks play a very important role. From an economic perspective, we strongly believe that the parks are the magnets for tourists who come to visit the parks and then make use of the facilities like lodges outside the parks.

I think the duration of our relationship, of our cooperation, shows that it has been successful. We have a long standing and well established relationship, and the Ministry of Environment is always very proactive in terms of German cooperation. We've had many visits from the German Ministry or the German Parliament or Ambassadors, that come to Namibia and visit NamParks. You really understand when you see it, talk to the communities, private sector or to the staff there. That is when you understand what integrated park management means. It's not just a term, it's a way for development of the country.

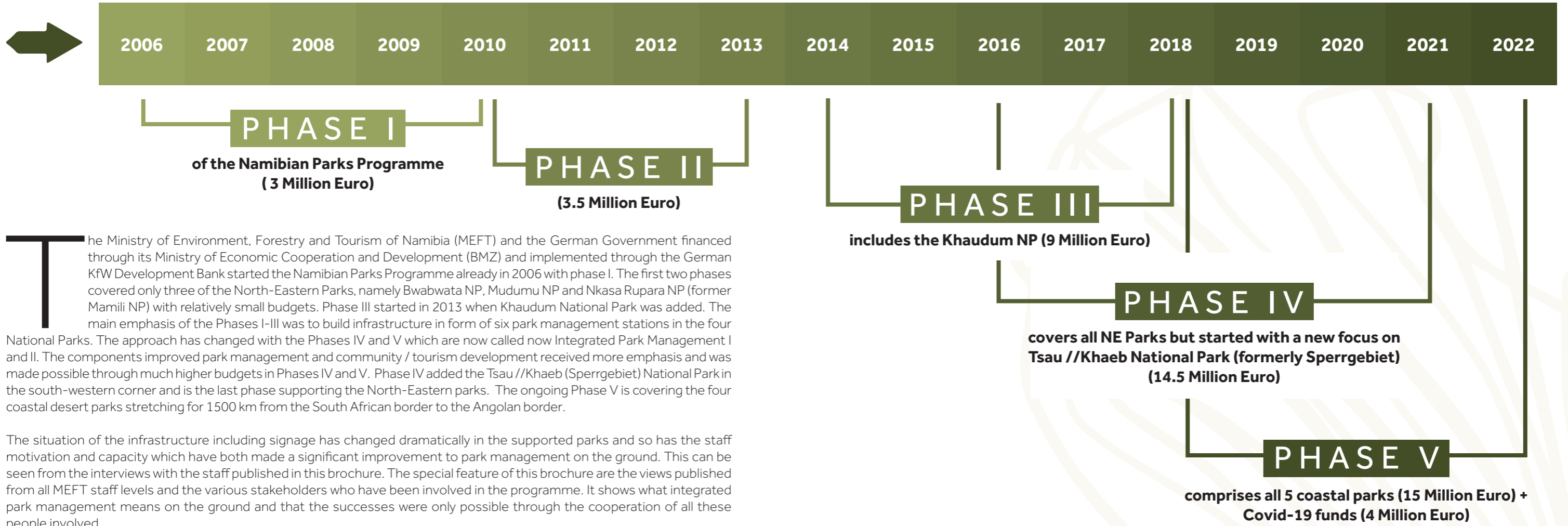
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**Being rich in nature and in wildlife we wanted to support the concept that puts value into and generates economic revenue from nature.**

# Objectives and Timelines of the NamParks Programme since 2006



André Baumgarten



The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism of Namibia (MEFT) and the German Government financed through its Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented through the German KfW Development Bank started the Namibian Parks Programme already in 2006 with phase I. The first two phases covered only three of the North-Eastern Parks, namely Bwabwata NP, Mudumu NP and Nkasa Rupara NP (former Mamilii NP) with relatively small budgets. Phase III started in 2013 when Khaudum National Park was added. The main emphasis of the Phases I-III was to build infrastructure in form of six park management stations in the four National Parks. The approach has changed with the Phases IV and V which are now called now Integrated Park Management I and II. The components improved park management and community / tourism development received more emphasis and was made possible through much higher budgets in Phases IV and V. Phase IV added the Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park in the south-western corner and is the last phase supporting the North-Eastern parks. The ongoing Phase V is covering the four coastal desert parks stretching for 1500 km from the South African border to the Angolan border.

The situation of the infrastructure including signage has changed dramatically in the supported parks and so has the staff motivation and capacity which have both made a significant improvement to park management on the ground. This can be seen from the interviews with the staff published in this brochure. The special feature of this brochure are the views published from all MEFT staff levels and the various stakeholders who have been involved in the programme. It shows what integrated park management means on the ground and that the successes were only possible through the cooperation of all these people involved.

The MEFT and KfW take a great deal of pride in the National Parks of the country and in the very successful design and implementation of the Namibian Parks Programme in the last 15 years. These parks in Namibia preserve wildlife and a biodiversity which has global significance but also is of utmost importance for the tourism sector in Namibia as the parks are the main attraction.

The overall objective of the programme has been to provide an opportunity for rural communities to benefit from the sustainable management of the natural resources leading to an improved environmental situation and to the stabilisation and improvement of the production base and rural incomes.

# Highlights in 15 years of NamParks

## MAHANGO, SUSUWE & NGENDA PARK STATIONS

were built under NamParks I and II



## 57 NEW STAFF HOUSES IN 3 PARK STATIONS

were built to replace the old camps at Khaudum National Park and Nkasa Rupara National Park under NamParks III



The architectural design appropriately matches and reflects the character and aesthetics of the different environments and

## REPRESENTS A SENSE OF PLACE BEING BORN FROM THE LANDSCAPE

### AT BWABWATA NATIONAL PARK

- the park entrance gate
- tourist reception building
- admin building
- service block
- vehicle store
- common room
- 10x 1-bedroom houses
- 10x 2-bedroom houses
- visitor's ablution block
- a sports field

WERE BUILT



## SOLAR HOT WATER GEYSERS & ENERGY AND WATER EFFICIENT FITTINGS AND FIXTURES ARE PROVIDED

at the accommodation facilities



## COMMUNITIES ARE VIEWED AS ALLIES

to be helped and rewarded for safeguarding some of Africa's most precious natural resources including growing populations of elephants and many other species



## PARTNERSHIPS ARE ENCOURAGED

between park and staff, residents and neighbours, NGOs and the private sector. The Ministry established several forums to enable stakeholders to have a say in how parks and ecosystems are managed



## SMART APPROACH

## SMART DATABASE & PATROL DATA COLLECTION IMPLEMENTED IN ALL NE PARKS

including baseline maps that incorporate zoning criteria as per national guidelines for zoning of protected areas and the relevant new Park Management Plans. Under NamParks V the Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool approach will be rolled out to Coastal Parks.



## NEW PARKS MANAGEMENT PLANS AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLANS

were prepared, launched and are being implemented



## NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR ZONING OF PROTECTED AREAS IN NAMIBIA

and management objectives for each zone as per IUCN requirements were developed together with key stakeholders



## IN LÜDERITZ THE HISTORICAL OLD POST OFFICE BUILDING IS RENOVATED

to serve as the required park visitor centre and office for MEFT staff for the northern TKNP



## CROSS-BORDER WILDLIFE CORRIDORS ARE BEING RESTORED

and wildlife numbers are increasing



# Strong Ownership by MEFT Management



Executive Director of MEFT  
**Teofilus Nghitila**

**N**amParks has become a hallmark in the improvement of our protected areas, especially in those parks where it has been focused. If you go there today you can see the impact of NamParks in terms of infrastructure. The investment in our parks ranged from accommodation for our staff, office accommodation to the gates, water point installations and so on. The parks have now become first class and that has really improved and enhanced the productivity in the park. Both from the point of view of the staff, and from the point of view of our visitors to the park.

I think NamParks has made a significant impact in conservation and the improvement of our protected areas. I'm very proud of the parks where NamParks has made this investment.

When you have good accommodation for your staff members it enhances their productivity level and also makes them very proud to be staff members of the Ministry, so accommodation is very important in that respect. We also have modern infrastructure at the parks. Most of these accommodations are powered by renewable energy which is also a very important component. In fact the biggest achievement is the investment in infrastructure, which your traditional donors usually don't do. They would usually invest in soft skills like capacity building and not in infrastructure. In this case the investment has been in hardware infrastructure of which we are really very proud.

The contribution is quite significant, for instance if you go to Sperrgebiet today, besides the staff accommodation you can see the contribution in terms of the gazettelement of the former diamond areas, which have now become accessible to the general public and that is made possible because of the contribution of NamParks. We see some roads are opening up and that is good. We have seen a number of concession areas that have been developed in Sperrgebiet for instance. This is a great contribution, it also creates economic opportunities for those communities to benefit directly from National Parks. We

believe this will further contribute to employment creation, contribute to growth of our tourism which we dearly need, so it is quite a significant contribution which cannot be underestimated at all.

Improvement in the facilities (in our amenities) is very important. Having a site alone is not sufficient, you need to add value to your parks in terms of the facilities and that forms a very critical component in our conservation effort.

Our parks need to be accessible. To make parks accessible you should have enabling amenities in the park, and therefore investing in parks is very critical so that we add value to our conservation area. That is the case now when it comes to the contribution from NamParks. So I was fortunate to visit Sperrgebiet and to see some of the investment done through NamParks. We tried to really work and include all stakeholders in terms of what we intend to do in our National Parks. I believe also National Parks by themselves become irrelevant if they are not contributing meaningfully to the lives of people.

Therefore, when we are investing in park infrastructure, we are also cognisant of the need to optimally maximise benefits to the communities, either communities neighbouring the parks and also general Namibian communities across the country.

We anticipate NamPark amenities in Phase V to continue contributing to and consolidate the improvement of protected areas in the country. The NamParks V will now focus on three important coastal protected areas, mainly Dorob National Park, Namib-Naukluft National Park and Skeleton Coast National Park. These are very important National Parks in Namibia, they are probably the most utilised by visitors. Within these areas you find Sossusvlei and when you are talking about Dorob National Park, this is a multi utilised and multi-purposed national park, with three coastal towns inside this park. Investing in these parks is very important. We also anticipate that through NamParks we will have well formulated and developed management plans to better manage those protected areas. Management plans are very important tools in managing conservation areas, not only in managing but also to be able to monitor the impact associated with various activities.

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**I believe also National Parks by themselves become irrelevant if they are not contributing meaningfully to the lives of people.**

According to the office for this Ministry it is very rewarding to see people talking about how beautiful our conservation areas are and what good facilities we have now. It is also quite rewarding to see functional facilities, like water points, in these parks. It is quite personally rewarding and fulfilling to see that. I always look forward to visit our National Parks.

National parks are our heritage to be enjoyed by everyone, either by Namibians or the visiting people coming to Namibia. They are a national treasure to be appreciated, and enjoyed to the fullest. It is really breathtaking and really liberating to be in those areas. Myself, I cannot cease visiting these areas with my family, I enjoy them.

We are very grateful and appreciative of the support from the German Government through KfW and also a number of our partners in conservation. Their contribution is highly appreciated and it is our wish as the Ministry to maintain and improve our working relations. We will always succeed if we do things together.

# Long Lasting Impacts of the NamParks Programme

Deputy Executive Director: Natural Resource Management

## Colgar Sikopo

**N**amParks has been a very good programme, firstly in the strength of the relationship between the Namibian Government and the German Government and secondly in that we see the impact of the programme, in what it has done for conservation and natural resource management in the country. I'm proud to say I've been involved in NamParks from the beginning.

During Phase I of the NamParks Programme, I was the Chief Warden for parks in the North East region. Right from the start of the programme (when it was still called the Bwabwata, Mudumu, Mamili Parks Project) I've seen the impact that the programme has made. When you look specifically at the parks in the Zambezi Region, where we started, there was nothing before and staff members lived in 'kimbo' houses. Then there was little interest among the staff to stay in the parks.

With the NamParks intervention, when we built the first park stations at Mahango, you could see the attitude of the staff changing. Staff from Khaudum, Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara wanted to work at Mahango because of the new park station there. We did expand to all these parks and soon staff could stay in the parks, and that had an immediate impact on the park management.

Now we have completed all the North East parks, and have moved to the Sperrgebiet. The set-up for Tsau //Khaeb National Park is quite a different one. It is a new park that was added just after Independence, so it was good to have the intervention from NamParks. Here again the development really attracted staff to this unique park found in the desert.

We are now moving to the coastal parks to bring development to the Dorob National Park, Skeleton Coast National Park, and the Namib-Naukluft National Park. The staff there have heard from the other regions what has happened in their parks, and they are really looking forward to seeing the NamParks intervention at the coastal parks.

What has also been really great about the NamParks Programme is what the German Government through KfW has done and is doing for the parks. If you look at poaching for instance, in 2015 there were a hundred and one elephants poached, but only one elephant was poached on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2021 for the whole year. It is the same if you look at our Rhinos poached. This confirms the impact of the facilities in the parks that allow for staff to immediately respond to conservation issues including wildlife protection.

NamParks has also been responsible for park planning. These parks never had Park Management Plans before. Starting in NamParks I, we developed the framework on how we develop Park Management Plans. This developed into guidelines and today we have Park Management Plans for all our parks. This means that the staff have tools that can direct them on how parks should be managed, and with structured guidelines staff know how to manage biodiversity in each park. Now we have a variety of tools to manage these parks and can proudly say this has been an achievement of the NamParks Programme.

NamParks was a huge intervention and we are very proud of this programme. With NamParks we are developing policies, strategies and interventions plus we have very good political will and support from the Minister and Cabinet. This also strengthens the programme, because we have financial support and we have political support, and you can't find anything better than that.

It has also been very good seeing how communities neighbouring the park or living in the parks, have benefited from the Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Policy which gives tourism rights to these communities. In very few countries do you find a rural community that has a tourism lodge inside a national park. Here we have seen communities neighbouring the park or living in the parks having actually benefited from living inside National Parks or next to the National Parks. You see the money coming in from these concessions, either hunting or tourism lodges, getting back to communities. If you go to these communities that have received this support you will see the benefits. When you go to the Mashi Conservancy for instance, which is between Mudumu National Park and Bwabwata National Park, they drink water from taps and they have electricity. The community there will tell you that the water or the electricity is money made from elephants, because they have a tourism concession in Bwabwata National Park or because they have a joint venture with Gondwana's Namushasha Lodge. This is all because of National Parks, because the reason why Namushasha Lodge is there is because of the National Park.

Today staff are happy to live in the parks, they have beautiful houses. Staff can manage the parks better, they have the tools. We have communities living there who can benefit

from the parks and you have a private sector that is willing to invest in the parks because the future looks bright. This is an achievement for Namibia that we should be proud of.

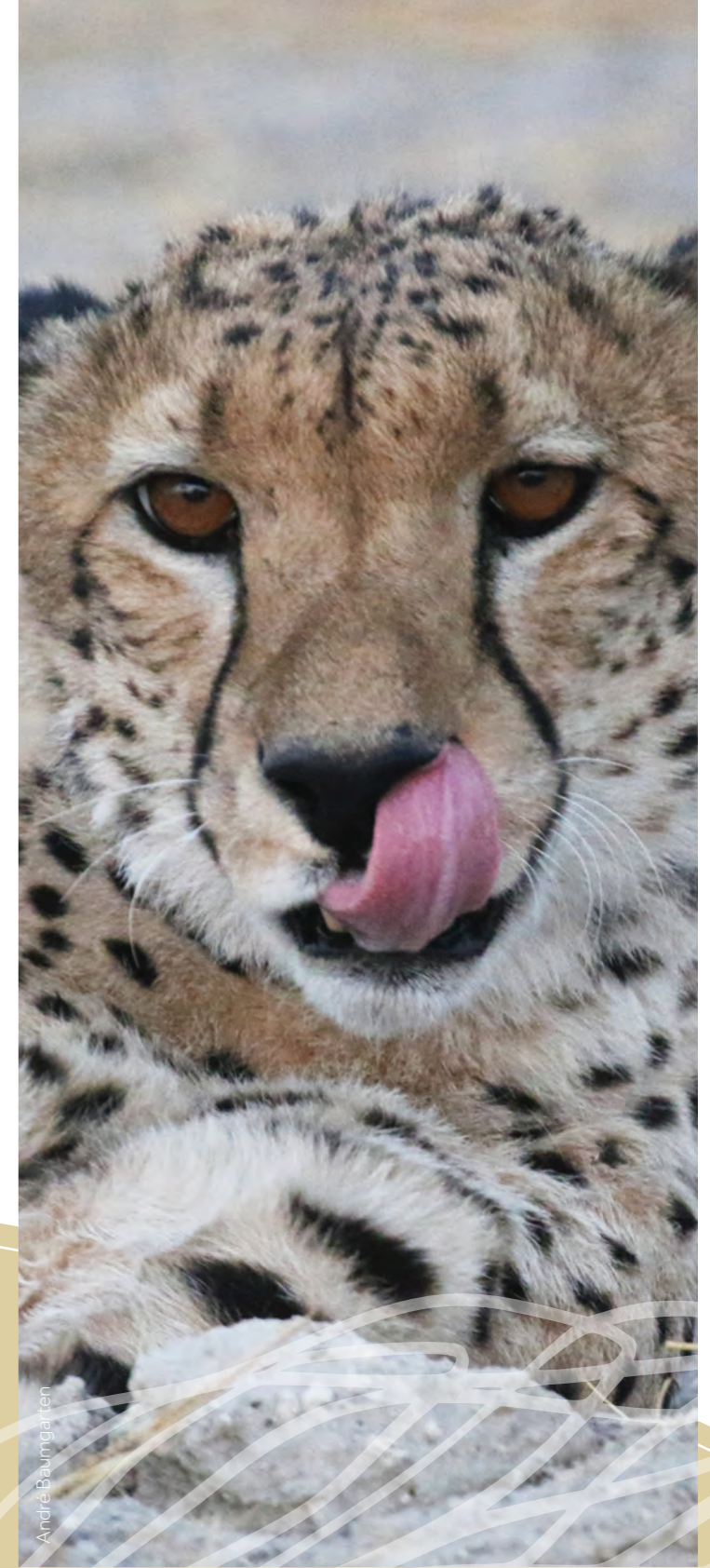
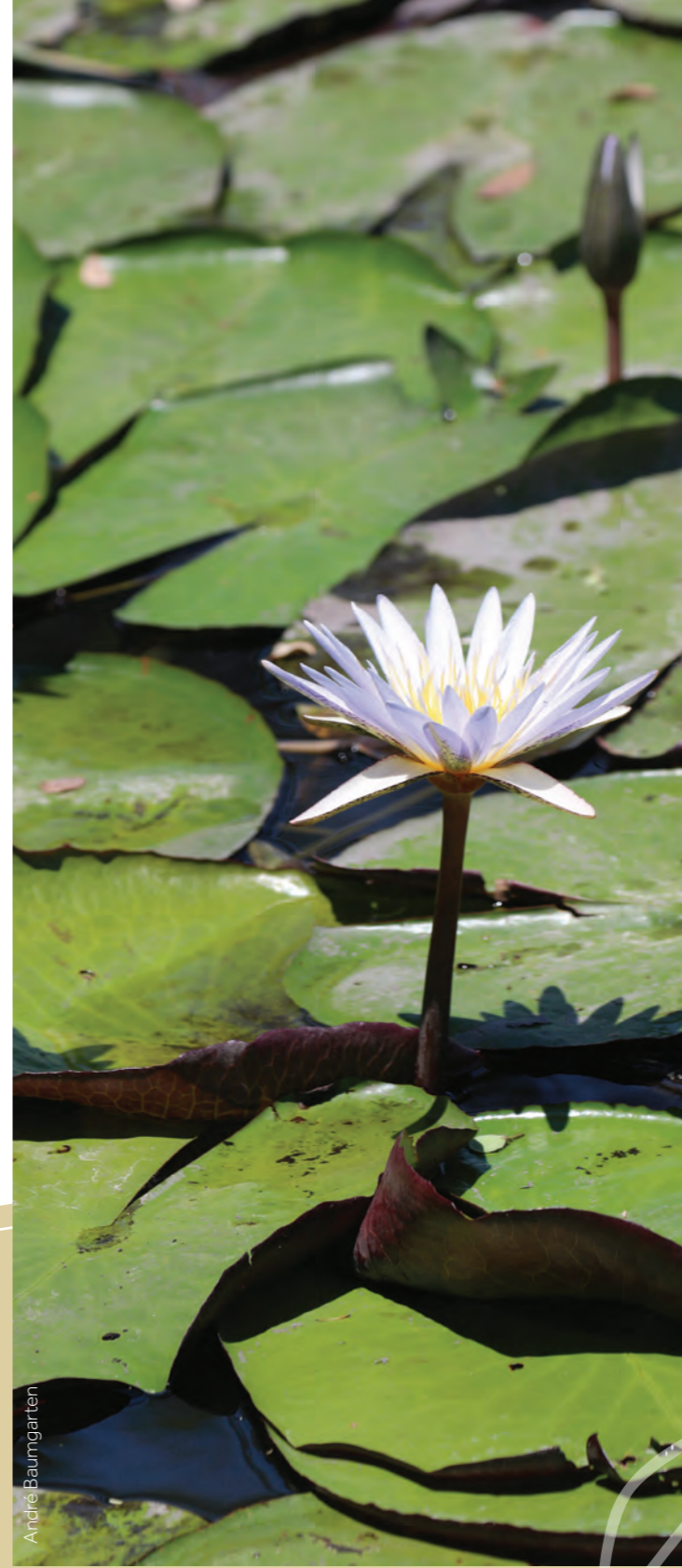
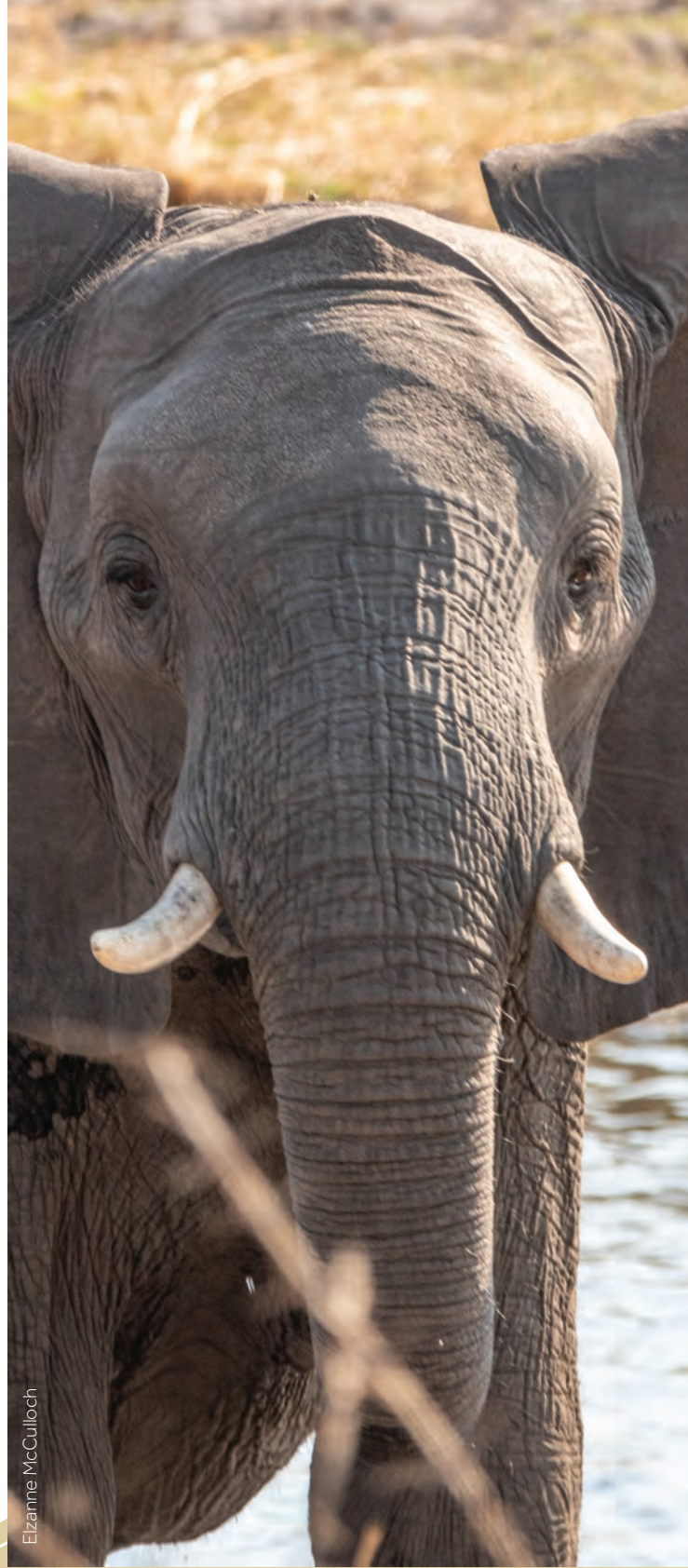
There is no doubt that because of these interventions I can proudly say the German Government through KfW under the NamParks Programme is a friend of Namibian National Parks.

We have seen over the years the growth in the populations of wildlife and in the National Parks you can easily view our wildlife and see the beautiful landscape like the wetland systems of Nkasa Rupara National Park which is the biggest protected wetland in the country. These parks are for all Namibians, we are looking after them, they are valuable to all of us, and we really invite everyone to come and see our parks.

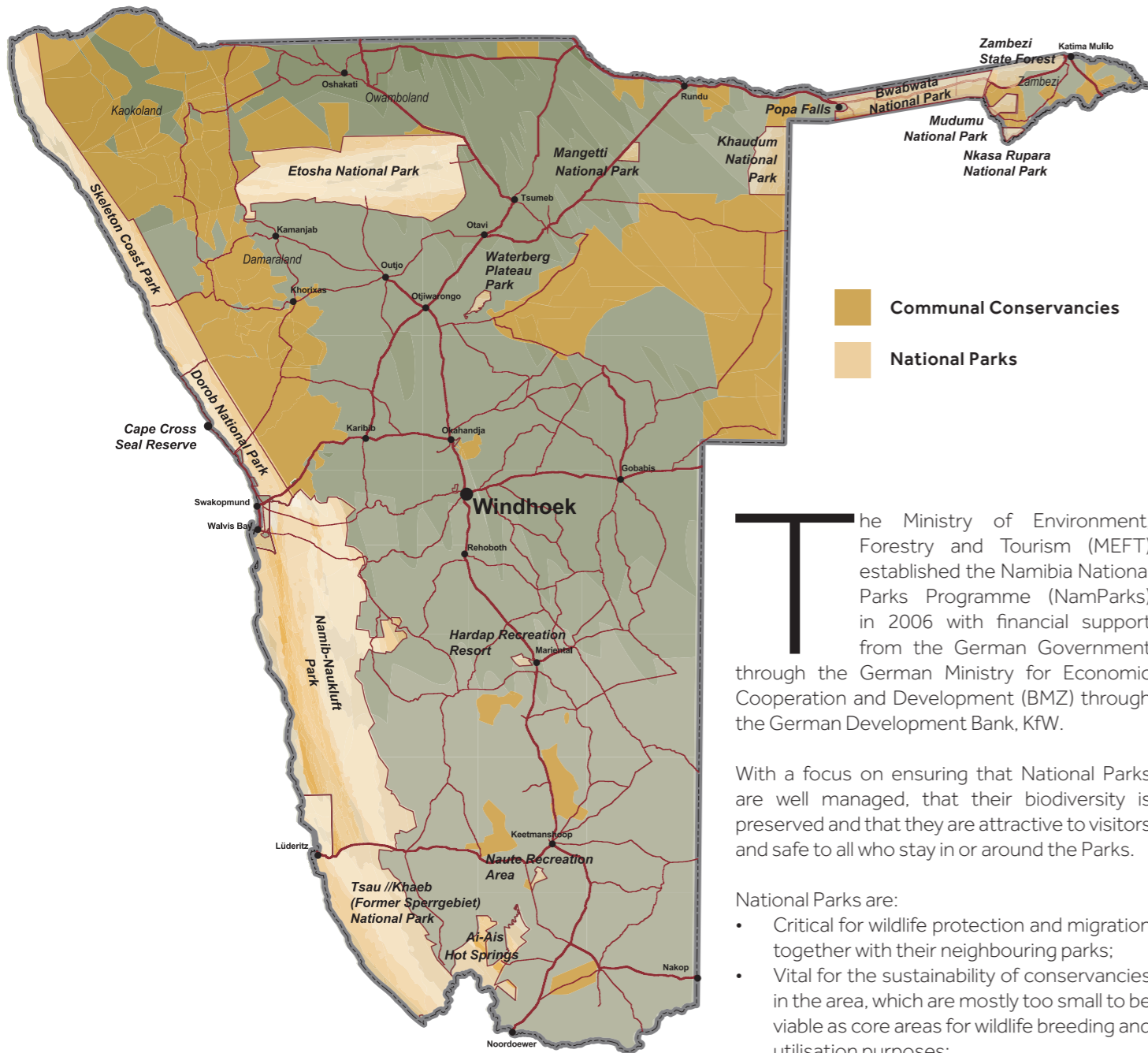
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# 2 THE NAM PARKS



# Namibia's Protected Areas and Communal Conservancies Network



Communal Conservancies  
 National Parks

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) established the Namibia National Parks Programme (NamParks) in 2006 with financial support from the German Government through the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the German Development Bank, KfW.

With a focus on ensuring that National Parks are well managed, that their biodiversity is preserved and that they are attractive to visitors and safe to all who stay in or around the Parks.

National Parks are:

- Critical for wildlife protection and migration together with their neighbouring parks;
- Vital for the sustainability of conservancies in the area, which are mostly too small to be viable as core areas for wildlife breeding and utilisation purposes;
- Unsustainable without good relations with their neighbours and residents, or if areas outside parks are left unintegrated and less developed with high levels of poverty and heavily depleted natural resources.

**Namibia has 20 state-run protected areas covering about 17% of the country's land surface, and 86 registered community conservancies covering 166,045 km<sup>2</sup> (another 20% of Namibia's surface) with a human population of about 228 000. The PAs conserve biodiversity and ecosystems by protecting some of the country's most important habitats and species of national and global significance.**



Director of Wildlife and National Parks

## Bennett Kahuure

In my view, the greatest impact of the NamParks Programme has been the infrastructure development. We started in 2006, with the BMM Parks (Bwabwata, Mamili, Mudumu) to primarily work in three parks at the time. These being Bwabwata, Mudumu and the old Mamili, which is now Nkasa Rupara. We've come along way since then. We've equipped all our North East parks with brand new infrastructure starting from Mudumu, Nkasa, Bwabwata, Buffalo and Khaudum. These parks all have brand new tools and brand new stations, and not only infrastructure, but there has really been an impact in the context of Integrated Park Management.

It is the result of an integrated approach to wildlife conservation, and involves the communities who are neighbouring those National Parks. This is about their ability to harness a livelihood from the resources that are adjacent to them. In 2006 we had around 20 communal conservancies, now we are boasting 86 communal conservancies involving over 200 000 people and over 40% of land under some form of conservation. NamParks has had a really big role to play in this.

As a Ministry, we derive our mandate from the Constitution, Article 95 and by extension we developed in 1996, the first iconic policy that governs communal conservation.

With that integrated approach in 2007 the Ministry worked on the Concessions Policy which again reinforces the idea of Integrated Park Management, because you can only manage wildlife effectively if your neighbours are willing to participate, and can derive benefits from wildlife in the parks. The idea of Integrated Park Management has always carried the ethos of managing wildlife in an integrated manner, and not in isolation.

The KAZA Treaty was signed around 2011, but the idea of KAZA came about ten years before that. Our political leaders saw it as important enough to have a Treaty signed between the five countries. Looking at the Zambezi, it was always an objective of this Ministry to bring conservation back after the war in this region. The communities had been in tatters, and wildlife was close to the brink of extinction there. Now, our elephant numbers have tripled there since Independence.

It's been an incredible success, this conservation story, not just for the North East but for the entire country.

Within the NamParks framework it has always been the intention of the Ministry to bring the same concepts, the same methods to the rest of the parks in Namibia. The idea is, and has always been, to extend the network of NamParks infrastructure and the concept of Integrated Park Management to our coastal parks. Soon there will be brand new infrastructure at the Skeleton Coast and Cape Cross Seal Reserve, and we will also move into the Namib Naukluft with our wonderful desert and dunes. So yes, the story continues.

What we can expect from NamParks V, apart from better park infrastructure that serves our own staff members, and also the public and local and International tourists: There will be brand new visitor entrance gates, new ablution facilities, tourist outlook facilities including camping and picnic areas. There will be an enhancement of the general look and feel of our parks at the coast. This development will also mean more tourists and this in turn benefits the communities around these parks. With larger numbers of visitors and our communal conservancy joint venture lodges, this means more revenue for the communities.

I think a special thanks and appreciation really needs to go to our long-term partner, the German Government through KfW, who facilitate the funding. They've been with us, and committed to conservation, for the past two decades. At the same time I also need to thank our communities because they form the cornerstone of what we do, and it has not been easy for them. We are being kept awake at night because of our own successes. With our success comes more wildlife, and this means more human-wildlife conflict. So a special thank you goes to our communities for truly believing in conservation.

For us as a Ministry, we are here primarily to conserve. We need to look at life from a biodiversity perspective. Life and livelihoods cannot exist without us conserving our biodiversity, and I take great pride in that.

# Transfrontier Conservation Areas

A Trans-frontier conservation area (TFCA) is a cross-border region where the natural and cultural resources are collaboratively managed by the Governments and/or Authorities involved. The area may include one or more protected areas as well as multiple resource use areas, and are referred to as 'peace parks'.

Namibia is home to three TFCAs, with one being found in the south: the /Ai-/Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park which stretches across the border into South Africa. The second TFCA in Namibia is the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), which lies in the Kavango and Zambezi river basins where Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe converge. The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) is larger than Germany and Austria combined.

The goal of the KAZA TFCA is "To sustainably manage the Kavango Zambezi ecosystem, its heritage and cultural

resources based on best conservation and tourism models for the socio-economic wellbeing of the communities and other stakeholders in and around the eco-region through harmonization of policies, strategies and practices."

As part of the integrated park management approach, NamParks has supported the restoration of cross-border corridors to enable free wildlife movement between the KAZA partners. It also supports ecosystem management through the Mudumu Landscape - a network of conservancies and community forests next to the Zambezi parks. The aim is for local communities to benefit from conservation, tourism and trophy hunting, which are the key drivers of socio-economic development in the region.

The third TFCA is Iona Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Park which combines the northern-most Namibian coastal park with Iona National Park in south west Angola.



Control Warden TFCA and Landscape Management

## Naambo Josephine Ipinge

work for the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism. My role is coordinating trans-frontier conservation areas, (between Namibia and other partner states) and landscape management (connectivities of lands within the country).

Since Independence we now have three transfrontier conservation areas of which two are trans-frontier parks. One between Namibia and South Africa, the /Ai-/Ais / Richtersveld Transfrontier Park. The second one is the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, which is a partnership between five countries but also happens to be the largest conservation area in the world. The third one is Iona-Skeleton Coast Transfrontier Park between Namibia and Angola. For me, looking at the SADC's vision of coordinating as a region, I think this is one of the key achievements for Namibia. This is about conserving natural resources, not only in our own respective countries, but doing this jointly. This is about biodiversity conservation and improving the livelihoods of communities.

I think one of our biggest conservation successes in Namibia is the involvement of communities in the natural resources management, what we call the community based natural resources management programme. It has brought a lot of positive changes, a lot of impacts not only for communities but also in landscape and wildlife management. With the establishment of conservancies we have seen connectivities and the recovery of wildlife. The other area I regard as a success for conservation in Namibia, is that we have seen growth in a number of National Parks which were gazetted even after Independence. In my view this contributes to tourism, but it also contributes to socio-economic development because of the involvement of communities, who derive benefits from natural resource management.

If you look at the history, where we came from we have seen a huge improvement in the parks through NamParks. This included staff accommodation and transportation, but also through the NamParks Programme we have seen an improvement in the planning and implementation of Park Management Plans, and they have assisted us in some of the technical and operational issues, and we really appreciated that.

We have also seen NamParks support tourism infrastructure in communal areas, especially in conservancies. For example in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, NamParks supported joint ventures, where communities are party to tourism facilities, this helps improve livelihoods. In my view the NamParks Programme has really contributed to some of our key objectives as a Nation.

Another thing that NamParks supported, and which is very important, is landscape connectivity. For example NamParks IV supported the Mudumu landscape, which is in the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, and is a very important wildlife corridor. These landscapes are in the heart of the Zambezi Region and without connectivity there, we would not have movement of wildlife in the larger Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area.

I really appreciate the long-term partnership we have had with the Government of Germany. This has contributed so much to biodiversity, to socio-economic development, not only for Namibia but for Africa. It contributed to a very important component of sustaining life because biodiversity conservation sustains life. Not only for ourselves, but because this is a long-term programme, it is for future generations.

“

**I think one of our biggest conservation successes in Namibia is the involvement of communities in the natural resources management, what we call the community based natural resources management programme.**



Le Roux van Schalkwyk



# The seven North-Eastern Protected Areas

Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area  
All seven North-Eastern Protected Areas are part of KAZA

# KAZA Fast Facts

 **>50%**  
AFRICA'S ELEPHANTS

**2.6**   
MILLION PEOPLE

**520,000 KM<sup>2</sup>**

**FREE**   
FLOWING RIVERS

 **>23**  
NPs, GAME & FOREST  
RESERVES

**575**   
TOURISM FOCUSED  
ESTABLISHMENTS

 **15%**  
OF THE CONTINENT'S LIONS

**200**   
SPECIES OF MAMMALS

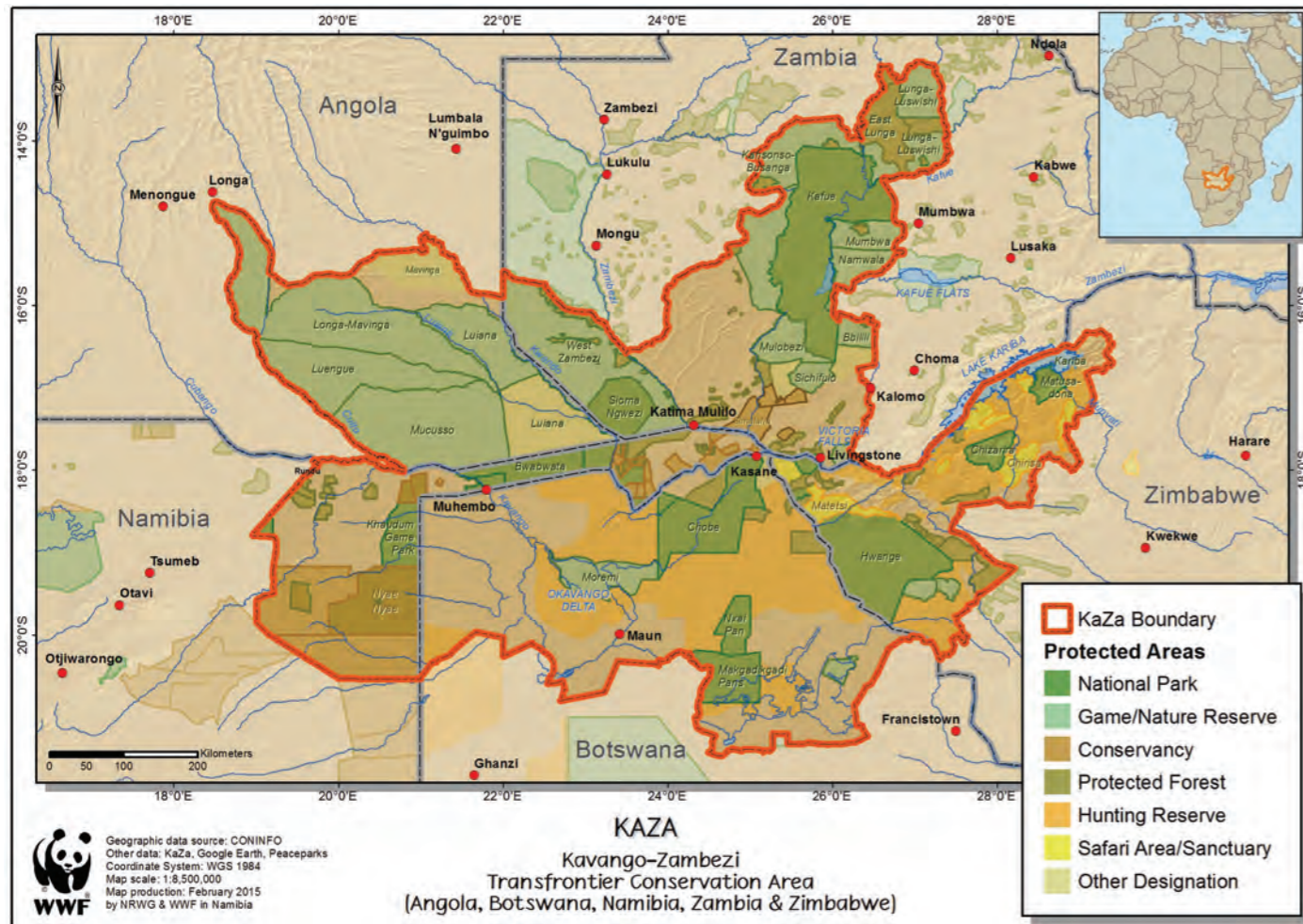
 **ICONIC**  
TOURISM ATTRACTIONS

**15%**   
OF THE WORLD'S WILD  
**CHEETAHS**

 **AFRICA'S  
LARGEST  
DRY LAND FOREST**

**>600**   
BIRD SPECIES

 **25%**  
OF AFRICA'S WILD DOGS





Chief Warden for the Kavango Zambezi  
Transfrontier Conservation Area

# Willem Ponahazo



“

My name is Apollinaris Apollonius Kannyinga, I am the regional head for the Kavango and Zambezi Regions.

I was fortunate to be part of the inception of the NamParks Programme where I participated in project inception discussions and the eventual construction of the Mahango Park Management Station in the first phase of the Programme.

The Programme eventually expanded to several phases with significant investments particularly in ensuring that the staff members of the Ministry got decent accommodation and office accommodation which is to me the recognisable achievement of the NamParks Programme. It is worth mentioning that the support through the NamParks Programme in the most remote areas of the North East parks was not really attractive to most donors. The expansion of this huge investment in the environmental sector across the Namibian landscape by investment in infrastructure, equipment, uniforms, training of staff members and more recently in supporting operational costs is remarkable from a single donor and country.

The investments in terms of housing and accommodation provided incentives for staff members to improve their performance since staff members were able to rest in proper shelter and work in better conditions. Staff members are operating away from their families and the least you as a person expect is to have decent accommodation in protected areas considered by some as a “hostile” environment. This is acknowledging basic human needs.

I appreciate the support through the NamParks Programme which made a huge difference in our protected areas including the neighbouring communities who were also beneficiaries of the Programme. There are only good memories I have in terms of the NamParks Programme as I look back as a member of the Ministry where we come from. I urge all that the good relationship we have built through this Programme should be maintained and kept alive.

## Apollinaris Apollonius Kannyinga

*Deputy Director: North East Regions*

Upon graduating I joined the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, and initially I was attached to the Namibia Parks Programme Phase 3 (NamParks III). After working for a period at the Ministry’s Head Quarters, I was appointed as the Park Warden for Mudumu National Park and transferred from Windhoek to the Zambezi Region, in the heart of KAZA. I was Park Warden for Mudumu National Park for five and a half years. After this I was promoted to Chief Warden for the Zambezi Trans Frontier Conservation Area.

It’s been very rewarding, for example what we have initiated as a region in Zambezi to ensure that we introduce landscape conservation. This is something at a landscape level that needs involvement from everyone, communities, tourism operators, traditional authorities and more.

The Namibia Parks Programme has been very instrumental in terms of supporting protected areas and communal conservancies as well. It’s a holistic approach where you treat conservation as a whole.

Emanating from Phase I of the Namibia Parks Programme, all the phases that have been put in place have built up some level of development in protected areas and also in communal conservancies. It is remarkable to see this support in wildlife conservation and biodiversity in particular. And the level of support also determines the level of success. There is a very large direct correlation between the two. As we stand now, Namibia has been a successful country in terms of community conservation, and NamParks has breathed some level of hope into this beautiful story that we are telling today. We are now inviting other countries to come and learn from what we have done so far.

In terms of protected areas NamParks has provided a lot of support, emanating from the prominent ones which is the support in infrastructure development in National Parks. The NamParks Programme has invested a lot of money in ensuring that park staff feel safe and their working environment is conducive. Also that there are tourism facilities and other infrastructure which supports tourism. In Mudumu National Park for example, NamParks built viewing decks where tourists can come and have a proper view of certain parts of the park.

NamParks has also been very instrumental in terms of supporting the landscape as well. NamParks actually brought some level of hope by providing technical and financial support to ensure that activities at landscape level, even at complex levels are being implemented. One of the KAZA efforts which have been supported by NamParks is the issue of wildlife corridors. NamParks has been very supportive of driving this process forward. Not only financially, even technically.

NamParks Phase IV addressed issues to do with Integrated Wildlife Management, through the Park Management Plans. The Park Management Plans together with the various policies serve as a basis to guide management and of course the activity. This also helps you in terms of measuring success at the end of each periodic cycle. NamParks has been very instrumental in terms of getting this process moving forward. It’s a very expensive process which wouldn’t have been fully implemented if it wasn’t for the NamParks Programme.

We regard our protected areas in Namibia as iconic and very pristine areas with a very special conservation status. If it wasn’t for protected areas in Namibia we wouldn’t have KAZA today, and we wouldn’t have this success story which Namibia is very proud to tell. Not only for the benefit of only us as Namibians but also for the benefit of the wildlife that we are managing.

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**We regard our protected areas as iconic and very pristine areas in Namibia with a very special conservation status.**



# BWABWATA NATIONAL PARK

**B**wabwata National Park is the largest of the six protected areas that make up the North-East Parks, all of which belong to the Namibian part of the KAZA TFCA. Surrounded by Mopane trees, Bwabwata is a haven to a wide variety of fauna and flora. Thanks to combined efforts with other parks (Khaudum, Nkasa Rupara, Mangetti and Mudumu National Parks) and new management plans, Bwabwata is able to capacitate large numbers of wildlife including high concentrations of Elephant and Buffalo. This 6274 km<sup>2</sup> National Park has proven that with the correct efforts in place it is possible to achieve and conserve rich biodiversity as well as history. Bwabwata consists of three areas which have been designated to active management and tourism. These include: Kwando (1,345 km<sup>2</sup>), Buffalo (629km<sup>2</sup>), and Mahango (245km<sup>2</sup>). The park also consists of a large Managed Resource Use Area (4,055 km<sup>2</sup>).



### Interesting facts

- Bwabwata was first called the Caprivi Game Park in 1963. In 2007 Mahango Game Reserve was merged with the Caprivi Game Park and was renamed Bwabwata.
- Bwabwata is home to 6 000 people.
- Bwabwata is home to 35 large game species and over 400 bird species
- Some of the parks most effective anti-poaching units are the communities which live in the park as they are able to make a living from tourism in the park.
- Bwabwata was named after a village within the park and refers to the sound of bubbling water.



Andre Baumgarten



We really appreciate every effort that NamParks is doing in strengthening the livelihood of the staff members. Staff members are more motivated compared to previous years. When the staff are happy, they can perform their job with ease, and this means conservation will benefit.

NamParks also motivated the staff members to feel that they are conservators, through capacity building. There were a lot of different training courses which were funded by NamParks.

If our current natural resources are misused then there will be no Plan B, so let that be my role to contribute to conserving biodiversity for future generations.

**Sinonge Bartholomeus**  
Park Warden Bwabwata West





“

I was a Park Warden in Bwabwata National Park for four years. I enjoyed Park Management, and Bwabwata is a complex park. You have communities inside, you have neighbouring communities, so you can imagine the challenges. Now I am doing Environmental Education. I sensitise communities on different policies, or educate communities about environmental issues.

I think in terms of impact, NamParks has really helped. For example, the impact on infrastructure. If you came here years back, people used to sleep in those kimbo houses. My colleague used to tell a story, where she had finished work and was changing her clothes, when a leopard came in through the window. She just froze, didn't know whether to scream. Luckily the leopard didn't stay and somehow got out through the same window. When she talks about that you can feel that there was much hardship when it came to that accommodation.

But then with the assistance of NamParks the new infrastructure was built and you can see that people are willing to stay in the park because they have better accommodation and it has also motivated them to work. For example, if you're in the park and scared of snakes in your house, or even a leopard in the house, it's very difficult. But staying in a proper house makes you feel proud and you'll be motivated to do your work properly.

**Ellen Simataa**

*Warden for Environmental Education in the Zambezi Region - former Park Warden Bwabwata East*



# Park Infrastructure

Infrastructure is essential for the effective operation of a national park. At the programme's inception, much of the parks equipment was in a deplorable state. Developing the park infrastructure included building park gates and tourism information boards. It also included equipping the park's staff with the necessary tools such as vehicles and GPS systems.

For the people working in and around the parks, infrastructure has been one of the most notable achievements of the NamParks Programme.





Stefan Grogill



André Baumgarten

“

It is good now with the new infrastructure, because when we were at the old Buffalo Gate, there were many snakes and we were afraid. Now I feel safe in the office, and this makes it easier for me to do my job.

**Rosalia Hipangelwa**  
*Administration Officer - Buffalo Gate*



André Baumgarten



André Baumgarten



Elzanne McCulloch



Elzanne McCulloch



André Baumgarten



Elzanne McCulloch

# Improved Park Management



Former Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism

## Dr. Malan Lindeque

### Park Management Plans

The revised Park Management Plans were finalised in May 2020 and officially launched on 14 October 2020 by MEFT Minister, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta, and the Head of Cooperation of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Namibia, Dr. Gabriele Geier. These Park management plans set out the objectives and guidelines for the management and development of the parks and represent the policies of MEFT on how National Parks should be managed. The revised plans are to be implemented over a 10-year period (2020/21 to 2030/31) and were developed through a consultative process involving the MEFT, local communities and other park stakeholders. Each Park management plan has unique aims, objectives, management principles and strategies that are specific to the park and that each park staffer or stakeholder must become familiar with. The Park management plans come with five-year operational plans that will assist the Ministry with annual budgeting for park-based management activities.

Although senior public servants of the MEFT are ultimately accountable for implementation of the plans, the plans also make clear the responsibilities of other staff, in particular those appointed to manage the park.



**N**amParks came at a time when the National Parks in Namibia were in a very bad shape. The budget of the Ministry had been reduced and there was absolutely no funding for infrastructure and especially the important issues concerning staff accommodation, inadequate infrastructure and many other problems. The other issue was that there is a significant portion of the land that falls under the parks, these are large land areas with thousands of kilometres of roads in them, hundreds of water holes, lots of tourist facilities, lots of fences and more. The Ministry at that time was not in a financial position to improve on this infrastructure and to maintain the infrastructure. There was then a decision to actively raise funds and fortunately the Government of Germany decided to support conservation in Namibia and chose National Parks.

The NamParks project has been able to make enormous changes through most of the larger parks and the process is still under way.

When this work started I think Namibia had a very mixed bag in terms of management plans and of different standards. So the management plans were not very successful. Now the Ministry has developed guidelines for management plans and it's actually even mentioned in the legislation so there's a good framework for it now. So there's a better information base now, there's a better policy basis, there's a better planning basis for all of this and I think NamParks helped a lot with all of this.

Just to think, in the North East there are six protected areas (five parks and one nature reserve) and we did a complete redevelopment of the management plans, which I was involved with. But then also the infrastructure development, especially staff and tourism infrastructure almost from the ground up. Modern and environmentally appropriate infrastructure as well. I have to say that without the infrastructure development in the parks, I think there would have been much, much bigger problems by now. Without NamParks, honestly I don't know, but there was never any assumption that this will go from NamParks I to V or even beyond V.

The Namibian Government long ago decided that the parks need to drive rural development. Rural communities are often the first to be impacted by the lions and the hyenas and the elephants coming out of these parks, so if they only suffer the negative impact, then they are going to be bad neighbours to the park. The Ministry staff complement is very small and the parks are very large and they have often just a few park stations and many gaps in between.

I think there's another way of looking at this, it's also the responsibility of the rest of the world to contribute towards protection, sustainable development and biodiversity conservation in other countries. This is because the world's biodiversity is often concentrated in the less developed countries and the less industrialised countries. It's a simple correlation. The more that you've transformed your country, often the more species you've lost and Europe is a very good example of that.

In Namibia, we have the succulent Karoo in the South West of the country which is actually a global biodiversity hotspot with thousands of species and mostly endemic that don't occur anywhere else and if people are very serious about biodiversity conservation there has to be support from the whole world.



**Rural communities are often the first to be impacted by the lions and the hyenas and the elephants coming out of these parks, so if they only suffer the negative impact, then they are going to be bad neighbours to the park.**



“

When I first started working in the Ministry I started in security. At that time you didn't have electricity, you slept almost in the open. You never knew what you would find in your house when you left. We endured tough conditions, and very few people wanted to stay. But now, when the NamParks Programme did a lot of infrastructure developments, and capacity building, and offered equipment, this had a very big impact on conservation.

KfW through the NamParks Project alleviated the challenges, when NamParks stepped in you could see gradual changes. Parks that started getting financial support and infrastructural development, started picking up in terms of staff members, and attracting new staff, even graduates feel valued here. It has changed a lot.

My role is Chief Warden Concession Unit. In the past, implementing concessions in the park was done through much consultative work. There were no proper guidelines in these parks. If someone wanted to put up a lodge, we didn't know if it was an area that is a wildlife breeding zone for example. Things were just not coordinated. There were no proper guidelines in these parks, there was no clear zoning, and even breeding sites for the animals were not known.

NamParks came and created a park management plan and tourism development plan for every park. This is the do's and don'ts, done by experts in consultation with the community and the Ministry. These documents, and their guidelines, have really helped us in decision making. When the concession policy came in, it opened up opportunities.

**Vitalis Mushongo**

*Chief Warden in the Concession Unit, Directorate of Scientific Services*



NamParks IV

**Land use and Development Plan Managed Resource Use Zone**

The Managed Resource Use Zone (MRUZ), formerly known as the Multiple use Area of the Bwabwata National Park (BNP), is inhabited by more than 6 000 people, and various government departments provide services to the residents. The Land Use and Development Plan for the MRUZ was finalised in 2019 through a consultative process with MEFT, park residents and other stakeholders. The plan sets out objectives and guidelines to conserve and develop the Bwabwata National Park MRUZ in a coordinated and organized approach for the benefit of park residents, the park and the country in general. The land use plan primarily focuses on the enhancement and maintenance of the consumptive use opportunities inherent in ecosystems, habitats and specific biodiversity features. It also provides for the establishment of an integrated development plan for park residents that is aimed at addressing poverty and food security based on improved production, improved income generation and the provision of basic services.

With this plan which was approved by the Namibian cabinet in 2020 and officially launched by the Minister in October 2021; MEFT shall establish and coordinate a coherent programme of development in the park, with the overall objective of improving livelihoods for the inhabitants of the park. One of the key strategic principles guiding the implementation of the plan is that "an agreement between the MEFT and the Kyaramacan Association (KA) will formally acknowledge the rights of park residents in accordance with national policies and park objectives regarding access rights, settlement rights, natural resource utilisation rights and other livelihood rights."



Andrië Baumgarten

# Community and Tourism Development

“

My name is Uatirohange Tjiuro and I am the Control Warden responsible for the coordination of community based natural resource management (CBNRM) and the protected areas which fall under the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) at National Level.

In the NamParks project I have been involved by serving on the project's technical committee, assessing bids and providing technical support to the project when it comes to CBNRM and protected areas for the past three phases.

In my opinion one of the biggest successes of this project has been the infrastructure development that has happened so far. It's also been amazing to see how the options for development in the communities neighbouring the parks and the profile of protected areas have increased owing to the project.

The CBNRM project overall has been supported by the NamParks project in quite a few ways. For instance the granting of concessions inside National Parks as well as tourism facilities outside the parks have allowed communities to feel a sense of ownership and generate an income from parks. Land use plans and training programmes have also been developed for communities living inside the national park which allows for better management of natural resources.

I found it unique that the projects are so strongly rooted within the Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) and therefore are aligned with MEFT's strategic objective and workplan. The provision of housing infrastructure and better workspaces to the staff was something that truly stood out as it motivated the staff to want to work and get involved in the project. My hope for the future of NamParks is that the National Parks become a point of pride for Namibian conservation.

## Uatirohange Tjiuro

Control Warden CBNRM and protected areas



### Park Residents and Kyaramacan Association

A number of small settlements are located inside the MRUZ, the largest of which are Omega I, Mut'ciku, Chetto, Omega III and Mashambo with a total population of more than 6,000 residents, of which 80% are from the minority San ethnic group, the Khwe. The remainder of the residents are Mbukushu, small numbers of !Xun San and other ethnic groups. Dating back at least 20,000 years, Khwe cultural and linguistic aspects provide a window into the lives of the earliest human civilisations.

The Kyaramacan Association (KA) was founded in 2003 and officially formed in 2005. It has the aim to represent the residents from various ethnic groups within the park and to co-manage the natural resources in close collaboration with MEFT, to generate benefits from natural resources for the resident community. This approach allowed for similar benefits such as for communities on communal land.

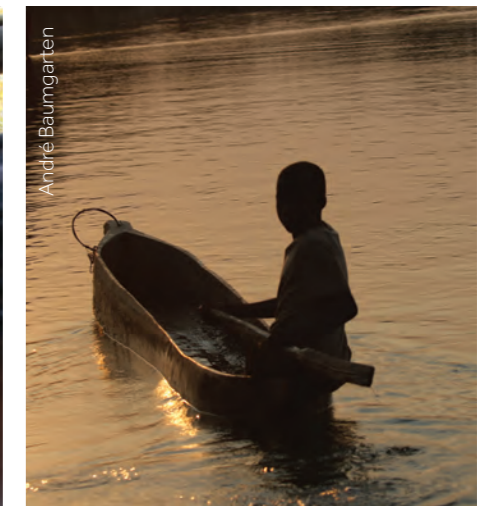
The KA became a recognised body to strengthen the capacity of the community to deal with these issues by generating income and employment through tourism and the sustainable utilisation of natural resources.



André Baumgarten

André Baumgarten

André Baumgarten



## Feasibility Study Khwe Traditional Heritage Centre and Golden Highway

The Kyaramacan Association expressed quite a long time ago the desire to establish a Traditional Knowledge (TK) project in Bwabwata National Park (BNP) to preserve traditional knowledge and culture currently held by the elders of the community, and training facilities to pass on indigenous knowledge and skills to younger members of the Khwe community as well as the San community across Southern Africa. A Feasibility Study was commissioned in NamParks IV in the end of 2020 and completed in October 2021.

The objectives of the proposed Traditional Knowledge Centre are to preserve the Khwe language and culture, to facilitate the transfer of indigenous knowledge and skills within the Khwe community, and to serve as a repository for San knowledge more broadly. The Khwe cultural knowledge base is thus recognised as a valuable resource directly tied to the landscape and possesses significant nature conservation potential if appropriately preserved and unlocked. By recognising the value and uniqueness of their culture as an attractor, the Khwe community hopes to share the benefits beyond the conservation of their own culture or nature conservation efforts. Khwedam is one of three distinct San linguistic families under threat of extinction along with its associated culture and deserves to be protected in its own right. San cultures, along with the Australian Aborigine culture, are the oldest living human cultures and could therefore qualify for world heritage status serving as a significant attractor. By adding a living heritage component to Namibia's existing natural and cultural world heritage offerings – the Namib Sand Sea and Twyfelfontein respectively – the proposed new TKC not only will diversify the tourism offering and amplify cultural tourism, but also add an attraction to the north-eastern region which currently lacks any such attractions and is one of the most marginalised areas in Namibia.

To support the Centre, the feasibility study has recommended that two further head tourist concessions are awarded to the Kyaramacan Association to provide additional support for the Centre. They include a lodge development located next to the Centre and exclusive tourist attractions along the route of the Golden Highway within the Bwabwata National Park and to the east of the Centre.

A brochure that summarizes the study and markets the implementation of the concept was produced in addition to the feasibility study.



# KHAUDUM NATIONAL PARK

A safe haven for rare and endangered species, Khaudum National Park is a pivotal part of Namibian conservation. Situated in north-eastern Namibia where the deep Kalahari sand adds to its picturesque landscape, species such as the African wild dog, tsessebe and roan antelope roam freely. Khaudum not only plays a role in the protection of endangered species through extensive research projects but also in the protection of parts of the Northern Kalahari. This vast expanse of wilderness has been much forgotten and is not visited often, giving it a "wild" and rustic feel. Khaudum offers not only a rich diversity of wildlife but also of cultural history.

## Interesting facts

- Khaudum serves as a corridor for wildlife species including elephant, giraffe, and other larger mammals which migrate through the area in search of water and food.
- Khaudum has one of the largest resident elephant populations in Namibia.
- On any given day in the 3 842 km<sup>2</sup> park, you will usually see more elephants than people in Khaudum.
- The epitome of African wilderness, Khaudum is remote and unspoiled, and affectionately described as Namibia's Forgotten Wilderness.







Former Warden of Khaudum National Park

# Jeremia Amutenya

I think NamParks is a programme that was really needed, it has helped the parks to become fully operational. Khaudum was one of the parks that was severely underfunded, mostly because of its location but also because it is not perceived as a flagship park. NamParks evened the playing field.

Khaudum is very unique, it is the last wilderness of Namibia. This also makes it one of the most difficult parks in the country to manage. It is in a remote area, an isolated and harsh environment, and it's difficult to access. It's also a very beautiful woodland savannah.

Khaudum has the highest resident elephant population of all the Namibian parks. Wild dogs roam freely. It's a sanctuary for rare and endangered species, and it will go down in Namibian history as the park that repopulated Namibian Roan. All Roan antelope in Namibia came out of the Khaudum population.

We have communities that live next to the park. A community of farmers to the West, marginalised communities to the South and the Kavango people to the North of the park. All these communities have benefited from the development that took place in Khaudum.

I was a Warden for Khaudum for seven years, the longest serving Warden. I've seen first-hand the development that took place at Khaudum. Firstly from the social aspect, I saw how the development helped motivate staff members to stay in the park. Building houses and work stations actually transformed the behaviour of staff members. I saw this even on our attendance registers. Before the houses were constructed, there was a high level of absenteeism. Now absenteeism decreased because people are happy. This project had a really positive impact on staff members.

The structure of the management of the park is another area that NamParks really helped with. This helped us to be proactive managers, rather than the reactive managers of the park. We used to be focused on implementing activities, responding to problems. But we were never evaluating, looking at how wildlife responds to our implemented activities. Through NamParks IV these things were resolved. We've now created a situation where the park is managed holistically.

Where we look at the impacts of our activities. This happened because we now have a Management Plan for the park.

A big concern in Khaudum is fire, as the park sits in a fire path. The fire usually originates in Botswana and sweeps right through the park. NamParks assisted us to establish a management plan for the fires, as well as a joint committee which actively looks at managing this.

One of the greatest challenges in Khaudum, and one that we've managed to figure out now with NamParks, is that the demand for water is higher than the supply. The Managers used to pump water for elephants, without understanding this and so there was always a water crisis. We are now actively addressing this problem by supplying water only when it's needed. I call this a knowledge based water management strategy, and it's about providing elephants with water at the time that they need it. NamParks are improving the water facilities in Khaudum to make sure that not a drop of water is wasted.

I would recommend that everyone should go and see Khaudum, it's so isolated that it's a place you can actually get away from everything. Khaudum gets less visitors per year than the number of elephants that live there. In Khaudum, you'll see 200-300 elephants at once, but you might not see any people other than park staff. Khaudum slows down life. Even driving in Khaudum is slow, everything is slower there. We need a park like Khaudum, where we can slow down. I always say, Khaudum is home of the brave, land of the free, because when you are there you are free, but you need to be brave for this freedom.



**I would recommend that everyone should go and see Khaudum, it's so isolated that it's a place you can actually get away from everything. Khaudum gets less visitors per year than the number of elephants that live there.**

# Infrastructure



# Improved Park Management

## Water management through 7 new installed water points

Thousands of elephants and other wildlife in Khaudum National Park (KNP) largely depend on the artificial water points for their survival, as there is no reliable natural surface water. Previously, precious groundwater was mostly pumped into mud pits from which only a very small volume of water had been available for all the game. During the peak of the dry season elephants have dominated these water points and denied other game species access to water. The upgrading of water point infrastructure therefore became a priority and seven water points were identified for upgrading to provide a good coverage of the entire parks, stretching from the southwestern part to the northern Khaudum Omuramba. The water points which were upgraded are Tsoana Fontein, Omuramba, Dussi, Tari Kora, Leeupan, Doringstraat and Burkea. A typical water point consists of the following infrastructure: concrete reservoir(s) which function both as storage of clean water and as troughs for elephants, concrete trough for antelope and small game species, solar powered submersible pumping installations and game viewing platform. To minimise the possibility of breakages by elephants, the solar pumping system has been installed in an underground manhole and the solar panels have been integrated into the viewing platform's roof. Water level monitoring devices have been installed in the boreholes to obtain data for sustainable groundwater management purposes.



## National Elephant Conservation and Management Plan

The conservation and management of elephants in Namibia has high priority for the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism. Elephants as the largest land mammal alive today face enormous challenges throughout their distribution range in Africa. Not only are elephants and people competing for the same resources such as water, land and space outside the protected areas, but also in the protected areas. Illegal killing for their ivory has become a significant threat.

Notwithstanding these problems, elephant conservation in Namibia has been a great success. While elephants have drastically declined in numbers and their habitat has been severely fragmented in other countries, Namibia has seen a consistent increase in elephant numbers over more than 30 years and we now have more than 20,000 elephants, or three times as at Independence in 1990. Elephant distribution range has expanded, and elephants seem to be in the process of recolonizing their former range in areas where we have not expected this to happen in our lifetimes. Namibia is indeed unique in that elephants occur over wide gradients of rainfall, vegetation types, land use and human density, from the hyper-arid northern Namib Desert in the Kunene and Erongo Regions in the west through to the highest rainfall woodlands and riverine areas in the north-east in the Kavango West and East Regions and the Zambezi Region.

The approved elephant conservation and management plan will for the next ten years guide the Ministry of

Environment, Forestry and Tourism in its conservation management of the elephant population of Namibia. This plan is based on extensive consultation with all key stakeholders, and their rich input is much appreciated. The Directorate of Scientific Services in cooperation with the Directorate of Parks and Wildlife Management coordinated this process, and their work is commendable. The elephant conservation and management plan for 2020/2021-2030/2031 provides a comprehensive review of the recent history of the elephant population and its management and all of the core issues and challenges that the Ministry and its conservation partners including rural communities have to face to sustain the elephant population amidst many challenges. It is critically important to maintain and strengthen landscape connectivity and prevent the fragmentation of elephant habitat and the obstruction of their movements.

Namibia takes part in major international conservation initiatives, including transfrontier conservation. The core of our elephant population forms part of the larger Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area elephant population and the MEFT is proud to present this elephant conservation and management plan as our contribution to cross-border collaboration in the conservation of shared elephant populations.

The National Elephant Management Plan was launched by the honourable Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism on 21 October 2021 at Susuwe park station in Bwabwata National Park.





# Community and Tourism Development

## New Tourism Development Plan for the North-Eastern Parks

The new North East Parks Tourism Development Plan is a revision, update and expansion of the original northeastern Tourism Development Plan dated April 2009 (NamParks I) and was first revised in April 2013 (NamParks II). The protected areas or parks covered under the previous versions only included Bwabwata National Park, Mudumu National Park and Nkasa Rupara National Park. Khaudum National Park, Mangetti National Park and Popa Falls Nature Reserve have been added to the revised plan.

The plan was developed through field visits, background research and a consultative and participatory process with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism and its key partners. In parallel, new management plans were developed for all the North-Eastern Parks. The TDP was incorporated into the Park Management Plans and is thus aligned to the management plans. The TDP provides an overview of all relevant aspects of tourism in the region most importantly the information on all existing and new concessions in the parks. Additional information is provided on the policy and legal frameworks applicable to the NE Parks as well as on the locational context.

The NE Parks retain their own unique tourism image with significant differences in comparison to the tourism images of other Namibian protected areas. The tourism image of the NE Parks can collectively be aligned with that of the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) tourism image, which highlights the vast expansion of the TFCA, its wilderness character, its high biodiversity and cultural diversity and its main features, namely the Kavango, Kwando and Zambezi Rivers. The five National Parks and the one nature reserve covered in this plan fall within the KAZA TFCA with its particular character of its broadleaf woodlands, large mammals, wetlands and rivers. The tourism image for the NE Parks is accordingly derived from the KAZA TFCA image. The tourism image essentially establishes a marketable brand for the NE Parks. This marketing should guide all strategic tourism planning actions and operations within the respective National Parks for at least the next 10 years.



# MUDUMU NATIONAL PARK

A 1010 km<sup>2</sup> fence free park which borders the Kwando river at its western side forming also the border to Botswana, Mudumu National Park is a park rich in biodiversity and serves as a core wildlife area. Mudumu has served as a model for positive co-operation between a park and its neighbours, and all human-wildlife conflict which has come as a result of the borderless park, has been peacefully managed. Mudumu is home to a large concentration of elephants as well as many other wildlife species and has had success in the relocation of many wildlife species to other parks. Mudumu is of great importance to Namibia's richness in species and biodiversity.

### Interesting facts

- 430 bird species have been recorded in the park.
- Mudumu has worked closely with local communities to conserve both the fauna and flora in the park.
- This is one of the least known parks in Namibia.
- The park area is completely flat.
- The ideal park for adventurous people with many activities.



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The Mudumu landscape plays a bigger role in the conservation of wildlife in the Zambezi Region, and also in Namibia and the SADC (Southern African Development Community). There's a lot of movement of wildlife from the neighbouring countries, through the Mudumu landscape. In fact, it is the Kwando wildlife corridors, that have been identified by KAZA as one of the key wildlife corridors within the KAZA TFCA. So it is a very important landscape and we've seen a lot of good things happening in that area. The numbers of wildlife have increased, there's a lot of collaboration between the players within the Mudumu landscape. We have both Government departments there, the conservancies and the community forests, and the support of NGO's, planning institutions like UNAM all working together to ensure that the biodiversity in the Mudumu landscape is maintained.

As we maintain the biodiversity of the Mudumu landscape it becomes more attractive, and the tourism potential of the area increases. This means we'll have more benefits going to the communities and to the people living in that area. Activities around tourism in this area include craft markets, the provision of jobs in lodges, and in camp sites. It provides an opportunity for the economic upliftment of the local communities.

I think the Mudumu landscape has a good future. Since we are working at a landscape level, there's more landscape management of the entire area. All who are involved are pulling in the same direction and ensuring that all activities are well coordinated. Not only at conservancy level but at a landscape level. I think the NamParks Programme has really supported both the communities and also the National Parks in the North East of Namibia.

We can see a lot of improvement, we can see infrastructure, we can see the gates, we can see the staff housing which has improved. That means that our staff and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism working in these areas are now able to do their job well.

The NamParks project has provided that opportunity for the stakeholders, both government and communities and supportive NGO's to come together, to plan and address the challenges they may have.”

### Dominic Muema

Operations Manager IRDNC North East



# Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBRNM)

Community-based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) is an approach to conservation where local people benefit from the use of wildlife and tourism resources in their area, by forming a community-based organisation which manages those resources.

The Namibian Government provides the legal framework which makes this possible with legislation that gives communities legal rights over resource use. Using an integrated park management approach builds on the country's approach to community-based natural resource management.

NamParks supported community development as a vital component of successful nature conservation in Namibia. Through various interventions rural communities felt the benefits of the NamParks Programme, directly and indirectly.



# Infrastructure



# Improved Park Management

The NamParks Programme uses the Integrated Park Management approach to develop national and local-level management policies and tools for effective park management. Using this approach, the NamParks Programme has already notched up a long list of achievements.

This approach values the people who live in and around parks, and has helped develop national and local-level management policies and tools for efficient and effective park management. Management plans have been compiled to guide future activities, current day-to-day management as well as tourism and business opportunities. These management plans are now guiding the management of the parks, such as the implementation of the fire management policy.

It was NamParks Phase IV that saw the improvement of Integrated Park Management in the North-Eastern and Southern Parks.

These activities also included:

- The development and implementation of national guidelines and the uptake of these into the Wildlife and Protected Areas Management Bill (replacing Ordinance 4 of 1975).
- The updating of the framework and guidelines for development of Park Management Plans to guide future development and updating of Park Management Plans. This framework includes the requirement for zoning of protected areas and monitoring at park level, for the purpose of informing and adaptive management approach to park management.
- The zoning of protected areas. In 2019, NamParks IV developed the national guidelines for zoning of protected areas in Namibia and management objectives for each zone as per IUCN requirements together with key stakeholders.
- National Guidelines for Monitoring for Management of Protected Areas in Namibia has been developed and approved by the MEFT. Together with the roll-out of the SMART monitoring system these will contribute to better monitoring and management of the protected areas.



André Baumgarten



Le Roux van Schalkwyk



André Baumgarten



André Baumgarten

## Introduction of Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART)

Tackling wildlife crime in Namibia requires proactive and innovative approaches to law enforcement and wildlife protection and close surveillance and monitoring. Similarly, tools for addressing Human Wildlife Conflicts are needed to help species and communities as they increasingly share resources and landscapes. The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) uses technology to enable real-time collection, storage, communication, and evaluation of ranger-based data connecting patrols on the ground with response teams at headquarters. The SMART approach ensures that a Protected Area is equipped with the information, management systems, and capacity for sound management. In Namibia, SMART was introduced for Etosha National Park in 2016. With NamParks IV the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) has expanded the SMART approach to the North East Parks. Increasing their commitment to protecting wildlife and Parks, MEFT has now committed to a national roll out of SMART and the tool sparked interest across partners in Namibia.



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I am working on the SMART system which was implemented since August 2019. I do the monthly report for the park. I'm also involved with the data collecting, the cybertrackers. We are monitoring what is happening in the park. Mudumu is a protected area, and some species are endangered, so we look at their population changes. NamParks has helped us a lot. Using the example of SMART, each park was given some grants for the patrols. There are grants for fixing our vehicles so that we can keep on going, because without vehicles you can't do anything, without fuel you can't do anything. This plays a very big role in helping us to perform our duties.

I also went to the SMART training in Zambia, to see how they are doing it there and I started liking SMART then already. It also helps for our superiors to know what is happening, because they are not on the ground. There is a record of my patrol now. If I go on the report, it shows exactly where you patrolled for the month or for that specific day. You see where are you lacking, or in which part of the park are you patrolling the most. This helps with planning, because there's no part of the park that is left behind, you know what is happening in every corner of the park.

**Alfred Matomola**

Assistant Ranger - Ngenda Station Mudumu National Park



Elzanne McCullough



Elzanne McCullough



André Baumgarten



André Baumgarten



“

SMART provides not only spatial data but it also creates accountability for the rangers. In the past, people would have to write their reports, which would end up stored in boxes in a back office somewhere. Analysing data became cumbersome. Now with SMART having everything digitised, collected digitally on a device, then imported onto the computer, running the reports is much easier. Data collection is simplified as well as analysis reporting is more simplified, which helps us do our jobs much more effectively. We can now report back even in terms of kilometres driven, encounters whether with wildlife or people, carcasses, poachers, all of that is much quicker and easier.

SMART is a great tool. The sponsorship or the support that's being given by the SMART partnership for, I think the next thirty or so years, is awesome. There are many, many countries in the world that have adopted it nationally and I think Namibia should do the same, not only because it's a great tool to use but I think it can actually enhance the way that we protect our natural resources.

### **Claudine Cloete**

*Conservation Scientist - MEFT*





## Development of a Biodiversity Framework with the University of Namibia and new Guidelines for Monitoring of Protected Areas

This activity aims to improve the management of biodiversity in Mudumu National Park, in North East Namibia, and the surrounding areas. For this purpose a Biodiversity Monitoring Framework (BMF) was developed with the following results:

1. Comprehensive Biomonitoring Framework for the Mudumu National Park
2. Accompanied by training measures and delivery of equipment to implement the BMF
3. Data management system
4. A Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Namibia and the MEFT subscribing to the cooperation efforts regarding research and monitoring for the protected areas to be signed soon.

A senior conservation scientist based in Susuwe was recruited and is leading the implementation of the framework.



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I am the General Manager of the Wild Waters Group of lodges. It's a group comprising three lodges and one rest camp in the Zambezi Region. All our camps and lodges are in a joint venture with the community. I am also the Chairperson of the Namibian Wetland Group. My association comprises eighteen lodges and campsites and businesses related to tourism in the Zambezi Region. Our business is basically to drive the sustainability of tourism in the region and that's what we do.

In this region the NamParks Programme has had a big impact because it really invested a lot in infrastructure. We've seen that in the parks and also in training of the staff. We've seen the results. When I started, there was not much going on. The parks were abandoned and had poor infrastructure. That has really improved. The staff are going to training courses and getting new technology devices. They are really doing well. This helps a lot because international tourists expect an entrance to the park, a reception and toilets. Now the parks have these basic facilities, and they have informative displays and this really helps for international tourists. It gives a good image of Namibia. International tourists go back with a positive experience and that naturally is going to attract more people.

### Simone Micheletti

General Manager Wild Waters Group



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NamParks has been a successful programme, if you look at the programme itself and you compare with the past. It is bringing all these conservancies together and planning especially on the land use and making sure the natural resource management programme is continuing. Previously people used to poach, they would only see the meat of the animal. Now everybody is on the lookout to protect wildlife, because it affects the whole community. People see all the projects going on. For example, we have got electricity, we have got water and the children have access to tertiary education.

### Janet Matota

Assistant Director - IRDNC



# Community and Tourism Development

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The Mashi conservancy has 2758 registered members, it also borders on different conservancies, and National Parks. Tourism is very important for this community because it's playing a big role for livelihood and employment in our region. Apart from that, there are the benefits that go back to our members. In our community we have installed water points. People used to carry buckets for two kilometres just to fetch water at the tap. Now some have put water in their courtyard, some even have showers and many have vegetables growing now because of water. There are many indirect benefits too, like the selling of crafts. The makers of those crafts are our members, tourists buy those crafts and the money feeds their children. People have seen the value in conserving because of the benefit that's coming out of those natural resources.

## Mawaya Moscow Mulisa

*Senior Enterprise Officer - Mashi Conservancy*



## Support of Communities in the Mudumu Landscape

The Mudumu Landscape, established in 2005, consists of the Mudumu North Complex and the Mudumu South Complex. The two complexes are the implementation units of the Landscape. The Mudumu North Complex is a cluster of resource management areas including the Kwandu, Mashi, Mayuni and Sobbe Conservancies, the Kwandu, Lubutu and Masida Community Forests, the Mudumu National Park and the eastern section of Bwabwata National Park including the Kyraramacan Association. The Mudumu South Complex in the Kwando-Linyanti triangle is made up of Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara National Parks and the Balyerwa, Bamunu, Wuparo and Dzoti Conservancies. The overall aims of the complexes are to accomplish tasks beyond that which any smaller unit could achieve on its own, therefore to work together to rehabilitate and manage the fauna and flora and resource use in the area and to guide the development of tourism in the landscape. In many ways the Mudumu Landscape can be considered a central focal point of KAZA as it provides a corridor for the movement of wildlife - particularly elephants - from Botswana in the south through to Zambia and Angola in the north. The Landscape links Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) and the Chobe National Park in Botswana with protected areas in Namibia, with community conservation areas in Namibia, the Luengue-Luiana National Park in Angola and the Sioma-Ngwezi National Park in Zambia.

The complexes are managed by a Management Committee consisting of representatives from the conservancies, community forests, traditional authorities, NGOs and public service agencies. The complexes have a strategic work plan which focuses on the key strategies required at the landscape level to enable and facilitate the more detailed management activities that take place at complex and landscape level. Recently a new configuration of working groups and respective work plans has been agreed at the landscape level. The 5 Working Groups under the Mudumu Landscape include: Community Awareness, Research and Land-Use; Financial Management; Human Wildlife Conflict; Tourism and Economic Development and Natural Resource Management and Agricultural Development.

NamParks made a very significant impact on the strengthening of the functioning of the Mudumu landscape west of the Zambezi Region. Under the NamParks IV exit strategy 50,000 Euros was earmarked in a Memorandum of Agreement to support the functionality of the Mudumu Landscape for another two years.

“

We appreciate the help that we are getting from NamParks, especially NamParks IV when I came in as manager. We had many projects, like the clearing of our park lines and fire breaks in the conservancy. We have zoned areas in our conservancy. There are areas to plough and graze, and conservation and tourism areas. The community now understands, and what is beautiful about the programme is that it gives people an opportunity to understand conservation and their own role, which is going to benefit future generations. As for NamParks IV, we appreciate the gesture of assisting us in our projects. We also appreciate the NamParks lectures, because specialists always come here and give us some directives so that we can forge ahead.

## Richard Mashwaiselo

*Manager of the Mashi Conservancy*



“

We depend on tourism, that's where we get our income. The NamParks Programme has helped us because it attracts even more tourists to the park. We benefit through payments made to lodges, a percentage goes to the conservancy. We use that money for projects for the community. For example, even if you go across the road you'll find water tanks and there are taps in the villages, so people are not fetching anymore at the boreholes. We also have our people employed at the lodges. If you go out and ask people what the advantages are, you'll find that there are a lot of advantages. We even give meat to the community and scholarships to students. The contribution or benefits, also help for the people to understand. That's why people are interested in looking after their wildlife. They can see their children are going to school with the money from the conservancy and from tourism.

## Zimbano Noel

*Assistant Tourism Enterprise Director - Mashi Conservancy*





Rupara Community Rest Camp



Kazile Island Lodge

Liza de Kleer

## New Campsite Wuparo and new Kazile Island Lodge

A direct project investment in community-based tourism enterprises is making a long-term impact on target conservancies in the Mudumu Complexes. Project Capitalisation of a N\$ 1,000,000 joint venture agreement between Mashi conservancy and the African Monarch Lodges on Kazile Island Lodge, as well as capitalisation of a N\$ 500,000 joint venture agreement between Wuparo conservancy and Nkasa Lupala Tented Lodge on the Rupara Camp site started to yield positive results. The initiative was welcomed and highly appreciated by the target conservancies as the most significant NamParks contribution towards community development in the Mudumu Complexes. The benefits are expected to contribute towards strengthening conservation of wildlife and natural resources in the long term. The initiative further assists conservancies to diversify income generation sources and stop dependence on hunting.

The RestCamp is managed on behalf of the community by the Wild Waters Group, the umbrella company of Nkasa Lupala Tented Lodge that is located 3km away from the Rest Camp, and also as a Joint Venture with the Wuparo Conservancy.

“

Together with the Chairman of the conservancy, we work as a network between the conservancy and the community, sharing the information about conservation. We've seen an improvement in the parks, and it's a benefit to us because it has created some jobs and helped the people within the community to improve their livelihood. We have also been doing lots of training, let me say for example there's this project of human wildlife conflict, where people's fields are targeted by animals, so they are trained on how they can protect their fields.

We have had community members injured by elephants. Where the people walk to get water is where the elephants drink water. It's amazing but there's nothing you can do because we want to live with wild animals. But there are some measures which have been taken by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to compensate for these losses.

### Kulumbano Eucent

Vice Chairman Wuparo Conservancy



“

Now we take care of the animals or trees, they are our families now. I remember some years back, people were just cutting trees but now they have changed. Now, with the conservancies, people see what is the importance of nature and protecting our animals.

### Starlife Maezi

Senior Staff Member - Wuparo Conservancy



“

We were struggling with our community camp site, Rupara Rest Camp, but fortunately enough we got a grant from NamParks to do renovations and extend the camp, and we can see the improvement. Before that, the camp made a loss but last year we received our first payment and it was around seventy thousand dollars.

All the money that we generate from tourism and hunting goes to an income account which is operated by the community, which means all the money which is there is administered by the community itself. This money is used to support the community. We've put in boreholes and electricity. Through joint ventures we have a kindergarten, or we help our community to build lion proof kraals. We are situated in the corridor between two National Parks. Lions crossing from one park to another come through our area, meaning our farmers are in danger. This is why we help them protect their livestock with the lion proof kraals. This year we have a budget of seventy thousand to help our community to build lion proof kraals.

### Lameck Limbo

Enterprise Officer - Wuparo Conservancy



# NKASA RUPARA NATIONAL PARK

**N**kasa Rupara National Park comprises the largest wetland area with conservation status in Namibia, and is a haven for wetland species. This park, although relatively small (337km<sup>2</sup>), houses the largest concentration of buffalos in Namibia. Nkasa Rupara borders on the Kwando and Linyati Rivers to the south, west and east and to the north on three communal conservancies. Nkasa Rupara is vital to Namibian wildlife numbers as it is seen as a core breeding area for many species which then disperse into neighbouring conservancies. With a natural environment similar to that of the Okavango Delta, Nkasa Rupara is subject to periods of floods and also periods of low water levels.



Le Roux van Schaikwyk



Le Roux van Schaikwyk



### Interesting facts

- Was once called Mamili National Park but was renamed Nkasa Rupara National Park.
- With 80% of the park being flooded during the rainy season the park is the largest wetland area in Namibia.
- 430 bird species have been recorded in the park.
- Nkasa Rupara is a park which is considered "underdeveloped" for tourism.
- In the rainy season caution is advised with visiting the park as you easily get stuck.
- This park is a Ramsar site, meaning it is a wetland site acknowledged to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.



“

In Zambezi where I am operating we have got fifteen conservancies. They are part of the CBNRM (Community Based Natural Resource Management) programme, where community members manage and benefit from wild animals. It's really working, because people feel ownership over the resources. They receive benefits and it's improving livelihoods. It has alleviated poverty in the community.

NamParks really helped on the park side and then also for the community. In the community, when I came in, the management committee for the conservancy was not so skilled. NamParks gave management skills training, and trained the bookkeepers that are dealing with funds on how to do financial management control.

NamParks is doing much for Community Based Natural Resources, it is a very beautiful programme and it would be a tragedy if it ended now.

**Boniface Sichombe**

Chief Warden CBNRM Zambezi Region, MEFT

# Infrastructure



Le Roux van Schalkwyk

# MANGETTI NATIONAL PARK

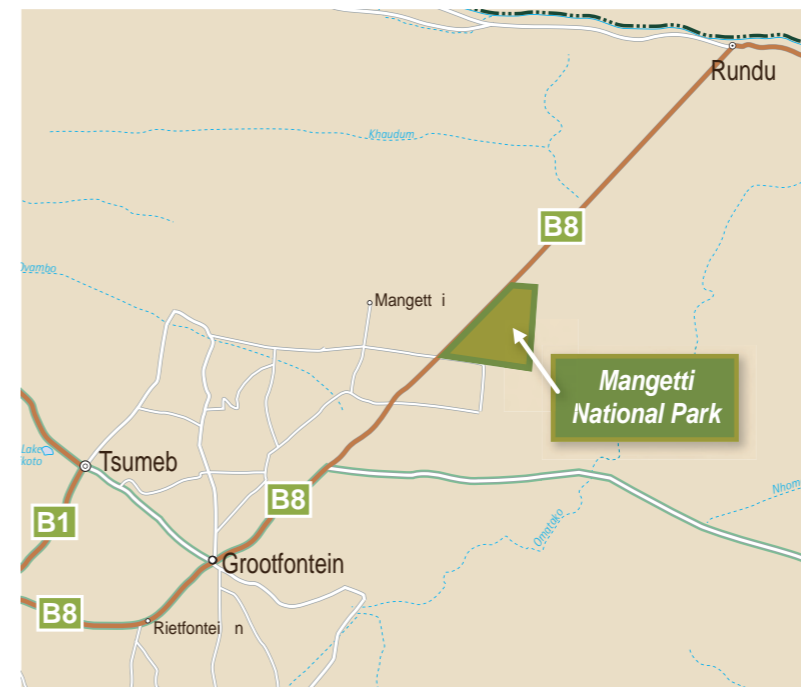
**M**angetti National Park is located in the Kavango West Region and occupies 420 km<sup>2</sup> of the Eastern Kalahari Woodlands. Gazetted in 2008, it is part of a new generation of parks aimed at reducing rural poverty through tourism development, joint management and benefit sharing with local communities.

The park protects the northern Kalahari Sandveld and provides a refuge for threatened species such as African wild dog, black rhinoceros, white rhinoceros as well as other species, including sable antelope, eland, impala, roan and elephant.

The land was originally set aside for conservation by the Ukwangali Traditional Authority. Today, it is Namibia's only contractual national park, a true partnership between the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), the Ukwangali Traditional Authority and the Kavango West Regional Council.

This is a model to be pursued in other areas, to create protected areas that will remain in the ownership of rural communities and traditional authorities. In the agreement that established the contractual park, and which led to its proclamation as the present-day Mangetti National Park, the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism was tasked with the responsibility of the day-to-day management of this park. The Management Committee for the park, which represents all contractual partners, oversees this management. These new structures and arrangements have not always been easy to implement, and funding to properly manage the park has remained a challenge.

Mangetti National Park was never included in the NamParks Programme and was only indirectly supported.



### Interesting facts

- Mangetti National Park is a new generation park that was gazetted in 2008
- A major topographical feature of Mangetti National Park are the north-west/south-east aligned ancient dunes
- Kalahari woodland vegetation is found on the dune crests, with very different mixed acacia savannah vegetation found in the dune valleys
- Leopard and African Wild Dogs are the most prominent predators found here

# POPA FALLS NATURE RESERVE

**P**opa Falls was officially proclaimed on 1 February 1989 and falls within the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA). Riverine forests, indigenous woodlands, floodplains and reeds shape the biodiversity-rich Popa Falls Nature Reserve.

This small yet remarkable park, located in the north-eastern region of Namibia, boasts an intact riverine forest and lines the rapids in the Kavango River, which is an otherwise very low flow gradient river.

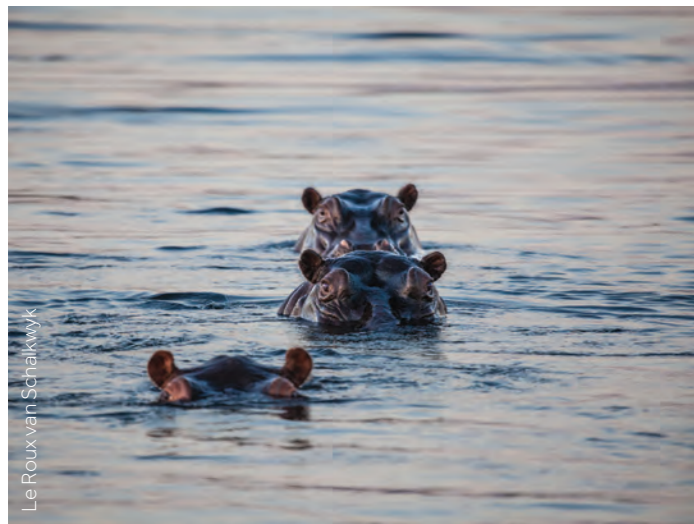
A species-rich Namibian gem, this nature reserve is enjoyed by local and international tourists alike. The nature reserve is bordered in the north by Bwabwata National Park and to the east, south and west by communal state land.



Elzanne McCulloch

**Interesting facts**

- Popa Falls Nature Reserve is the second smallest protected area in Namibia and only extends to 25.2ha
- Popa Falls supports at least 37 tree species despite its small size
- The rapids reach a height of 3.5 meters during low flow conditions and 1.5 meters during high flow periods
- Mammals such as the Cape clawless otter, bushbuck, hippopotamus, spotted-necked otter and water mongoose have been recorded in the area.





# The largest forest in Namibia is the Zambezi State Forest

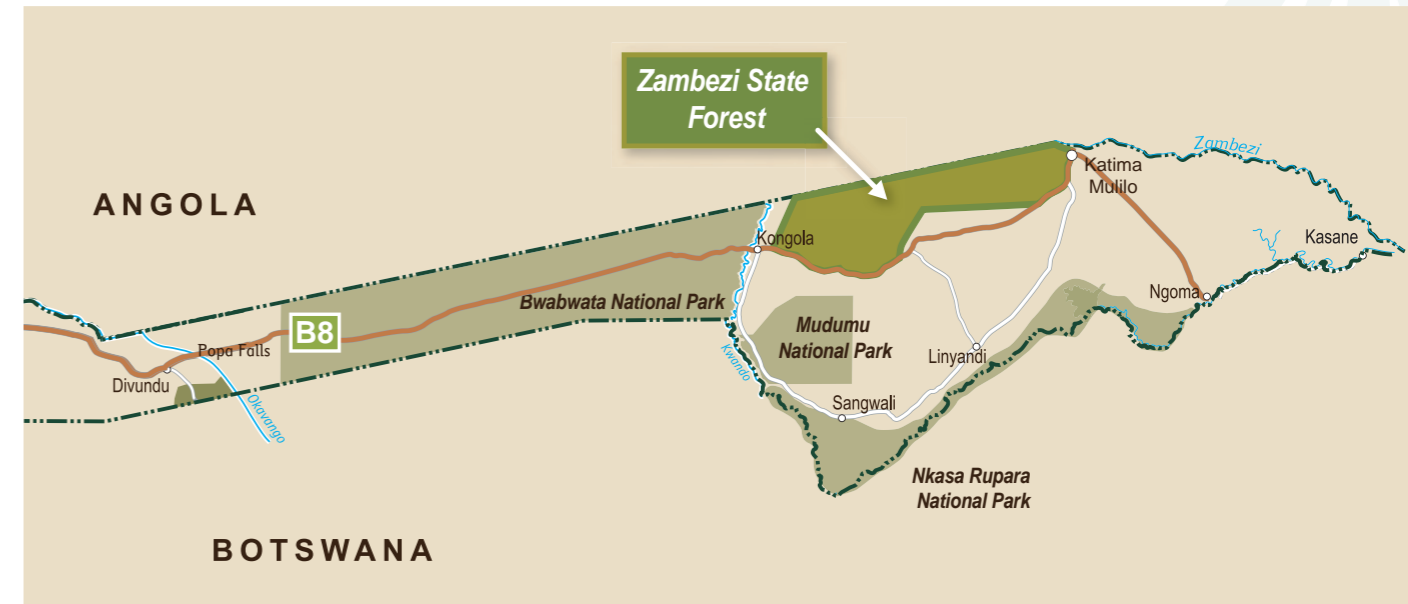
Natural woodlands in Namibia occupy only about 20% of the total land area, and until recently there were few laws to protect forest ecosystems, nor were forests under a sustainable management plan. Today, with the help of the NamParks Programme, this is changing with the development of the Forest and Wildlife Integrated Management Plan and the advancements in the declaration of community forest reserves. These community forest reserves enable positive and environmentally responsible interactions between communities and the woodland and forest ecosystems by allowing them rights over forest resources, provided that they maintain them as forest or woodland ecosystems.

## Integrated Forest and Wildlife Management Plan for the State Forest in the Zambezi Regions

This Integrated Forest and Wildlife Management Plan for the Zambezi State Forest Reserve provides strategic guidance to restore and develop the resource base. It is the basis for management decisions and used to develop concrete work packages to implement sound management practices. The management plan is the first of its kind and management must constantly be improved and refined based on improved monitoring and research, institutional learning and adaptive management.

This management plan was developed through a consultative process involving MEFT, local communities and other stakeholders. It provides a background of the Zambezi State Forest Reserve, its biophysical and socio-economic features, as well as an identification of the main threats to the State Forest ecosystem. This overview directly informs the plan's four main management objectives: (1) sustainable management and forest restoration, (2) enhancing regional conservation efforts, (3) supporting biodiversity conservation and wildlife movement through the KAZA landscape, and (4) ensuring nature-based and community benefits. A zonation plan is proposed for implementing key interventions, as well as a detailed approach for local community participation in forest management.

On the basis of the management plan the gazettement process for the Zambezi state forest reserve is being concluded successfully.







Britta Hackenberg



Britta Hackenberg



Senior Forester at the Directorate of Forestry

## Kamuhelo Lisao

**W**e don't have much forest considering the large area of Namibia. Our forest only covers about 18% of the Zambezi Region. Therefore with high rates of deforestation it would definitely be a problem for us. At the same time we are in the rural areas and the livelihood of people is important. With the growth of the human population the demand for timber and other forest products increases especially for constructing village houses, which are mainly built using forest resources. This gets worse because everybody needs a house and forests are cleared for new settlements. Constructing modern houses is unaffordable for most rural communities, they depend on harvesting resources from nearby forests. However, harvesting in Community Forests is controlled. Communities manage forest resources in gazetted Community Forests. We have seen an improvement in the management of the forest resources in such areas. They have a permit system that they enforce when harvesting forest resources. Each Community Forest has by-laws that determine how resources should be sustainably used. There are also less cases of illegal harvesting in Community Forests in comparison to areas that are not declared as Community Forests.

The Zambezi State Forest is the largest in Namibia and some of the species that you find there do not occur elsewhere in the country. The area that we are conserving as State Forest is important as it maintains connectivity between landscapes. This reduces fragmentation and creates connectivity of wildlife corridors between the KAZA countries. If illegal activities in our forests continue, we are going to lose this connectivity as well as the ecosystems services that we are currently enjoying.

The Forest and Wildlife Integrated Management Plan for the State Forest is a management tool that is drafted to manage the State Forest. It guides us to sustainably implement holistic objectives of both wildlife and forest resources in the area, while conforming to the social and cultural life of those surrounding the State Forest. It is a guiding tool for implementing activities for the set objectives. It was supported by the NamParks Programme from the onset. The NamParks Programme has had quite a positive impact because we are now empowered to ensure that the area is sustainably managed. When we reflect on the time that NamParks started supporting us there has been a positive impact. There is now a plan that we will use to control the

illegal activities that were rampant. There used to be a lot of illegal activities going on there, but we now have a plan, and without a proper plan we would definitely fail. The management plan really assists us with activities and also getting the area gazetted. The plan also has a component on benefit distribution which will ensure that the benefits from the State Forest are shared equitably. The resources will also be enhanced from the current degraded condition.

What really stands out for me is NamParks' support to the neighbouring communities of the State Forest and parks. Communities are the leaders in conserving these resources as they are the direct users. They are recognising the fact that the State Forest is important not just to Namibia but to the entire KAZA Landscape to allow movements of wildlife and protect tree species occurring there.

We have also had assistance from NamParks in terms of clearing fire breaks in the State area. This is important for managing forest fires and also serves as access roads for law enforcement activities. NamParks has also supported our engagements with communities around the State Forest and National Parks, ensuring that as resource users they play a critical role in conserving biodiversity.

We are hopeful that there will be further support to implement our management plan. The earlier we can implement the better, because forests are dynamic and the current diversity and species composition of the forest might be different later. With the implementation we could see the State Forest restored to a healthy state.

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**Recognising the fact that the State Forest is important not just to Namibia but to the entire KAZA Landscape to allow movements of wildlife and protect tree species occurring there.**



Britta Hackenberg



Director of Projects - Namibia Nature Foundation

## Britta Hackenberg

The State Forest plays an important role in KAZA, especially for connectivity with other protected areas in Namibia and the neighbouring countries. The Integrated Regional Land Use Plan which was approved by Cabinet, indicates the area on the map as a State Forest, but it never had an official status. When we started, we started from scratch to develop the first Integrated Forest and Wildlife Management Plan. In the past, management plans often only focused on wildlife and access to water but wildlife needs a conducive habitat, something which was a neglected element in a very complex system. In Khaudum National Park, there is a citation that elephants are the architects of the landscapes. The presence of megafauna like elephants in a forest creates a different dynamic, which is reflected in the structure of the forest and which requires a different management approach.

In the process of developing the State Forest Management Plan we had to define together with partners and stakeholders the vision and objectives. What do we ultimately want to have? Restoration or rehabilitation? We consulted the literature to understand the composition and condition of the forest in the past, and the complex interaction of activities and impacts, e.g. the utilisation rates and how the extraction of timber in the late eighties and nineties had changed the composition of the forest. We also studied the fires that contributed a lot to the degradation in the area. Our analysis showed that the area is in a mild to moderate degradation stage, with a risk of reaching a tipping point where the ecosystem, if not managed, could drop to a lower productivity level, which would be a disaster because the area is the backbone of KAZA. Maintaining the State Forest as a corridor for wildlife migration as a wildlife dispersal area is critical for the broader landscape.

Understanding the drivers of the degradation, helped us to develop approaches how to address them to reverse those trends. We consulted new international models of forest landscape restoration, while at the same time scrutinising the Namibian law to understand what legal options we have, and what would be a suitable protection status for the area. We involved the communities in the area, because habitat

and wildlife management requires the support of the people in the vicinity. We needed to develop concepts on how adjacent communities could be incentivised to help protect the State Forest, while benefiting from the State Forest. We also wanted to include communities in the safe-guarding of the forest, as forest guards and honorary foresters.

We also had some surprising findings, like for example we confirmed wildlife corridors used by elephants in the vicinity of Katima Mulilo, or found plants far outside of their confirmed range.

For me it's exciting to be partners in very positive developments. It has strengthened our relationship with MEFT, who are one of our most important partners. Another really important factor has been the shift of the focus. In the past it was on managing animals, now it is on managing the habitat with the people living around the Forest Area. This means we have a more holistic understanding of what we need to consider in order to have a successful long-term conservation strategy.

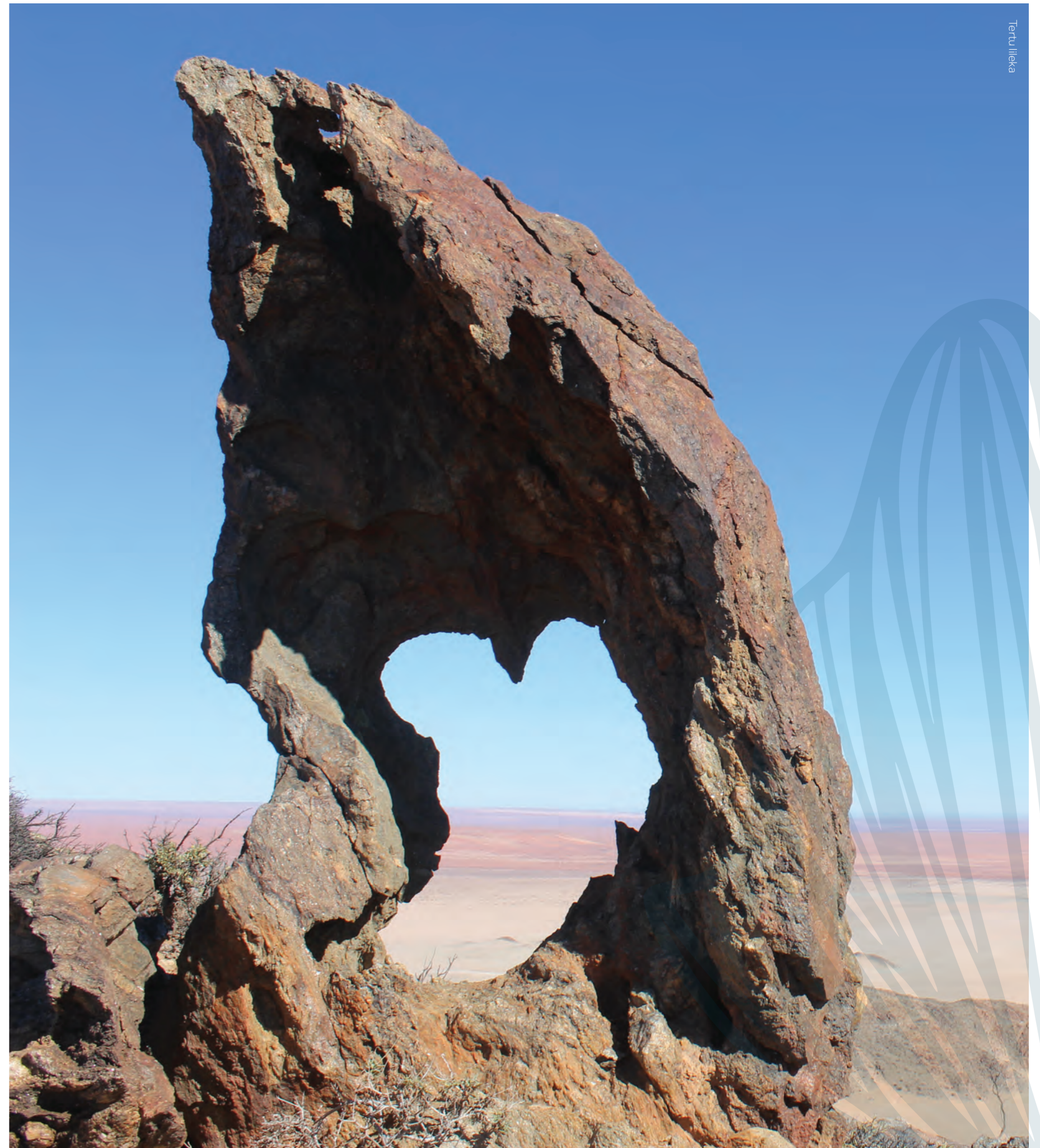
I think NamParks enabled the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism to get the best out of the National Parks. This included providing infrastructure that is conducive to the management of the park, and then also providing capacity building. This meant the people have the ability and also the joy of managing what are international flagship conservation areas.

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**Another really important factor has been the shift of the focus. In the past it was on managing animals, now it is on managing the habitat with the people living around the Forest Area.**

# The Five Coastal Protected Areas





Tertu Illeka



**Former NamParks Field Coordinator  
Coastal Parks. NamParks IV and V**

## Mendes Vinte

I was appointed as a Field Coordinator for Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park in 2016 to build capacity through technical support, advisory services, mentoring and coaching of regional staff, also to coordinate the implementation of project supported activities in the Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park and adjacent communities including conservancies.

With my appointment, I had a special advantage of having worked in the same area for some years prior to becoming the field coordinator under the NamParks Programme. Hence, I knew and shared the same challenges that the colleagues were faced with on a daily basis, so having been deployed back there with a more influential role and a budget, I did not waste any time but started rolling stones out of the way.

NamParks brought a lot of meaning in terms of the work performed in the field. The confidence of knowing that every day spent in the field does contribute to a bigger picture of biodiversity conservation makes staff feel appreciated. You know the staff form part of the community and if they are not positive about what they do the entire community will lose hope.

Tsau //Khaeb National Park (Sperrgebiet), was proclaimed in 2008 but since then not much could be seen in terms of tourism development, which is due to a lack of harmonisation of the two conflicting legislations that govern most activities in that area. Mining activities started before the proclamation of the park and the need to harmonise both was always there, but unfortunately one always seemed to dominate the other.

The physical and notable changes brought about through the project support can be seen in the infrastructure development which includes staff housing, offices and signage walls. These are tangible and key to the ministry in fulfilling the mandate of provision of adequate housing, to boost staff morale and enhance service delivery to the community. The signage wall also referred to as "symbolic gates" clearly indicates various entrances and boundaries of the park.

Through the same support the Park now has a Management and Tourism Development Plan. These management tools give clear guidance in terms of how the park should be managed. This has really helped with managing Tsau //Khaeb National Park. For me, these are the key deliverables that the project brought. If one speaks to any of the staff members now working in the park they are quick to refer you to their Management Plans. These plans are implementable, because they were done in full consultation with all stakeholders. Implementation of these plans requires a concerted effort, hence all role players and neighbours are needed to participate to foster landscape conservation.

Through these plans stakeholder fora were established, and valuable information is shared and discussed with the community. Through this process a better understanding of the objectives of the park is augmented and to date, some adjacent farmers are more keen to organize themselves and lend their areas to create nature reserves that would run parallel to the park which could in turn establish the much needed migratory corridors which historically allowed the Oryx and other game species to move between east and west of the escarpment in pursuit of green grazing grounds in accordance with the rainfall patterns.

The Tsau //Khaeb National Park is one of the world biodiversity hot spots due to its unique and diverse flora. Putting emphasis on managing the area well and the introduction of high quality but low impact tourism sends a positive global signal. Namibia prides itself on having the entire coastline under national park protection. From Tsau //Khaeb to the Skeleton Coast. This indicates the intense value which the country sees in biodiversity conservation. If we go wrong with the management of these areas, it will put a dent in the status of our conservation efforts. We have a good story to tell as a country on how well we have done in terms of protected area management and biodiversity conservation, and the National Parks are the cornerstones of biodiversity conservation in the country.

For me personally, NamParks brought transformation which has been a great experience for me. The same is echoed by the field staff as well as the entire community in the southern region.



# TSAU //KHAEB NATIONAL PARK (SPERRGEBIET)

Encompassed by dunes, mountains and the succulent karoo biome, the Tsau //Khaeb National Park (Sperrgebiet) is a one of a kind Namibian gem. Sperrgebiet means "forbidden territory," and it used to be just that before it was proclaimed a National Park in 2008. With a total area of 21 800 km<sup>2</sup>, this vast and wondrous landscape makes up for 2.5% of the Namibian land surface. Much of this area is protected and still falls under forbidden territory. Sperrgebiet was renamed Tsau //Khaeb National Park and is best known as a Diamond Mining area, though only 5% of the Park is used for this.

- Interesting facts**
- The name *Tsau //Khaeb*, means 'deep sandy soils'. However, this area was known for decades as the *Sperrgebiet*, which means 'forbidden area'.
  - The Tsau //Khaeb National Park has many bird species that breed within the park, these include wetland birds and sea birds as well as migratory birds.
  - The remains of many shipwrecks can be found up to 1km inland in some areas of the park.
  - 776 plant species can be found within the Park, 234 of them being Namibian endemics.



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“I don't think we could have achieved anything to date if it wasn't for the NamParks Programme. Starting from NamParks I right up until where we are now, there's no ways we would have been able to achieve anything in these parks, taking into consideration all the budget constraints that we experience. NamParks really helped us a great deal, with crucial things that you need in a park to operate.”

Tsau //Khaeb is a biodiversity hotspot. It's got the highest population and density of succulents in Namibia and it is very important to protect these plants. Now with all the new infrastructure in place and the positions that have been filled, we will be able to protect them, the succulents especially. And then tourism. For tourism, that area has been dormant, nobody was able to access it during the last hundred years.

The parks need so much support, without NamParks we wouldn't be able to address human-wildlife conflict, which in Namibia is very complex and challenging. NamParks is even now helping us with human wildlife offsetting (compensation), and without funding we cannot address these things. We just don't have the funds to come up with mitigation efforts, so we really depend on the projects to help us in this regard.

**Richard Fryer**  
 Chief Control Warden for Human-Wildlife Conflict and Conservation Hunting

“

I think what we as Namibians should be proud of the Community Based Natural Resource Management Programme which is based on the concept of protecting the environment and at the same time benefiting from the environment. We protect the environment, the biodiversity, the wildlife, and at the same time it contributes to our livelihood. I think we will have a good story for our grandchildren and great grandchildren.

I think that when it comes to the NamParks project we are really feeling the positive impact. I think it is good that it will continue into Phase V so that the other parks also get this opportunity.

NamParks has assisted us with Park Management Plans and the Park Tourism Development Plan. These are the plans that will drive the management effectiveness. We need these documents, they are guiding documents and they will also help with tourism development within the park. You need to have the tools, people can't work without tools. All this assistance really motivates the staff. Staff can see the tangible contributions that are being made. This is how we will be able to do what is expected of us, because we now have the support.

**Harry Tjihukununa**

*Deputy Director of Southern Region*



Kirsty Watermeyer

“

My name is Elton Kuruseb. I'm the Control Warden responsible for the Karas Region, and I am based in Keetmanshoop. I'm responsible for Sperrgebiet Tsau //Khaeb National Park where NamParks is involved.

NamParks IV was my first intervention and where I have seen how limited the government's budget is for infrastructure development and other park management issues. NamParks came in and did activities in terms of housing, offices, other issues like signboards, cars and trucks. So all the gaps are closed.

Tourism is actually one of the backbones of the country, but we need to have proper infrastructure in terms of roads, in terms of our fencing and water point installation for tourism. All those things are interlinked. If we have improved infrastructure and a well managed park with all the infrastructure, tourism will grow. That will actually spin off to other sectors. It boosts the economy.

**Elton Kuruseb**

*Control Warden - Karas Region*



Le Roux van Schalkwyk



Le Roux van Schalkwyk

“

My name is Wayne, I was previously the Warden for the Southern Tsau // Khaeb. However, I've been acting in the position of Chief Warden for Karas Parks on and off since 2016.

I first met Miss Lydia from KfW in 2013. I remember saying to her 'I won't believe this until I hear the first concrete mixer turning, then I'll believe this project has really come to fruition'. Of course it did happen.

For me the biggest achievement of NamParks has been the physical infrastructure on the ground. Without this the staff wouldn't have accommodation. Rosh Pinah wouldn't be functioning.

Namibian parks are one of the backbones of our economy. That's why people come here. People don't come from overseas to see our towns. Our parks are a drawcard for the country.

The value that this programme has for conservation, I don't think you can quantify it. The things NamParks has done are going to have a long-term positive impact on the parks.

**Wayne Handley**

*Chief Warden - Karas Parks*

Entrance Gate at Kolmanskop - TKNP



Le Roux van Schalkwyk

# Infrastructure

Housing in Oranjemund



Le Roux van Schalkwyk

Office in Aus



Le Roux van Schalkwyk



Lena Diekmann

Launch of the infrastructure under NamParks IV

Lüderitz MEFT office (former German post office from 1907 was renovated)



Raimund Stoldt



Lena Diekmann

“

My name is Martha. I'm the newly appointed Park Warden for Tsau //Khaeb National Park, the Northern side of the park. I've seen NamParks do so much. Water points have been created through the project, the building of staff houses and the renovation of the office. Especially in Lüderitz. When I visited three years back, they only had two offices to share among all the staff. It was a challenge. So I really do appreciate the assistance we got from NamParks.

Since I began, NamParks has been funding most of our training and workshops which are assisting us to carry out our duties, especially when it comes to law enforcement and Park Management Plans.

I personally have benefitted a lot, mostly with the accommodation so I don't have to suffer. But I think the most important things NamParks did was to come up with the management plan and the tourism development plan for the park. This will help guide us on how to manage the park and also how to carry out the tourism activities. This will assist me in executing my duties.

## Martha Kambidhi

Warden - TKNP North



“

My name is Dorothy. I'm a Ranger here in the Oranjemund office, operating in the Southern part of Tsau //Khaeb Sperrgebiet National Park. I joined MEFT in 2008.

We've seen a lot happening since NamParks came in. This project has really uplifted us and brought value to our offices. We now have toilets and homes for the staff. That is really helping us. NamParks also gave us uniforms. Since I started, NamParks also helped with new vehicles and office equipment. It's made our job easier. NamParks are also bringing us uniforms, and since I started with the Ministry in 2008 we have not ever received uniforms. This is very important, because the first thing the tourists will see is the guard at the gate. The first impression must be the uniform so that they can identify that is a person from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism.

NamParks is really a blessing for us. We will look after the equipment, so that even after five years, the things will still be in a good condition. We are really privileged and really thankful and we will learn and grow.

## Dorothy Mejo Katjuaende

Ranger TKNP - South







I'm Alex Mowa, a Ranger stationed in Tsau //Khaeb National Park. As a ranger I am responsible for park management activities, such as law enforcement, tourist patrols, water point maintenance, fence repairs, vegetation assessment and more.

For me the biggest achievement of NamParks is the infrastructure, like the staff accommodation and offices that were built. NamParks also procured a 4x4 truck for the park, that was a major achievement, and also camping equipment and fencing material. NamPark has achieved many things for TKNP.

On top of that there is a biodiversity monitoring framework that NamParks started. Now staff members within the TKNP are involved in monitoring key species. Our park is known as a biodiversity hotspot with special succulent plants that are key indicators of the park.

### Alex Mowa

Ranger (Aus) - TKNP



Tertu Illeka

### Zonation of the TKNP

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism with NamParks IV support has updated the framework and guidelines for the development of Park Management Plans to guide future development and updating of Park Management Plans. The framework was finalised in November 2018 and provides essential guidelines and a format for how Park Management Plans should be prepared and operationalised by MEFT. The basis for Park Management Plans is provided for in the Wildlife and Protected Areas Bill. In addition, this framework includes the requirement for zoning of protected areas and monitoring at park level, for the purpose of informing and an adaptive management approach to park management.

NamParks IV ensured that the zoning criteria and new national guidelines for zoning of protected areas were considered for the development and updating of Park Management Plans in the North East and TKNP, making them the first to adopt these approved guidelines and criteria. Now the revision and development of the three coastal parks north of TKNP are also following the same pattern under NamParks V.



I'm Paulus. I'm the Park Warden of Ai-/Ais Richtersveld Transfrontier Park which is shared by South Africa and Namibia, but I'm based in Rosh Pinah outside the park. We are doing cross border operations and law enforcement patrols.

During my time in the parks department, I have seen the developments such as the houses that have been built and the offices have also been renovated. It's a good initiative bringing good developments for the parks department. There have been a lot of changes and it's impressive. There is camping equipment that has been bought, and car assistance and even uniforms. So now we have to take care of what NamParks has been bringing into our lives.

### Paulus Gowaseb

Warden at Ai-/Ais Richtersveld Park



I'm Clarence Kutako. I'm a newly appointed warden at the Tsau //Khaeb National Park. I'm responsible for the Southern section of the park.

I do park management, so we do law enforcement, we do fence maintenance, we have joint patrols with the South African counterparts and administration as well.

NamParks did the upgrading of the houses and the office space which makes it nice for the staff. It's good to have a proper functioning roof over your head.

### Clarence Kutako

Warden TKNP - South



Le Roux van Schalkwyk



Tertu Illeka



Kristy Watermeyer



## Introduction of new Biodiversity Monitoring Framework

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism contracted Enviro Science to develop the Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) National Park Biodiversity Monitoring framework on 01 October 2017. This two year assignment consisted of a biodiversity monitoring framework, a training manual and data capture application. The process ensured a wide participation inclusive of all key stakeholders in determining the status of biodiversity and to identify monitoring parameters. The monitoring framework and respective training manual were finalised and endorsed by the MEFT Minister in April 2019. The implementation of this framework started immediately after approval, field staff who participated in the development process received training and were able to help setting up monitoring sites as per the framework. Further to this the MEFT appointed a dedicated senior conservation scientist to implement the monitoring framework. More recently the ministry resolved to use SMART as a tool for data capture across all parks. This did not present any challenge for the TKNP monitoring framework because the framework was developed knowing that SMART will be adopted as the main tool for data capturing, hence the compatibility with the TKNP monitoring framework. With the scientist appointed analysis of monitoring, results will be made available to TKNP Management for adaptive management, better tourism development and all other land uses in the park.



Developing the biodiversity monitoring framework for TKNP

Tertu Illeka



Tertu Iileka

## Park Management Plan

Following the finalisation of the TKNP management plan in November 2019 and subsequent launch in October 2020, management of the park has significantly improved. This is notable from the last MEFT assessment report, where the TKNP scored above 72 % depicting Sound Management. Implementation of this plan started immediately after approval in November 2019. The most unique feature of this plan is that it comes with a costed five years operational plan from which park managers are able to draw their annual work plans and monthly work plans. Quarterly reviews are conducted to determine the rate of implementation and adjust as necessary. The same annual work plan is then integrated into the park staff performance agreement which binds the park management to ensure that all or at least most activities are achieved as far as possible. Doing this would then ensure that the glossy printed park management plan is actually being implemented.



Tertu Iileka



Tertu Iileka



Le Roux van Schalkwyk



Tertu Iileka



Mendes Vinte

## New Park Management Equipment

Necessary field equipment for park management, including computers, were purchased in accordance with the recommendations of the park management plan. The provided IT and field equipment is a prerequisite for proper communication and park management. The procurement of a 6-ton truck (co-financed with the Game Product Trust Fund) and a Land Cruiser in 2018 for TKNP has enhanced field activities and enabled the Chief Warden to carry out regular park inspections across TKNP. This equipment together with other park management equipment and tools procured through the project has also made it possible and practical for TKNP staff to rehabilitate waterholes for game in strategic places of the park. Work which otherwise would have been outsourced to private contractors is now done inhouse. The rehabilitation of these waterholes is already proving successful, with an increase in game sightings captured by the camera traps, a monitoring component of the Biodiversity Monitoring Framework.



Tertu Iileka



Tertu Iileka

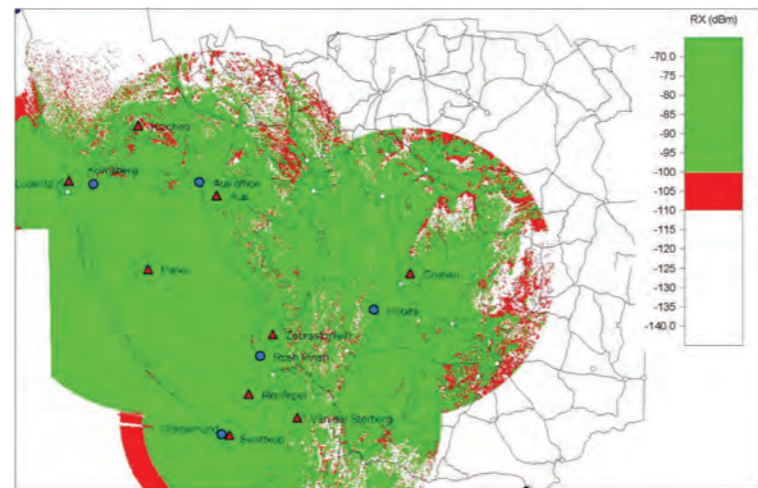


Le Roux van Schalkwyk



## New Digital Radio Installation

The TKNP, through the NamParks IV project, resolved to install a cross-border digital radio system. A radio communication system is imperative for the management of desolate and remote protected areas such as the TKNP (21 750 km<sup>2</sup>). Being a prerequisite for tourism activities in the diamond area, this system will serve as a life line in case of any eventuality. This radio system is both for improved communication of MEFT park staff but also serves as a security tool for tracking tour operators who will be operating concessions in the TKNP. It will motivate staff to spend more time in the field as it also boosts the morale of staff in the vast remote park.



## Restricted area access negotiations

To ensure the smooth implementation of the TKNP Tourism Development Plan, the MEFT has been negotiating with the Ministry of Mines and Energy (MME) and Namdeb to reduce the size of the current Diamond Area 1 by 70% as well as amending the Diamond Act. The reduction of the current diamond area was endorsed by the two Ministers in 2019. To proceed with the de-gazettement of the current boundary of Diamond Area 1, the following process was agreed upon:

- a) to develop a cadastral diagram and finalise the narrative description of the boundary of the revised Diamond Area 1 as well as the agreed schedules in consultation with key stakeholders through the services of a registered Land Surveyor,
- b) submit the cadastral and narrative description to the Office of the Surveyor General for cancellation of the existing cadastral diagram of Diamond Area 1 certification and approval of the new boundaries of Diamond Area 1
- c) finalise the draft gazette
- d) submit the revised gazette to the Ministry of Justice for gazetting.

Based on this need, the MEFT with NamParks V project support contracted Strydom and Associates CC as the Land Surveying Consulting Firm to facilitate the process of developing the cadastral map and finalizing the descriptive narrative of the revised Diamond Area 1. This assignment is carried out in close in collaboration with the Surveyor General Office and the MME. In the meantime, MEFT has devised other mechanisms with the close stakeholder, including the mining companies, on current access for field staff and tourists alike until such time that the de-gazettment is achieved.

# Community and Tourism development

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I'm Johannes, I'm a community member and I used to be an intern for NamParks IV. I met Lydia von Krosigk from KfW when I took her on a tour around the area (TKNP) and she recommended me to come on board. I was still doing my last year of schooling, and after that I went to Gondwana as a Junior Park Warden, until the opportunity came to become an intern for NamParks.

NamParks has been massive and it's really helped the community. Apart from building houses for the staff, it created a lot of awareness. This made it easier for people or students to understand how parks function, why biodiversity is important, the importance of tourism and the environment in general. NamParks also made it possible to get these little prosecution books where it makes it easier to charge people doing illegal activities.

I love this region, you know the TKNP has been forbidden for more than one hundred years, it holds lots of treasures and history itself.

**Abed Johannes**  
*Community Member*



“

I am Johanness Swartz, the Chairman of the Traditional Authority. I oversee the community and communal area. My work is to develop the community.

The development of the Tsau //Khaeb National Park meant a lot to the community, and we appreciate it also. We will take it with both hands. We expect that in the future, the development of the park will grow us as a community. It will change lives and livelihoods, and better our standard of living.

**Johannes Theofelus Swartz**  
*Chairperson of the laman Traditional Authority*

“

I am the General Manager of OMD2030 which is a community organisation in Oranjemund, and part of the town transformation team hoping to ensure that Oranjemund has a future beyond mining. We represent the community in the town transformation process.

I've seen a lot of progress with the NamParks Programme. From infrastructure going up but also all the consultations and stakeholder meetings, from the start we've been included. The Tourism Development Plan that's been produced, we've been through all the changes and involved in the process. NamParks has been really helpful.

We also had, as part of the town transformation project, a bird count, and where we asked the community members to come and join in. It's under our wing as part of our citizen reactivation programme, and we run it in conjunction with MEFT and NAMDEB. NamParks helped sponsor that. They sponsored binoculars, bird books and the refreshments. We used this data, which is great for park management.

Without the tools, without the techniques, without the capacity you can't conserve effectively. As environmentalists, just to support conservation and biodiversity and the ecosystem, and health, we want to do our best.

**Sue Cooper**  
*General Manager of OMD2030*



Lena Diekmann



## Tourism Development Plan and new concessions

The TKNP tourism development plan was fully finalised in September 2019 with a coordinated alignment to the Park Management Plan and its zonation, the biodiversity monitoring framework and the Namib Horse Management Plan. The TDP apportioned the park into six Tourism Development Areas with nine concessions of both area (lodge) and adventure route concessions. The TKNP TDP was approved by the minister and launched in October 2020 together with the northeastern Tourism Plan.

The TDP forms the basis of the tourism development in the TKNP and it will add value to the whole tourism sector in the southern regions. The four towns adjacent to the park have eagerly awaited the realisation of this plan, which they, too, believe will have a major economic spin-off. During 2021, six concessions from this plan were advertised, this was received by an overwhelming number of applicants (90 plus) companies who showed interest. The evaluation process was competitive and five companies emerged successful and they were awarded one concession each, the remaining one from the six did not receive satisfactory proposals. This process is separate from the concessions which were identified to be awarded to the southern communal conservancy communities. Some of the already known communities lined up for these concessions are the /Han /Awab Conservancy and the Aus Community Conservation Trust.



“

My name is Leena Vaile. I'm a Senior Administrative Officer at the Oranjemund Constituency Office. I'm working at Oranjemund Constituency Office, representing the regional councillor. I feel it will be good for the community, if we really grab this opportunity. It is our desire for the life of Oranjemund town to remain, but we need activities or economic sectors that can support the sustainability of these towns. Tourism is the sector that we are looking at with big eyes. It is our hope that it will be successful and beneficial to the community of Oranjemund.

**Leena Vaile**  
Oranjemund Town Council Administrative Officer

“

My name is Joyce Kashirwa. I work for NAMDEB as the Environmental Management Coordinator for Rehabilitation. Operating in a protected area like the Tsau //Khaeb National Park (Sperrgebiet), there is an interlink between our projects. NamParks has enhanced the envisaged end land use and helped make the process systematic and a coordinated effort.

**Joyce Katjirua**  
Namdeb Environmental Management Coordinator - Rehabilitation





Lena Diekmann



Tertu Illeka



Le Roux van der Merwe

### Ontanda Environmental Education Centre

The development of an Environmental Education Programme and related learning and support material for Ontanda Environmental Education Centre (OEEC) in TKNP was successfully completed at the end of January 2019. A MEFT warden responsible for the Centre was also trained in the process. Today OEEC is operating based on the developed curriculum under the leadership of a warden. The new curriculum has synergies with the national education curriculum. The southern MEFT team is proud to announce that the OEEC is successfully operational for the first time since its inception in 2012 and is becoming a role model to all other government-operated educational centres across the country.



Lena Diekmann

### Stakeholder Fora TKNP North and TKNP South

The TKNP north and south stakeholder fora were established in 2017. These fora have remained and are certainly viewed by all involved as having a major positive impact on integrated park management. Critical issues such as wildlife crime on neighbouring farms, park area and public roads are reported through these fora. Cooperation with other line ministries like MME and Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) has been strengthened. Information sharing and feedback among stakeholders is essential for park management and creates awareness for all.

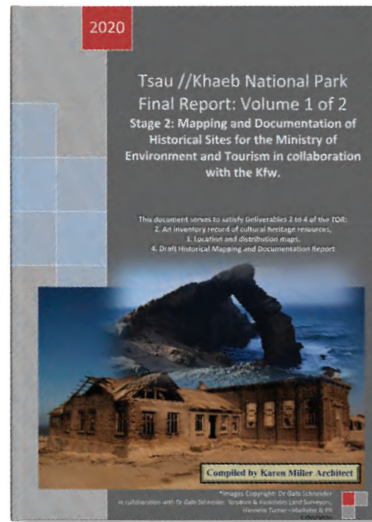


Kirsty Watermeyer

# Mapping and Documentation of Historical Sites

Documentation of the historic buildings in the TKNP is paramount. Hence, this was carried out through the services of a capable consulting team led by Karen Miller Architects from Swakopmund. This work resulted in a 35-minute visual video on the historic timelines. Cooperation with National Archives has been established. The documentation of the many historic buildings in the TKNP shows the history and gives recommendations on how to further use these buildings and the possible preservation of identified structures. A full two volume report, brochures and a display have been produced and will show the rich mining history which also is an attraction for tourism into the park.

Most notably not only the historic buildings but also the infrastructure such as historic mining and a sieving plant and equipment, desalination plants, railway line remains, railway trolleys, pipelines, telephone infrastructure, electric supply remains, sieving mounds and historic claim beacons have been identified as valuable attractions that apprise of the true historical TKNP experience. The historic Benzol-Electric Railway infrastructure was a true diamond mining asset and a very efficient and environmentally friendly mode of transport within the TKNP, begging many questions of infrastructure for the current day tourist industry.



Kirsty Watermeyer

Richard Fryer



## Community-based Tourism Enterprises (CBTE) and Contract with NDT to support southern Conservancies and CBRNM process

A feasibility study on community-based tourism enterprises (CBTE) for the southern regions //Kharas and Hardap was finalised in the first quarter of 2019. The submission included a situational analysis of the 6 southern conservancies and business plans for the 3 highest ranking enterprises. During this study, a cohesive stakeholder engagement was established with significant role players in the CBNRM fraternity. The recommendation for a southern tourism landscape spatial planning process for tourism and natural resources was made. Such a spatial plan based on the existing regional land use plans should pave the way for an economic reorientation from mining to tourism development in the southern regions and shall organise a platform for such a development. A kick-start for community development in the southern regions was the result.

Since NamParks IV is slowly phasing out, some of the remaining funds are being committed to an NGO, the Namibian Development Trust (NDT), to support communities in the southern regions, namely Hardap and //Kharas. This move is well in line with the NamParks IV exit strategy. NDT received a contract of 12 months for southern conservancy institutional support and to prepare the conservancies and CBOs for the upcoming conservancy-based enterprise projects from the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF) and also for the Tourism Concessions from both Tsau //Khaeb National Park and Namib Naukluft National Park. Their terms of contract also include activities related to SOPs, Governance etc.,

As of late, various training workshops were held with communities in the effort of preparing them to be the new owners of tourism concessions in the coastal parks, e.g. financial management, review and updating of all southern conservancies' Constitutions and Benefit Distribution plans, AGMs, ACCT workshop on the review of the deed of trust.

On the other hand, the succeeding project, which is NamParks V, has reserved a budget of 4 000 000 NAD for communities living adjacent to coastal parks, namely Tsau //Khaeb, Namib Naukluft, Dorob and Skeleton Coast National Parks. Of which most of the funding is intended to develop and operationalise the Tourism Concessions awarded to such communities.



Tertulienka



Lena Diekmann

# THE OTHER FOUR COASTAL PARKS

## NAMIB-NAUKLUFT, DOROB AND SKELETON COAST NATIONAL PARKS, CAPE CROSS NATURE RESERVE

The Namib-Naukluft National Park is home to some of the country's most iconic attractions such as the towering sand dunes found at Sossusvlei, the Naukluft Mountains, Sandwich Harbour, and Dead Vlei. As one of the oldest National Parks in Namibia, a celebration was held in 2008 to mark the 101st birthday of the park.

The Dorob National Park, which was proclaimed in 2010, covers the central Namib desert. It is bordered to the north by the Ugab River and the Skeleton Coast Park. The Cape Cross Seal Reserve is a separate reserve in the northern section of the area.

The Skeleton Coast Park is now acknowledged as one of the world's last great wildernesses. The park, often shrouded in fog, is home to rich lichen fields and it is a sanctuary for desert-dwelling Elephants, Rhino and Lion.



Hoarusib River, Skeleton Coast National Park

E. Zanne McCulloch

### Interesting facts

- The Namib-Naukluft National Park was originally proclaimed to serve as a sanctuary for Namibia's endemic Hartmann zebra
- The Namib Desert is found at the heart of the The Namib-Naukluft National Park; it is the oldest desert in the world
- The Dorob National Park is another example of smart conservation in Namibia, where you find core conservation areas set aside for rare and endangered species, and others for multiple uses, including adventure tourism
- The Dorob National Park is home to the Walvis Bay Ramsar Site and the main conservation area of the Damara Tern.
- The Skeleton Coast National Park is defined by fog-shrouded beaches, sprawling and remote wilderness that is littered with shipwrecks and whale skeletons, giving rise to its name.
- More than 100 species of lichen have been recorded in the Skeleton Coast National Park



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Right now the infrastructure we have at the North West Parks is in a deplorable state, and if you don't have a proper infrastructure you don't attract competent staff members, and existing staff are not really motivated. We have a problem of staff wanting to leave the park, or applying for transfers. We have started the process of building infrastructure under NamParks V, and also capacity building, even empowering conservancies that are adjacent to the park. We also have plans to strengthen our radio communication, because another challenge we have is that communication is very poor, especially in Dorob and Skeleton Coast National Parks.

You know, if you have a proper working environment it enhances your performance. So with infrastructure coming, it will increase the capacity in the park which will benefit conservation. We really appreciate partners like NamParks V, it's a conservation driven project because it has a long-term focus, and its impact will remain for a number of years, even to be felt by generations to come.

**Christopher Mumwela**  
Deputy Director North West Region





NamParks V Project Manager and Covid-19 Fund

## Michael Sibalatani

I think what NamParks has achieved in the past twelve years or so, would have taken the Ministry much longer. It has enabled this process, and this process has a knock-on effect for the Nation in terms of economic benefits and also for the communities that live in and around National Parks.

There are five phases of NamParks, most of which are, and have been looking at improving infrastructure as well as the concept of community and tourism development to make sure that it is not only parks that benefit but that the adjacent communities do too. The impact of this is visible all over. Another notable achievement is the development of the Park Management Plans. Now each park has clearly defined objectives.

At the end of the day these parks are to be seen as the economic engines in their areas, as in many cases there are no other serious employment opportunities where they are situated. Fortunately tourism thrives in rural areas as compared to other industries.

The greatest success of the programme was the infrastructure development and the willingness of the Government to work with other partners.

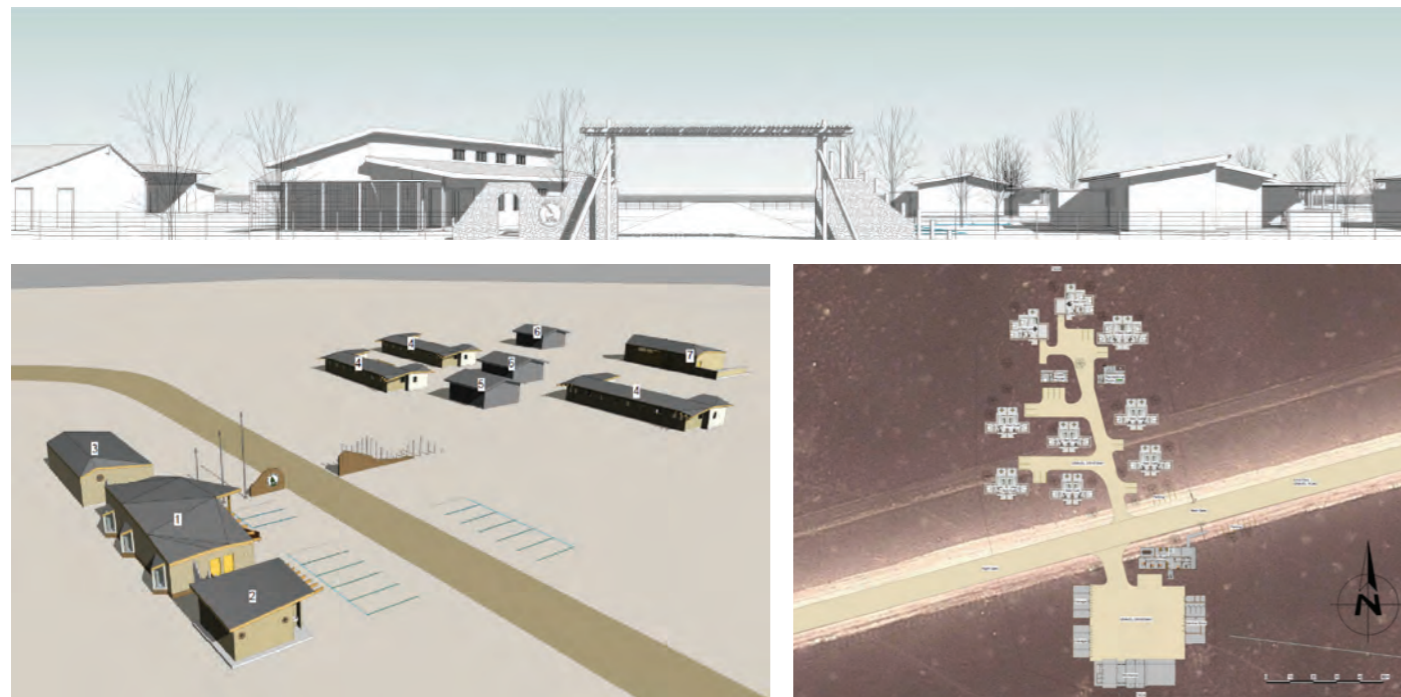
In Namibia we have good infrastructure between destinations, peace and security and true contrast in the landscape from the wetlands to the desert. This combined with the conservation successes makes it an all-in-one package worth visiting.

Personally, my favourite park to visit is the Skeleton Coast Park, and when I go there now, it feels like home.

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**In Namibia we have good infrastructure between destinations, peace and security and true contrast in the landscape from the wetlands to the desert, this combined with the conservation successes makes it an all-in-one package worth visiting.**

# Infrastructure

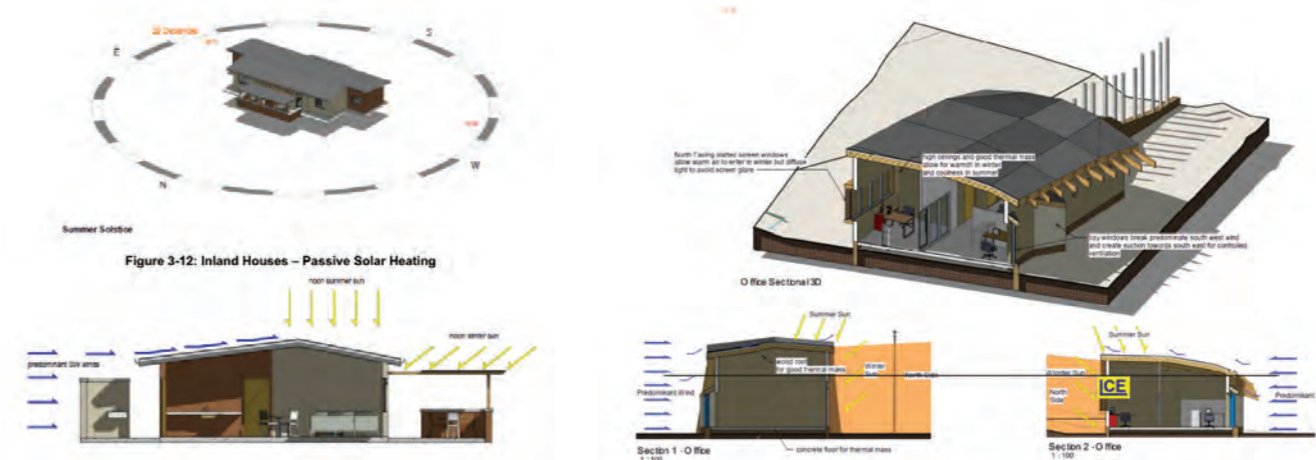


# Improved Park Management



## New Park Management Plans

Among the coastal parks, only TKNP has a revised management plan inclusive of a detailed chapter on tourism development that is valid for ten years. With support from NamParks V, the Park management plans for the Namib-Naukluft National Park, the Dorob National Park and the Skeleton Coast National Park were recently revised. The remaining time frame of the project is dedicated to supporting the implementation of these Park Management Plans.



## Environmental and Social Monitoring Framework (ESMF)

Following the completion of the Socio-Economic Survey of the Topnaar Community and a Situational Analysis, the Land Use and Development Plan for the Topnaar Community in both Namib-Naukluft National Park (NNP) and Dorob National Park (DNP) was developed. The draft plan was presented to the MEFT and stakeholders on 15 February 2021 prior to the presentation to the Topnaar Community on 11 March 2021 at Utuseb. The plan was accepted by both the MEFT and the Topnaar Community and the final draft was submitted on 04 May 2021. The Land Use and Development Plan includes a mitigation and livelihoods enhancement plan, which was incorporated into the DNP and NNP Management Plans, was shared with KfW's Environmental and Social Expert for review in order to identify any need for additional provisions regarding the process of land use plan implementation. In addition to the above reports, MEFT with funding from KfW developed the Law Enforcement Component report to be incorporated into a single ESMF with Ms. Eckhardt's guidance from KfW.

## Cape Cross Nature Reserve

The Cape Cross Seal Reserve was established to protect the largest breeding colony of Cape fur seals in the world. Gazetted as a reserve in 1968, the Cape Cross Seal Reserve borders the Dorob National Park and the Atlantic Ocean.

What started out as a stone cross put up on a headland by Portuguese captain Diego Cão in 1485, has become a biologically and historically significant tourist attraction in Namibia. In addition to the biological significance of the area, the site of the cross erected by Cão, now represented by a replica, was proclaimed as a National Heritage site in 1968.

The cold Benguela Current of the Atlantic Ocean sustains a wealth of marine life and produces fog that supports an intriguing variety of animals and plants further inland, including over a hundred species of lichens.

Cape Cross Seal Reserve is also home to the Cape Cross Lagoon, an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA), a key site for the conservation of bird species.



### Interesting facts

- The Cape fur seal, *Arctocephalus pusillus pusillus*, is the largest of the world's nine fur-seal species, and is only found along the coastline of Southern Africa; Cape Cross Seal Reserve is the site of the largest breeding colony in the world
- Cape Cross is home to up to 210 000 seals during breeding season in November and December
- Guano is an Inca word for a mix of eggshell, feathers, decayed corpses and bird excrement. So valuable that it's called 'white gold', it is still harvested from platforms off Namibia's coast.
- The black-backed jackal and brown hyena are often found in the Cape Cross Seal Reserve





“

In my role, I liaise between the projects and the Ministry and I'm also in charge of permits for the Ministry. During NamParks IV, I was involved in the north-eastern parks and the roll-out of the SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool) programme there. The implementation of the SMART programme was extremely successful, and it has improved the monitoring of the parks very much. When you compare reports from a year ago, to what we are getting now, there is no comparison. Reports used to be virtually non-existent and now they include even photos and graphs. With the success we had in the north-east, we will now be rolling out SMART to the rest of the country, meaning we now have a nationalised programme for SMART which is very important.

In my opinion the coastal parks were a little bit neglected, with most of the support going to the bigger parks and not to the smaller parks. Now, with NamParks, the playing field has been evened for everybody. This is important because smaller parks like the Skeleton Coast are valuable but without high tourism numbers they often get forgotten. NamParks has enabled us to focus on conservation as a whole and not only tourist numbers.

Namibia is such a diverse country, with many different landscapes and where each park is unique in its own way. My hope with NamParks V is that we start encouraging local tourists to visit the little gems like the Skeleton Coast, which is probably one of the most pristine landscapes on the planet.

### Shayne Kötting

*Chief Warden: Support to Parks*



# Community and Tourism Development

For the long-term sustainability of National Parks, local communities are key, as recognised in the MEFT Parks and Neighbours strategy and the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Policy.

It is also known that community support of parks is greatly improved if communities see benefits arising from the parks. Through the CBNRM initiative and the granting of rights to communities through the establishment of conservancies and by awarding them hunting and tourism concessions, communities in Namibia are seeing the benefits from conservation.

Community voices are in support of the NamParks Programme and of development of Namibia's National Parks as a drawcard for tourism.

Communities in the North-West of Namibia eagerly await NamParks V and the anticipated development that this intervention will bring to this remote region.



Kirsty Watermeyer



Kirsty Watermeyer



Elzanne McCulloch

# 3 MANAGEMENT of the NamParks Programme

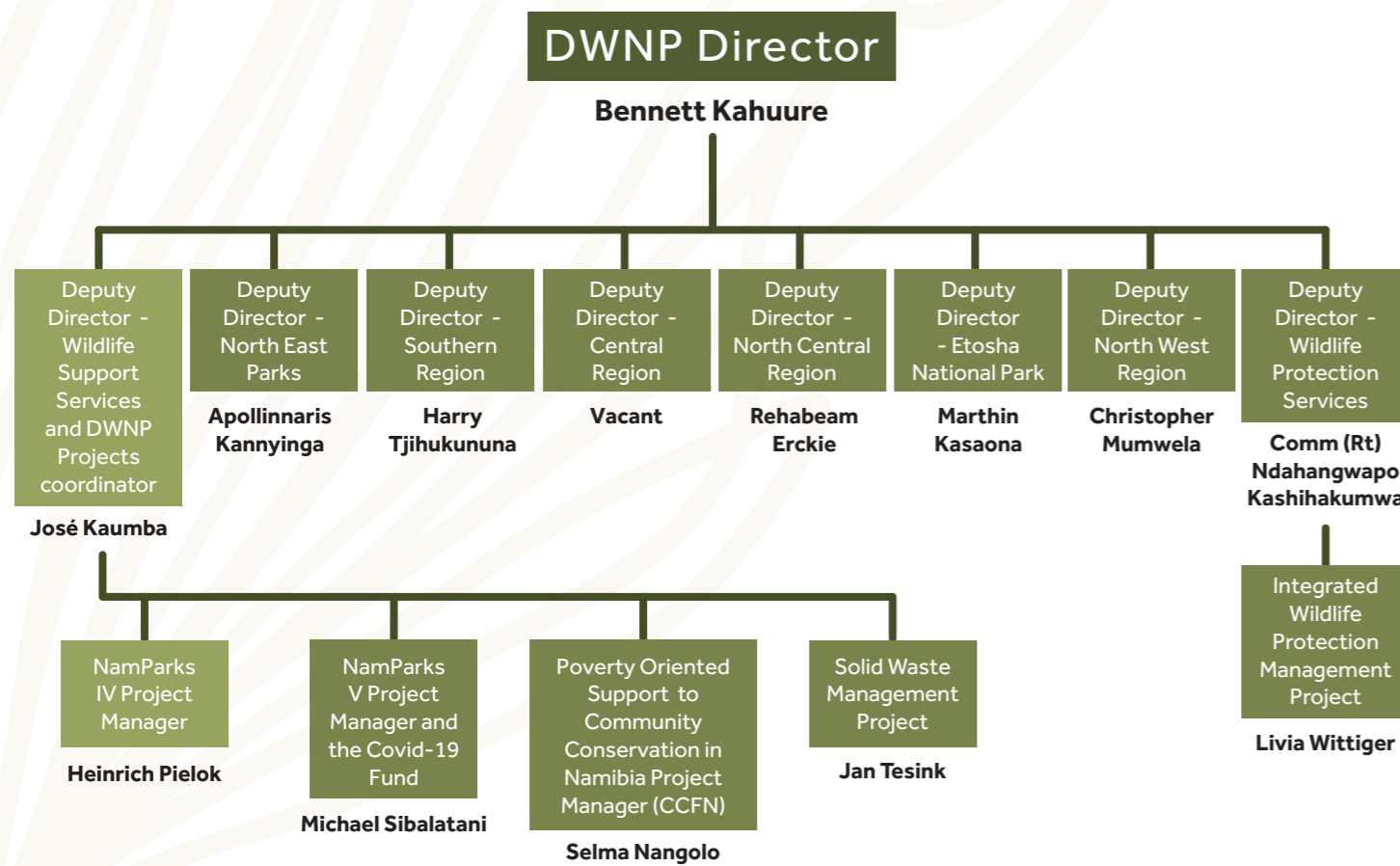






André Baumgarten

## The Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks



## Project Management

Since the inception of the NamParks Programme, the initiative was supported by a strong technical team of project managers and technical experts. This proved a cornerstone in the successful programme implementation.

KfW always works with so-called Implementation Consultants to support the implementing agency, which in the case of NamParks is the Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks. The assigned implementation consultants for Phase IV has been GOPA Worldwide Consultants from Germany in joint venture with Lund Consulting Engineers from Namibia.



Elzanne McCulloch



Chief Technical Advisor - NamParks IV

## Heinrich Pielok

I came here in November 2015 to start the NamParks IV Project. My official position title is Chief Technical Advisor, practically I'm the project manager. I'm a full-time employee of GOPA Worldwide Consultants. We developed the work plan or operational plan in the beginning for the whole project, and then see that it gets implemented. I'm responsible for all the project outputs of the 5 project components which includes the infrastructure.

NamParks I started in 2006 and it was only for the North East parks. It started quite small with NamParks I, having a budget of 3 million Euros, and now we've reached NamParks V with a budget of 15 million Euros. Phase IV is the first one being called integrated park management, because the emphasis was broader compared to the first three phases where the clear focus was on infrastructure. Under NamParks IV we have developed many important tools like the new Park Management and Tourism Development Plans. The project also included the development of two bio-monitoring frameworks, the Bwabwata Land Use and Development Plan and recently also the national Elephant Management Plan. Plus, in the scope of NamParks IV the Tsau //Khaeb National Park in the south-west was included and we have seen quite a remarkable trajectory that was achieved there in the last five years starting practically from scratch.

Infrastructure development included mainly staff housing as your staff cannot perform if the housing is not adequate. We now see proper ranger stations in the parks which are fully equipped. We also had park management equipment supplied including vehicles, and a large number of training courses were carried out. Important monitoring tools like SMART was successfully introduced. Pivotal for the success was the creation of the subdivision of Wildlife Support Services in 2017, which plays an important role because it's a support body for all the regional divisions. The team of the implementation consultant was fully integrated in the

Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks which led to the cooperative achievements.

I can't imagine a more relevant aid intervention than the NamParks Programme, because it also has relevance on the global scale. It is supporting nature conservation which is biodiversity protection with a global significance. It also has an enormous national relevance because tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in Namibia.

The real threat to wildlife and nature is that the human population is growing and encroaching on the habitat of the wildlife. Parks are protected areas where you can keep wildlife and their habitats safe."



**I can't imagine a more relevant aid intervention than the NamParks Programme, because it also has relevance on the global scale.**



Former Deputy Chief Technical Advisor  
NamParks IV

## André Baumgarten

I was involved in NamParks IV as the Deputy Chief Technical Advisor for the North East parks from 2018 to 2020. My role included supporting park management activities and managing the contracts for developing Park Management Plans, 5-year operational plans and annual work plans.

These Park management plans have been created with the support of our project and are now really guiding documents for park management. These plans help facilitate the many activities that a park manager must consider: fire management, law enforcement activities, wildlife monitoring, infrastructure maintenance and stakeholder engagement to name a few. We also supported the Ministry in developing national guidelines for zoning of protected areas which has been a critical contribution of NamParks IV for better managing Namibia's National Parks.

We also supported the MEFT in the implementation of the 2019 aerial surveys in the Zambezi and Kavango East Region and Khaudum NP and Nyae Nyae Conservancy. Through these surveys the Ministry was able to get a much-needed update on its elephant population but was also able to see the population trends of other wildlife species and understand threats such as livestock in Bwabwata National Park. Gathering this information facilitated other essential NamParks IV outputs, such as the Ministry's National Elephant Management and Conservation Plan which will guide elephant management interventions in Namibia for the next ten years.

For me one of the most exciting achievements of NamParks IV was the rollout of SMART (Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool) in the NE Parks. When I started working on this project, previous paper-based monitoring systems were discontinued in most parks and important park monitoring data were not sufficiently captured. With an app-based and georeferenced system such as SMART the Ministry is now able to record incidents, wildlife sightings or threats efficiently and effectively in its parks and maintain this information in the SMART database. The SMART approach is a powerful

park management tool that looks at wildlife numbers and poaching incidents and helps park management to monitor critical park infrastructure such as fences and waterpoints. I view the Ministry's decision to go with the SMART approach as a crucial step to foster park management as it helps the park managers and MEFT decision-makers to analyse field data and make conservation management decisions. All monthly SMART reports are aligned with the reporting requirements from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism. The tool is easy to learn and very user-friendly. With a little training and support all rangers can collect field- data and compiling reports has become so much easier for park and regional management. It is exciting that the Ministry has committed to the complete rollout of SMART to all Namibian parks, making Namibia the nineteenth country in the world using SMART as a national mandate.

Working together with the dedicated MEFT and NamParks colleagues and conservation partners has been a hugely motivating experience and a highlight in my conservation career. I believe that Namibia's protected area network is amazing and that the NamParks Programme has significantly contributed to build Namibia's preparedness to manage its protected areas.



**It is exciting that the Ministry has decided to commit to the complete rollout of SMART to all Namibian parks, making Namibia the nineteenth country in the world using SMART as a national mandate.**



## New uniforms for all MEFT Staff

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism acquired new uniforms for over 1000 of its employees. This was made possible through the NamParks Programme. Launching the new uniforms, Minister Pohamba Shifeta said that the wearing of uniforms is guided by internal policy designed to highlight basic values, and has a significant impact on the way the ministry is viewed by employees, stakeholders and the general public.



Images: Ndeshipanda Hamunyela



Elzanne McCulloch

## Measures to support Namibian Parks during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Aimed at offsetting the negative impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Namibian conservation and tourism sector, a Covid-19 fund was set up. Through the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and with the support from the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), measures were implemented to mitigate the adverse impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the operations of the protected areas in the country.

A total amount of €13 million in grant funding was received by the Namibian government from the government of Germany, through the KfW Development Bank, to support the mitigation measures. The Covid-19 fund aims to cover Covid-19-related funding gaps in the operation of protected areas and wildlife protection activities.



Elzanne McCulloch

Elzanne McCulloch



Finance and Procurement Officer for NamParks IV

## Martha Ndove

“

I joined NamParks IV in 2016 as a Procurement and Finance Officer / Manager. During this time I was exposed to all the great developments that came along with the project for our beautiful parks. As an office based person I was aware of all the major investments going to the regions, thus I had to work hard and smart to ensure that all the administrative requirements were seamlessly achieved to fast-track implementation of project deliverables. The NamParks IV programme has contributed towards improved park management, infrastructure development, coordinated tourism and community livelihoods.

I am indeed delighted to have played a behind-the-scenes role in this successful programme. To date I can confidently say that KfW Development Bank continues to support biodiversity conservation and communities across the country in various ways due to the trust built from the implementation process, accurate accountancy resulting in the attainment of consistent unqualified audited financial reports. I am grateful for the good work collaboration between MEFT and the Project team.

Civil Engineer - Lund Consulting Engineers

## Stefan Grögli

“

I would say the NamParks project thus far has been a huge success. The importance of this project is for people to have a functioning workplace and improved living conditions to motivate staff and keep them happy.

My hope for the future of these parks is that the facilities are properly maintained and the buildings are appreciated and looked after. The main highlights for me was the inauguration of the Buffalo station as well as seeing the elephants drinking from the new water points we put up.”



Civil and Structural Engineer and Principal Agent for NamParks IV and V

## Reimund Stoldt

The most important and enjoyable aspect of the project for me was the team effort, whereby all the stakeholders involved were pulling in the same direction. The regional staff and the headquarters staff, obviously all with different backgrounds, all worked together, making the project environment a very pleasant one to work in.

A significant amount of preparatory work was done during the NamParks I, II and III phases before Lund Consulting Engineers CC became involved, which allowed an easy continuation into NamParks III and later the NamParks IV as far as infrastructure in the North-Eastern Parks is concerned. The conditions in which development plans in the Tsau // Khaeb National Park under Phase IV and the other coastal parks under Phase V were implemented are totally different, being located in coastal and desert environments whereas Phases I to III were located in the hot and dry interior and in the North-Eastern Parks. This meant that different types of buildings had to be designed to cater for the harsh desert and coastal environments, which required much more input from the architects and engineers than was the case with some of the previous phases. Changes to the previous designs were needed, as well as new and innovative designs and the use of different materials more appropriate to the environment. The circumstances in which the MEFT staff lived, in really windy, humid and sandy areas, and being housed in prefabricated and old buildings, which were no longer adequate, made for tough living and working conditions.

Starting with a needs assessment, to define what was required, new infrastructure was planned, designed and constructed. The implementation was also challenging, due to the remoteness of the sites, such as in Khaudum, where for example access is a problem, requiring the contractors to plan their logistics very well. The improved infrastructure has contributed to markedly improved motivation of MEFT's regional staff, the rangers and wardens in the National Parks. More staff have also been employed and this has contributed to improved park management.

Besides staff-related infrastructure, the water points at Khaudum were also improved, which was needed because there was conflict between elephants and the other game using the old water points in particular during the dry season. This has contributed to improved biodiversity and conservation and in my opinion really made a big impact.

Another important aspect to the NamParks project, apart from the infrastructure component, is the implementation of new Park Management Plans, which are holistic and better integrated. For me, effective conservation starts with safeguarding biodiversity and then ensuring you have a presence in the National Parks, which I think has been achieved by the NamParks project.

In the Tsau //Khaeb (Sperrgebiet) Park, we also conducted an assessment and classification of all the existing old historical infrastructure, like the old mining sites and the old plant located there. We did this to provide a record of what is in the park, so that it can be preserved for the future because the environment is so aggressive, and infrastructure disintegrates very quickly.

Now that new infrastructure has been put in place, efforts to maintain it become important. Without the necessary funding for scheduled maintenance, this infrastructure will deteriorate very quickly, and I hope that the financial means will be available, not only for infrastructure maintenance, but for retaining MEFT's staff, to ensure the sustainability of the NamParks project.

Many people don't know about the development which has taken place in the various National Parks, and now's a wonderful opportunity to go and see these areas that are now easily accessible. Namibia's National Parks host unique and pristine environments which are really worthwhile visiting; there are not many places in the world where one can experience nature largely untouched.

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**The most important and enjoyable aspect of the project for me was the team effort, whereby all the stakeholders involved were pulling in the same direction.**

# 4 THE COOPERATION PARTNERS



Partnerships played a vital role in the NamParks Programme. Building on the foundation of mutual interest and shared conservation objectives and priorities, MEFT, through NamParks, partnered with various national and international stakeholders such as WWF Namibia, the Namibian Nature Foundation (NNF), Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), the North Carolina Zoo representing the SMART partnership, the KAZA TFCA Secretariat, and the University of Namibia (UNAM).

These partnerships achieved tangible results and implemented concrete conservation initiatives targeted by the Namibian Parks Programme. Moreover, partner organizations came together and created value by combining their complementary and diverse strengths, resources, and interests to address issues that were beyond their scope individually. NamParks helped to foster these partnerships to implement several activities strengthening practical implementation of activities on the ground.



Director : NACSO

## Maxi Louis

“

My highlight was when I drove there after they had just finished building the Nkasa-Rupara gate. For over 20 years I have worked in those areas and could never make a distinction between driving through the parks and surrounding areas. As we approached the park the elephants walked out the gate, so whether the gate is there or not they are free to pass through. Looking at how the landscape has changed, the development of the park, how beautiful that development is and how the infrastructure adds value to the parks is amazing. It was a seriously good investment and I would like to thank KfW for that. Parks cannot exist in isolation, their neighbouring communities and farmers are very important to them. We have really strengthened those relationships and just need to make sure we have continuous relationships and partnerships going forward.

WWF

## Richard Diggle

“

The Ministry's as well as KfW's interests were really aligned, they invested hugely in the Parks plans and infrastructure and then trying to get a people's park neighbourhood implementation approach - I think it's been a tremendous success. They got it absolutely right to get top quality infrastructure into the Parks as well as make them great parks for tourists. The first lot of tourism plans were absolutely brilliant and secured many head concessions that went to communities, which increased the sense of ownership as well as job opportunities. It is not just the lodges but the campsites as well which are really important as it is not about the money, it is about saying, "this is our park and we have been given the access and the rights for tourism in that Park." I think NamParks really helped create that platform to have that integrated approach for a social, economic and ecological hub. A lot of credit goes to KfW, the Ministry and particularly Colgar Sikopo who to a large extent has been guiding and managing this.





## The Community Conservation Fund of Namibia - Poverty Oriented Support to Community Conservation in Namibia

The Poverty Oriented Support to Community Conservation in Namibia-HWCM Project started in January 2020. The project is funded through KfW to the tune of EUR 5 million with a project duration until December 2023. The project executing agency is the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN) with overall oversight and responsibility by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism's Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks.

One of the MEFT strategies for the implementation of the Revised National Policy on Human Wildlife Conflict Management was the establishment of a national Human Wildlife Conflict Management Project. This project will contribute to implementing measures in communal conservancies in accordance with the policy. The project provides target conservancies with the means to address HWC challenges in line with the national policies of Namibia. The overall objective of the project is:

- To contribute to biodiversity conservation and rural development in Namibia's communal conservancies through the establishment of sustainable HWC management systems.

To achieve the stated objective, five major output areas have been identified and these will be financed out of the financial contributions to this Project.

In May 2020, after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, MEFT, with support from different donors established the Conservation Relief, Resilience and Recovery Facility (CRRRF). The aim of the facility is to provide financial relief to CBNRM institutions affected by the pandemic by ensuring the continuation of anti-poaching activities, mitigation of HWC, preservation of natural resources and management of wildlife. In support of the CRRRF facility, KfW made available an additional EUR 5 million to the HWCM project to add an additional component aimed at supporting measures/packages to mitigate economic losses of conservancies.



Le Roux van Schalkwyk

Director - Namibia Nature Foundation

# Angus Middleton

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**T**he NamParks Programme has been an incredible investment, when considering that nature based tourism is estimated to account for at least 36% of all visitors to Namibia. In 2018 this was estimated at a value of N\$5.2 billion in terms of overall economic value. Of this, National Parks account for almost 42% of the value, making development of National Parks a good investment option. But perhaps more interestingly this has helped drive significant value from communal conservancies, accounting for 35% of the value. Noting that many if not all conservancies that are economically active border along and have relations with National Parks through the Good Neighbours approach of the Ministry of Environment Forestry and Tourism. With investments in both National Parks and Communal Conservancies NamParks has underpinned an extraordinary development programme with widespread benefits, right from global benefits of having more nature protected through to benefits to local individuals and communities.



Programme Director - IRDNC

# Willie Boonzaaier

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**C**ommunities are a direct beneficiary of the NamParks project, and IRDNC's role is to support communities, and help coordinate field activities. IRDNC has been involved in conservation for many years and programmes like NamParks give another level of support. It's synchronised, and with this funding we are revitalising activities in the field.

To keep CBNRM going you need good governance, natural resource management and income generation. NamParks focuses on protected areas, but because of our park and neighbour policy, they also want to see that neighbouring communities benefit from those parks. This becomes a vehicle through which we can move toward communities benefiting as a whole.

We are very excited about NamParks V and seeing the North West of Namibia getting support. In the Zambezi Region, before Covid-19, conservancies were fairly financially independent. The Kunene Region is very different as there is little to no income in the far northwest. Now with NamParks V, which is going to focus on the Skeleton Coast, we hope that similar programmes could benefit conservancies in Kunene.



Tertu Illeka



# 5 NAMLESSONS



- The team of Implementation Consultants were fully integrated in the DWNP which created a positive social cohesion for joint implementation, thus contributing to the success of the programme.
- Integrated park management means not only working with park neighbours and relevant stakeholders, it also means also that all components of the projects - the infrastructure and tourism development - have to be well planned and integrated. NamParks IV has produced many high quality plans, strategies and guidelines which are serving as a solid basis for the future DWNP work.
- The developed SMART monitoring system is a good tool for digital data management of protected areas. This should be expanded into a comprehensive park information management system for DWNP.
- Many governmental, non-governmental organisations and international financing institutions are working in the nature conservation sector in Namibia. The MEFT as the main actor is not always able to coordinate all these stakeholders properly. Information is not shared adequately. In this regard the Directorate of Wildlife and National Parks should strengthen its capacities.
- The CBRNM process in Namibia has been a success story for the past 25 years and has very much contributed to the overall increase of wildlife numbers in the country. However, new elements of this process should be thought of and the approach should be broadened.





