

ANNUAL REPORT  
2023



## The State of **Community Conservation** in Namibia

A review of Communal Conservancies, Community Forests and other community based natural resource management initiatives



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The annual State of Community Conservation Report is a joint publication from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO). It is very much a collaborative effort. Conservancies and other community conservation organisations gather data throughout the year. This is then returned to them in poster form and used in adaptive conservancy management. The data are also supplied to the MEFT and the NACSO working groups to enable evaluation and reporting on programme achievements and challenges at a national level. Only key data are presented in this printed report. The full data are shared with partner organisations working in conservation and presented on our website: [communityconservationnamibia.com](http://communityconservationnamibia.com)

Contributors to the website and this report are far too numerous to mention individually, however, all staff of the MEFT and various community conservation organisations are gratefully acknowledged for their contributions. We would also like to thank all enterprises, private sector partners, NGOs and individuals who provide data and information.

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A full list of funding partners is presented on  
[communityconservationnamibia.com](http://communityconservationnamibia.com)

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## FOREWORD

**The rational for community-based conservation aligns with Namibia's overall objectives for the preservation of natural process and ecosystems to sustainably utilise our natural resources. Namibia is steadfast on a positive trajectory as community conservation continues to contribute to the country's conservation successes with growing wildlife populations and accrued benefits to communities. Our conservation successes are coupled with social and economic challenges such as a growing human population, the effects of climate change, and a prolonged drought across many parts of our country. These challenges have lead to an increase in the number of human wildlife conflict incidents. We continue to note in some instances that poor administration of community-based institutions leads to limited or no or benefits for communities. In many cases, the most vulnerable members of our communities are affected, putting more pressure on their scarce resources at household level. It is therefore critical for us all to work together and find solutions.**

We held the first ever National Conference on Human Wildlife Conflict Management in May this year. The conference reviewed and discussed progress, challenges and opportunities in the implementation of the Revised National Policy on Human Wildlife Conflict Management. The conference provided specific solutions and actions to implement prevention, protection and mitigation strategies for human wildlife conflict management. Community based conservation institutions such as conservancies and community forests are the most affected by the impact of human wildlife conflict. I would like to see the successful implementation of the recommendations made at this conference as measures to reduce the conflicts and associated impacts.

Sustainable utilisation is beneficial to the people of Namibia and contributes significantly to achieving conservation milestones in the country. Our community-based institutions operate independently from government and, as such, their operations are sustained from the utilization of natural resources through sustainable hunting, harvesting or tourism. Its concerning to see the number of countries that are contemplating banning the importation of trophies hunted from range countries such as Namibia. The impact will not only be felt by Namibia but conservation on the sub-continent will suffer medium to long term impacts of such decisions.

Our objective still remains **livelihood improvement through sustainable community conservation**, and we will continue to provide support to the rural communities working hard to conserve their natural environment.

The 2023 Tourist Statistical report reveals that international tourist arrivals increased by 87.4 percent, from 461,027 in 2022, to 863,872 in 2023. The number of arrivals has contributed to an increase in revenue for our community-based institutions. While the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility (CRRRF) was critical in supporting community-based institutions during the global pandemic, the boost in the generation of revenue indicates recovery, as they were able to continue to cover their operational costs. As we move to the resilience stage of the facility, there is an opportunity for communities to venture into alternative income generating opportunities.

In conclusion, our objective still remains livelihood improvement through sustainable community conservation and we will continue to provide support to the rural communities working hard to conserve their natural environment.

  
**Pohamba Shifeta, MP**  
Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism

# WHO WE ARE

## COMMUNAL CONSERVANCIES, COMMUNITY FORESTS AND FISHERIES RESERVES

Namibia's communal conservancies and community forests are self-governing entities legally recognised by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT). Conservancies and community forests receive training and support from the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO). Fisheries reserves are similar entities, legally recognised by the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) and supported by MFMR and NACSO partners.

Each conservancy, community forest and fisheries reserve has a constitution and elects a management committee. Conservancies, community forests and fisheries reserves work to conserve and protect the environment, and to earn revenue from the sustainable use of natural resources. There are also three community associations within national parks, which are managed like conservancies.

Ten regional conservancy associations in Erongo, Kavango, Zambezi, Omaheke, Kunene (two), Otjozondjupa (two), the north-central areas and the south act as representative umbrella organisations for conservancies in their areas.

### MEFT

The mission of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism is to promote biodiversity conservation in the Namibian environment through the sustainable utilisation of natural resources and tourism development for the maximum social and economic benefit of our citizens.

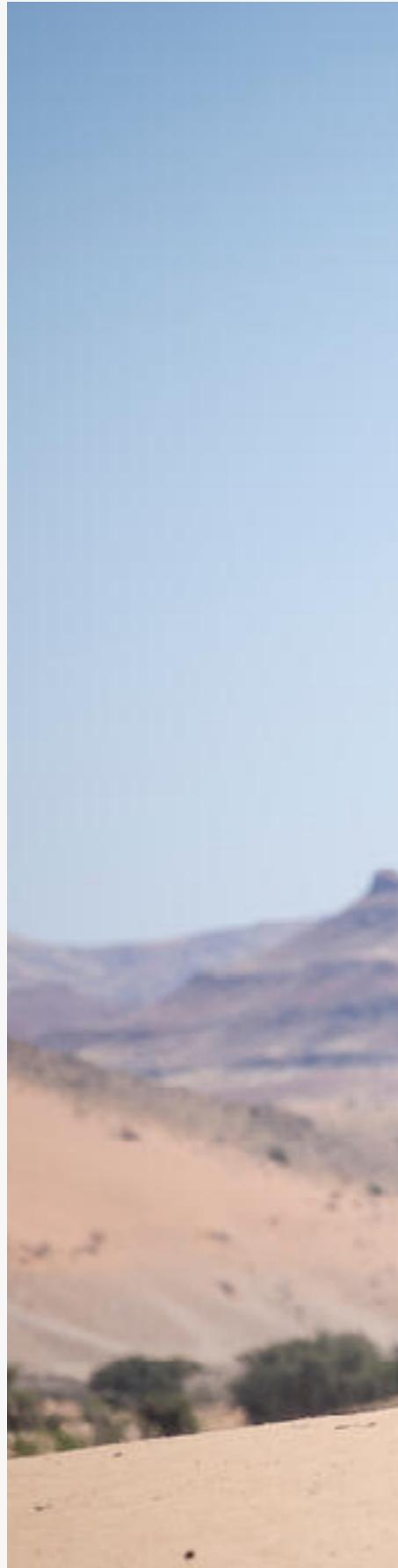
### NACSO

NACSO is a networking organisation that coordinates the work of its members in partnership with the MEFT and other government ministries.

Full and associate members give direct support to conservancies in the form of training, advice, technical and logistical support, and advocate for sustainable development and links to the tourism industry.

### WORKING GROUPS

Three working groups provide technical expertise: the Natural Resources Working Group (NRWG), the Institutional Development Working Group (IDWG), and the Business, Enterprises and Livelihoods Working Group (BELWG). These are flexible constellations of NACSO members and partners that pool experience and resources to provide effective support to conservancies, community forests and fisheries reserves, which are gazetted and fall under the legal responsibility of the MEFT and the MFMR, respectively.





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## A COMMON VISION

Ronny Dempers – NACSO Chairperson

**As we reflect on 2023, we are proud of the innovations and initiatives that the CBNRM Programme has continued to put in place and to build upon. The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) remains dedicated to ensuring communities are empowered and resilient, to both maintain their past successes and achieve new ones. Over its long history, the CBNRM programme has undergone many transformations. Key to the growth this year has been the normalisation of activities and income post-COVID-19, allowing the programme to move forward with the times. This year has highlighted the importance of adaptation and resilience in a changing environment.**

Namibia continues to suffer from harsh climatic conditions and drought, particularly in the northwest, which impact wildlife, livestock and livelihoods. Other challenges facing communities include the movement of the mining industry into sensitive areas, with the processes around consultation and compensation presenting major challenges for CBNRM. Mining activities can be detrimental to wildlife, the environment and water resources, and can cause the breakdown of tourism efforts within conservancies, resulting in devastating losses of income. While tourism and conservation hunting are recovering well and returning to pre-pandemic levels, it is still imperative to focus on the diversification of livelihoods to ensure that communities can benefit from multiple income generating activities which are not exclusively dependent on global markets. Namibia has also witnessed the emergence of new industries which promise huge benefits, such as green hydrogen. There is a need for NACSO to engage closely within these new industries, to ensure CBNRM and community voices are heard, and that benefits are maximised for communities.

Throughout Namibia, NACSO and all its partners have continued not only to lead community conservation efforts, but also to learn from one another how to adapt and develop innovative ways to thrive. One of the ways NACSO is addressing change is the digital transformation being integrated across the CBNRM programme. While Namibia still grapples with a significant digital gap, NACSO is working hard to ensure that our local communities are not left behind in embracing technology. Leveraging systems and devices like SMART, we have enhanced and streamlined conservation efforts, empowering communities to monitor, safeguard and manage their natural resources more effectively.

One of 2023's achievements was the hosting of the first-ever Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) Conservation Congress in Windhoek in October, in partnership with the Alliance for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for Conservation in Africa (AICA) and the Community Leaders Network (CLN). NACSO received praise, not only for its organisational skills, but for its outstanding Namibian hospitality. This congress brought together over 300 IPLCs, governments, donors and NGOs from over 47 African countries to develop a collaborative strategy for people-centred and community-led conservation in Africa. The IPLC Congress was unquestionably the high point of NACSO's effort to empower local communities. The Congress has highlighted the need for NACSO to clearly define and articulate its working relationship with IPLCs in Namibia.

2023 also saw gains in momentum by regional conservancy associations, as well as work towards the formation of a national community voice on conservation issues. Once this body is established, NACSO will work on defining and developing its relationship with this organised, nationally representative community voice.

Additionally, NACSO's involvement in several international forums, including the 7<sup>th</sup> GEF Assembly in Vancouver, Canada and the CITES Livelihoods and Engagement of IPLCs Working Group meeting in Cusco, Peru, demonstrated our efforts to promote international linkages. NACSO's participation in the Enhancing Participatory Democracy in Namibia (EPDN) Programme, funded by the European Union, is testament to our ongoing commitment to strengthening the voices of community-based and civil society organisations within national parliamentary discourse, while also improving their ability to successfully engage with policy concerns.



Throughout Namibia, NACSO and all its partners have continued not only to lead community conservation efforts, but also to **learn from one another how to adapt and develop innovative ways to thrive.**

Throughout 2023, the NACSO Executive Committee oversaw the implementation of the NACSO Strategic Plan with close monitoring to ensure the organisation is meeting its objectives. One of the pivotal initiatives undertaken by the Executive Committee was the establishment of a Task Committee to explore alternative organisational structures to better address the evolving needs of NACSO as a voluntary association. The committee made two recommendations for restructuring into a Section 21 company or a Trust. These recommendations will have an impact on the Secretariat and operations will be thoroughly discussed and acted upon in the upcoming year. Steps toward the establishment of a NACSO Training Institute continue in order to provide accredited training to contribute and respond to the growth within conservancies.

To better understand its capabilities for providing services, NACSO conducted a needs assessment through its member, the University of Namibia's (UNAM) Multi-Disciplinary Research and Research Centre and Consultancy (MRCC). This assessment was

undertaken to prioritise the most important services needed by community forests, conservancies and inland fisheries. NACSO also actively participated in the CBNRM Week, a platform that brings partners together to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration. Additionally, a partnership workshop with WWF explored areas of continued cooperation and constructive collaboration.

NACSO supported successes, learning and growth in 2023, and along with all its partners, addressed the new and ongoing challenges in community conservation throughout Namibia. Looking ahead, NACSO remains committed to conservation, community development and a sustainable future for local communities, recognising the importance of ongoing collaboration at local, national and international levels to achieve these goals. When we work together, we can overcome any obstacles and achieve our common goal of a just and sustainable future for all.

## Big Issues Impacting Conservancies

- Drought and other impacts of climate change have significant and far-reaching effects on rural communities that depend on subsistence farming for their livelihoods.
- The granting of mining rights within conservancies is jeopardising the development and sustainability of wildlife and tourism activities which are crucial for environmental conservation and the resilience of local communities' livelihoods.
- Tourism remains a primary income source for conservancies, and although it has recovered from the impacts of COVID-19, it remains critical to diversify income and livelihoods.
- The emergence of new industries and the challenges and opportunities they pose, require the development of a detailed engagement strategy with multiple stakeholders.
- The encroachment of people into wildlife zones and wildlife corridors poses a significant threat to the conservation and development objectives of conservancies.
- Building capacity in newly elected, incoming management committees takes time and results in challenges to the ongoing and effective management of conservancy operations due to the steep learning curve and a loss of institutional knowledge with outgoing committees.

# PARTNER PROFILE

## NDT

Namibia Development Trust's (NDT) mission is to develop the organisational and institutional capacities of marginalised rural and urban communities in Namibia. NDT's approach is people-centred and focused on social development and community participation.

NDT was formed in 1987, predating Namibia's independence, as a welfare organisation to determine how to channel overseas development assistance to previously disadvantaged communities under apartheid and colonial rule. NDT was established by a consortium of civil society organisations including the Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) and the Namibia National Students Organisation (NANSO). The founding trustees were focused on the philosophy of liberation from within and were, themselves, leaders in the struggle for independence. On 21 March 1989, exactly a year before independence, NDT was constituted as a Trust to promote the welfare and livelihoods of the majority disadvantaged and poor communities in rural Namibia.

NDT's vision is self-reliant community-based organisations (CBO) supporting both rural and urban communities. A society that is made up of communities capable of self-management is able to determine its own destiny by mobilising local and external resources and promoting participatory and more equitable development.

### **The well-known development theory of change also informs NDT's approach:**

If you give me a fish, you have fed me for a day.  
If you teach me to fish, then you have fed me until the river is contaminated or the shoreline seized for development.  
But if you teach me to organise, then whatever the challenge I can join together with my peers, and we will fashion our own solutions.

## NDT AT A GLANCE



**1987**

*NDT is established*



**7**

*regions that we work in*



**6**

*conservancies in North Central*



**6**

*conservancies and 1 community trust (Aus Community Trust) in the South*



**6**

*conservancies in Otojondjupa*



**78,820**

*number of residents*



NDT believes that once communities are better organised, no matter what the situation and the issues confronting them, they will be able to overcome those challenges. While this approach takes longer to produce results, it provides better resilience for communities. This was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Investing in building community-based organisations and their human resource capacity involves investing in their leadership and followership. CBOs should be constituted by able leaders and have a followership, or membership, which ensures that the necessary checks and balances are in place.

For more than 30 years, NDT has worked throughout Namibia with rural and urban communities based on this development approach. Today, NDT supports 16 conservancies and 11 community forests in the North Central, Otjozondjupa and southern regions of the country, as well as all ten regional and one national conservancy and community forest associations. NDT maintains a working relationship with other civil society networks, including outside the CBNRM sector. NDT supports the Namibia Rural Women's Association, which has 14 chapters nationwide, and it has also supported more than 20 other cooperative organisations in the past.

Although NDT is a key partner in the CBNRM programme, its key difference is that it has a much broader mandate, working across civil society on women's rights, indigenous peoples' rights, advocacy, governance, networking and amplifying community voices. NDT is working towards a better future for Namibia's rural and urban populations through support to CBOs that are making a difference at the grassroots level. As the landscape of development work changes and new challenges must be met, whether from economic, climate or health factors, NDT is committed to uplifting the voices of communities and individuals and helping them to manage their own futures.

# COMMUNITY CONSERVATION ONLINE

This report, the State of Community Conservation Report, functions to raise awareness about CBNRM and to highlight the annual achievements and challenges experienced by rural communities in Namibia who are managing and benefiting from their natural resources. However, it is limited to a publication format.

The State of Community Conservation in Namibia website – [communityconservationnamibia.com](http://communityconservationnamibia.com) – serves to reach a much broader audience. The website provides more in-depth access to information on the programme, the issues facing conservancies

and updated data and statistics. It is an invaluable resource, delivering accessible information to conservancy members in rural areas of Namibia, national level partners, and donors and organisations interested in strengthening community conservation in other parts of the world.

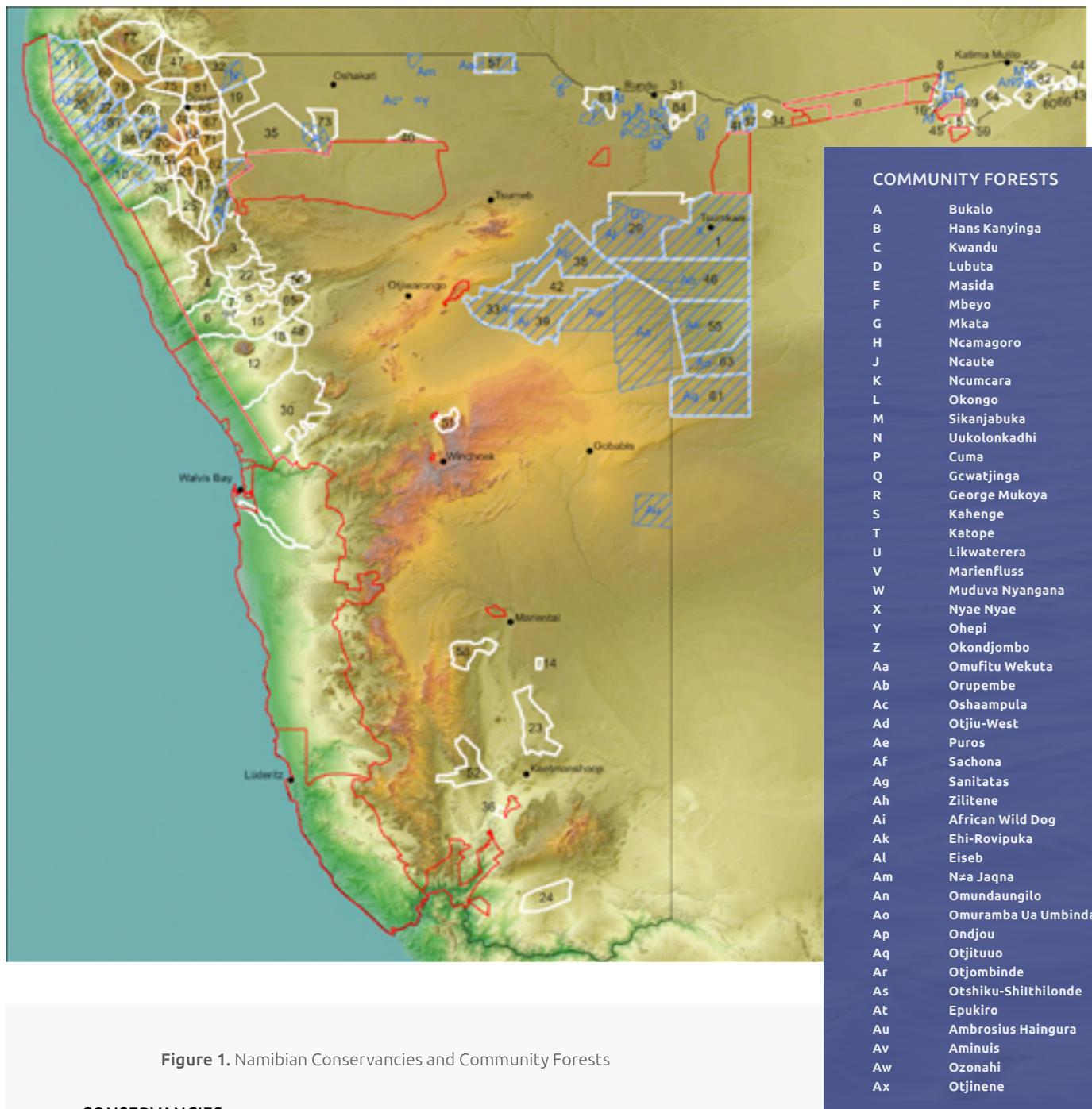
The website, like this report, is jointly hosted by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO). Their combined contributions have provided the most comprehensive source of information on community conservation in Namibia.



SCAN HERE FOR  
MORE INFO



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**Figure 1.** Namibian Conservancies and Community Forests

## CONSERVANCIES

1. Nyaе Nyae	24. //Gamaseb	47. Kunene River	70. Ombujokanguindi
2. Salambala	25. Anabeb	48. Ohungu	71. Otuzemba
3. ≠Khoadi-//Hōas	26. Sesfontein	49. Sobbe	72. Otjiu-West
4. Torra	27. Sanitatas	50. //Audi	73. lipumbu ya Tshilongo
5. Wuparo	28. Ozondundu	51. Ovitoto	74. Okatjandja Kozomenje
6. Doro !nawas	29. ≠ña Jaqna	52. !Han /Awab	75. Ombazu
7. Uibasen Twyfelfontein	30. ≠Gaingu	53. Okondjombo	76. Okanguati
8. Kwandu	31. Joseph Mbambangandu	54. Otjambangu	77. Epupa
9. Mayuni	32. Uukolonkadhi Ruacana	55. Eiseb	78. Otjikondavirongo
10. Puros	33. Ozonahi	56. Sikunga	79. Etanga
11. Marienfluss	34. Shamungwa	57. Okongo	80. Nakabolelwia
12. Tsiseb	35. Sheya Shuushona	58. Huibes	81. Ombombo
13. Ehi-Rovipuka	36. !Gawachab	59. Dzoti	82. Lusese
14. Oskop	37. Muduva Nyangana	60. Otjitanda	83. Maurus Nekaro
15. Sorris Sorris	38. Otjituuo	61. Otjombinde	84. Kapinga kaMwalye
16. Mashi	39. African Wild Dog	62. Orupupa	85. Otjindjere
17. Omatendeka	40. King Nehale	63. Omuramba ua Mbinda	86. Otjikongo
18. Otjimboyo	41. George Mukoya	64. Bāmunu	¤ Kyaramacan Association
19. Uukwaluudhi	42. Okamatapati	65. !Khorø !goreb	Φ Topnara Association
20. Orupembe	43. Kasika	66. Kabulabula	6-7 Doro !nawas/Uibasen
21. Okangundumba	44. Impalila	67. Okongoro	Twyfelfontein/Sorris Sorris Joint
22. //Huab	45. Balyerwa	68. Otjombande	Management
23. !Khob !naub	46. Ondjou	69. Ongongo	

# NAMIBIA COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

## Review of 2023

For over two decades, community conservation has significantly impacted the lives of rural Namibians by enabling them to participate in democratic processes, obtain rights to manage their natural resources and enhance income and benefits for both communities and individuals. The National CBNRM Programme has expanded from its initial four conservancies in 1998 to 86 conservancies and three resident associations in 2023. Additionally, 47 community forests and 20 fisheries reserves have been established as new governance and management structures, further supporting community rights over natural resources and promoting additional benefits. Community forests primarily focus on timber, plant and grazing resources, while fisheries reserves are focused on inland fish resources.

Community conservation efforts have significantly grown and changed, as they seek to address and adapt to the needs of both the environment and communities in Namibia. Throughout its development, the programme has achieved successes and encountered challenges, which has led to a deeper understanding of the complexities of community conservation. The objective of CBNRM is to foster resilience and generate benefits for communities living with wildlife, while also managing their natural resources sustainably.

While the recovery of tourism in 2023, post-COVID-19, is a positive development for Namibia and community conservation, the impact of the pandemic has underscored an even greater necessity to diversify income sources and livelihoods within conservancies. In 2023, new projects sought to address alternative livelihoods with innovative methods and to establish the Socio-Economic Development Fund (SEDF) to provide multiple funding mechanisms for communities to support the development of nature-based enterprises.



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A photograph showing a woman in a red dress holding a baby. In the background, a child in a green dress is visible. The image is partially obscured by a dark red overlay.

**“The CBNRM program has empowered Namibian communities, enhancing resource management and diversifying livelihoods amid ongoing challenges.**

In addition to the need for diversification, the environmental and social repercussions of climate change continue to impact local communities and natural resources throughout Namibia. This has been particularly evident in the northwest, which has faced drought conditions for over nine years, leading to significant losses in both livestock and wildlife, and increasing human wildlife conflict. The drought has had devastating impacts on rural communities whose livelihoods depend on livestock. Other regions of the country continue to experience shorter droughts which contribute to ongoing challenges with food security in rural communities who depend on subsistence farming and are also impacted by human wildlife conflict.

**In 2023, new projects sought to address **alternative livelihoods with innovative methods** and to establish the Socio-Economic Development Fund.**

Although residents of community conservation areas have the power to manage their natural resources and make their own decisions, they do not operate in isolation. Effective CBNRM relies on multiple layers of institutional support. The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) provides overall guidance and maintains standards, while Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) members offer extensive technical and logistical assistance. Furthermore, private sector conservancy partners play a crucial role in connecting international markets with local communities to generate income and create jobs.

The CBNRM programme must continually evolve and adapt while reinforcing fundamental principles of good governance, sustainable natural resource management and equitable benefit distribution to support rural livelihoods. This report provides an update on the growth and progress of the CBNRM programme from its inception through the end of 2023.





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## PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION

During 2023, the Namibian government, conservation and development NGOs and communities participated in important international conservation events, two of which were hosted for the first time in Namibia.

The 21<sup>st</sup> African Wildlife Consultative Forum (AWCF) was hosted in Namibia from 9-13 October 2023 with participation from senior government officials, private hunting organisations, community stakeholders and researchers from across Africa. The AWCF is hosted annually by the Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF). The purpose of the yearly forum is to discuss sustainable use policy, as well as wildlife conservation issues across Africa. It also serves as a platform for the wildlife conservation hunting sector to engage with practical wildlife conservation solutions to contribute to the improvement of local communities' livelihoods and the management of wildlife populations within a wildlife economy.

The 2023 AWCF was co-hosted by the MEFT, the Namibia Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA) and NACSO. Approximately 100 participants from a dozen countries joined the Forum in Windhoek. The focus of the AWCF was the African wildlife economy and opportunities for natural resources to benefit indigenous peoples and local communities.

The AWCF agenda included several breakout sessions on various topics, including the status of hunting in Africa, the role of communities, communicating effectively and, most importantly, achieving a \$30 billion wildlife economy. Namibian speakers, including the Minister of Environment, Forestry and Tourism, highlighted the successes of Namibia's CBNRM Programme, as well as the challenges still faced by human-wildlife conflict, the impacts of climate change and market access for its wildlife.

The discussions underlined a unified voice on the role that hunting and sustainable use can play for conservation in the region, while exploring how African voices can be heard in international forums such as CITES. The AWCF concluded with a clear action agenda and the establishment of three working groups to:

1. Strengthen the hunting sector with data, standards and the sectors' contribution to the 2030 Agenda and the Global Biodiversity Framework;
2. Consolidate governance of elephant and rhino conservation in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) by addressing sustainable use and conservation management challenges; and
3. Build trust and empowerment for CBNRM to renew its positive narrative and focus on a rights-based approach to ensure fair deals for communities.

The inaugural Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLC) Conservation Congress took place in Windhoek from 25-27 October 2023. This landmark event brought together over 300 representatives from IPLCs, governments, donors and NGOs from 47 African countries. They gathered to exchange their experiences, challenges and insights on community-led conservation efforts, and to collaboratively develop a strategy focused on people-centred and community-led conservation in Africa.

The congress was organised by the Alliance for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities for Conservation in Africa (AICA) and the Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) in partnership with the Community Leaders Network (CLN) of Southern Africa, the Indigenous Movement for Peace Advancement and Conflict Transformation (IMPACT), and NACSO.

**We should apply consultation, participation and representation to every conservation policy, because nothing about us without us.**

During the event, participants discussed the preliminary findings of an upcoming study on community conservation in Africa and mapped out a plan for the newly established AICA. This congress offered a unique platform to address IPLC priorities and strategies, building on the discussions initiated during the IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) in Rwanda in July 2022. Participants emphasised that IPLCs, particularly women and youth, are now more organised and empowered than ever to defend their land and livelihood rights.

Moving forward, AICA and its partners will work to establish mechanisms to implement the congress' outcomes at both national and regional levels, as well as provide updated data to guide current and future conservation efforts. The Community Conservation Congress will be held every three years, with the next meeting planned to take place in the Central Africa region. Additionally, the congress will serve as AICA's platform for engaging in future International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) international conferences on protected areas.

Alongside IPLC participants, the congress also attracted policymakers and representatives from prominent regional and international conservation organisations, such as IUCN, the African Wildlife Foundation, the Christensen Fund, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Nature Finance, the Packard Foundation, Conservation International (CI), Arcus Foundation, Rainforest Trust, Global Green Grants and Miserior.

Royal Johan Kxao IUiololo, Deputy Minister for Marginalised Communities of Namibia stated, "We should apply consultation, participation and representation to every conservation policy, because nothing about us without us. The rights of indigenous peoples and local communities must be protected, celebrated and respected." Malidadi Langa, who represents Malawi in CLN

and is the interim Chair of AICA, called the Congress a celebration of community-based conservation. "As IPs and LCs, we have every reason to celebrate community-based conservation because from time immemorial, we have effectively conserved forests, ecosystems and biodiversity through collective ownership, traditional governance and ecological knowledge systems which continue to this day," Langa said. He urged African governments to change the dominant conservation narrative by instead putting people at the center alongside nature.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), was held in Dubai from 30 November to 12 December 2023. This global summit brought together 85,000 world leaders, policymakers, scientists and activists representing government, civil society, business, IPLCs, youth, and philanthropic and international organisations to discuss and negotiate climate action and policies. The conference aimed to foster international cooperation and commitment to achieving a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

The Namibian delegation included President Hage Geingob, several government line ministries, MEFT representatives, private sector and NGOs. Although Namibia is not a significant contributor to global greenhouse gas emissions, it is vulnerable to climate change and it is therefore essential for the country to focus on adaptation strategies. The recent discovery and push for the development off-shore fossil fuel reserves, combined with a significant investment in green hydrogen projects, are impacting climate change dialogues both within Namibia and in the global context.





Community **conservation**  
in **Namibia** empowers rural  
**communities** to manage  
natural resources.

**Key highlights of COP28 include:**

- A comprehensive five-year assessment of progress towards the Paris Agreement goals was concluded. This global stocktake (GST) is focused on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing climate resilience. The GST highlighted the need for increased ambition and commitment to combat climate change.
- Discussions were held on mobilising financial resources to support climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, particularly in developing countries.
- Emphasis was placed on accelerating the transition to renewable energy sources and phasing out fossil fuels.
- Promoting the role of nature-based solutions and natural ecosystems is important in addressing climate change, including reforestation and conservation efforts.
- Ensuring the inclusion of the perspectives and voices of young people and indigenous communities in climate decision-making processes is critical for the future.

International conservation events allow Namibia and the CBNRM programme to share our lessons learned, build key relationships and participate in creating guiding frameworks for our own conservation work.

## PROJECT FINANCE FOR PERMANENCE NAMIBIA FOR LIFE

Namibia for Life (N4L) Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) continues to work to change the funding landscape for community conservation in Namibia, ensuring that conservancies can continue the critical work of conserving wildlife, sustainably using their natural resources and improving the lives of their communities. The focus of N4L in 2023 was on enhancing the Socio-Economic Development Fund (SEDF) and increasing stakeholder engagement at regional and local conservancy levels.

WWF Namibia, working with partners like MEFT, NACSO and Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), co-led the development of the SEDF through the Socio-Economic Development Assessment Reference Group (SEDA RG). The SEDF aims to provide blended finance to community-owned nature-based enterprises (NBEs), promoting socio-economic development, biodiversity conservation and climate resilience at the conservancy level. It aligns with community needs, ensuring both short- and long-term impact, establishing a model for impact investing in Namibia. Guided by Business Financial Solutions (BFS), market and landscape analyses led to recommendations for the fund's structure. Please see page 76 for more details on the SEDF.

Regional and local stakeholder engagement was facilitated through institutional support grants awarded to partners including IRDNC, Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), Namibia Development Trust (NDT), Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN) and Rössing Foundation. These grants reached 83 conservancies, covering all eight regional clusters, and involving over 8,900 community members and more than 20 support agencies and government representatives in decision-making.

In June 2023, N4L updates were shared with nine regional conservancy associations who convened to discuss the establishment of a national conservancies' association. Updates on N4L were also shared during the Leading the Change: Civil Society, Rights and Environment Programme Inception Workshop. An Indigenous Communities and CBNRM meeting of eight indigenous peoples' organisations was also held and addressed lessons and ongoing collaboration, a key step for the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) within the N4L Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework (ESSF).

In the Zambezi Region, IRDNC provided technical support across 15 conservancies, organised biannual meetings which required cross-border collaboration between Botswana, Namibia, Angola and Zambia. The biannual meetings emphasised land protection, wildlife conservation, socio-economic growth, climate resilience and anti-poaching. The Zambezi Chairpersons Forum reviewed a draft constitution for the Namibia Communal Conservancies and Community Forests Alliance, while 14 conservancies were helped with AGM preparations. The meetings encouraged youth participation and climate change adaptation through diversified livelihoods.



**N4L aims to enhance  
stakeholder engagement  
and improve conservancy  
financing systems.**

In Kunene North, 30 conservancies participated in biannual meetings, discussing N4L and the ESSF. The forums provided platforms for Women for Conservation (WFC) and Youth in Conservation (YiC), drawing over 100 attendees. Constituency councillors and government directors engaged with communities on development and compliance. In 2023, 2,522 people, including 904 women, attended conservancy annual general meetings (AGM). N4L also reached community game guards (CGGs) across 19 conservancies during monitoring events, including a full-moon count focused on black-faced impala and elephant. Climate adaptation efforts continued, with over 80 women attending AGMs through the WFC initiative.

In Kunene South and Erongo, the Southern Kunene Conservancy Association (SKCA) held an N4L inception meeting in July 2023. Thirty-eight representatives from conservancies, NGOs and stakeholders discussed issues such as mining conflicts, human-wildlife conflict, water assessments, wildlife restocking and game management and utilisation plans (GMUPs). Conservancy level meetings to raise awareness on N4L were also supported in four conservancies.

In Kavango East and West, the Kavango Conservancies and Community Forest Regional Association (KEWCCFRA) held their first N4L meeting in May 2023, with discussions focused on sustainable financing, land protection and maximising economic benefits. In October 2023, N4L was introduced at the village level in several conservancies to raise awareness and strengthen governance. Traditional authorities and village committees supported the initiative, but requested ongoing assistance to enhance management and increase member benefits.

In the North-Central regions, a peer review meeting introduced N4L to six conservancies. Engagements, including pre-AGM and AGM meetings, reached over 2,500 conservancy members, focusing on youth and female representation. Concerns were raised about the exclusion of community forests with members suggesting that forests be included in conservation efforts. Human-wildlife conflict and illegal activities were reported in one conservancy, prompting calls for further support. Participants were encouraged to adhere to N4L's five compliance pillars, and training for newly elected office bearers was provided to strengthen governance.

In the Otjozondjupa Region, a regional CBNRM Stakeholders' Forum in September 2023 discussed N4L with 39 participants from 20 organisations. Key challenges included conflicting land uses and a lack of youth involvement. N4L's goals were also presented to 292 members of Ondjou Conservancy, who expressed commitment to the project. The conservancy held its AGM, providing training in wildlife management and joint venture contract compliance. N4L's objectives were also highlighted during the mid-year audits in seven conservancies to ensure alignment with resource management goals.

In Namibia's southern region, conservancies received support from the NDT and partners in late 2023 for pre-AGM planning and N4L awareness. Conservancies were introduced to N4L's goals, with members pledging support. AGMs saw varying attendance, with discussions centred on improving compliance with standard operating procedures. Concerns arose about the southern region receiving less project attention due to limited income streams. Workshops with the NamParks 5 project explored concession opportunities and supported N4L's objectives.

In the Omaheke Region, the first N4L presentation took place in November 2023, attended by representatives from three conservancies. Conservancy representatives requested that fund disbursements consider different conditions, as some conservancies need support to meet compliance standards. In December 2023, MEFT presented N4L at the Omuramba Ua Mbinda Conservancy AGM, attended by 66 members and conservancy management committee representatives.

## TERMINOLOGY OF INCOME, BENEFITS AND RETURNS

For clarity, the following terms are consistently used in this report:

**INCOME** – indicates cash income received as payment for goods or services, either by organisations or individuals.

**BENEFITS** – indicates benefits distributed by a conservancy as dividends or social benefits, or by the private sector as fringe benefits and donations which go to communities or individual households and can be divided into three types:

- cash benefits are dividends paid to conservancy members from conservancy income;
- in-kind benefits include meat distribution and fringe benefits from tourism employment such as staff housing, etc.; and
- social benefits are investments in community initiatives including education facilities, health services, etc.

**RETURNS** – combine income and benefits and indicate overall returns, either to individuals, communities or conservancies.

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AT A GLANCE

At the end of 2023 there were:

**86**

*registered communal conservancies and 3 community conservation associations*

**74**

*conservancies with a zonation plan*

**47**

*registered community forests*

**767**

*game guards working in conservancies*

**20**

*community fisheries reserves in 7 conservancies*

**19**

*sustainable business and financial plans in place*

**22**

*concessions in national parks or on other state land held by 28 conservancies (some conservancies share concessions)*

**80**

*annual financial reports presented*

**83**

*registered conservancies and 1 association using the Event Book monitoring tool*

**82**

*annual general meetings held*

**54**

*conservancies conducting annual game counts*

**12%**

*female chairpersons*

**48**

*conservancies with own use harvesting quotas*

**47%**

*female treasurers/financial managers*

**79**

*conservancies with a game management and utilisation plan*

**35%**

*female management committee members*



## WHAT'S BEING ACHIEVED

Community conservation covers

**185,809 km<sup>2</sup>** which is about **60.7%** of all communal land with an estimated **244,587** residents (**7,384** residents supported by the Kyaramacan Association live in Bwabwata National Park and **468** residents supported by ≠Aonin Community Association live in the Dorob and Namib Naukluft National Parks, and **900** residents supported by the !Gobaob Hai//om Community Association live in the Etosha National Park)

Of this area, conservancies manage **166,179 km<sup>2</sup>** which comprises **20.2%** of Namibia

**47 registered community forests** cover a total area of almost **93,400 km<sup>2</sup>**, with around **19,600 km<sup>2</sup>** outside of conservancy boundaries

**Namibia's elephant population** grew from around 7,600 to around 23,600 between 1995 and 2016 according to aerial survey data\*

Namibia has the **largest free-roaming population of black rhinos** in the world

From the beginning of 1990 to the end of 2023, **community conservation contributed** an estimated **N\$ 15.468 billion** to Namibia's net national income

Community conservation **facilitated 2,340 jobs** in 2023\*\*

**56 conservancies** hosted a total of **93** enterprises based on natural resources

**Conservancy residents earned** a total cash income of **N\$ 90,525,478** from enterprise wages, of which:

- N\$ 57,744,805 was from joint-venture tourism
- N\$ 30,798,243 from conservancies
- N\$ 1,982,430 from conservation hunting

**Conservancy residents** received **90,116 kg of game meat from hunting**

**Conservancies generated** total cash income and in-kind benefits to rural communities of **N\$ 166,855,933** in 2023, of this

- Conservation hunting generated N\$ 48,986,405 with a meat value of N\$ 2,433,132
- Tourism generated N\$ 111,167,250
- Indigenous plant products generated N\$ N\$ 1,194,835
- Miscellaneous income (including interest) generated N\$ 3,074,311

Conservancies received **N\$ 19,441,133** in grants

**N\$ 28,026,553** in **cash benefits** was distributed to conservancy residents and used to support community projects

\* Craig, Gibson and Uiseb (2021) Namibia's elephants – population, distribution and trends. Pachyderm 62:35-5

\*\* Does not include the number of crafts and harvesters

## CBNRM AND THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

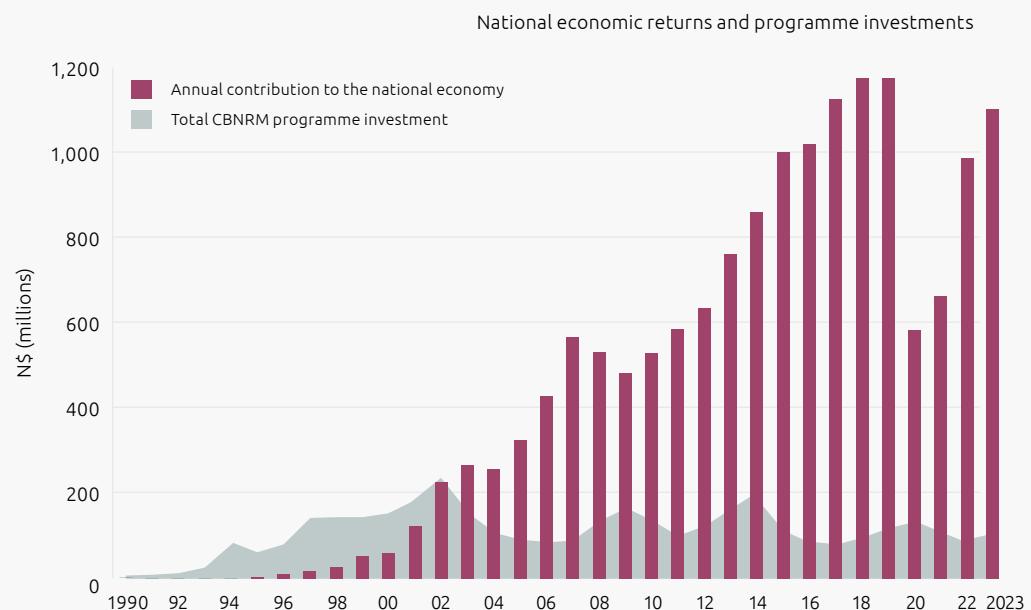
Although the CBNRM programme focuses primarily on empowering rural communities, the overall economic impact of the programme on the Namibian economy is substantial. Community conservation has contributed to the national economy through tourism, conservation hunting and other enterprises.

In 2023, the net national income (NNI) contribution made by CBNRM was about N\$ 1075 million. The NNI contribution can be defined as the value of goods and services that community conservation activities make available each year to the nation. Between 1990 and 2023, the cumulative value of the NNI contribution amounts to an estimated N\$ 15.268 billion. This contribution is 4.0 times greater than the cumulative

investment into the programme through donors and support organisations, which is estimated at N\$ 3.8 billion. The NNI contribution is estimated by also considering the multiplier effects of international visitors (tourists and hunters) visiting Namibian communal conservancies.

Multiplier effects of industries related to CBNRM include:

- **Airlines, hotels and car rental companies;**
- **Private sector tourism and hunting operations related to conservancies;**
- **Rental and taxes; and**
- **Further spending generated by the additional income above.**



**Figure 2.** Estimates of the yearly national economic returns from the CBNRM programme. This cumulatively adds up to about N\$ 3.8 billion of investment between 1990 and 2023. The contributions are made up mainly from donors, MEFT and NGOs.

Since 1990, the programme has had an economic internal rate of 18% and has earned an economic present value of some N\$ 2,270 million, indicating a highly positive economic return for programme investment. Investment in the conservancy programme started before the first conservancies were officially

gazetted in 1996, as community game guards were being trained and the communities mobilised around the concept of CBNRM. Investment was higher than economic returns until 2002, when the programme broke even (Figure 2).

**Table 1.** The Economic Efficiency of CBNRM. Since 1990, the program has had an economic internal rate of return of 18% and has earned an economic net present value of N\$ 2.270 billion – a very positive economic return for programme investment.

Years of investment	Economic Rate of Return	Net Present Value N\$
19	10%	230,575,200
21	12%	473,659,155
23	15%	749,188,894
25	16%	1,090,305,176
27	17%	1,478,119,670
29	18%	1,851,850,606
31	18%	2,008,463,811
33	18%	2,270,466,864

Besides the monetary value of the programme, wildlife itself has a tangible value (minimally, as meat). Accurate population estimates for all species are difficult to determine, but wildlife numbers have increased since 1990, although drought conditions in the northwest have led to recent wildlife declines. The ecosystem services provided by plants and animals that

are managed through CBNRM are also difficult to calculate in monetary terms, but these are nonetheless substantial contributions nationally and globally. The economic figures presented in Figure 2 and Table 1 indicate the more easily measurable impact of CBNRM only and therefore represent a partial estimate of its true positive impact.

## CBNRM AND THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Namibia's fifth National Development Plan consists of four pillars. Community conservation makes a significant contribution to each of these pillars in the following ways:



### Economic progression

- generates cash and in-kind benefits to conservancies and members
- promotes economic development and poverty reduction through livelihood diversification and private sector partnerships
- facilitates new jobs and income opportunities in rural areas, especially within the tourism, hunting, natural plant products and craft sectors



### Social Transformation

- promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women through equal access to employment and governance, resources and economic opportunities
- increases household food security and reduces malnutrition through livelihood diversification and the provision of game meat
- promotes cultural pride and the conservation of cultural heritage through responsible tourism and the development of living museums and other cultural tourism activities



### Environmental Sustainability

- makes significant contributions to environmental conservation, funded through tourism and conservation hunting income
- promotes equal access to natural resources through formal management structures and participatory processes
- encourages a sense of ownership over natural resources and responsibility for development
- facilitates the reduction and reversal of land degradation and deforestation through mandated, structured and sustainable natural resource management
- facilitates integrated land-use planning through formal management structures and collaboration with other community, government and private sector stakeholders
- promotes sustainable practices and increases agricultural productivity through land-use diversification, structured and sustainable management, and activities such as conservation agriculture and community rangeland management



### Governance

- promotes democracy in rural areas through community participation and democratic election of office bearers
- emphasises accountability, transparency and good governance through performance monitoring and evaluation
- emphasises the equitable distribution of returns
- enables significant capacity enhancement through on-going training in governance, natural resource management and business, as well as in-service training in the private sector





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# COMMUNITY CONSERVATION GOVERNANCE

## Review of 2023

**Good governance is the cornerstone of community conservation efforts in Namibia and from year to year, it remains the top priority for conservancies. Governance efforts are focused on maintaining communication among members, elected representatives and staff, sharing benefits with communities and managing finances. The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism's (MEFT) established guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are in place to ensure that conservancies adhere to national governance standards.**

Compliance with the SOPs is assessed based on five key criteria: conducting an Annual General Meeting (AGM), distributing benefits according to a Benefit Distribution Plan (BDP), reporting on wildlife management in alignment with a Game Management and Utilisation Plan (GMUP) and providing satisfactory annual financial reports. Additionally, Conservancy Management Committees (CMCs) must be elected in accordance with the terms and procedures outlined in each conservancy's constitution.

The governance commitment and performance review process is undertaken by conservancies and their field partners who work together to assess performance. Evaluations are based on specific criteria related to member engagement, benefit planning and distribution, accountability, stakeholder engagement and financial management.

Effective governance relies not only on the actions of individual conservancies, but also on the engagement of their members and the broader national conservation landscape. The MEFT collaborates with the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) Institutional Development Working Group (IDWG) to enhance democratic governance, management



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**Good effective governance ensures communication, benefits distribution, and financial management within community conservancies in Namibia.**

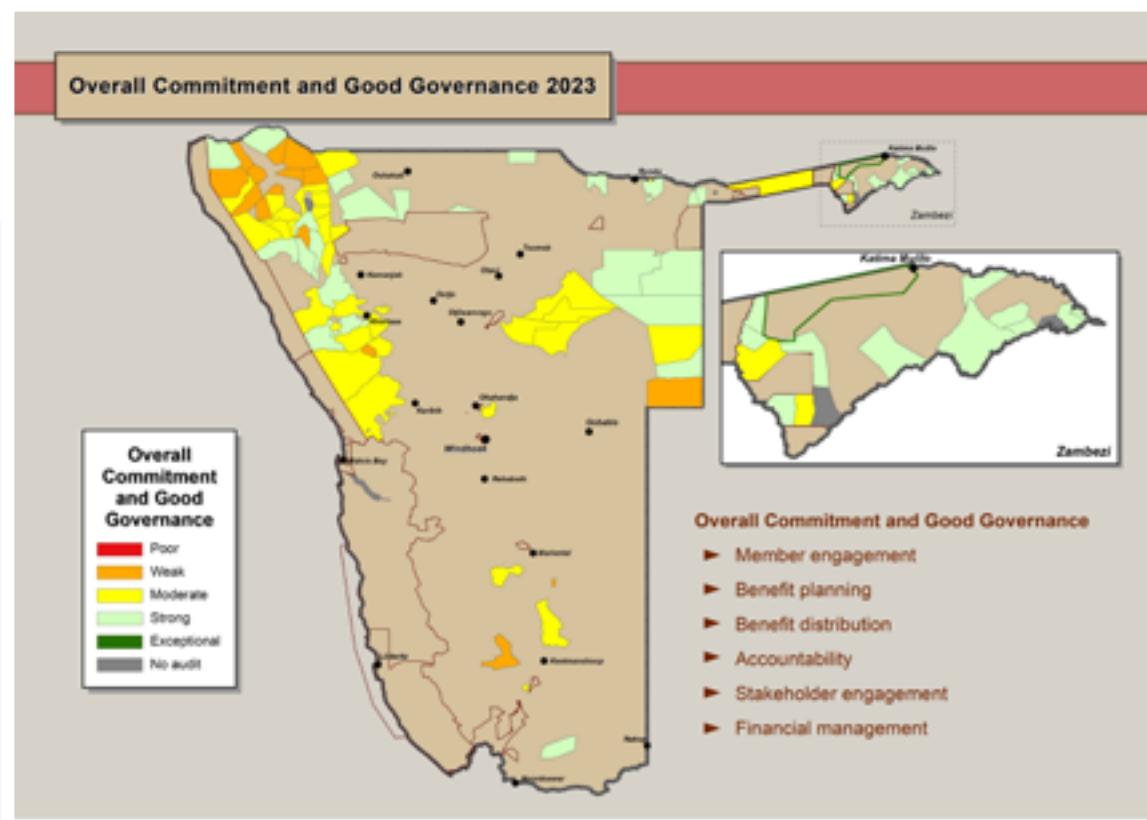
and financial operations within conservancies. This collaborative effort provides governance support to ensure compliance with SOPs, covering areas such as financial management, benefit distribution and assistance to management committees.

In 2023, various governance activities continued to be facilitated, including ongoing support to financial governance, AGM assistance, induction training for new committees and

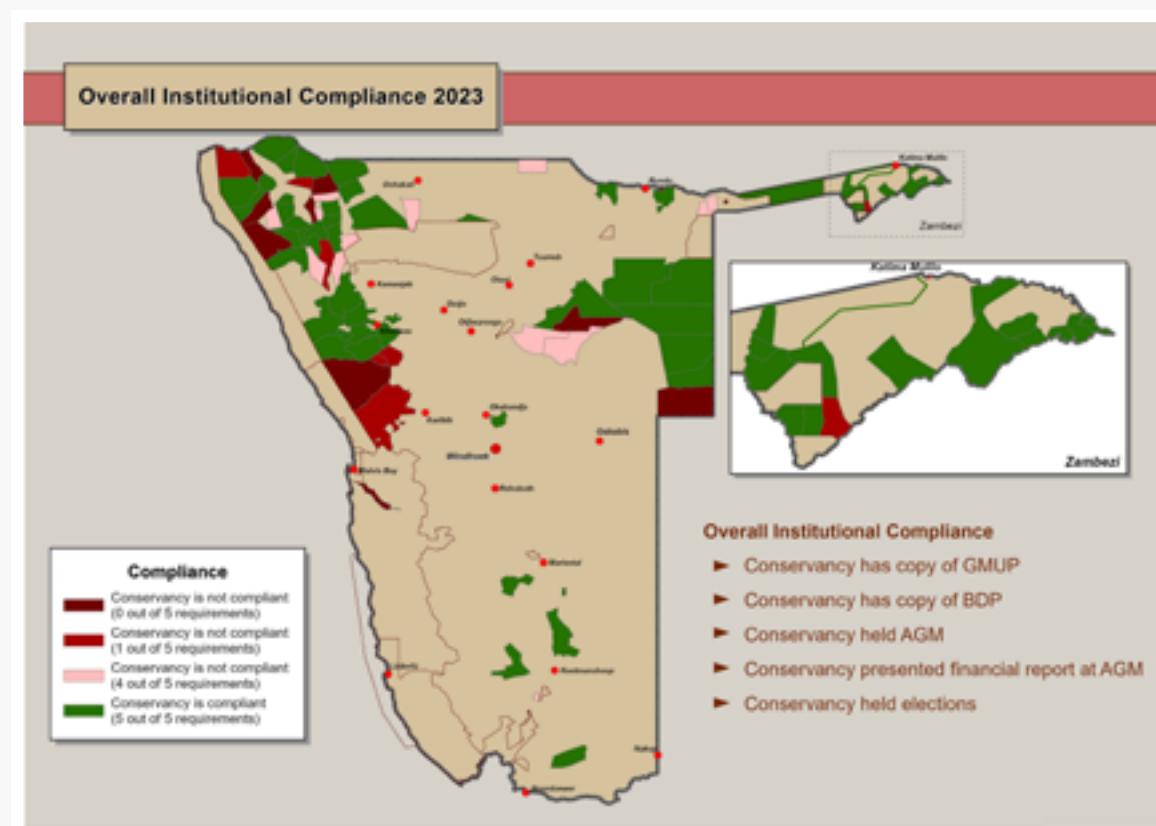
constitution reviews. Furthermore, support was maintained to the Namibia Rural Women's Association (NRWA) and the Women for Conservation (WfC) organisations, as well as to all regional conservancy and community forest associations, which serve as vital platforms for community-based organisations (CBOs) at both regional and national levels.



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**Figure 3.** The aggregate results of the governance performance review which included specific questions on member engagement, benefit planning and distribution, accountability, engagement with other stakeholders (e.g. joint venture partners) and financial management.



**Figure 4.** The institutional compliance of conservancies based on five governance requirements (financial reporting, game management and use reporting, holding AGMs, presenting benefit distribution plans and holding elections).

## GOVERNANCE INDICATORS AND GENDER BALANCE

In 2023, 61% of conservancies were able to cover their operational costs from their own income (Table 2), with 82% distributing some kind of benefits to their members, including meat from hunting. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of reporting

conservancies were able to hold their annual general meetings (AGM). Financial reporting improved this year with more financial reports and budgets submitted and approved.

**Table 2.** Governance indicators for 86 Conservancies and the Kyaramacan Association (≠Aonin and !Gobaob Hai//om Associations are not included). The number of conservancies reporting are those that have been audited.

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF CONSERVANCIES	CONSERVANCIES REPORTING	PERCENTAGE OF CATEGORY
Registered conservancies (incl. Kyaramacan Association)	87	87	100
Conservancies generating returns	79	87	91
· covering operational costs from own income	47	77	61
· distributing cash or in-kind benefits to members, or investing in community projects	63	77	82
Conservancies with game management and utilisation plans	79	83	95
· sustainable business and financial plans	19	83	23
Conservancy AGMs held	81	83	98
· financial reports presented at AGM	79	83	95
· financial reports approved at AGM	77	83	93
· budgets approved at AGM	74	83	89

Women's leadership in conservancies has decreased slightly from last year, with 12% of 83 reporting conservancies being led by female chairpersons. Just over a third of committee members and 39% of the treasurers and financial managers are women,

highlighting that women are trusted with the important task of working with conservancy finances. Less than a quarter of conservancy staff members are female, however, which is likely due to a bias towards male game guards (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Gender balance within conservancy structures for 83 reporting conservancies. The percentage of category is the proportion of females out of the total number of people in that category (e.g. 345 female committee members out of 994 total committee members).

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	CONSERVANCIES REPORTING	PERCENTAGE OF CATEGORY
Conservancy management committee members	994	83	100
· female management committee members	345	83	35
· female chairpersons	10	83	12
· female treasurers/financial managers	39	83	47
Conservancy staff members	1044	83	100
· female staff members	234	83	22

## BENEFIT DISTRIBUTION

Delivering benefits to conservancy members and their families is at the core of CBNRM. Whether this be as employment opportunities, cash distributions, meat or community projects, these benefits are the tangible representation of conservation in action. Instead of only carrying the burden of coexisting with wildlife, benefits create both financial incentives and instil pride in communities towards their environment and natural resources.

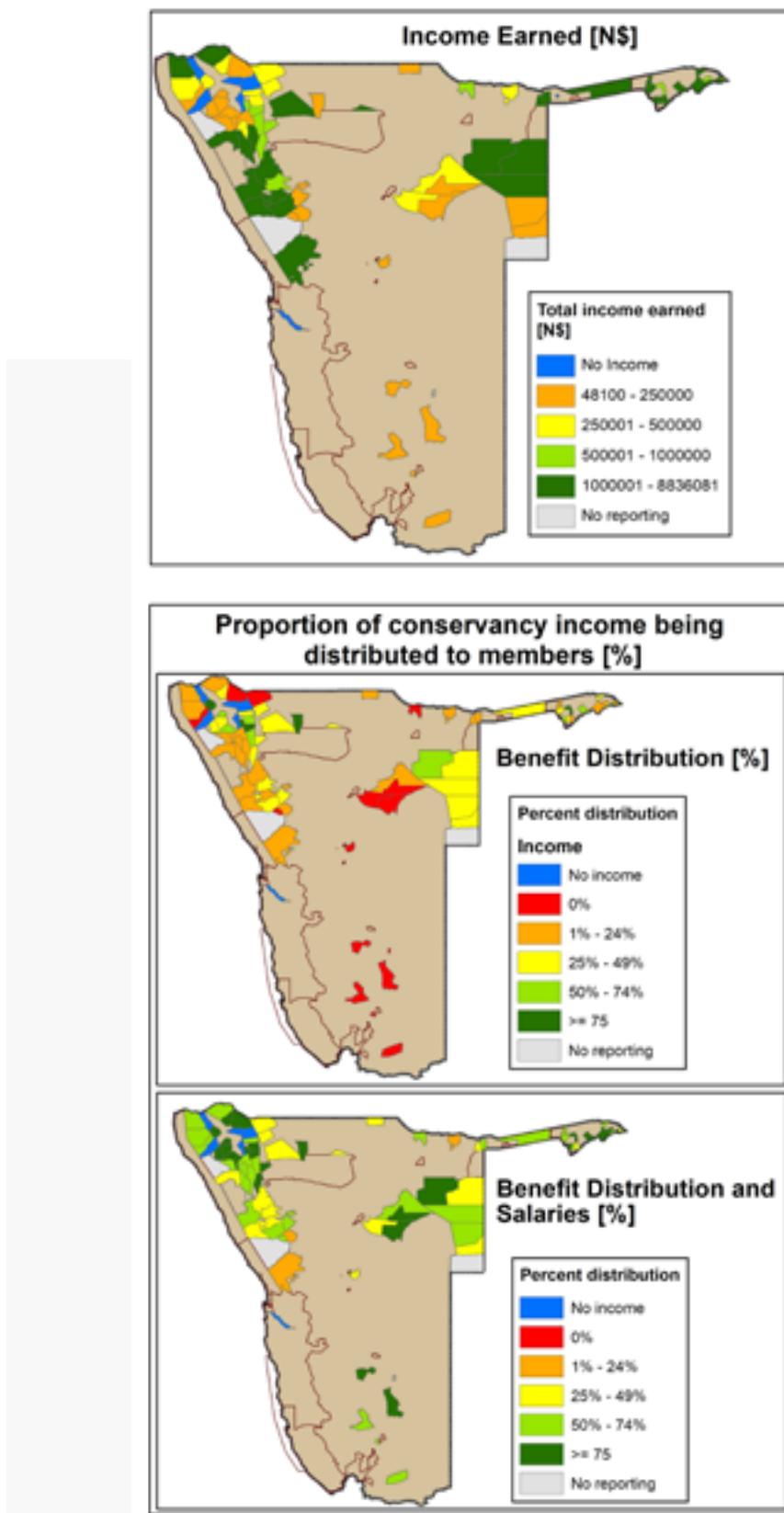
The MEFT requires that at least a minimum target of 50% of the income generated in conservancies is allocated to benefit distribution, specifically to community development projects. These projects increase the positive impact of the CBNRM programme on the broader community by improving lives and creating opportunities for rural development.

One of the challenges that some conservancies face is the lack of sufficient income due to low wildlife numbers, no JV partnership investment or other factors. This remains an important focus for the programme, particularly as it expands its efforts to diversify income sources and livelihoods in all conservancies.

In 2023, based on the submission of financial reports by 77 conservancies, 13 conservancies managed to surpass the 50% minimum benefit requirement, an increase from the previous year. The discrepancy in the distribution of benefits can be attributed to factors such as a limited emphasis on benefit distribution in conservancy budgeting, a lack of member accountability in upholding approved budgets and ensuring the implementation of designated benefit-yielding activities.

There is a persistent concern surrounding benefit distribution levels as conservancy income has increased to higher levels post-COVID-19. The prioritisation of benefit distribution is imperative for communities living with wildlife to ensure that they have a clear role and stake in management, and also have a strong incentive for conservation. Without adjusting the present course, the CBNRM sector risks falling short of its vision to sustain communal gains from wildlife, tourism and other local resources.

### Level of income and benefit distribution in 2023



**Figure 5.** The current state of conservancy income generation (top map), the percentage of income that is spent on community benefits (middle map), and the percentage that is spent on benefits and salaries combined (bottom map). The MEFT directive is concerned with improving conservancy status in the middle map among those conservancies that generate sufficient income, which are currently in the northern parts of Namibia.



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## LEARNING AND SHARING

In August 2023, CBNRM support staff from across Namibia met together in Windhoek for a learning and sharing workshop which provided an opportunity to reflect on successes and challenges, share lessons learned and pursue best practices. The workshop was convened by the MEFT and NACSO with support from the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Climate Change and Inclusive Use of Natural Resources (CCIU) Project and the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN).

Over the four-day workshop regional and Windhoek-based support staff shared their experiences and developed recommendations on how to improve and better coordinate activities of the CBNRM Programme. The interactive manner in which the workshop was facilitated meant that all attendees actively participated and gave their contributions and recommendations on a variety of CBNRM topics.

Key discussions for improvement in governance support included the compliance status of conservancies, the Young Professional Accountants Programme (YPA), constitution reviews for conservancies and community forests, the implementation of community projects, land issues and the assessment of civil society organisations.

The discussions for natural resource management support focused on monitoring and data management in community forests, utilisation of forestry and wildlife (hunting) resources, game management and utilisation plans (GMUP) and human-wildlife conflict (HWC) procedures.

Business and enterprise support discussions and recommendations centred on support to individual-owned initiatives, joint venture agreements, community forests and business sustainability plans.

In addition to specific support around the main CBNRM themes the meeting discussed environmental and social safeguards (ESS) and the need for CBNRM-specific ESS, the Youth Stewardship Programme and conflict resolution.

A significant number of recommendations and actions were determined and are guiding the way forward. Some of these are as follows:

- Provide refresher training for the YPAs and conservancy financial staff and extend the YPA programme to support community forests.



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- Review constitutions for the majority of conservancies and community forests with broad member and stakeholder engagement, to include mechanisms for the spending of funds, benefit distribution plans and clear roles and responsibilities.
- Provide additional support for conservancies and community forests to engage on land issues.
- Improve monitoring and data management in community forests, including new inventories and technologies, and explore the development of an Event Book system.
- Improve reporting for wildlife utilisation to ensure better adaptive management response.
- Improve contract monitoring and reporting for the utilisation of forestry resources.
- Improve support for GMUPs within MEFT and support NGOs so there is no need for outside consultants.
- Continue to explore and support individual enterprises along with community enterprises.
- Continue to explore innovative income opportunities.
- Develop business and sustainability plans for all enterprises.
- Support communities to gain access to markets and unlock the value of their resources.

The CBNRM Programme continues to support communities to benefit from their natural resources and to find new ways to improve services and ensure that conservancies and community forests are meeting the needs of their members and their communities. Much has been achieved and yet, there still remains much to do and new challenges to address. The most important message from the learning and sharing workshop is that, although there is space for improvement and growth, CBNRM partners draw inspiration from each other and the communities they support. Together, over the next several years, much can be achieved.

## PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES YOUNG PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

The Young Professional Accounts (YPA) Programme, made significant progress in improving the financial management and governance capabilities of conservancies in 2023. The project is implemented in collaboration with the MEFT and NACSO's Institutional Development Working Group (IDWG), with funding from the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN). The project was initiated in November 2022 to equip conservancy management committees (CMC), managers and bookkeepers with essential skills and knowledge in financial management. Improved financial management and the application of standardised financial systems increase transparency and accountability in conservancies, reducing financial mismanagement.

In 2023, nine YPAs supported 51 conservancies throughout the country in the Zambezi, North Central, Kunene North and South, Kavango West and East, and Central regions. YPAs are hosted by the regional support organisations including Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), Namibia Development Trust (NDT), Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN) and the MEFT. In addition to the experience they gain on the job, YPAs receive one-on-one mentoring with professional accountants.

As part of the project, a new financial management system and step-by-step guidelines were developed in 2022, and are currently being implemented within conservancies. Refresher training on the new system was conducted in 2023 with participation from the YPAs, MEFT and field-based partners.

YPAs implemented the new system over the course of the year which was focused on the maintenance of organised records, regular updating of financial data and closing off of monthly books. The training and the on-going support the YPAs provided to the CMCs, managers and bookkeepers, has resulted in improved financial outcomes. Early detection of financial issues through improved maintenance and updating of data allows for a quicker response. Adaptive management can then be applied to adjust and deal with the challenges.

In 2023, the first key success of the YPA support is a marked improvement in record keeping. More organised financial records



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boost internal accountability and provide a better financial understanding when engaging with stakeholders or potential donors. Secondly, the regular updating of the finances and adherence to monthly or quarterly reviews, assists in identifying irregularities or potential mismanagement which can then be rectified before it can impact annual financial reporting. Lastly, the YPAs have witnessed a growing enthusiasm and willingness to learn among the CMC, managers and bookkeepers. This commitment to improving financial practices fosters a culture of good governance and financial stewardship and lays the groundwork for continued development and capacity building within conservancies.

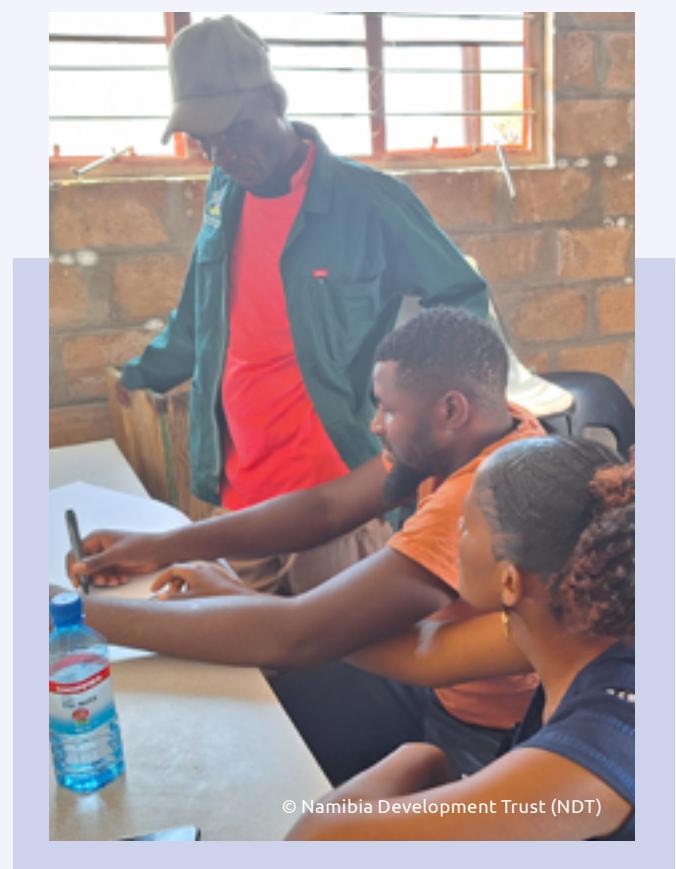
The eagerness to learn among bookkeepers, conservancy managers/coordinators and members of the management committee has been a standout feature of the project. Despite facing various challenges, the commitment to improve financial practices has been commendable. This attitude is vital for fostering a sustainable culture of governance and financial stewardship, as it lays the groundwork for ongoing development and capacity building.

Although there has been great success over the past year, there are also challenges which highlight the complexities of implementing support activities in remote rural settings. The varying levels of computer literacy are a significant challenge. Many managers and bookkeepers struggle to use computer software for cashbook updates and generating financial reports. Low computer literacy hinders efficient implementation of the financial management system, impacting the ability to maintain accurate financial records and report on them in a timely manner. In addition, inconsistencies can arise between keeping both physical and electronic financial records.

Other critical issues are related to technology. Many conservancies lack computers and because the financial management system is built around digital tools, this limits the capacity of the personnel. The absence of reliable internet connections in conservancies compounds the problem. Poor connectivity impacts the ability to receive essential financial information and also stifles the communication necessary for effective governance.

Accessing monthly bank statements has also emerged as a persistent challenge. Despite numerous discussions with key conservancy personnel to have bank statements emailed, there has been a reluctance to do this. This indicates a lack of understanding of the importance of timely financial reporting. Without access to up-to-date financial information, conservancies face significant hurdles in effective financial planning and management.

Despite these challenges, the project's successes in 2023 provide a strong foundation for future efforts. The willingness of conservancy personnel to learn and adapt, combined with the improvements in record keeping, signals a positive trajectory. Stakeholders will continue to collaborate in addressing the challenges for the continued success of the project. The YPAs and their work are fostering an environment where conservancies can more effectively manage their finances to ensure good governance and improved outcomes.



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## YOUNG GIRLS AND WOMEN'S CLUB

In 2022, NACSO forged a strategic partnership with WWF Namibia to facilitate the development of an Inclusive Green Economy Vision for the Kavango East and West Regions. This initiative was prompted by an oil and gas mining exploration partnership between the Government of Namibia and Canadian commercial partner, Recon Africa Company, to explore oil and gas in the Okavango Basin. Recon Africa's inadequate consultation processes, particularly in informing affected communities near drilling sites, led to concerns over the potential impacts on land use and community well-being.

The exploration and mining of oil and gas can pose significant social, economic and environmental risks to local communities. Long-term environmental impacts can jeopardise sustainable development, while social impacts may exacerbate existing vulnerabilities, particularly for marginalised groups like girls and young women. Economic impacts may also be unequal, with communities potentially not benefitting from mining revenues.

Local communities' rights on communal lands are often disregarded due to limited information and engagement opportunities in the exploration process. Despite progressive legislation like Namibia's Environmental Management Act (7 of 2007), there is limited awareness among Namibians about their civil rights and duties regarding industrial developments and extractive industries, especially with regards to oil and gas.

The Elevating Community Voices on Managing the Extractive Industries in Kavango West and East Regions Project (February 2022 – January 2025), developed out of the Green Economy Vision, aims to empower local communities in these regions to understand and assert their rights and responsibilities regarding large-scale extractive projects. By focusing on broader extractive industry issues beyond oil and gas, including mining, timber exploitation and potential water abstraction along the Kavango River, the project aims to foster sustainable and inclusive development in the region.

The project seeks to: 1) raise awareness about the Environmental Management Act and community rights; 2) establish a functional community grievance mechanism for conservancies and community forests; 3) highlight concerns of indigenous San people; 4) empower girls and young women in conservancies and community forests through capacity building and advocacy for their rights; and 5) facilitate learning and sharing initiatives among stakeholders.

The Young Girls and Women's Club Project initiative was designed and piloted to meet the needs of young girls and women within the targeted conservancies and community forests near the oil and gas drilling sites in Kavango East and West. The project recognises the importance of amplifying the voices of girls and young women through targeted investments aimed at enhancing their inclusion in the community economy, and seeks to improve leadership skills among participants, enabling them to become effective members of society. The initiative supported the girls in general learning outcomes and life skills through eight trainings on sexual health and gender-based violence (GBV), agriculture production, HIV and AIDS, Earth Hour and the development of a constitution for the Young Girls and Women's Club. Implementation activities started in March 2023 with the training of six community activators and one regional coordinator on the curriculum. The trained community activators and the regional coordinator subsequently conducted training sessions for a total of 80 young people on life skills, self-confidence and cultural diversity. This integrated approach aimed to instil a healthy sense of self-confidence and improve leadership skills among participants, enabling them to become effective members of society.

Interestingly, feedback from communities highlighted a perceived lack of inclusion of boys in the initiative and to address this, eight additional training sessions were conducted for the six community activators and six members of the young girls' club to include the boy child. This adjustment was leveraged with expertise from the University of Namibia and WWF. These changes aimed to ensure that both genders can benefit equally from the initiative.

Girls and young women are particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse of human rights and the persistent impact of gender-based violence (GBV). To address these challenges, a comprehensive profiling was conducted for the members of the Young Girls and Women's Club in June and July 2023. The interviews were conducted with 75 out of 80 club members across 22 villages. The participants were interviewed along with their parents/guardians and spouses/intimate partners. This profile exercise highlighted the complexities of the participants' socio-economic conditions, their access to resources and the specific hurdles they encounter. The aim of the profiling was

to assist in the development of targeted interventions and inform strategic initiatives that address the intersecting issues of gender-based violence, poverty and human rights abuses. This activity was linked to the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication, and Social Welfare mandate and support to girls and young women.

In response to addressing poverty, a multifaceted approach to empower girls and women and elevate them into community leadership structures was undertaken. As part of this, members of the Young Girls and Women's Club developed proposals for livelihoods improvement through agricultural production. This activity seeks to enhance skills on sustainable agricultural production and to sell produce to local markets. The training and implementation for these activities will be undertaken in 2024 along with training on HIV/AIDS.

WWF invited the six community activators and two other members from the Young Girls and Women's Club to join the Youth in Conservation Indaba held in Swakopmund in March 2023. The primary objectives of the Indaba were to inspire, network and celebrate the contributions of young adults in community conservation. The Indaba instilled a sense of environmental stewardship and social responsibility in the Young Girls and Women's Club representatives, alongside a larger contingency of youth representing 26 communal conservancies and community forests from across Namibia. By bringing together youth from various backgrounds and conservancies, the Indaba created a platform for sharing experiences, ideas and innovative approaches to address environmental challenges within conservancies and beyond. One of the major focal points of Youth in Conservation is participation in Earth Hour, which provides opportunities for youth to engage on conservation and environmental issues in their own communities. The Young Girls and Women's Club gained ideas and insight for their own Earth Hour initiatives.

A draft constitution for the Young Girls and Women's Club was collectively developed that guides the effective management and operations of the club. This constitution serves as a

framework for decision-making, resource allocation and conflict resolutions within the club, ensuring a cohesive and sustainable approach to the club's initiatives.

The Young Girls and Women's Club Project has already made significant steps in addressing social challenges faced by marginalised girls and young women within the Kavango West and East Regions of Namibia. There is a need for the continuation of the project and the replication of similar projects in other affected areas, emphasising the potential for scalable solutions and widespread community empowerment. By sharing the lessons learned and successes achieved, the project aims to catalyse positive change, inspiring similar initiatives to make a meaningful difference in diverse communities facing environmental and social challenges.



## CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PUROS, SALAMBALA AND DZOTI

Communal conservancies are self-governed and democratic entities which seek to provide community rights and access over natural resources for the benefit of their members. The establishment and subsequent registration of a conservancy is a long process, with a significant amount of consultation between community members and relevant stakeholders to meet the MEFT requirements for registration. The requirements include a list of members, defined and agreed-to boundaries, an elected conservancy committee and a constitution outlining governance rules. Other important milestones in the establishment and governing of a conservancy are the development of a benefit distribution plan and a game management and utilisation plan.

Although a collaborative and consultative process is involved in the development of conservancies, it does not ensure that

points of conflict cannot occur. As conservancies have matured over time and become more complex, particularly with increased income and members' expectations, the potential for conflict has changed or intensified. Possible sources of conflict could be how revenue generated from natural resources is distributed within the conservancy or managing the interests of diverse stakeholders. Conflicts could also stem from long-standing issues within a conservancy which have gone unresolved over time.

There are several mechanisms which can support the management and resolution of conflicts at varying levels. Conservancy constitutions outline how conflict should be resolved, although these processes are not always followed properly. Training in conflict resolution is provided to conservancies to assist communities to build their capacity to manage conflicts internally. Some conflicts such as staff disputes, could be handled at conservancy level by the conservancy management committee (CMC). However, there might be more complex conflicts which might require the involvement of a mediator as a neutral outsider. If conflicts become pervasive and undermine the ability of the conservancy to govern itself, the MEFT can intervene. All relevant stakeholders are consulted and participate in this process and are included in discussions and recommendations.

In 2023, three conservancies engaged in conflict resolution processes with support from the MEFT.

Puros Conservancy in the Kunene Region was gazetted in 2000. Puros is a high-income earning conservancy with three joint venture (JV) lodges, a community lodge and a Himba cultural village. In addition to the 13 conservancy management committee members, it has 38 staff members including office staff, game guards, rhino rangers, lion rangers and village staff. Since its inception, the conservancy has experienced challenges with governance compliance, including poor oversight by members, poor management of the conservancy by the management committee, and staff, asset and financial management issues. These governance issues remain unresolved and continue to affect the conservancy operation.



In late 2022, after an unsuccessful annual general meeting (AGM) which failed to conduct elections for new CMC members as per the constitution, the MEFT decided to suspend conservancy operations, including the bank accounts, until all matters were resolved to avoid any misuse of conservancy funds. A general meeting was held 11-12 February 2023 to find amicable solutions to challenges raised and propose a way forward for the conservancy to operate while addressing these matters.

The main issues were the failure to hold the AGM and elections, unclear staff and management committee roles, unaccounted for funds, delayed staff salary payments and the need for a constitution review. The meeting reached consensus on several outcomes. An AGM would be held within 30 days with support from the MEFT, NACSO and Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC). The AGM was held on 13 March 2023 and determined that a review of the constitution would be conducted. As part of this review, CMC and staff roles would be clarified so that CMC members could not serve as staff members. Staff salary payments were made with financial support from the MEFT. All conservancy assets would be registered and managed accordingly.

Salambala Conservancy in the Zambezi Region was one of the first four conservancies gazetted in the country in 1998. Salambala, located at the heart of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA) and bordering Botswana's Chobe National Park across the Chobe River, supports a significant amount of wildlife including the longest migration on the continent. Plains zebra migrate a distance of 500 kms between Salambala Conservancy and the Nxai Pan National Park in Botswana. The conservancy earns income from several JV tourism enterprises, conservation hunting and a craft centre.

Conflict in Salambala arose when it held its AGM in December 2022. Although all the AGM documents for 2023 were prepared and ready to be tabled and approved by members at the meeting, the members raised strong concerns about the CMC members and the signing of the hunting contract. The issues were too contentious to resolve amicably and none of the

reports were adopted. The conflict was carried into 2023 as the CMC scheduled several meetings in January which were subsequently rescheduled or called off. The failure to schedule and follow through with meetings raised additional concerns and regional MEFT and IRDNC staff then initiated engagement with the current CMC. The conflict continued into February with members calling for the election of a new CMC. Eventually, in March, after extensive clarifications around the registration status of members and other issues, a list of nominations for CMC elections was finalised. These nominations were then taken to village level for discussion.

In July a new CMC was elected and began the work of contributing to the governance of the conservancy. With input from the MEFT and support organisations, Salambala was able to resolve its conflict and continue representing the voice of the community.

Dzoti Conservancy in the Zambezi Region was registered in 2009. Dzoti lies across the Linyanti River from Botswana and shares its southwestern border with the Nkasa Rupara National Park. The conservancy supports a wide variety of wildlife including elephant and lion and earns income from conservation hunting. In addition to its CMC, Dzoti's staff comprises community game guards and a manager.

Members reported their grievances concerning financial mismanagement and a lack of oversight on community projects to the police and MEFT in early 2023. Upon further consultation with police and members, MEFT staff were able to clarify that the main conflict focused on the renewal of the conservation hunting contract. Some members felt that the conservancy should renegotiate the terms of the contract for improved benefits. However, the CMC renewed the contract despite the objection from some of the members. In addition, there were allegations from some members concerning the community electricity project tender, awarded to a contractor by the CMC.

The conflict around these issues led to the closure of the conservancy office by members and an interruption in operations for a period of time. This resulted in several consultative

meetings between the MEFT, IRDNC, the Traditional Authority and conservancy members to reach a solution. On 9 October 2023, Dzoti held a General Meeting and decided to dissolve the current CMC and elect a new CMC.

The conflict management challenges in 2023 have highlighted the need for the development of additional guidelines for conservancies around benefit distribution and the procurement of services and goods by conservancies to improve financial management and increase transparency. Such guidelines will support existing conservancy constitutions, standard operating procedures and other governance policies.

The existing framework for conflict management within conservancies is being bolstered and improved by the more recent development of environmental and social safeguards and

provision of grievance mechanisms now required in community development work across the world.

Conflict management processes are required not only within conservancies, but throughout any democratically governed institution or organisation to ensure equitable resolutions can be identified and implemented. While some of Namibia's conservancies have experienced major conflicts, no conservancy has ever been de-registered. It is testament to the efforts of communities, government, support NGOs and private sector stakeholders, that they have been able to work collaboratively and to effectively curtail any long-term impacts of conflict on conservancies and the critical conservation and community development work they undertake.



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# NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

## REVIEW OF 2023

Rural communities in Namibia are heavily dependent on natural resources and the ecosystem services they provide. In 2023, tourism and other sectors experienced significant recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, many Namibians continue to face other severe challenges. In northwest Namibia, a prolonged drought persists, leading to drastically reduced livestock and wildlife populations, increased poverty and escalating human-wildlife conflict (HWC). In other areas, shorter droughts are impacting subsistence crop farming and contributing to an increase in HWC. These challenges underscore the severe impacts of climate change, with food insecurity already affecting many parts of the country. Ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources and enhancing the resilience of communities that rely on them remains the core focus of CBNRM.

The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) oversees the Natural Resources Working Group (NRWG), which is comprised of experts from CBNRM support organisations and government ministries. Together, they work to bolster conservancies and promote effective natural resource management across Namibia. The NRWG collects, analyses and disseminates data on natural resources to inform decisions at conservancy, regional and national levels. In 2023, the NRWG continued to support the monitoring of wildlife, plant and fish resources, while also managing human-wildlife (HWC) conflict and wildlife crime. Conservancies, community forests and fisheries reserves protect their valuable natural resources through the efforts of their community game guards, resource monitors, fish monitors and fish guards who protect and undertake natural resource management activities.



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“ Ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources and enhancing the resilience of communities that rely on them remains the core focus of CBNRM.

## ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Community conservation and natural resource management is focused on wildlife, forestry and fish resources. Conservancies, community forests and fish reserves generate funding using these resources, while their members are dependent on livestock and/or rain-fed crop production, all susceptible to

the impacts of drought and climate change. It is imperative in Namibia's semi-arid environment to closely monitor the use of natural resources. The data collected forms the basis for the CBNRM adaptive management system (Figure 6).

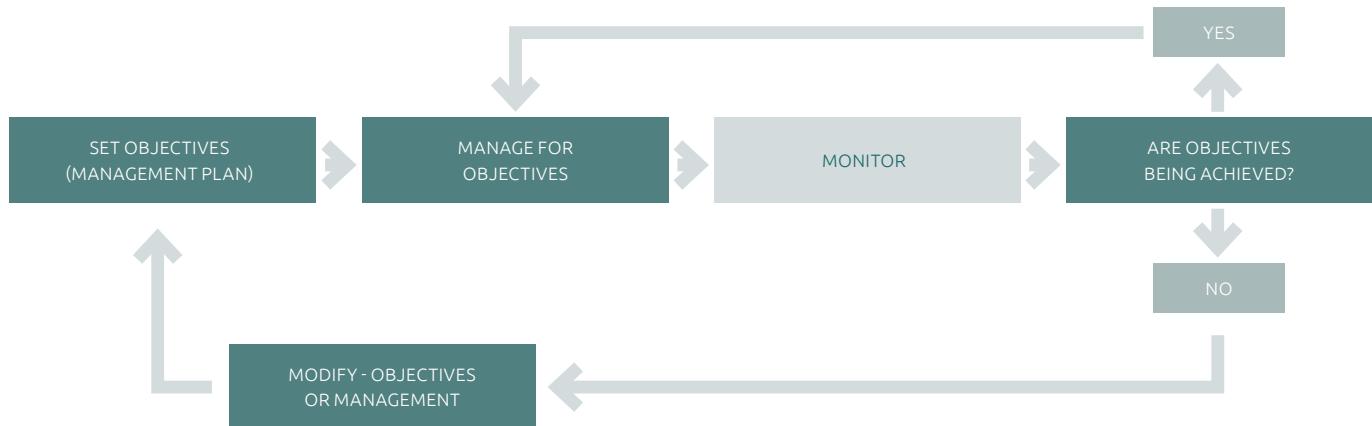


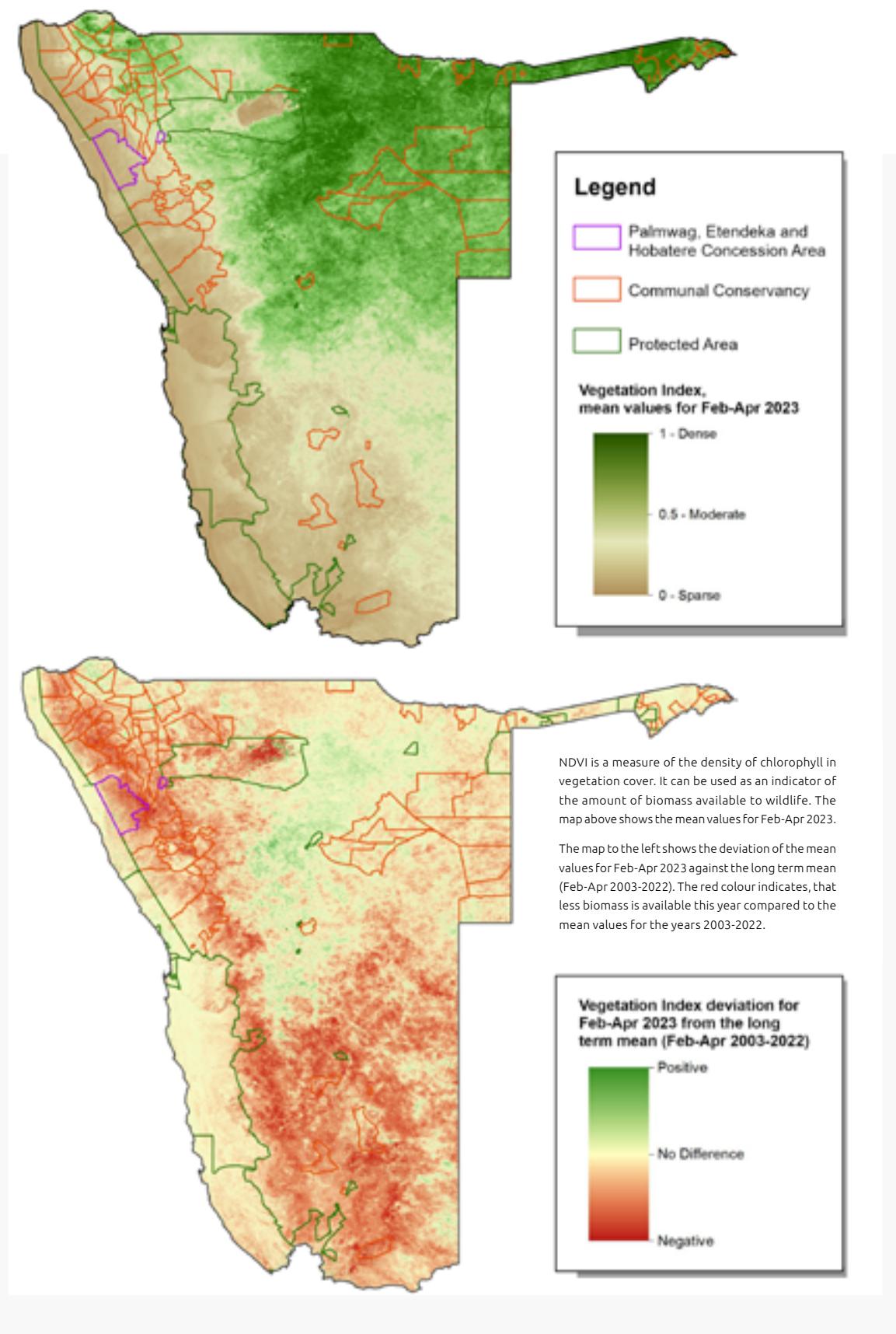
Figure 6. The adaptive management cycle.

Conservancies, community forests and fish reserves manage their specific natural resources to protect and increase the resource and allow for sustainable use. Management actions, stipulated in management plans, include the protection of key habitats, the setting of sustainable harvest quotas and the timing of and methods for harvesting. The collection of data through the Event Book, game counts, plant inventories and fishing records feed into the adaptive management system. If objectives are being met, then management actions continue. If objectives are not being met, management actions are modified to meet the objectives. This ongoing feedback loop supports informed decision making and management interventions.

In addition to the data obtained through monitoring, adaptive management also depends upon climatic conditions. The Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI) (Figure 7) is used as a tool to inform management decisions along with a local climate monitoring system. The overall objective of the

local climate monitoring system, integrated with the Event Book, is to ensure that local communities have reduced vulnerability and increased resilience to the anticipated impacts of climate change by incorporating climate adaptation response strategies into local practices.

Adaptive management is not only applied to natural resources but is cross-cutting throughout the CBNRM programme. As part of annual events, integrated audits are conducted in all conservancies and offer a crucial vantage point for all conservancies and stakeholders. The first part of the audit is focused on the Event Book and natural resource monitoring, while the second part is focused on governance and institutional monitoring. The data from integrated audits can then assist in evaluating if objectives are being met. Regular monitoring and collection of data on governance, including financial management, is critical for reflection, decision-making and long-term planning.



**Figure 7.** The Normalised Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI).

## CLIMATE RESILIENCE

Namibia is one of the driest countries in sub-Saharan Africa and is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Namibia's climate is characterised by persistent drought, unpredictable and variable rainfall, high temperature variability and a scarcity of water. Climate change is expected to increase the risk and intensity of droughts, floods, heat waves and wildfires. While flooding regularly impacts certain areas of the country, drought represents a greater threat in terms of the total number of people impacted (approximately 2 million) and the total cost of damage. Further challenges are the significant levels of poverty and the country's reliance on rain-fed agriculture and livestock farming, which increase Namibia's vulnerability to climate change. Almost half of Namibia's population is reliant on subsistence agriculture. Poor populations face numerous challenges in implementing climate adaptation strategies, including limited financial resources, technical expertise and poor infrastructure.

It is crucial that Namibia's communities are able to implement adaptation strategies to ensure that they can build more climate resilience to withstand the challenges posed by climate change. CBNRM represents an opportunity for enhancing climate resilience in Namibia in several ways.

- **Governance:** CBNRM fosters social cohesion by involving community members in decision-making processes. This participatory approach strengthens local governance and empowers communities to manage their resources effectively.
- **Natural Resource Management:** CBNRM involves local communities in the sustainable management of natural resources, integrating traditional knowledge with modern practices. This approach helps maintain biodiversity and ecosystem services, which are vital for resilience against climate change.
- **Business, Enterprise and Livelihoods:** By promoting the sustainable use of resources, CBNRM provides economic benefits to communities through activities like eco-tourism, sustainable harvesting and wildlife management. These activities create alternative livelihoods, reducing dependence on climate-sensitive agriculture.

CBNRM supports the implementation of various adaptation strategies under CBNRM, such as water harvesting, conservation agriculture and management of forestry resources. These strategies help mitigate the impacts of climate variability and improve food and water security. CBNRM also includes training and capacity-building initiatives, enhancing the skills and knowledge of community members. This empowers them to adapt to changing environmental conditions and manage resources sustainably. Effective CBNRM requires supportive policies and frameworks at the national and regional levels which are already in place as CBNRM is being integrated into broader climate adaptation and development policies at all levels.

There are a number of projects which are currently supporting climate resilience in CBNRM. One of these is the Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) Climate Change and Inclusive Use of Natural Resources (CCIU) Programme, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with co-funding from the European Union, which is working together with the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) to implement the programme from 2021-2024.

The CCIU facilitates the implementation of climate-resilient interventions and promotes the inclusive use of natural resources. The target group is all of Namibia's 86 communal conservancies and community forests, as well as vulnerable households in peri-urban areas. The programme focuses on two key areas which are being implemented within conservancies and community forests: to improve good governance standards and institutional capacities of community-based organisations involved in CBNRM, and to provide services to enhance the value of natural resources and to diversify livelihoods.

One of the main aspects of the current project is the mitigation of HWC, particularly in the northwest. With long-term drought conditions across the area, there has been a significant increase



**It is crucial that Namibia's communities are able to implement adaptation strategies to ensure that they can build more climate resilience.**

in HWC as wildlife struggles to find water away from human settlement areas. Project activities are focused on rehabilitation and upgrading of key water infrastructure in Etosha National Park and in communities and conservancies around the park. More reliable water supply in the park will ensure wildlife, especially elephant, do not migrate outside the park into conservancy areas. Improved infrastructure in community areas provides people with more reliable access to water and supports livelihoods to decrease the risk of losing livestock or crops to HWC. Upgrading efforts in conservancy areas include the rehabilitation of boreholes, installation of solar pumping systems, construction of community taps and livestock troughs, construction of elephant-proof protection for infrastructure and construction of elephant water points. The project also supports the training of MEFT and Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (MAWLR) staff to provide improved water infrastructure support and maintenance. As part of the project, the CCIU also supported wildlife monitoring and research efforts and the mitigation of livestock predation to decrease HWC.

WWF Namibia's Climate Crowd Pilot Project (2021-2024) has pioneered several initiatives aimed help vulnerable groups adapt to climate shocks while preserving their rich natural environment.

One pilot initiative, in Bwabwata National Park, seeks to support marginalised San women with new opportunities to access improved economic opportunities and build climate resilience.

WWF Namibia partnered with the Omba Arts Trust and the Kyramayan Association to support 16 Khwe women to revitalise their basket weaving tradition, transforming it into a livelihood that not only provides income, but strengthens resilience to the changing climate. The project provided training in quality weaving techniques, innovative basket designs and production standards. This training has assisted the weavers to increase their income from basket weaving and to access better markets.

The pilot has offered the Khwe women a safer and more stable alternative to their traditional income source, devil's claw harvesting. Harvesting devil's claw is a seasonal, labour-intensive activity that often exposes them to the dangers of encountering wildlife within the park. One weaver shared, "we earn more from our baskets now than we did from devil's claw, and it saves us from traveling long distances and protects our lives. We can now balance our time between caring for our families, earning an income and conserving our precious natural resources within the park."

CBNRM, through its focus on the sustainable use of natural resources, seeks to build climate resilience in a number of ways. The integration of community participation, heritage and environmental stewardship highlights how climate resilience can be nurtured from within communities, creating lasting impacts that extend beyond individual lives to support broader conservation goals.



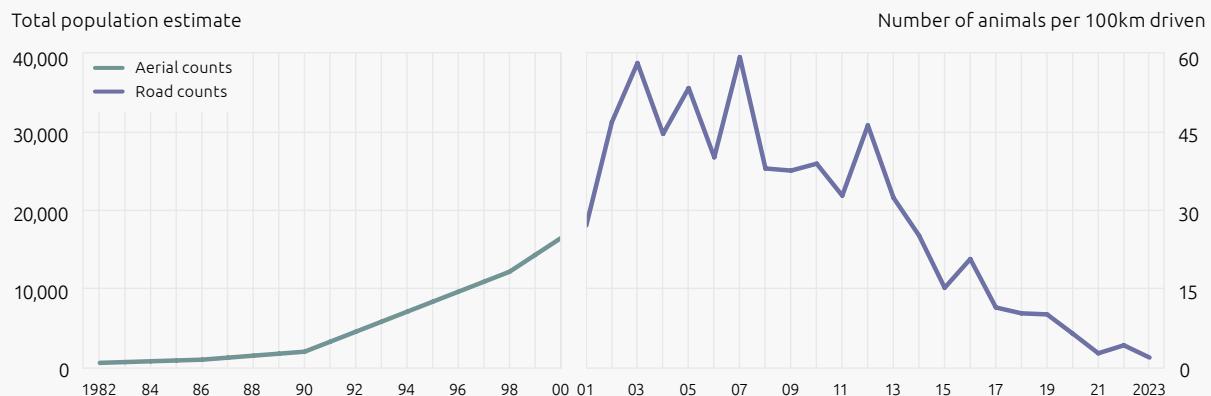
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## WILDLIFE MONITORING AND POPULATION TRENDS

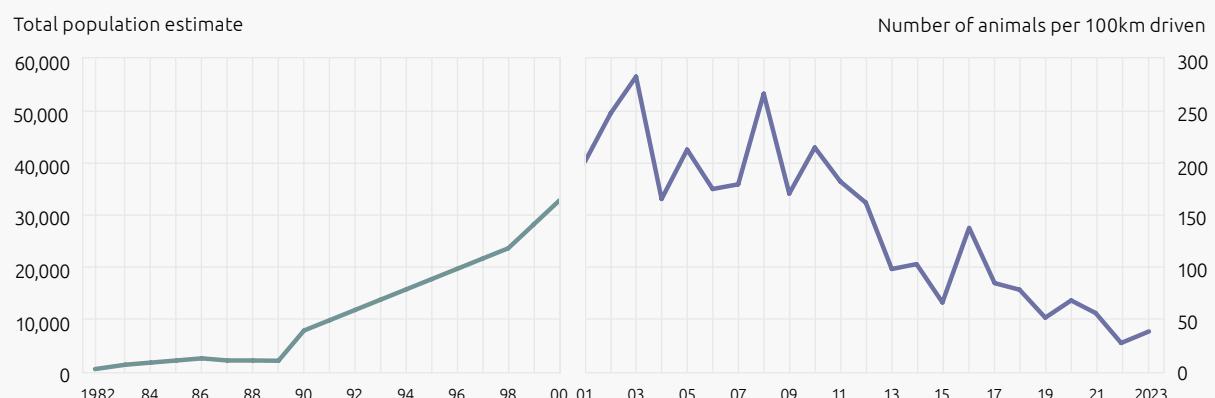
Wildlife populations in communal conservancies are monitored through annual game counts, waterhole counts and the Event Book monitoring system. Periodically aerial surveys are also conducted in some areas. These multiple methods are used to ensure that a variety of species can be monitored and the results compared. Wildlife populations vary from year to year in response to changes in the environment such as drought, rainfall, diseases, predation, utilisation and poaching.

Annual road-based game counts and line transect counts are undertaken in conservancies, along with regular fixed foot patrols, which are collected in the Event Book by the community game guards. In preparation for annual game counts, the NRWG and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) train community game guards and staff on game count methodology. Game count training is used as an opportunity to review broader wildlife monitoring techniques such as fixed patrols and the Event Book monitoring system. The predator sightings index is produced by dividing the number of physical sightings recorded during the year by the number of event books (one book per game guard).

### Gemsbok



### Springbok

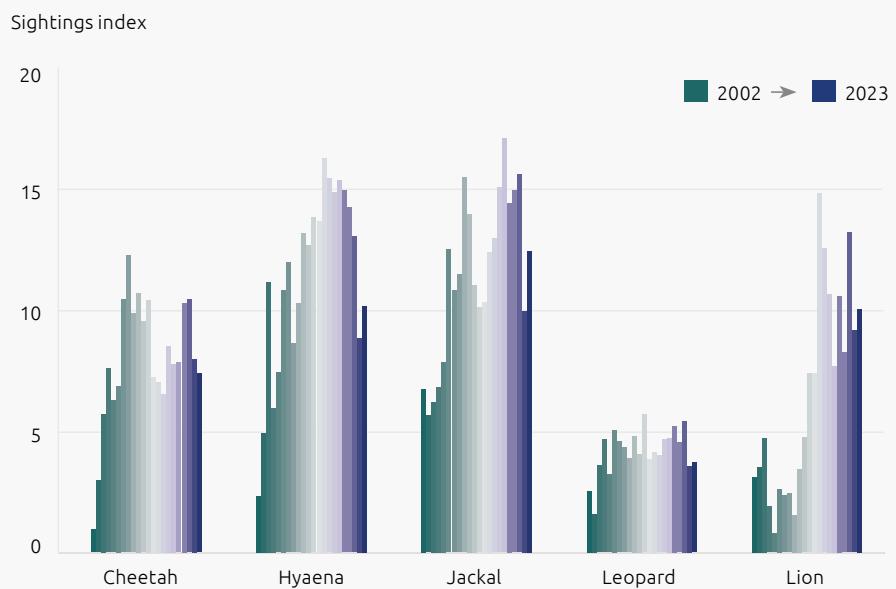


### Hartmann's Mountain Zebra



**Figure 8.** Wildlife population trends for three key herbivore species for the Erongo and Kunene Regions. Figures on the left were produced from aerial survey-based counts prior to 2000. Figures on the right are from road-based counts (animals seen per 100 km driven). The graphs highlight trends over time and not total population estimates.

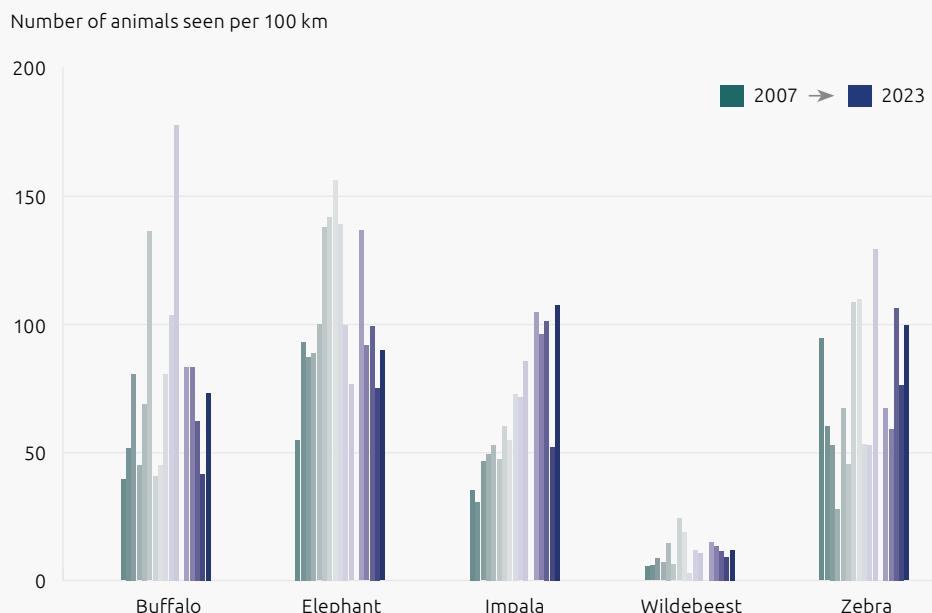
The 2023 road counts show a downward trend over the past several years. The factors affecting this trend are expected to be due primarily to the drought and competition with livestock for the decreasing biomass available as depicted in the NDVI map (Figure 7). Preliminary work was initiated in 2023 on a research study funded by Reversing Environmental Degradation in Africa and Asia (REDAA) to better understand the main causes for continued wildlife declines in this area.



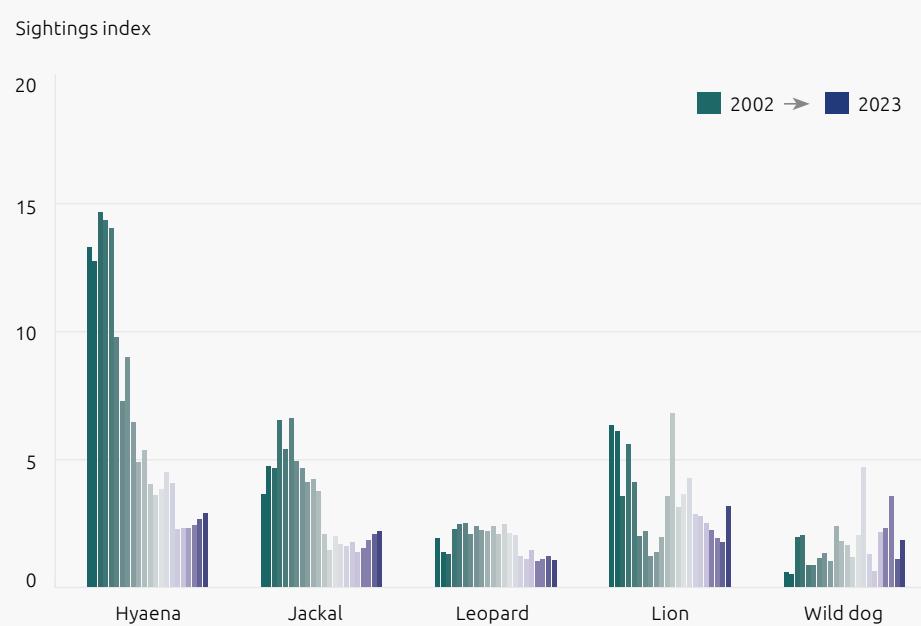
**Figure 9.** Predator sightings index for the Erongo and Kunene Regions.

Observations of predator sightings in the northwest suggest a general decline in sightings over the past few years, although hyaena, jackal, leopard and lion sightings increased in 2023. The decline in predator sightings is likely due to declining prey populations and increased conflict with people due to livestock losses.

In 2023 in the Zambezi Region, the game count numbers decreased for all species. Observations indicate that predator sightings are mostly stable or increasing.



**Figure 10.** Northeast game count, including both the National Parks and conservancies. Game counts in the northeast are conducted using walking line transects.



**Figure 11.** Predator sightings index for the northeast.

## NORTHWEST LION SURVEY

Namibia's northwest consists of rugged mountain terrain, arid desert and staggering beauty. It is within this challenging landscape that Namibia's free-ranging lion population roams. This population, valued by the tourism sector, serves a critical role in the maintenance of free-ranging lion populations across Africa. African lions (*Panthera leo*) are classified as vulnerable by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), experiencing an estimated 43% decline in their numbers between 1993-2014.

Intensive monitoring of the northwest population has taken place in certain areas; however, a systematic survey of these lions has never been conducted. Between November 2022 and January 2023, a comprehensive survey was undertaken in the core lion range area of approximately 40,000 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>\*</sup> This enormous range consists of 11 conservancies (Anabeb, Doro !nawas, Ehi-rovipuka, #Khoadi-//Hôas, Omatendeka, Orupupa, Puros, Sesfontein, Sorris Sorris, Torra and Tseiseb), three tourism concessions (Hobatere, Etendeka and Palmwag) and a portion of the Skeleton Coast National Park from the Hoaruseb River in the north to the Huab River in the south. Although lion have historically used a larger area of more than 51,000 km<sup>2</sup>, this core range is where they currently move and repeatedly breed.

It is estimated that the population has declined as much as 60% over the past five years, however, this number is not based on the same survey methods used for this most recent study. The decline in the population is attributed to a significant decrease of between 53-85% in the prey base. The decline in prey is likely caused by the persistent drought conditions in the region over the past decade. A lack of available prey has increased human-lion conflict (HLC) throughout the range, particularly in communal conservancy areas, resulting in HLC being the main cause of lion mortalities. In order to address the challenge of HLC, the MEFT developed the Human-Lion Conflict Management Plan for North West Namibia in 2017 to guide the management of lion and support the mitigation of conflict.

As drought in the area continued, lion condition was decreasing and some prides were seeking marine food sources, indicating that the population was under strain. It was against this backdrop that the MEFT deemed it necessary to undertake a comprehensive population survey. The aim was to identify all lions in the range, set baselines for ongoing surveys, work

with partners to develop capacity for ongoing monitoring, address research and monitoring needs, and contribute to the development of a national lion management plan, while also ensuring support for lion conservation within conservancies.

A significant amount of advance preparation and planning went into the survey. The MEFT worked in partnership with the Lion Rangers, the Namibian Lion Trust and IRDNC. Four teams with a total of 45 trained members traversed the entire range during the survey, recording approximately 10,155 km on foot patrol and 83,290 km by vehicle patrol, all undertaken over a 54-day period. The survey approach was focused on obtaining a whole count, meaning that all individuals were sighted during a short period of time, ensuring that all were captured. Another critical piece of the survey was a focus on the importance of local ecological knowledge (LEK) provided by the Lion Rangers and MEFT staff. The contribution of LEK to the survey and to the monitoring of lion going forward will have a positive impact on HLC and community conservation efforts.

Other impressive statistics are the 1,059 SMART patrol reports logged on the app by Lion Rangers including more than 80 individual lion sightings and the approximately 6,100 high-resolution photos taken to identify individual lions from unique vibrissae (whisker pattern). These photos have been collated into a database which will be updated with regular monitoring.

The results indicate that the lion population is stable at 57-60 adult lions and 14 cubs, and although this is a decrease from earlier assessments, it is expected with a decreasing prey base. The population has a normal sex ratio, which in the past was not balanced due to high male mortalities to HLC.

The first-ever systematic lion survey of Namibia's free-ranging lion population was a success, bringing together all stakeholders to survey, develop improved monitoring procedures and implement management actions going forward. The participation of Lion Rangers and the importance of their role in conservation efforts, will ensure that communities can continue to work together to find solutions to the challenges of living with wildlife, while also benefiting from it.

<sup>\*</sup> Heydinger, J., Muzuma, U. (2024). Report on the Population Survey of the Free-ranging Lions of Northwest Namibia, with Results and Recommendations, 2022. Namibia Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism. Windhoek, Namibia.



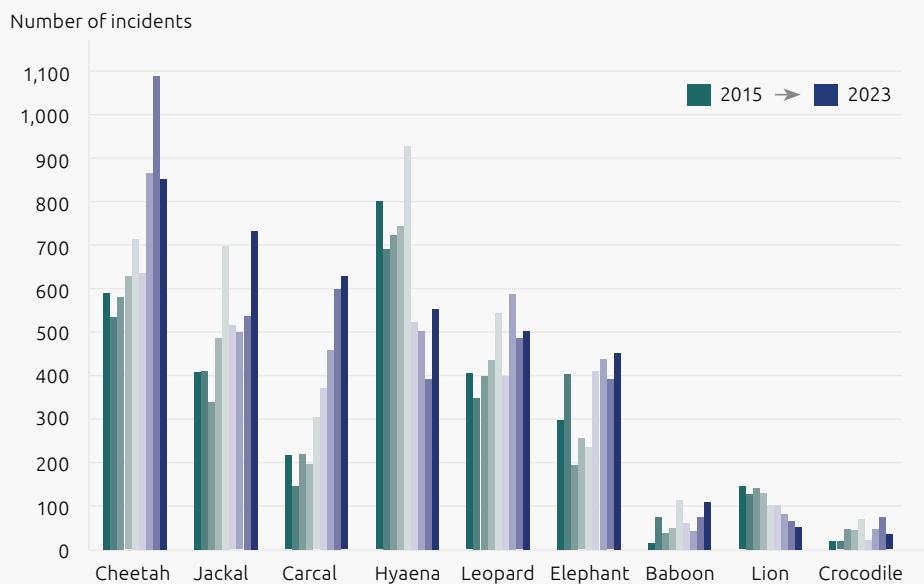
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## HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT

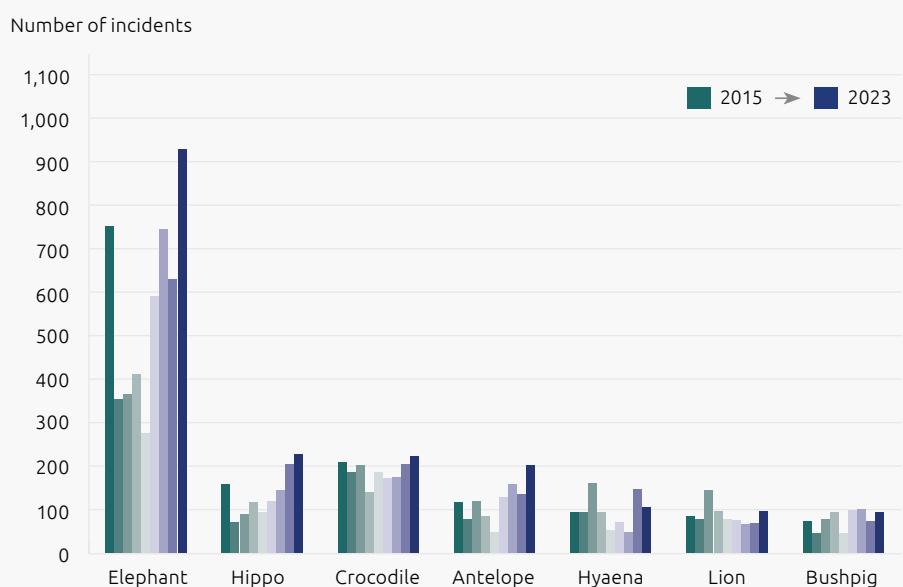
Communities throughout Namibia live with wildlife on a daily basis, while trying to raise livestock and crops. This interface of wildlife and humans results in human wildlife conflict (HWC). HWC is a pressing conservation issue in Namibia, and as the drought continues and climate change impacts increase over time, it is expected that HWC will also increase. While conflict will always exist, HWC mitigation efforts aim to reduce conflict and focus on building human wildlife coexistence through the most effective and efficient methods possible.

The people that live with wildlife bear increased costs of conservation through attacks on livestock, crop damage and loss, damage to infrastructure, human injury and loss of life. A balance is needed between long-term conservation priorities and future generations, and the short-term needs of people living with large mammals and predators.

In 2023, a total of just over N\$ 9.21 million in HWC off-set payments were made, both within and outside conservancies, including 22 instances of human injury and 13 mortalities. In the Erongo and Kunene Regions, the highest number of incidents were caused by cheetah, with the second and third highest also predators, jackal and caracal, respectively. The higher overall levels of conflict in Erongo and Kunene are indicative of long-term drought. In Zambezi, elephant caused the highest number of conflict incidents, mainly through crop damage and loss. In this area, increased human population leads to encroachment into wildlife areas and contributes to the increase in HWC incidents



**Figure 12.** Human-wildlife conflict species and trends in the Erongo and Kunene Regions from 2015 to 2023.



**Figure 13.** Human-wildlife conflict species and trends in the Zambezi Region from 2015 to 2023.

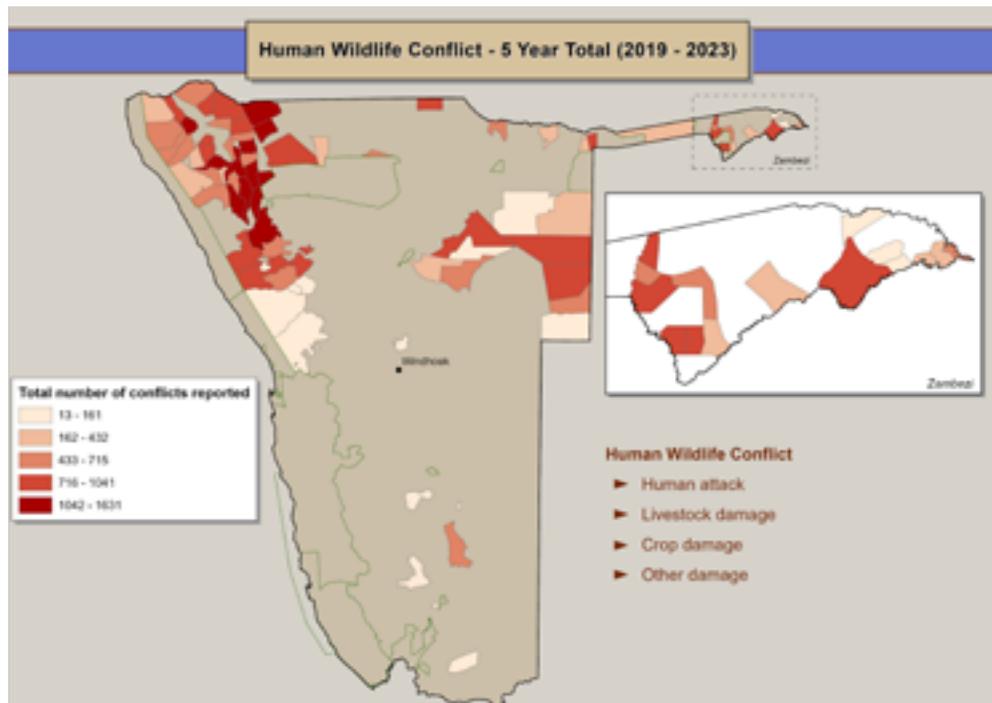


Figure 14. Number of conflict incidents reported in a five-year period by all conservancies. Darker red indicates higher reporting frequencies, not the amount of damage caused. Some species may cause high levels of damage in a few incidents (e.g. surplus killing of livestock by lions and leopards).

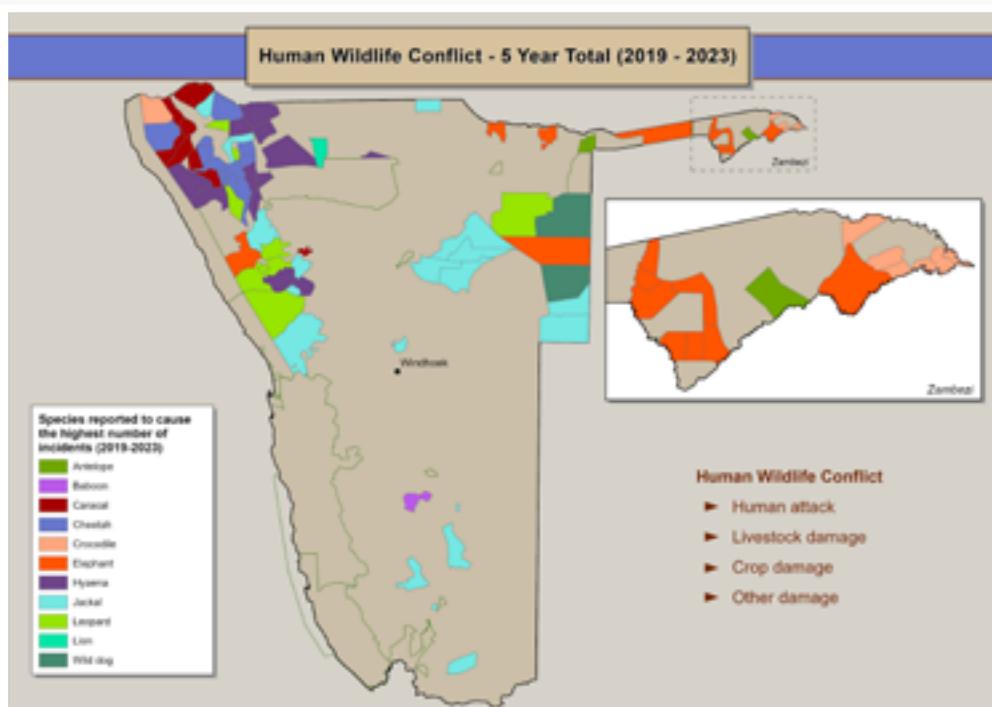


Figure 15. Species that were the most frequently reported to cause human wildlife conflict in all conservancies in 2023. In a few cases two or three species have a similar number of incidents. Most conservancies report conflict with several different species each year, so this is not a representation of all conflict experienced.

The Human Wildlife Conflict Self Reliance Scheme (HWCSRS) is funded by the Game Products Trust Fund (GPTF) and provides funding to off-set the costs of human wildlife conflict. Conservancies receive N\$60,000 in funding to off-set losses and damage costs as per a set payment schedule. Off-set payments for livestock depend upon the species, crops on the size of the area damaged and injury on the type and severity of injury or death. All claims are processed by a review panel. Some conservancies add to the amount available for claims as part of their benefit distribution plans.

## HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT CONFERENCE

Human-wildlife conflict (HWC) is a significant issue in Namibia, affecting both rural communities and wildlife conservation efforts. HWC results in livestock depredation by predators, crop damage by elephant, infrastructure damage and human injuries and fatalities. Increasing human population, livelihood demands and climate change continue to exacerbate HWC. CBNRM and conservancies seek to balance conservation priorities with the needs of people who live alongside wildlife through the generation of income from tourism and hunting, which helps create employment opportunities and funds local development projects. The challenge is implementing HWC mitigation efforts that ensure the cost of living with wildlife does not outweigh the benefits for communities.

The National Human Wildlife Conflict Conference was held in Windhoek from 10-12 May 2023. This inaugural event, convened by the MEFT focused on reviewing progress, discussing challenges and developing opportunities to mitigate HWC across Namibia and in important transboundary corridor areas where human activities overlap with wildlife habitats, such as the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA).

Dr Nangolo Mbumba, President of Namibia, opened the conference, emphasising the need for multi-dimensional approaches to mitigate HWC. The conference was attended by representatives from parliament, regional government, traditional and local authorities from across Namibia, NGOs, the private sector, farmers, conservancy leadership, researchers and other conservation stakeholders.

The Revised National Policy on Human Wildlife Conflict Management (2018-2027) is midway through its implementation, making it an ideal time to reflect on its progress. The national Policy allows for the management of human wildlife conflict in a way that recognises the rights and development needs of local communities, recognises the need to promote biodiversity conservation, promotes self-reliance and ensures that decision-making is quick, efficient and based on the best available information.

The conference provided an opportunity for the different stakeholders to conduct extended conversations around conservation issues and the challenges of living with wildlife. Each session was organised around scientific findings and research presentations, which not only focused on evidence-based approaches, but were also important in disseminating information to a wider audience. Scientists, MEFT representatives, community members and NGOs shared their experience and findings, and participants then met in breakout sessions to discuss issues and ideas in more detail.

The conference culminated in the development of 30 resolutions for HWC focused on specific topics. These included the implementation of the National Policy, human elephant conflict management, human predator relations and conflict management, wetland species and interventions for conflict management, management of conflict involving other species, and human wildlife conflict management schemes.

In closing the conference, the Minister of Environment Forestry and Tourism, Pohamba Shifeta, reiterated the MEFT's commitment to working alongside all stakeholders to address HWC in Namibia. He added that the conference demonstrated that HWC is a national issue which needs lasting sustainable solutions for communities living with wildlife. The Minister highlighted that all stakeholders must ensure that resources are available to manage HWC, engage with affected communities, continue to improve awareness on the importance of biodiversity conservation and benefits for communities, manage increasing wildlife populations through sustainable use, and intensify the implementation of management methods and techniques to address HWC across the country.



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## HUMAN WILDLIFE CONFLICT MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS

The unprecedented recovery of wildlife populations throughout Namibia, in part due to the success of the CBNRM programme and community conservation efforts, has also led to an increase in HWC. While an increase in wildlife numbers is positive, HWC creates a considerable risk for the continued success of the CBNRM approach. This is a particular challenge in conservancies where HWC costs are exceeding revenues and other benefits obtained from CBNRM.

Human Wildlife Conflict Management Action Plans (HWCMAP) are a framework for addressing the challenges of HWC in conservancies. The objective of HWCMAPs is to manage and mitigate the negative impacts which conflict species (elephant, lion, hyaena, leopard, cheetah and crocodile) can have on livestock, crops and human lives. HWCMAPs are individually tailored for each conservancy, acknowledging that the nature and intensity of conflicts vary across different landscapes.

Most conservancies already have a Game Management and Utilisation Plan (GMUP) which guides wildlife management and the utilisation of wildlife through tourism and hunting. HWCMAPs are an additional tool developed and implemented in conservancies experiencing significant levels of HWC and follow the requirements of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism's (MEFT) Measures and Guidelines for Implementation of the Revised National Policy on Human Wildlife Conflict Management (2018). HWCMAPs are crucial for communities living in areas heavily affected by HWC to foster coexistence while ensuring that conservation goals are met.

HWCMAPs are developed through a facilitated process with the conservancy management committee (CMC) and key

conservancy staff members which culminates in a two-part document – a Human Wildlife Conflict Management Plan and an Action Plan for the actual implementation. HWCMAPs indicate the steps the conservancy management and staff will take to promptly assist members or individuals who have been affected by HWC. They also clarify how land-use planning and zonation have been considered as a means of mitigating HWC within the conservancy and outline strategies and actions for ensuring effective implementation and monitoring. The HWCMAPs also consider various strategies for the management of specific problem-causing animals.

The development of HWCMAPs is supported by the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia's (CCFN) Poverty Oriented Support to Community Conservation in Namibia Project (2020-2024) and funded by KfW in conjunction with the Namibian government. This large-scale project is designed to address HWC by reducing the level of conflict, establishing sustainable financing and improving conservancy governance. The project supports CBNRM partners to work together to develop and institutionalise long-term mechanisms and structures that make the management of HWC part of the sustainability strategy of CBNRM. The project also provides target conservancies with some means to address the HWC challenges they face in line with the Revised National Human Wildlife Conflict Policy of Namibia. The project is being implemented in 43 conservancies throughout Namibia and includes several other interventions.

In 2023, 32 HWCMAPs were developed for the Kunene South (2), Khaudum landscape (1), North Central (3), Kunene North (21), and Otjozondjupa (5). By the end of 2023, 32 HWCMAPs were validated by conservancy AGMs and were endorsed by MEFT.

In addition to HWCMAPs, the Poverty Oriented Support to Community Conservation in Namibia Project addresses HWC through various interventions including the construction of predator-proof kraals, tin wire fencing to deter elephant, wildlife monitoring equipment (collars, cameras, tracking systems, smart phones), training, equipment and salaries for specialised lion and elephant ranger units, the electrification of fences, equipping of existing water points, drilling of new water points, and grants to individual conservancies. In addition, the project was expanded shortly after inception in 2020, to incorporate Namibia's ambitious and highly successful Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Fund (CRRRF), which supported conservancies through the COVID-19 pandemic to cover basic operations, critical wildlife management activities and buffer the loss of tourism income.

## COMBATTING WILDLIFE CRIME

Wildlife crime is a serious threat to conservation efforts throughout Africa. Wildlife crime is the illegal harvesting and trading of animals and plants and occurs on multiple levels, creating the need for a complex and multi-agency approach. Wildlife crime robs communities of high value resources and impacts the benefits which communities receive from their conservation efforts. Some wildlife crime takes place at a subsistence level for food, or at a commercial level which then involves crime syndicates and illegal international trade, increasing the stakes. In these wide criminal networks, local individuals who take the biggest risk in poaching activities earn only a small portion of what is earned by others in the chain of illegal trade.

In Namibia, rhino horn, elephant ivory, pangolin scales and meat, and rosewood timber products are the main products commercially poached for a global market, while illegal fishing is typically for the African market. The trafficking of rare and endemic species of plants is increasing rapidly and exponentially. To counteract wildlife crime at a national level, the MEFT, the Namibian Police Force and the Office of the Prosecutor General work closely together with other government agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGO). In conservancies, several major projects are being implemented by the MEFT and NGOs in partnership with communities. Conservancy staff including game guards, fish guards and specialised rangers are not law enforcement representatives, but rather play an important role in providing on the ground presence to deter, inhibit or stop illegal activities and alert law enforcement authorities to suspicious activities or wildlife crime incidents in their areas.





## NATIONAL WILDLIFE CRIME TRENDS

In 2023 there were important reductions in most key indicators related to wildlife crime. From an overall peak in 2019, registered cases have dropped by nearly 30%, with arrests dropping by just over 40%. This is positive, however, the backlog of wildlife cases awaiting the courts continues to increase. The number of rhinos poached in 2023 decreased from 97 in 2022 to 69 in 2023. During 2023, a significant number of poaching incidents from 2021-2023 were newly detected and statistics had to be updated. Rhino incidents were recorded in National Parks and private reserves, with no rhino poached in conservancy areas. In 2023, 83 arrests for rhino poaching were recorded, almost half of which were pre-emptive and saved valuable animals. Although eight elephants were poached in 2023, Namibia's elephant population remains healthy and this number is considered to have a negligible impact on the population. Of greater concern is the increase in tusk seizures in 2023 originating from outside Namibia, which highlights the impact of regional poaching in neighbouring countries. Meat poaching remains a constant challenge throughout the country, representing 37% of all registered cases.

Arrests for crimes related to plants increased from 3 in 2021 to 42 in 2023. The harvesting of live plants for the international market has increased greatly over the past two years and investigations indicate that well-organised criminal syndicates with international connections are targeting Namibian flora. Many of the targeted species are rare and endemic species and the impact on their populations is expected to be substantial. These crimes not only affect plant species, but also have social impacts on communities. In 2023, one of the major syndicate kingpins from Tanzania was arrested in northwest Namibia. Two community members were arrested in the same case, lured by the prospect of income to reduce poverty. NACSO supported community demonstrations against the granting of bail for all those arrested in the case.

The illegal harvesting and cross-border trafficking of Namibian timber remains prevalent in the form of timber, firewood and charcoal, despite the 2018 moratorium on timber harvesting. Non-timber resources such as devil's claw, which have provided income to local communities, are being harvested illegally in neighbouring countries and brought into Namibia to launder them into the controlled legal trade.

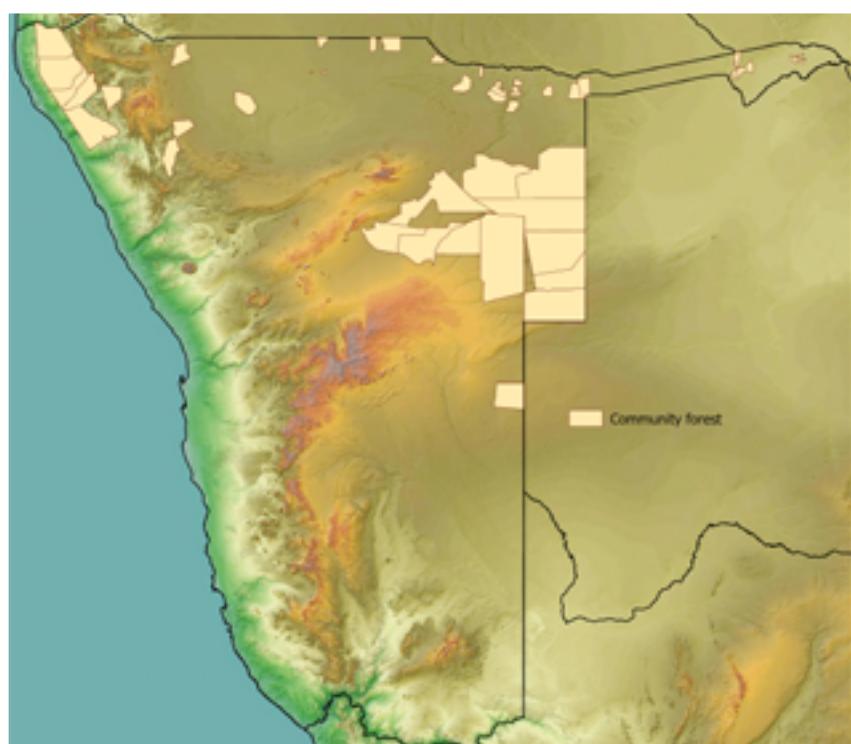
## COMMUNITY FORESTS

Namibia's forest resources are composed primarily of woodlands and bush, rather than dense forests. They serve crucial ecological and economic roles, particularly in the country's northern areas. Forests provide ecosystem services such as carbon storage, air filtration, soil stabilisation and biodiversity conservation, and help preserve water sources. Additionally, forests offer shelter, fuel, food security and economic benefits, supporting livelihoods and generating income.

Community forests (CF) are similar to conservancies, but instead of sustainable wildlife use, they are focused on community rights over timber and non-timber forest resources. Community forests and conservancies have similar governance structures, and they are often integrated to benefit from shared resources and management approaches. Community forests foster skills, capacity building and advocacy for rural populations, and empower women to participate in decision-making and assume leadership roles. By generating income for social welfare and community infrastructure projects, forests contribute to rural development and poverty alleviation.

In 2023, Namibia had a total of 47 gazetted community forests spanning just over 93,400 km<sup>2</sup>, with about 19,600 km<sup>2</sup> lying outside conservancy areas. The establishment of a community forest requires communities to work towards meeting requirements as set forth by the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT). Forest inventories are conducted by the Directorate of Forestry (DoF) in conjunction with community forest members to assess available plant resources and define sustainable harvesting limits. An Integrated Forest Management Plan is then developed outlining necessary management actions, while resource monitors issue permits and oversee forest activities to ensure compliance. Grazing within forest areas, a critical resource in times of drought, is also managed through this plan.

Timber, particularly the extraction of hardwoods, has historically been the primary income source for community forests. However, restrictions on timber harvesting, introduced by the MEFT in 2018 to curb illegal harvesting, have reduced this revenue. Recognising the need for livelihood diversification, MEFT and partners are supporting the development of non-



**Figure 16.** The 47 community forests gazetted in Namibia.

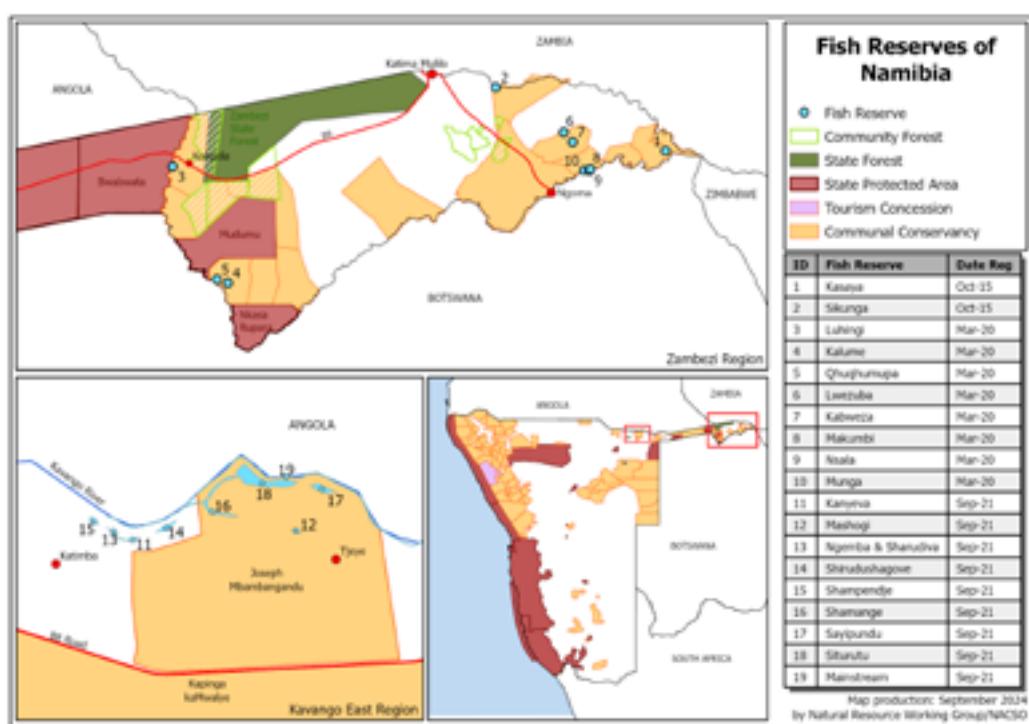
## FISHERIES RESERVES

timber forest products, focusing on species like marula, ximenia, mopane, mangetti and commiphora. Though accessing international markets for oils and other products from these species is challenging, efforts continue to focus on adding local value. Devil's claw is an important indigenous natural product which is exported in large quantities and provides substantial income to community forests annually.

The Zambezi State Forest Reserve (ZSFR) was proclaimed in May 2023 and has increased protected forest areas in the Zambezi Region. While this designation is new in Namibia and plans are still in progress, four community forests share boundaries with the State Forest and will likely benefit from grazing and harvesting rights. The State Forest is well situated within the heart of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area and connects conservancies, community forests and wildlife corridors, contributing to landscape conservation efforts.

Freshwater fisheries are an important natural resource for rural communities residing along the country's northern perennial rivers, the Okavango, Kwando, Zambezi and Chobe. Fishing provides a crucial source of protein for many communities. However, fisheries have experienced declines due to the use of illegal fishing methods, commercialised fishing by non-Namibian companies, the increase in population in riverine areas and the impacts of climate change.

The Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) provides for the establishment of fisheries reserves (FR), which allow local communities to protect and manage their fisheries resources. Fisheries reserves are integrated into conservancies in order to manage them more efficiently. In 2023 the total number of fisheries reserves remained at 20, across seven conservancies in the Zambezi and Kavango East and West Regions. Nsundwa and Kabulabula conservancies submitted applications for the official registration of five individual reserves, while Maurus



**Figure 17.** The 20 fisheries reserves in Namibia. Two reserves (Ngemba and Sharudiva) are listed together as they merge if water levels are sufficiently high.

Nekaro and Kapinga Kamwalye conservancies requested the gazetting of the entire length of their river boundaries, a total distance of approximately 75 km, as a fisheries reserves, promoting a new “riverscape” approach.

FRs provide protected areas for fish populations to increase in number, size and diversity. The recovering stocks then spill over into the wider river system, helping improve fish populations overall. In some areas, fish stocks have increased up to five times within the reserve and doubled in fishing areas adjacent to the reserve. Improved fish stocks benefit communities who rely on the fish for the provision of food, the availability of fish for sport fishing and for the increased value of intact ecosystems to tourism.

Fish guards and monitors work together to reduce illegal fishing and assess the status of fish stocks in the fisheries reserves. 70 fish guards are tasked with regularly patrolling the reserves to detect illegal fishing activities and remove illegal nets from the river. They are also trained as fish inspectors and thus greatly increase the capacity of MFMR to control illegal fishing. If arrests are required, the fish guards work together with MFMR inspectors and the police.

Forty fish monitors collect data on legal fish catches on a regular basis by visiting boat landing sites in their area to find out how much fish was caught and what methods were used. They are trained by fisheries scientists to accurately identify fish species and fill out data collection sheets. Adaptive management principles can then be applied based on the information collected over time.

The FR model has been so successful in providing a framework for communities to protect and manage their fisheries, that it has been shared and taken up throughout the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TCFA). In 2023, two newly formed transboundary natural resource management forums, between Namibian and Angolan cross-river communities on the Okavango River, were institutionalised in order to better manage overlapping fisheries. The Guidelines to Establish Fisheries Reserves and the Tackle Box for Community Fisheries through the MFMR, launched in 2022, are now accepted as standard procedure. These documents are now being extensively used to further capacity among the neighbouring KAZA countries, particularly in Angola and Zambia, to support the establishment of community fisheries reserves on both sides of the rivers.





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# IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS

## REVIEW OF 2023

**One of the main aims of CBNRM is to support income generation for conservancies and their members. Income is derived from the sustainable use of natural resources through tourism, conservation hunting and the harvesting of indigenous natural products. The generation of benefits for communities supports community-led conservation efforts. Namibia's strong reputation in the global tourism market as a unique wildlife and landscape destination, coupled with policies promoting sustainable use and conservation hunting, has enabled the CBNRM Programme to generate income for many conservancies through wildlife-based activities and partnerships. These partnerships, particularly joint ventures (JVs) with the private sector, combine expertise, resources and market access to optimize wildlife-centred enterprises for the benefit of communities and their conservation efforts.**

Income and livelihood opportunities for conservancies and members are crucial to maintaining the wildlife economy within rural communities. In 2023, Namibia recorded a significant rise in international tourist arrivals, increasing 87.4% from 461,027 in 2022 to 863,872 in 2023, marking a recovery rate of 28.9% relative to 2019 tourism levels. While tourism and conservation hunting are recovering well from the COVID-19 pandemic, there remains a critical need to diversify livelihoods in conservancies from a reliance on these sectors. This diversification will support resilience and increased economic opportunities in rural communities throughout Namibia.

The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) Business, Enterprise and Livelihoods Working Group (BEL WG) is a coalition of business and enterprise specialists from NGOs and government agencies who work together to support Namibian conservancies and communities in building and enhancing enterprises. Within BEL WG, smaller sub-groups focus on different sectors and opportunities, such as tourism, joint ventures, small and medium enterprises, hunting and natural products.



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**“Income and livelihood opportunities for conservancies and members are crucial to maintaining the wildlife economy within rural communities.**

In 2023, significant strides were made in the establishment of the Socio-Economic Development Fund (SEDF) as part of the Namibia for Life Project Finance for Permanence to provide a funding mechanism for nature-based enterprise development within the CBNRM Programme. In addition, several projects are providing community enterprises with innovative training and management support with craft and beekeeping enterprises, as well as agricultural products (produce and meat) and improved markets and access.

## THE ECONOMICS OF CONSERVANCIES

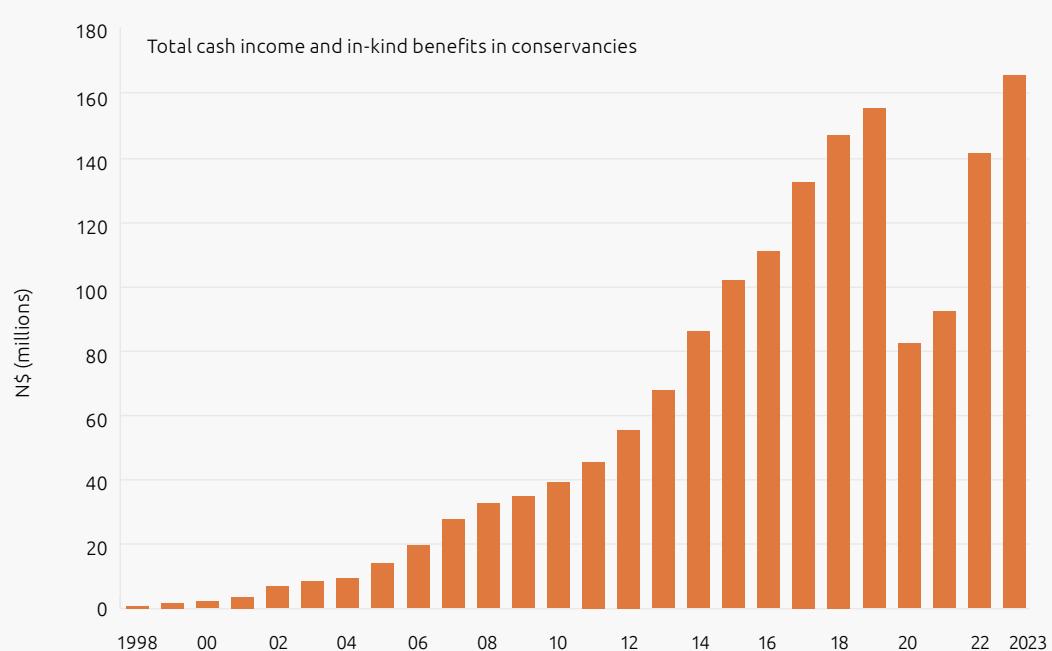
The main sources of economic returns for communal conservancies relate to international tourist arrivals, either directly or indirectly. Photographic tourism, conservation hunting and craft industries are all largely reliant on international customers. As the global tourism industry continued to recover in 2023, Namibia saw increased returns for conservancies. This year, the total returns (income and benefits) from conservancies came to over N\$ 165 million (Figure 18). This is the highest level of returns yet achieved.

Conservancies' collaboration with JV tourism and conservation hunting partners plays a crucial role in generating local economic returns, including conservancy fees that are used to cover conservation management costs and development projects. These partnerships create essential job opportunities for local community members and non-monetary benefits like meat from hunting which is highly valued. JV partnerships also contribute directly to social and developmental projects within the conservancies, through both cash and in-kind contributions.

Conservancies utilise cash income from diverse sources to fund various operational expenses, including the salaries of conservancy office and field staff responsible for natural resource monitoring, human wildlife conflict mitigation and wildlife crime prevention. Within conservancies, benefit distribution plans allocate a portion of their budgets for social initiatives, cash disbursements to members and additional social support needs such as scholarships. Some of the conservancies also allocate funds to address human wildlife conflict incidents through the Human Wildlife Conflict Self-Reliance Scheme.

There is an understandable emphasis on the tangible economic advantages that conservancies bring their members, yet equally noteworthy are the intangible benefits that the conservancy movement can offer. These include safeguarding of the environment, strategies for climate change resilience, cultural pride intertwined with conservation, the emergence of civil society structures in areas lacking them, and a sense of empowerment in assuming responsibility for natural resources. The rights granted to local communities over their natural resources can also create opportunities for capacity-building, skills enhancement and local leadership capacity. The CBNRM programme therefore, not only supports rural economic progression, but also catalyses social transformation, bolsters environmental sustainability, including climate change adaptation, and champions good governance, all pillars of the National Development Plan (page 30).

These partnerships create essential job opportunities for local community members and non-monetary benefits like meat from hunting.



**Figure 18.** Total returns to conservancies and members excluding relief grants. This includes all directly measurable income and in-kind benefits being generated, and can be divided into cash income to conservancies including the Kyaramacan Association (mostly through partnerships with private sector operators), cash income to residents from enterprises (mostly through employment and the sale of products), and as in-kind benefits to residents (mostly the distribution of harvested game meat).

**Table 4.** Summary of conservancy income earning power 2019 - 2023

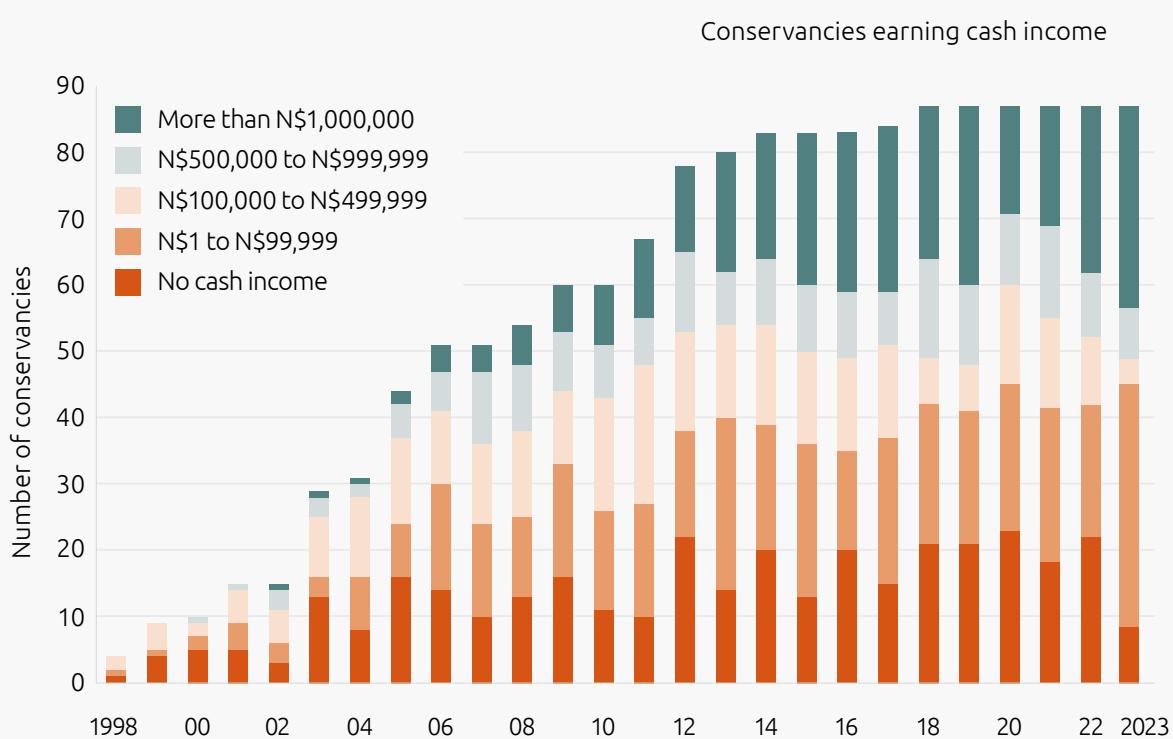
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of total conservancies (including 1 Association)	87	87	87	87	87
Number of reporting conservancies	65	62	69	64	79
% of reporting conservancies in 1st category (earning less than N\$ 100,000)	31%	32%	35%	34%	47%
% of reporting conservancies in 2nd category (earning between N\$ 100,000 - N\$ 999,999)	28%	42%	39%	25%	14%
% of reporting conservancies in 3rd category (earning N\$ 1,000,000 or more)	42%	26%	26%	41%	39%

The first category of conservancies earning less than N\$ 100,000 was recorded as 37 (47%) of reporting conservancies. This significant increase is likely due to the increased number of conservancies reporting and earning income as compared to 2022.

The middle category of conservancies earning N\$100,000 – N\$999,999 decreased, recording only 11 (14%) conservancies

out of 79 that reported in that category. This is likely due to the recovery of the tourism industry which has pushed conservancies into the third category.

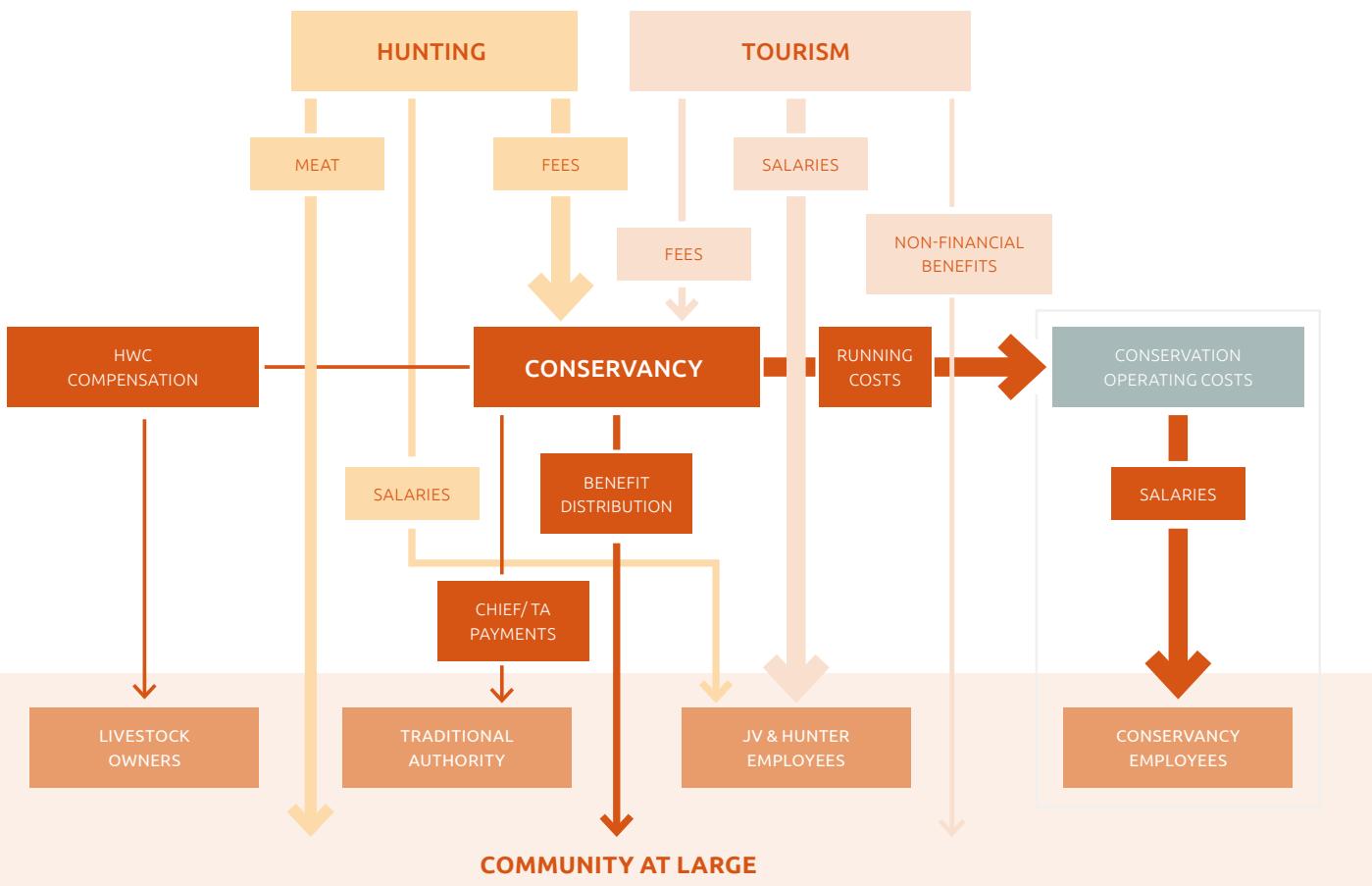
The third category indicates that, with the increase in the number of reporting conservancies and the increase in income, likely from tourism, there has been an increase to 31 (39%) in the number of conservancies earning N\$ 1,000,000 or more.



**Figure 19.** Earning power of conservancies (including the Kyaramacan Association). The number of conservancies earning cash, divided into incremental categories. The earning potential varies greatly due to factors like size of conservancy, wildlife populations, and location relative to tourist routes. The “no cash income” category includes conservancies for which no financial data has been received for 2023.

**Table 5.** Sources of returns to conservancies and their members from 2020 to 2023.

Category	Amount (N\$) 2023	%	Amount (N\$) 2022	%	Amount (N\$) 2021	%	Amount (N\$) 2020	%
JV Tourism (includes all cash income to conservancies and members)	111,167,250	59.7	90,898,390	53.7	52,871,581	46	46,453,579	48.2
Conservation Hunting (includes all cash income and meat to conservancies and members)	45,549,374	24.4	36,603,243	21.6	28,407,565	24.7	26,988,405	28
Grants	19,441,133	10.4	28,964,100	17.1	23,199,858	20.2	13,838,384	14.4
Game Harvesting, PAC, Live Sales	5,870,163	3.2	6,810,837	4.0	6,812,134	5.9	4,646,025	4.8
Miscellaneous	3,074,311	1.7	3,169,738	1.9	1,658,805	1.4	1,944,569	2
Indigenous Plant Products	1,194,835	0.6	1,270,597	0.8	1,029,191	0.9	1,482,160	1.5
Crafts					708,900	0.6	917,806	1
Community-Based Tourism (local / conservancy run enterprises, such as campsites, traditional villages, etc.)			1,501,204	0.9	257,602	0.2	29,250	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>186,297,066</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>169,218,109</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>114,945,636</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>96,300,178</b>	<b>100</b>

**Figure 20.** Benefit flows in conservancies. A schematic diagram showing income flows from tourism and conservation hunting to communities. The size of the arrows is in proportion to the size of income flows, based on average figures for conservancies in 2011-2013. Figure adapted from Naidoo et al. (2016). Complementary benefits of tourism and hunting to communal conservancies in Namibia. Conservation Biology. 30:628-638.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND

The intention of the Namibia for Life (N4L) Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) is to secure funding for conservation in perpetuity in order to solve the challenges of accessing short-term donor funding. The focus of the N4L is twofold: to provide critical extension support services to communities and to secure funding to broaden nature-based socioeconomic development in conservancies. The Socio-Economic Development Fund (SEDF) will serve as a dedicated, specialized financial mechanism under N4L to support the communities within conservancies to diversify and improve their livelihoods. The SEDF, designed to support equality, equity and inclusivity, will provide access to capital for rural communities and aspiring entrepreneurs. It will also provide access to tailored business advisory services to start, nurture and grow enterprises.

The development of the SEDF has been undertaken through a multi-partner group, the Socio-Economic Development Assessment Reference Group (SEDA RG), consisting of government, NGOs and WWF Namibia, with co-opted support from the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF) and the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN). While the process to design the SEDF has been ongoing since 2022 and will continue into 2024, several key achievements were made in 2023.

A Socio-Economic Development Assessment (SEDA), Landscape Analysis and Market Analysis were conducted by Business Financial Solutions (BFS) from July 2022 to June 2023 and included a broad variety of consultations with stakeholders and finance experts. BFS analysed the information and inputs, and made recommendations, completing the studies in September 2023. The main recommendation is a funding mechanism that can act as a catalyst and instrument for impact, grant, investment and development funding. This mechanism will support positive socioeconomic development outcomes that can further stimulate multiplier effects to meet the needs of local communities and indigenous people.

The fund will focus on nature-based enterprises (NBEs) and enabling infrastructure with a defined bias towards those enterprises that: (a) support sustainable biodiversity utilization, conservation and equitable benefit sharing from derived resources; (b) diversify livelihood options; (c) provide

socioeconomic benefits and improve household incomes; and (d) develop community resilience to social and environmental threats such as climate change. The SEDF will focus on five funding instruments that are considered suitable for the goal of supporting community NBEs and related enterprises. These are grants for business development support, grants for equipment, zero rated loans, equity and interest-bearing loans, and possibly a recoverable grant.

The SEDF will be a pioneering initiative in Namibia and one of the few instruments which will move and/or deploy capital, in the form of blended finance, into community-owned and managed NBEs within CBNRM entities, community forests, conservancies and associations. It is expected that the fund will be able to support a number of sustainable NBEs within the different conservation landscapes. These NBEs will contribute to the resilience of local economies and result in improved biodiversity conservation efforts by communities. This supports evolving conservation theory and is a model for Namibia and other developing countries and perhaps, for the rest of the world. The activities that will ensure success include funding, empowering, skilling, upskilling, training (business development, sustainable practices, etc.), mentoring and coaching communities, and also providing incubation services that support the establishment of scalable, sustainable NBEs.

The establishment of the SEDF will contribute to long-term financial security which is critical to secure all gains (initial capital injections, investments, catalysts) necessary to drive sustainable natural resource management, support the implementation of CBNRM Policy, uphold human rights and application to biodiversity conservation, and advance the living standards and wellbeing of indigenous people and local communities (IPLC).

Development of the SEDF will continue into 2024 with the planned establishment and operations in place by the beginning of 2025. The ultimate goal of the SEDF is to facilitate financial flows to community conservancy with a view to establishing sustainable NBEs that can provide employment and improve socioeconomic livelihoods, thereby incentivizing communities to improve conservation and biodiversity.



## DORO !NAWAS AND ONDULI RIDGE

Before independence in 1990 and under apartheid rule by South Africa, Namibian communities did not have rights to utilise and benefit from wildlife. The development of CBNRM and the conservancy model, supported by the newly independent Namibian government, introduced an option for rural communities to coexist with wildlife and generate benefits to improve livelihoods. Doro !nawas Conservancy is an example of an income earning conservancy, benefitting from their wildlife through tourism.

Named after the Doros Crater, a ring crater formed by volcanic activity, Doro !nawas Conservancy in northwest Namibia was gazetted in 1999. The Doro !nawas population is predominantly Damara with most of the approximately 1,500 residents speaking Khoekhoegowab. Its climate is arid with an unpredictable annual rainfall between 50 and 150 millimetres and residents are mainly dependent on small livestock farming. Despite its harsh climate, Doro !nawas has much to offer, including breathtaking scenery, interesting geology and a wide diversity of game. The area is an important refuge for black rhino and is home to desert-adapted elephant, giraffe, leopard and cheetah. In addition to antelope and other mammal species, many of Namibia's near endemic bird species can be found in the conservancy. In the east of the conservancy is the Petrified Forest, a proclaimed national monument and the largest accumulation of petrified logs in southern Africa. Doro !nawas is located close to Twyfelfontein, Namibia's first World Heritage Site and home to one of the largest collections of ancient rock engravings and paintings in the world.

Doro !nawas has four tourism enterprises which capitalize on its wildlife and natural beauty – a community owned and operated campsite, a tented camp, a mid-range lodge and its newest lodge, Onduli Ridge. Onduli Ridge is a joint venture (JV) partnership between the conservancy and Ultimate Safaris. Ultimate Safaris is a Namibian tourism company, dedicated to the protection and conservation of the areas in which they operate, as well as to improving the quality of life of the communities who live in and around them.





© Ultimate Safaris

The relationship between Doro !nawas and Ultimate Safaris was established when the conservancy first approached the company about a possible tourism JV. The initial engagements eventually led to negotiations and a JV contract in 2019. Onduli Ridge, named after the resident giraffe, was envisaged as a small, exclusive lodge with only nine rooms. Unfortunately, three months into construction in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the collapse of the global tourism market hit and construction halted. The lodge was eventually completed and officially opened in June 2021. The lodge has already won two prestigious awards, the PURE Award for Conservation acknowledging the joint conservation effort between Ultimate, Doro !nawas and neighbouring conservancies, and the Richard Bangs Best Hotels in the World Award, celebrating unparalleled excellence in hospitality.

Joint venture partnerships provide numerous benefits for conservancies including cash income, employment opportunities for conservancy residents, capital investment into the area and support for community and conservation projects. Since its opening until the end of 2023, Onduli Ridge made almost N\$ 2,5 million in cash payments to the conservancy, provided just over N\$ 5,8 million in salaries and benefits for employees, facilitated N\$ 2,5 million for conservation and development projects, and invested just over N\$ 50 million in lodge infrastructure.

Ultimate Safaris employs 34 staff members at Onduli, 60% of which are from the conservancy. Staff receive training as they join the team and continue to receive ongoing training as needed. As part of their aim, Ultimate Safaris seeks to support the development of staff and several conservancy employees have been very successful in their work over a short period of time. A camp assistant was promoted to the position of butler and is now training as a guide, which requires specialized knowledge, while a groundsman has been appointed as assistant chef. Several other staff members have also benefited from their employment and development and have been promoted.

Support to conservation and development projects include water drilling and installations, salaries for Rhino Rangers, translocation and monitoring of giraffe, water point restoration for elephant and the establishment of a village garden. In

## DIVERSIFYING INCOME

addition, Ultimate Safaris assisted Doro !nawas to obtain a grant from the Community Conservation Fund of Namibia's (CCFN) Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility (CRRRF) to upgrade the conservancy owned and operated Granietkop Campsite. This has enabled the conservancy, with management and booking support from Ultimate Safaris, to operate more efficiently and increase income for the conservancy.

The Doro !nawas conservancy, its members and the broader community benefit in numerous ways from JV operations. The income from Onduli Ridge and the other tourism partners provides funding for conservancy operations, including salaries and other expenses, allowing the conservancy to monitor and manage its natural resources sustainably and provide employment. Doro !nawas is able to meet the threshold of 50% benefit distribution, with half of the income going to running costs and the other half distributed in benefits. Benefits are shared in two ways, through direct cash benefits to members and through community projects. Direct cash benefits support community members at a household level, while projects have broader positive impact for the entire community. The conservancy is divided into six areas and each area receives a portion of funding for community projects determined by the residents in that area.

Through Ultimate Safari's Conservation Travel Foundation, the conservancy receives support to apply for grants and can access additional funding for smaller projects, such as constitution reviews or equipment for community game guards.

Doro !nawas is a shining example of tourism supporting community conservation efforts. Linking economic benefits directly to conservation supports encourages the sustainable use of natural resources. However, JV partnerships provide much more than economic and employment benefits to both partners. They also provide community development and capacity building opportunities, conservation incentives and cultural preservation to local communities, while providing authentic and extraordinary experiences to visitors. Tourism is helping to ensure that future generations in Doro !nawas and Namibia will continue to benefit from their wildlife and their natural resources.

The CBNRM Programme in Namibia aims to diversify livelihoods in order to improve standards of living, alleviate poverty, create economic opportunities and increase resilience in rural communities. CBNRM is focused on diversifying livelihoods through the integration of various natural resource-based activities and has already been successful in creating income streams in conservancies through the development of joint venture (JV) tourism and conservation hunting enterprises in partnership with the private sector. Unfortunately, not all conservancies can benefit from these high earning JVs due to location, density of wildlife and other limiting factors. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the vulnerability of global tourism markets. Some community forests are able to benefit from the harvesting of indigenous natural products, but high value species are not found in every community forest. It is critical that more effort be placed on further diversification of livelihoods and income to ensure that communities are able to earn income at both a collective and individual level.



**CBNRM is focused on diversifying livelihoods through the integration of various natural resource-based activities and has already been successful in creating income streams in conservancies.**

Multiple alternative livelihood options have been explored within the CBNRM framework. As mentioned, the most successful have been tourism, conservation hunting and indigenous natural products. Other options include craft production, sustainable agriculture, fisheries and renewable energy. In the past, emphasis was placed on the development of conservancy-based enterprises. While this can work in some situations, it is challenging to make a community-run enterprise successful without a business-minded entrepreneur in the lead. Currently, more innovative options are being explored and implemented.



© NACSO/WWF Namibia

The Community Conservation Fund of Namibia's (CCFN) Poverty Oriented Support to Community Conservation in Namibia Project (January 2020 - December 2024) is providing grants as part its project. The objective of these grants is to assist groups or individuals in investing in or enhancing existing alternative income-generating activities in conservancies and community forests. The aim is to diversify or add to existing tourism-related and other income sources and create employment for community members. This diversification will build resilience against external shocks that have a direct impact on tourism-related income streams.

**CoLAB seeks to ensure that support to farmers promotes individual income generation while ensuring biodiversity and habitat conservation.**

The CCFN supported several projects in 2023 focused on meat production, indigenous natural products and beekeeping. In Sheya Shuushona Conservancy in North Central Namibia, Kagwanduka Pig Farming and Meat Supply received a grant to upgrade and further enhance an existing pig farming project to diversify its products with the establishment of a butchery. This enterprise is owned and managed by an individual, however, it supports the generation of income within the conservancy and provides jobs. The basis of the enterprise is a revolving scheme to encourage the farming of pigs in the conservancy to create a sustainable supply for the butchery. The pigs are then purchased from the community, creating income for conservancy members. Part of the funding support also included feed and vaccinations for the pigs. The project showed good progress and started to generate income within just 12 months. The project employs three people from the conservancy and proceeds from the project also supported school-feeding initiatives and the provision of school uniforms to vulnerable children.

In northwest Namibia, the Opuwo Processing Facility (OPF) markets and sells essential oils from indigenous natural products. The OPF is a trust, managed by a board of trustees, comprising representatives from five conservancies (Puros, Sanitatas, Okondjombo, Marienfluss and Orupembe). Plant resins are collected from local harvesters, who are paid for their work. The resin is then processed from its raw form into essential oils at the OPF. While the OPF has been in operation for a number of years, the grant supported an enhancement of operations and long-term sustainability. The funding provided a significant increase the OPF's visibility on a local, regional and international level, and assisted the OPF in securing several sales agreements and increasing their revenue. As a result, the employees of OPF who were previously only employed on a contract basis received permanent employment contracts with benefits such as pension and medical aid. The trust receives additional support from other partners including the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Tourism Supporting Conservation Trust (TOSCO) and Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC).

Two community-owned and managed beekeeping enterprises in Lubuta Community Forest and Sikanjabuka Community Forest in the Zambezi Region received a grant to train beekeepers and enhance honey production. The aim is to create a sustainable supply of honey for the community forest to sell nationally, sharing benefits with the beekeepers. Currently honey is only being sold in limited quantities in the region, with some honey being sold at each CF or at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MEFT) Department of Forestry (DoF) offices.

A total of 32 beekeepers were trained with the appropriate knowledge and skills to farm with bees including the basics of beekeeping, apiary management, honey extraction and bee health. As part of the grant, beekeepers received equipment. In addition, the beekeepers participated in an exchange and learning visit to beekeeping and honey production projects in Zambia.

Another project supporting the diversification of livelihoods is the GIZ Climate Change and Inclusive Use of Natural Resources (CCIU) Programme (2021-2024). The CCIU is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) with co-funding from the European Union and works together with the MEFT.

The Women's Knitting Project was initiated in September 2022 in the Otjindjerese Conservancy in the Kunene Region. The first phase trained 20 women on basic knitting, crocheting, weaving and basic marketing. The group, called Tjiwa-Tjiwa, produced hats, handbags, cell phone pouches, baskets, baby shoes, scarves and woven mats which were sold in the local market.

In 2023, the project continued support in a second phase with the aim of providing additional, more advanced training for the production of quality products to sell in local, regional and national markets. Training, coaching and mentoring were provided to 21 women to build on the skills from the first phase to enhance production processes, materials, quality, pricing, marketing, bookkeeping, social media and branding. As part of the project, a crochet and knitting manual was developed. Training took place for a total of four weeks between August and December 2023 and almost 250 items were produced.

As part of the project, branding materials and social media accounts for the group were also developed. Market access was supported and targeted towards international tourists and hotels and lodges, but also for the national Namibian market.

Tjiwa-Tjiwa has the potential to become a valuable livelihood, achieving economic and social goals. There are always challenges to running a community artisan business and the establishment of a successful craft enterprise takes time. However, the comprehensive training, capacity building and linkages with markets will assist the women of Tjiwa-Tjiwa to generate alternative incomes and be more resilient.

Small scale agriculture production has been identified by many donor-funded development projects as an opportunity for uplifting livelihoods and ensuring food security in rural communities. These projects aim, in theory, to provide livelihood

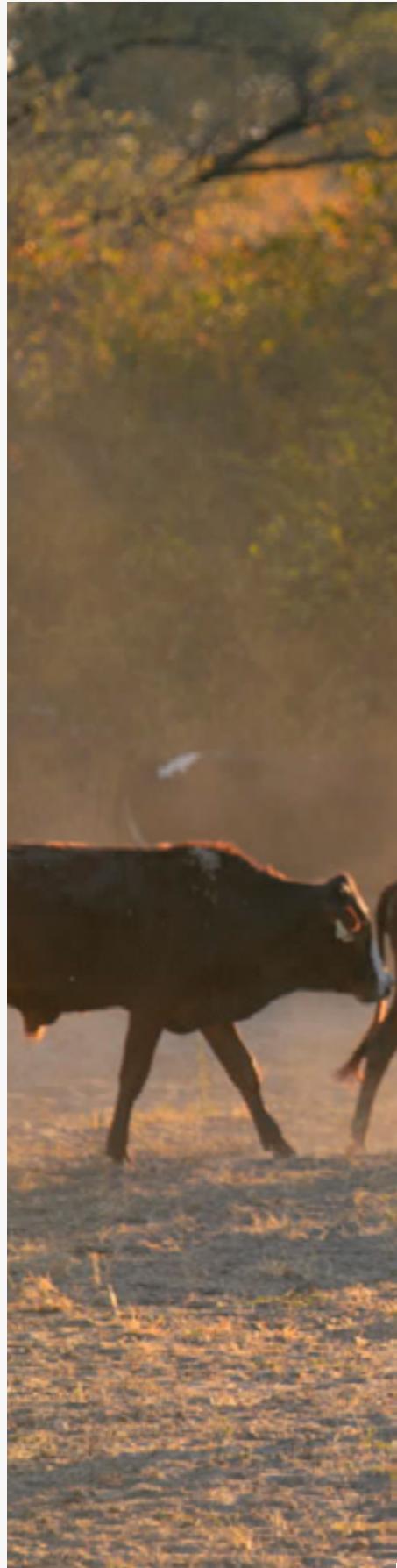


diversification, food security and climate resilience, but in the past they have not proven sustainable. Innovations are now being explored, with the application of a business approach. In 2023, initial steps in the development of a new project to support agribusiness were taken by WWF Namibia. Conservation Leveraging Agribusiness (CoLAB) seeks to ensure that support to farmers promotes individual income generation while ensuring biodiversity and habitat conservation, and retains the important wildlife dispersal areas that connect the vast multi-national Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA). This project does not aim to replace the support already being given to subsistence and small-scale farmers on production, but rather to introduce a new level of support to catalyse sustainable value chain development by adopting a business approach. The private sector is considered a key driving partner. The approaches representing a new way of doing business are:

1. **Private sector and local enterprise should be more involved as the drivers;**
2. **Production should be driven by markets and not by donors or NGOs; and**
3. **Conservation efforts should be used to obtain premium returns.**

The elements that gained traction in the year included market access for cattle through the piloting of a small feedlot, the establishment of cluster farms to facilitate production and discussions around the development of chilli production to supply companies producing chilli products. Further development will continue in 2024. It is also hoped that by developing a local level marketing hub for small scale producers in Kongola, a large settlement in the Zambezi Region, the agricultural value chain will be less risky for both the producer and the consumer.

Combining agricultural production within conservancies with nature positive, conservation friendly standards and practices, allows for the development strong nature-based brands, opens opportunities for premium pricing, and also achieves positive conservation outcomes.





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# CONSERVATION AT SCALE

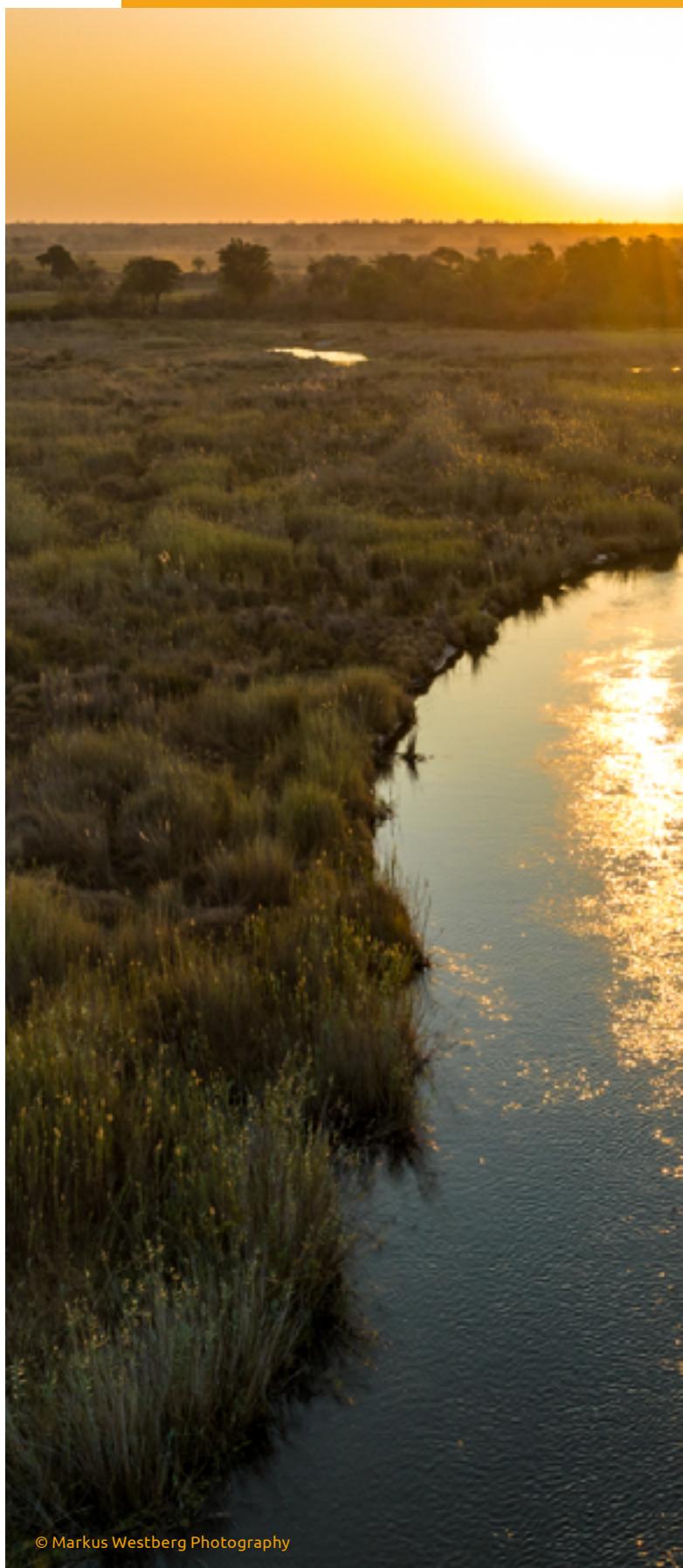
**Local conservation efforts are essential for supporting both livelihoods and wildlife, but broader landscape-level approaches amplify the impact across larger regions. These approaches help secure wildlife movement, implement conservation strategies, foster socio-economic development and manage human-wildlife conflict. Landscape level conservation is especially important in Namibia, where the predominantly arid to semi-arid environment requires that wildlife migrates across vast areas in response to rainfall patterns and grazing needs.**

Namibia's protected areas cover 16.9% of the country, while communal conservancies and community forests add another 22.6%. Combined, these parks and community-managed areas place 40% of Namibia under sustainable land management. This dual system of land management is mutually beneficial with community land creating wildlife corridors that connect national parks while communities also gain benefits like tourism concessions and improved wildlife management.

The boundaries of parks and conservancies were designed with human priorities in mind (i.e. nature conservation and income generation), however these boundaries often intersect natural ecosystems and migration routes. The effective management of whole ecosystems demands a larger, landscape level perspective that extends beyond individual park and conservancy boundaries. This approach prioritizes stronger collaboration between conservancies at both regional and sub-regional levels, as well as alignment with national parks. Key efforts in landscape conservation within Namibia include the alignment of conservancy land-use zones, and mapping and protecting wildlife corridors between parks.

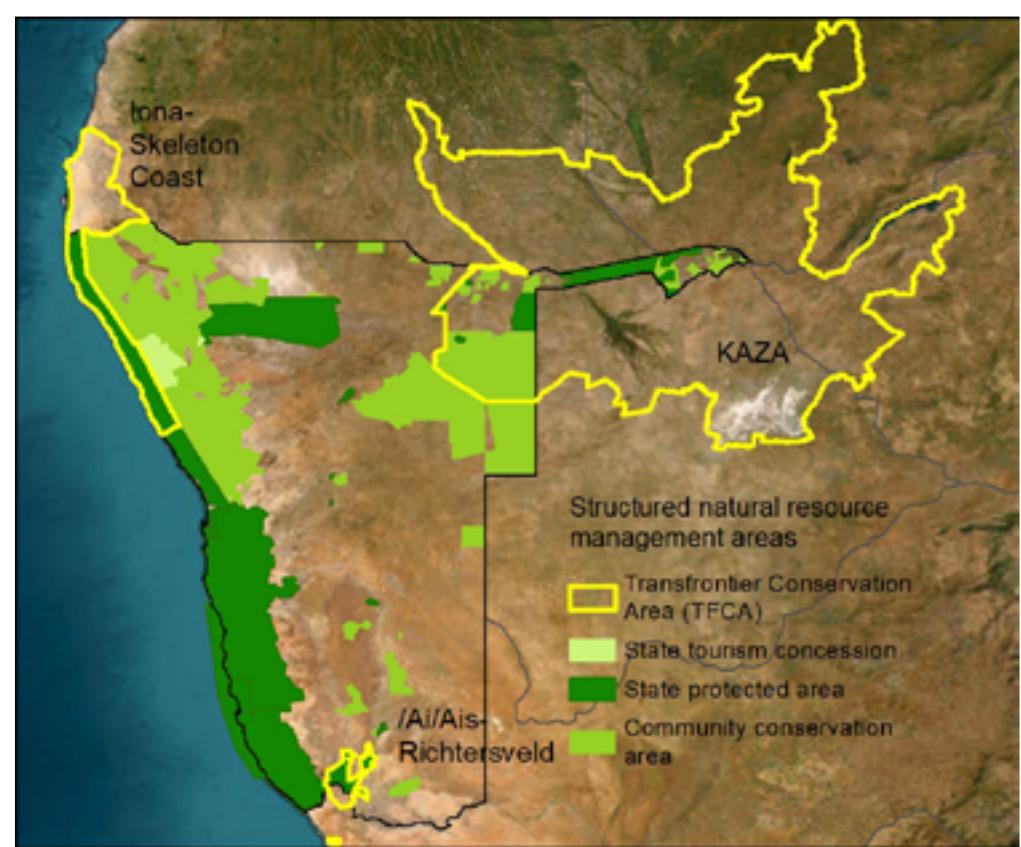
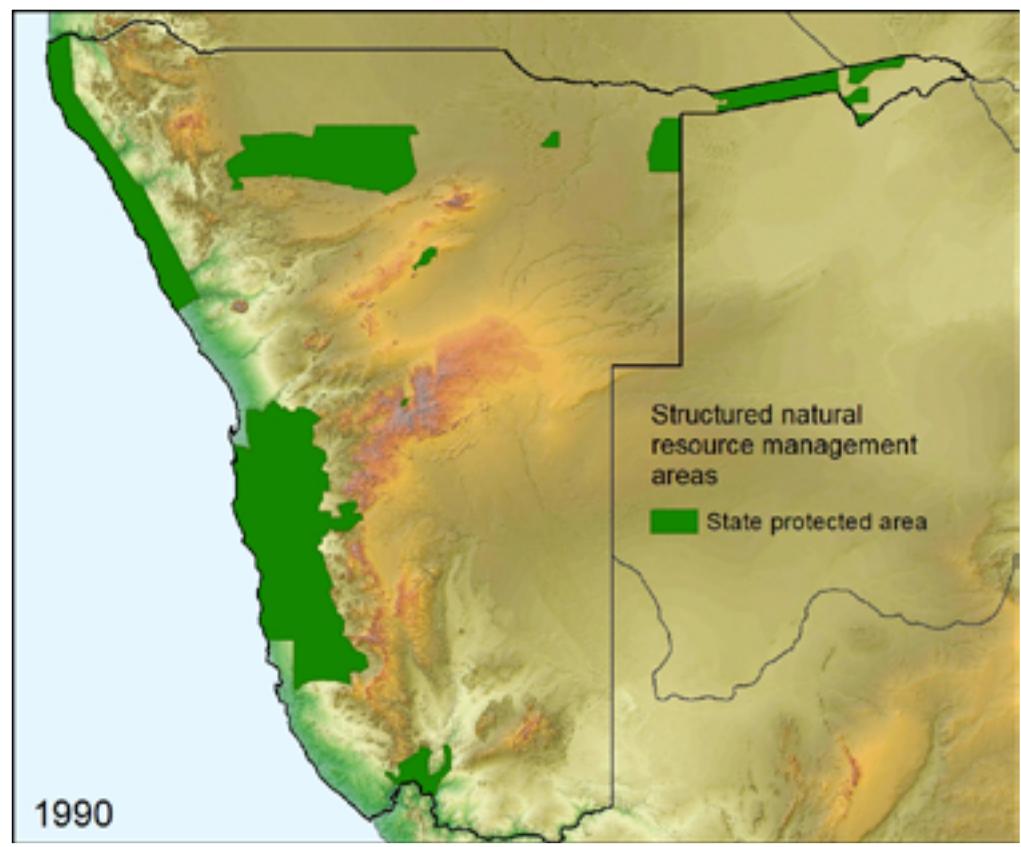
Landscape conservation coordination is also essential at an international level to ensure long-term results. Management of conservation efforts on an international level adds even more complexity, requiring extensive cooperation between governments to agree on issues, develop joint planning and implement activities.

Namibia's landscape conservation efforts operate on multiple levels – between individual conservancies, between conservancies and national parks, and between conservancies, national parks and neighboring countries. In 2023, Namibia made significant strides towards realizing its landscape level conservation aims.



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**“The effective management of whole ecosystems demands a larger, landscape level perspective that extends beyond individual park and conservancy boundaries.**



**Figure 21.** In 1990, the only areas under conservation management in Namibia were state-protected national parks. By 2023, this area had expanded significantly, especially through the addition of communal conservancies and community forests. Namibia is also party to three trans-frontier conservation areas with neighbouring countries.

## KAVANGO-ZAMBEZI TRANSFRONTIER CONSERVATION AREA

The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TCFA) spans almost 520,000 km<sup>2</sup> across five countries (Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe). In 2023, the implementation of numerous conservation efforts continued across this huge landscape at local, national and international level.

Six active transboundary natural resource management (TBNRM) forums between Namibia, Botswana, Angola and Zambia continued full operations in 2023. These forums are focused at the local level, providing communities with the opportunity to share their experiences and address cross-border issues such as wildlife crime, wildlife corridors, fisheries, forests and fire management.

The Okavango TBNRM forum was established in September 2023 between community trusts in Botswana, the Kyaramacan Association in Namibia and the Mucusso communities in Angola. There are plans to establish another forum between Angola and Zambia (Kwando North West TBNRM forum). The Kwando and Okavango Rivers have been identified as biodiversity hotspots and are facing increasing threats. The establishment of additional TBNRM forums will expand collaboration

and conservation efforts within KAZA, providing new opportunities for communities to work together to protect their natural resources.

The first bi-annual TBNRM Forum planning meeting outside of Namibia was held in July 2023 in Simalaha Conservancy in Zambia. More than 300 delegates from Angola, Botswana, Namibia and Zambia participated in the meeting. Another important achievement for the year is the recognition of the TBNRM Community Sub-Working Group within the KAZA Secretariat's Community Sub-Working Group.

The Dream Fund, a partnership between African Parks, Peace Parks Foundation and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), seeks to support KAZA, encourage sustainable agriculture to improve food security, protect the freshwater supply of the Kwando River, connect isolated areas of the TFCA, tackle poaching and create economic opportunities through tourism. Activities under the Dream Fund project have identified a total of 35 important wildlife corridors in Angola, Namibia, Zambia and Botswana which need to be secured. In 2023, it was estimated, using seven different criteria, that these corridors are 46% secured. Efforts to secure more of these corridors will continue with support from the Dream Fund.

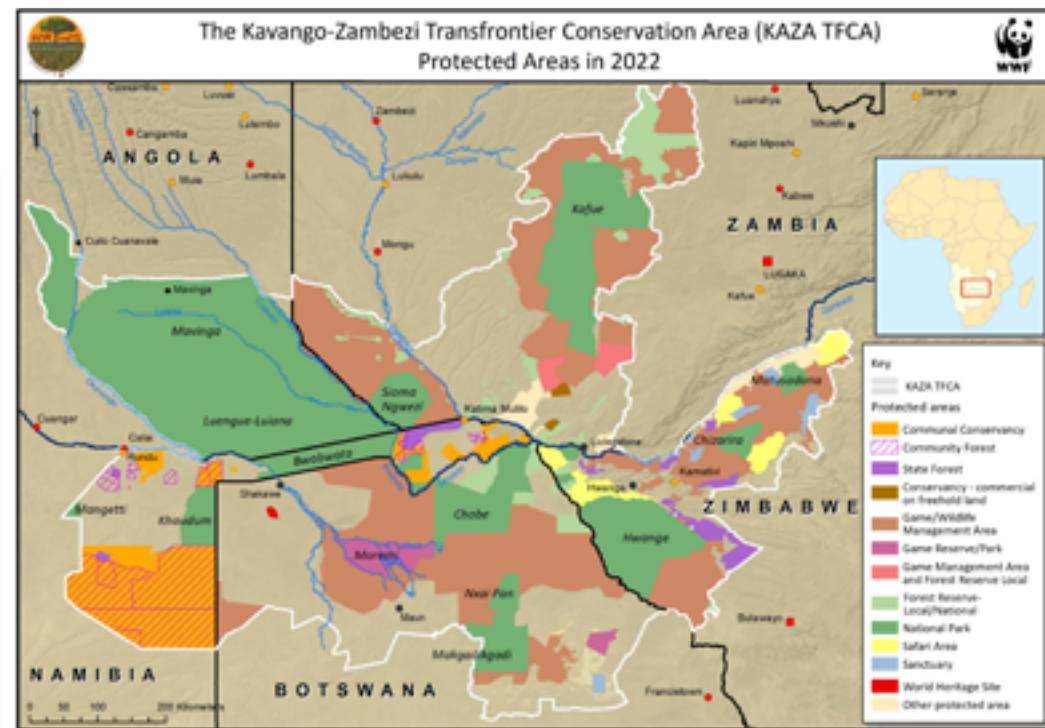


Figure 22. The Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TCFA) protected areas in 2023.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/cuando-river-basin-2021-report-card>

The 'pre-final' draft report for the Cuando River Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is complete. The SEA draws upon the information collated through the Cuando Basin Report Card, State of the Basin reports, the Integrated Water Resource Management Plan for the Cuando River, and the joint WWF and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) conservation values mapping. The report suggests a low-to-medium impact development scenario for the basin, highlighting that it is very sensitive to development. A systematic conservation plan identified key areas for preserving the environmental health of the basin. These areas include the protection of the southern reedbeds and wetlands, maintenance of the entire river as free-flowing to ensure critical ecological processes continue, and the securing of the important wildlife corridor that extends through eastern Bwabwata National Park in Namibia. Summary posters and flyers with recommendations will be produced in English and Portuguese for government officials and developers. Securing the Cuando River remains a priority for WWF and KAZA.

## WILDLIFE SURVEYS IN ANGOLA

For the past five years, the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisation's (NACSO) Natural Resources Working Group (NRWG) and WWF Namibia have been working to support the establishment of tools to monitor wildlife in Angola. This collaboration with the Angolan Ministry of the Environment and the Association for the Conservation of the Environment and Integrated Rural Development (ACADIR), an Angolan NGO, aimed to establish annual game counts in the Luengue-Luiana National Park, located in the Cuando Cubango province in the south-eastern corner of Angola. At the time the park was newly proclaimed and needed assistance to establish monitoring systems.

NACSO, WWF Namibia and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) have over 20 years' experience in conducting annual game counts in communal conservancies and in state protected areas, and were able to provide the support to Angola to establish their own counts. Angola is an integral part of the KAZA TCFA landscape, more specifically the Luengue-Luiana National Park is bordered to the south by Bwabwata National Park in Namibia and to the east by Sioma-Ngwezi National Park in Zambia. It is imperative that the wildlife in this park is systematically monitored.

The support provided over the past five years has included essential materials for the counts, personnel to provide training, GIS and mapping services, as well as the compilation and analysis of data to provide survey results for adaptive management purposes. Funding has been provided annually through different donors. Due to the international travel restrictions imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Namibian team was unable to physically participate in the counts for a few years. However, in 2023, the Namibian team was once again invited to participate in this important annual activity.

The invitation was also extended to neighbouring community-based organisations in Namibia, Botswana and Zambia participating in KAZA's TBNRM forums. More than 40 participants from local communities in Cuando-Cubango, communal conservancies, associations and transboundary forums were present for the seven-day activity, alongside representatives from ACADIR, the Angolan Ministry of the Environment, NACSO, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) and WWF Zambia.

Herman Aindongo, a NRWG team member describes the experience. "It was a very early morning drive which began at 4:30 am from Rundu in Namibia, with the team from ACADIR leading the way. The thick, sandy and winding road eventually led us to Jamba, ten hours later. After all the tents were set up, we sat down to discuss the upcoming activity and to exchange ideas and suggestions. For logistical reasons, it was agreed that the training and count be hosted at Benorio, a base camp on the banks of the Kwando River only 70 km southeast of Jamba. Benorio is closer in proximity to the settlements found within the park.

The team set out for Benorio the next morning and waited for the arrival of the remaining participants. An in-depth training was conducted the next day to ensure that the game count methodologies were well understood and to explain the concept of systematic wildlife monitoring. The larger group was then divided up into five smaller teams, one allocated to each of the five routes. Drivers familiar with the routes were specifically chosen to make sure that the routes were followed accurately. On 21 October, at exactly 05:00, all the teams started their count routes. In total, 16 different species were sighted during the counts, including elephant, buffalo, leopard, sable, lechwe, reedbuck and bat-eared fox.



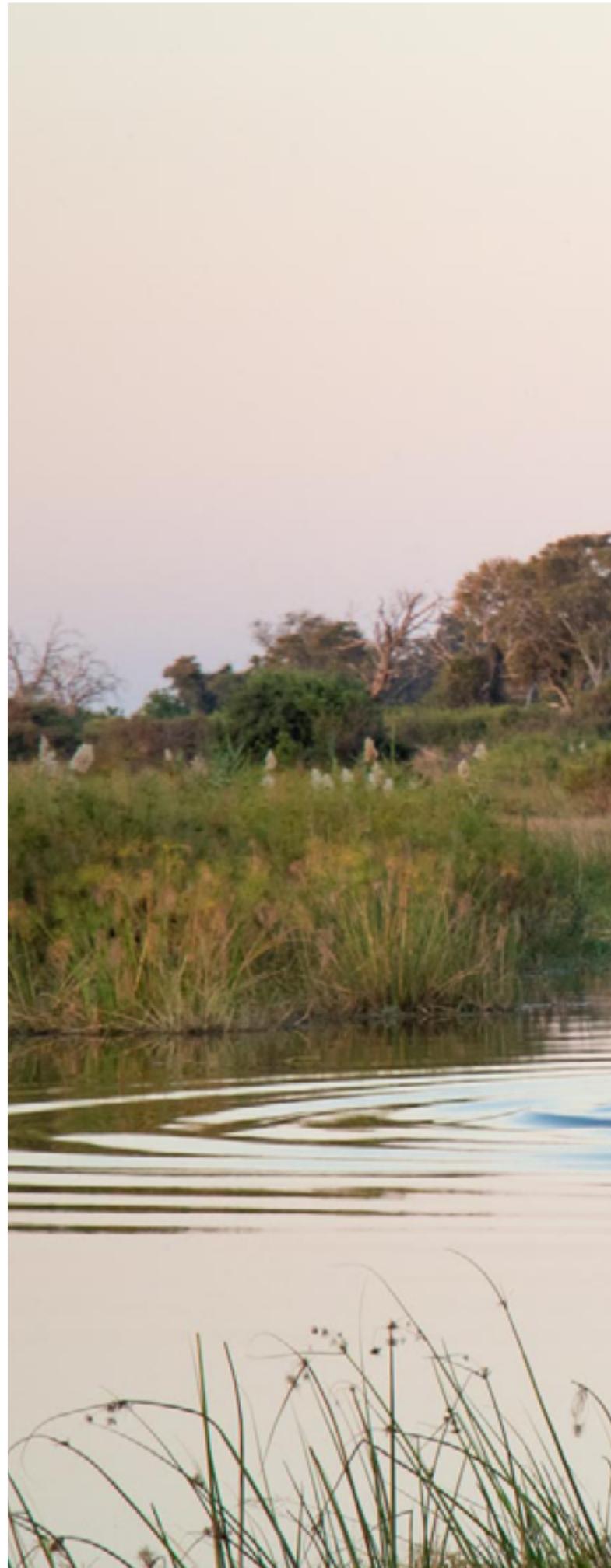
The results were received with excitement, with this sample count being a possible indicator that there could be more wildlife in the area. Wildlife number predictions in the area can be made as soon as the data is analysed and compared to the trends of the previous year's count data. The feedback was concluded with a discussion of what the results meant for the park and the future cooperation in KAZA. Suggestions for future counts included the addition of more routes, walking transects and excitingly, maybe even a riverboat count on the Kwando River which makes up the eastern border of the park. There was also consensus from the group to challenge participants to learn a bit of each other's languages to improve communication and limit challenges caused by language barriers. Along with the laughter, joy and camaraderie experienced after conducting a successful game count, the parting message was to continue to strengthen relationships within KAZA and to schedule game counts at the same time each year to ensure better monitoring results.

## KAZA TFCA ELEPHANT SURVEY

An estimated half of the world's population of savanna elephant live within the KAZA TFCA, which consists of almost 520,000km<sup>2</sup> in Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This is the largest single elephant population in the world. The first-of-its-kind, synchronized, transnational aerial survey of KAZA's the elephant population was conducted over a period of 68 days between August and October of 2022. They aerial survey was flown during the dry season to ensure improved sightings of elephant.

Results from this survey were published in 2023 and estimate the KAZA population at 227,900 (Table 6). Although this survey is the first synchronized transboundary survey and cannot be exactly compared with previous survey methods, the overall population appears to be stable, with some areas showing population increases, some remaining stable and some possibly decreasing.

The need for this extensive survey was highlighted in early 2019, with the planning and coordination of survey efforts initiated later that year. It was a monumental undertaking, involving seven aircraft, 195 individual flights and 700 flying hours to cover 60% of KAZA. The total distance flown is a staggering 67,390 kms, equivalent to almost two times the circumference of the earth.





**Table 6. Estimated elephant population in the KAZA TCFA in 2022**

Country	Population
Angola	5,983
Botswana	131,909
Namibia	21,090
Zambia	3,840
Zimbabwe	65,028
<b>Total</b>	<b>227,900 (±16,743)</b>

The survey revealed a relatively high carcass ratio 10.47% which is above what is considered to be within natural mortality norms. The underlying reasons for high mortality rates may not be due to poaching but could be related to a combination of other several factors such as habitat loss, associated human-elephant conflict, disease or other natural causes.

The survey also took the opportunity to count as many other large animals as possible, producing population estimates for species such as buffalo, giraffe, hartebeest, hippopotamus, impala, roan, sable, wildebeest and zebra. Livestock was also counted. The distribution of elephant and wildlife sightings in relation to the distribution of livestock revealed that there is a stark spatial segregation between wildlife and the presence of humans and livestock. This data highlights the growing pressure on water resources and rangelands with an estimated 736,426 head of livestock counted. The survey data will help inform conservation efforts, integrated land use planning, co-existence with wildlife and cross-sectoral policy harmonization throughout the KAZA TFCA.

## SKELETON COAST-ETOSHA CONSERVATION BRIDGE LEGACY LANDSCAPE

The development of a large bridge landscape in Namibia's northwest Kunene Region made important strides in 2023 with the submission of a proposal to the Legacy Landscapes Fund (LLF) in May 2023. WWF was able to secure the co-financing of USD 10 million through the Rob and Melani Walton Foundation, with LLF committing the additional USD 20 million required to provide financing of USD 1 million per year, over 50 years.

LLF supports the protection and management of important or legacy landscapes, while supporting the needs of local communities to conserve biodiversity, strengthen climate resilience and fight climate change. LLF's goal is to fund 30 of the world's most relevant biodiversity hotspots by 2030.

The Ombonde People's Park, a concept to establish a protected area out of the core wildlife areas of two neighbouring conservancies (Ehi-Rovipuka and Omantendeka) has made it possible to re-establish a key land link between the Skeleton Coast National Park and the Etosha National Park at landscape scale. Combined with National Parks (Skeleton Coast, Dorob



Figure 23. The Skeleton Coast-Etosha Conservation Bridge Legacy Landscape.

and a portion of western Etosha), Cape Cross Nature Reserve, tourism concession areas (Palmwag, Etendeka and Hobatere) and additional emerging People's Parks (Hoanib and Arid Eden), this conservation bridge will expand the total area in north-western Namibia included in State Protected Areas and People's Parks to 55,299 km<sup>2</sup>. In the process, landscape connectivity will be restored and important migratory corridors protected. This will, in turn, help people and wildlife to better respond to drought and other climate shocks and assist in decreasing human-wildlife conflict.

The Skeleton Coast-Etosha Conservation Bridge Legacy Landscape holds internationally important biodiversity components and provides critically important ecosystem services at regional, national and international levels. By addressing both the needs of critical populations of black rhino, elephant, lion and other species for movement and providing for new economic opportunities for the people living with this wildlife, conservation efforts will be improved. This is a unique example of community conservation action at landscape scale and a new model of community engagement in establishing protected areas in Africa.

Currently, an almost decade-long drought is impacting this arid area of the country and continuing to support the restoration of natural migratory patterns will support the conservation of multiple desert-adapted species.

Funding from the LLF for this landscape will be long-term, over the course of 50 years, and provide for the full expansion of all aspects of the landscape, including conservation and development support to conservancies and People's Parks.

## KHAUDUM-NGAMILAND WILDLIFE DISPERSAL AREA

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) Financing Facility (FF) is a regional fund which supports development of TFCAs in the SADC region. It is part of the SADC TFCA Programme, which aims to contribute towards sustainable financing mechanisms for transboundary natural resources management in the SADC region. The TFCA FF is administered by the International Union



for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO). The initial phase of this programme (2020-2026) is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), with funding facilitated through the KfW Development Bank.

The Khaudum-Ngamiland Wildlife Dispersal Area (WDA) in northeastern Namibia (Kavango East and Otozondjupa Regions), bordering on Botswana, is an important element of the KAZA TFCA, but has so far not received as much attention as wildlife corridors in the Zambezi Region.

The area is made up of Khaudum and Mangetti National Parks (4,105 km<sup>2</sup>), eight communal conservancies and seven community forests covering some 29,000 km<sup>2</sup> of conservation area. Overall, approximately 4,300 households and an estimated 25,000 individuals are part of the conservancies. There are three distinct groups of people in the area: Herero, Kavango, and Ju/'hoansi, !Kung and Khwe San. San communities in Namibia have been disproportionately and negatively impacted since

pre-colonial times and are considered a marginalised group by the Namibian government.

A proposal was submitted in 2023 to the SADC TFCA FF for the Namibian portion of the Khaudum-Ngamiland WDA and received GBP 1 million in funding. The project (March 2024 - April 2026) will use an integrated landscape approach to implementation. The interventions of the project will be three-fold: (1) improved habitat connectivity, especially for elephants and large carnivores as flagship species; (2) improved management effectiveness of Protected Areas (PAs) and communal conservancies; and (3) improved livelihoods for communities affected by human-wildlife co-habitation.

The overarching aim of the project is to create a connected, resilient, economically viable conservation landscape for people and nature within the Namibian portion of the Khaudum-Ngamiland WDA which will support greater connectivity within the KAZA TFCA, improved conservation and greater socio-economic gains for communities.

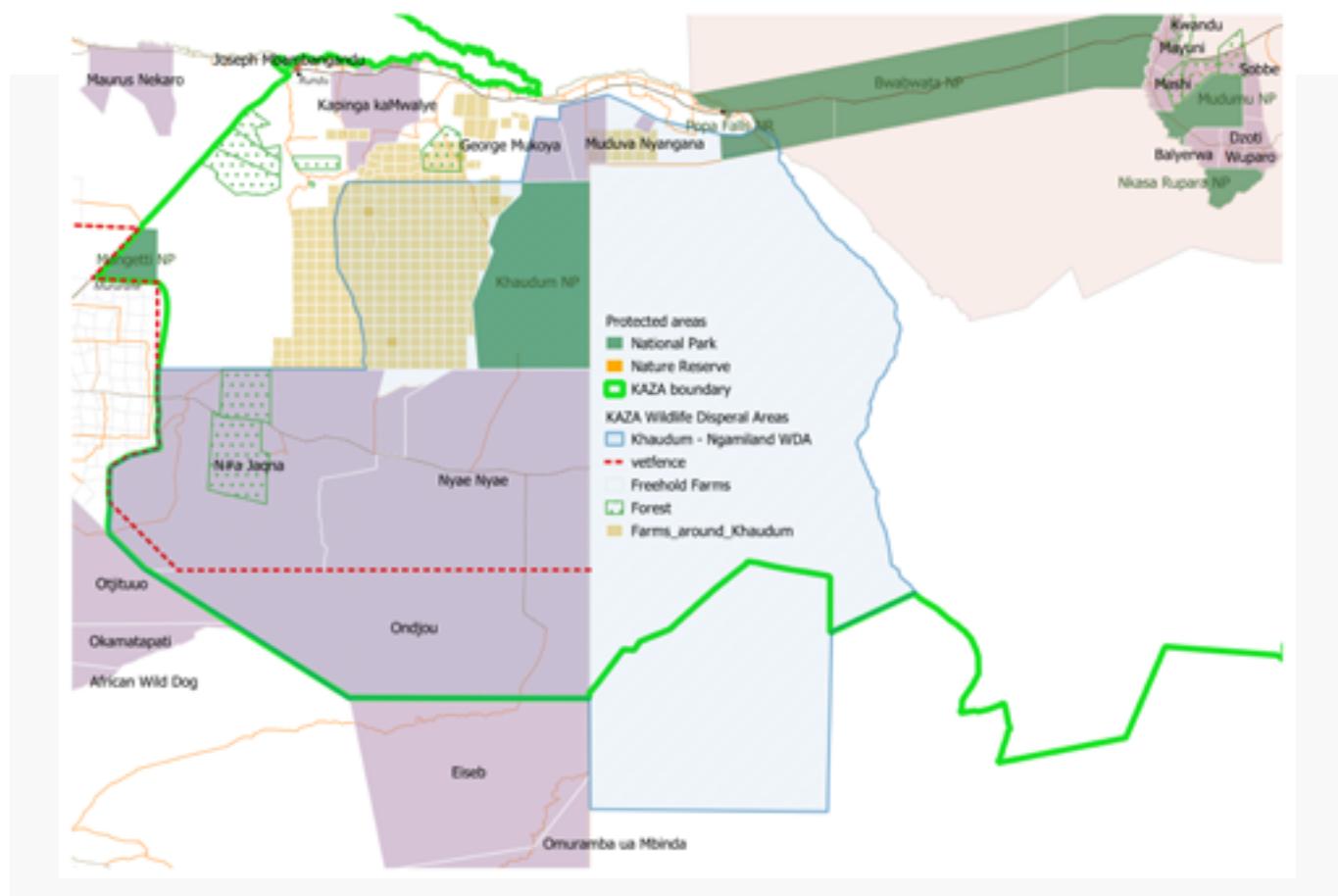


Figure 24. The Khaudum-Ngamiland Wildlife Dispersal Area



© Jason Houston/WWF

## REGISTERED CONSERVANCIES

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MAP NO.	NAME	APPROX. PEOPLE	REG. DATE	CONTACT
36	!Gawachab	200	Jun-05	081 5526657
52	!Han /Awab	614	May-08	081 6217056
23	!Khob !Naub	2137	Jul-03	081 2838565
65	!Khore !Goreb	1811	Sep-11	081 6926373
30	#Gaingu	2911	Mar-04	081 2057909
3	#Khoadi-//Hôas	5079	Jun-98	081 2715058
50	//Audi	853	Oct-06	081 3789129
24	//Gamaseb	1647	Jul-03	081 3954440 081 3596999
22	//Huab	1381	Jul-03	081 3965040
39	African Wild Dog	4617	Sep-05	081 2615539
25	Anabeb	1495	Jul-03	081 4684699
45	Balyerwa	1307	Oct-06	081 2789888
64	Bamunu	2304	Mar-11	081 2784586
6	Doro !nawas	1472	Dec-99	081 2437502
59	Dzoti	2023	Oct-09	081 7927968
13	Ehi-Rovipuka	1432	Jan-01	081 2970311
55	Eiseb	1567	Mar-09	081 2595375
77	Epupa	4871	Oct-12	081 6736862
79	Etanga	1780	Mar-13	081 3111584
41	George Mukoya	1109	Sep-05	081 8457715
58	Huibes	750	Oct-09	081 5629123
73	lipumbu ya Tshilongo	2460	May-12	081 3097890
44	Impalila	966	Dec-05	081 2675805
31	Joseph Mbambangandu	1801	Mar-04	081 2657237
66	Kabulabula	457	Nov-11	081 8001391
84	Kapinga kaMwalye	3746	Aug-18	081 6384064

MAP NO.	NAME	APPROX. PEOPLE	REG. DATE	CONTACT
43	Kasika	1097	Dec-05	081 2847326
40	King Nehale	5089	Sep-05	081 3662919
47	Kunene River	6901	Oct-06	081 3471624
8	Kwandu	3866	Dec-99	081 6456933
82	Lusese	1195	Oct-14	081 6824826
11	Marienfluss	340	Jan-01	081 6613337
16	Mashi	2433	Mar-03	081 2216778
83	Maurus Nekaro	12787	Aug-17	081 4039165
9	Mayuni	2594	Dec-99	081 8611404
37	Muduva Nyangana	1737	Sep-05	081 3539749
29	N≠a Jaqna	3891	Jul-03	081 8569593
80	Nakabolelwā	802	Oct-14	081 6567378 081 4454441
1	Nyae Nyae	3143	Feb-98	081 3117621
48	Ohungu	1315	Oct-06	081 3430733
42	Okamatapati	1996	Sep-05	081 2784371
76	Okanguati	2338	May-12	081 2308007
21	Okangundumba	2129	Jul-03	081 2393447
74	Okatjandja Kozomenje	1898	May-12	081 8934251
53	Okondjombo	100	Aug-08	081 3363985
57	Okongo	2918	Aug-09	081 4377541
67	Okongoro	1870	Feb-12	081 2326133
17	Omatendeka	2539	Mar-03	081 2992614
75	Ombazu	3207	May-12	081 4316825
81	Ombombo-Masitu	2962	Oct-14	081 3353308
70	Ombujokanguindi	701	Feb-12	081 3495376
63	Omuramba ua Mbinda	513	Mar-11	081 2987150
46	Ondjou	2969	Oct-06	081 6414521
69	Ongongo	881	Feb-12	081 5838862
20	Orupembe	187	Jul-03	081 6875256

MAP NO.	NAME	APPROX. PEOPLE	REG. DATE	CONTACT
62	Orupupa	1494	Mar-11	081 2353361
14	Oskop	75	Feb-01	081 3283097
54	Otjambangu	1872	Mar-09	081 3205005
78	Otjikondavirongo	3669	Mar-13	081 7113949
86	Otjikongo	210	Aug-18	081 6991488
18	Otjimboyo	323	Mar-03	081 4009118
85	Otjindjerese	2062	Aug-18	081 3511097
60	Otjitanda	575	Mar-11	081 4717732
38	Otjituuo	5921	Sep-05	081 2292587
72	Otjiu-West	831	May-12	065 685160
68	Otjombande	1633	Feb-12	081 2619044
61	Otjombinde	4782	Mar-11	081 3224923
71	Otuzemba	457	Feb-12	081 7057273
51	Ovitoto	4495	May-08	081 6401530
33	Ozonahi	11381	Sep-05	081 7491466
28	Ozondundu	395	Jul-03	081 4156550
10	Puros	1163	May-00	081 2950106
2	Salambala	8923	Jun-98	081 8447262
27	Sanitatas	148	Jul-03	081 6698709
26	Sesfontein	1839	Jul-03	081 2200968
34	Shamungwa	140	Sep-05	
35	Sheya Shuushona	3542	Sep-05	081 1225507 081 2994698
56	Sikunga	2476	Jul-09	081 2520968
49	Sobbe	1085	Oct-06	081 6063093
15	Sorris Sorris	950	Oct-01	081 2479327
4	Torra	1330	Jun-98	081 7579847
12	Tsiseb	2645	Jan-01	081 3548186
7	Uibasen Twyfelfontein	230	Dec-99	081 2857933
32	Uukolonkadhi Ruacana	35958	Sep-05	081 3476455 081 4964643
19	Uukwaluudhi	983	Mar-03	081 2807623
5	Wuparo	1027	Dec-99	081 6051577

## REGISTERED COMMUNITY FORESTS

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CF ID	YEAR	NAME	AREA KM <sup>2</sup>	CF ID	YEAR	NAME	AREA KM <sup>2</sup>
1	Feb-2006	Masida	197	25	Mar-2013	Otjiu-West	1100
2	Feb-2006	Lubuta	171	26	Mar-2013	Gcwatjingga	341
3	Feb-2006	Kwandu	212	27	Mar-2013	George Mukoya	486
4	Feb-2006	Bukalo	9	28	Mar-2013	Kahenge	267
5	Feb-2006	Ncumcara	152	29	Mar-2013	Muduva Nyangana	615
6	Feb-2006	Ncaute	3	30	Mar-2013	Ohepi	30
7	Feb-2006	Ncamagoro	263	31	Mar-2013	Omufitu Wekuta	270
8	Feb-2006	Mbeyo	410	32	Mar-2013	Oshaampula	7
9	Feb-2006	Hans Kanyinga	277	33	Oct-2018	Omuramba Ua Umbinda	3217
10	Feb-2006	Mkata	865	34	Oct-2018	Ondjou	8729
11	Feb-2006	Okongo	765	35	Oct-2018	Otjituuo	6132
12	Feb-2006	Uukolonkadhi	848	36	Oct-2018	Otjombinde	5891
13	Feb-2006	Sikanjabuka	42	37	Oct-2018	Otshiku-Shilhilonde	1088
14	Mar-2013	Orupembe	3565	38	Oct-2018	African Wild Dog	3824
15	Mar-2013	Nyae Nyae	8992	39	Oct-2018	Ehi-Rovipuka	1980
16	Mar-2013	Sanitatas	1446	40	Oct-2018	Eiseb	6625
17	Mar-2013	Marienfluss	3034	41	Oct-2018	N̄a Jaqna	6303
18	Mar-2013	Puros	3562	42	Oct-2018	Omundaungilo	237
19	Mar-2013	Okondjombo	1644	43	Feb-2019	Epukiro	10923
20	Mar-2013	Zilitene	81	44	Jun-2022	Ozonahi	3232
21	Mar-2013	Sachona	122	45	Jun-2022	Ambrosius Haingura	131
22	Mar-2013	Likwaterera	138	46	Sep-2022	Aminuis	2131
23	Mar-2013	Katope	638	47	May-2023	Otjinene	3425
24	Mar-2013	Cuma	116				

## NACSO MEMBERS

**Cheetah Conservation Fund**  
067 306225  
[www.cheetah.org](http://www.cheetah.org)

**Elephant Human Relations Aid (EHRA)**  
[www.ehranamibia.org](http://www.ehranamibia.org)

**Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)**  
061 228506  
[www.irdnc.org.na](http://www.irdnc.org.na)

**Legal Assistance Centre (LAC)**  
061 233356  
[www.lac.org.na](http://www.lac.org.na)

**Multi-disciplinary Research Centre and Consultancy (MRCC-UNAM)**  
061 2063051  
[www.unam.edu.na/mrc](http://www.unam.edu.na/mrc)

**Namibia Development Trust (NDT)**  
061 238003  
[www.ndt.org.na](http://www.ndt.org.na)

**Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)**  
061 248345  
[www.nnf.org.na](http://www.nnf.org.na)

**Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia (NNDFN)**  
061 236327  
[www.nndfn.org](http://www.nndfn.org)

**Ombo Arts Trust (OAT)**  
061 242799  
[www.ombo.org.na](http://www.ombo.org.na)

**Save the Rhino Trust (SRT)**  
064 403829  
[www.savetherhinotrust.org](http://www.savetherhinotrust.org)

**Rössing Foundation**  
061 211721  
[www.rossingfoundation.com](http://www.rossingfoundation.com)

## NACSO ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

**Kavango East and West Regional Conservancy & Community Forest Association (KERCCFA)**  
Cell: 081 3539749  
PO Box 344, Rundu

**Kunene Regional Communal Conservancy Association (KRCCA)**  
Cell: 081 3978066  
PO Box 294, Opuwo

**Erongo Community Conservancy Association (ECCA)**  
Tel: 081 2139137  
PO Box 40, Uis

**Southern Kunene Conservancy Association (SKCA)**  
Cell: 081 3400196  
Email: [chairperson.skca@gmail.com](mailto:chairperson.skca@gmail.com)

**North Central Conservancy and Community Forest Regional Association (NCCCFRA)**  
Cell: 081 2994698  
PO Box 8489, Ondangwa

**Southern United Conservancy Association (SUCA)**

**Otjozondjupa Western Communal Conservancy Association (OWCCA)**

**Zambezi Conservancy Chairperson's Forum (ZCCF)**

**Namibian Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS)**  
Tel: 061 306450  
[www.NEWS-namibia.org](http://www.NEWS-namibia.org)

**Tourism Supporting Conservation (TOSCO)**  
Tel: 081 4535855  
[www.tosco.org](http://www.tosco.org)

**WWF Namibia**  
Tel: 061 239945  
PO Box 9681, Windhoek

## NACSO WORKING GROUPS

### NACSO Business, Enterprises and Livelihoods Working Group

Tel: 061 239945

[www.nacso.org.na](http://www.nacso.org.na)

### NACSO Institutional Development Working Group

Tel: 061 238002

[www.nacso.org.na](http://www.nacso.org.na)

### NACSO Natural Resources Working Group

Tel: 061 239945

[www.nacso.org.na](http://www.nacso.org.na)

## GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

### Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism

Tel: 061 284 2520

[www.meft.gov.na](http://www.meft.gov.na)

### Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform

Directorate of Water Affairs

Tel: 061 208 7266

[www.mawf.gov.na](http://www.mawf.gov.na)

### Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture

Tel: 061 293 3111

[www.moe.gov.na](http://www.moe.gov.na)

### Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources

Tel: 061 205 3084

[www.mfmr.gov.na](http://www.mfmr.gov.na)

### Ministry of Mines and Energy

Tel: 061 284 8111

[www.mme.gov.na](http://www.mme.gov.na)

### Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare

Tel: 061 283 313

[mgecw.gov.na](http://mgecw.gov.na)



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## TOURISM PARTNERS

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Joint Venture	Area	Conservancy	Private Sector Partner	Contact
Brandberg White Lady Lodge	Kunene South	Tsiseb	Naude de Jager	Tel: +264 64 684 004 <a href="http://www.brandbergwlodge.com">www.brandbergwlodge.com</a>
Camp Chobe	Zambezi	Salambala	Gondwana Collections	Tel: +264 61 230 066 <a href="http://www.gondwana-collection.com">www.gondwana-collection.com</a>
Camp Cornie Camping	Kunene North	Epupa	Phillip W. Oosthuisen	Tel: +264 81 1292357 <a href="mailto:pierrrevk11@gmail.com">pierrrevk11@gmail.com</a>
Camp Kipwe	Kunene South	Twyfelfontein-Uibasen	Visions of Africa	Tel: +264 61 232 009 <a href="http://www.kipwe.com">www.kipwe.com</a>
Camp Kwando	Zambezi	Mashi	Losange Lodges - Johann Liebenberg	Tel: +264 81 206 1514 <a href="http://www.campkwando.com">www.campkwando.com</a>
Camp Oduli	Kunene North	Doro !nawas	Ultimate Safaris	Tel: +264 61 248137 <a href="http://www.ultimatesafaris.na">www.ultimatesafaris.na</a>
Camp Syncro	Kunene North	Marienfluss	Ryan Felix Christinger	Tel: +264 65 685 993 <a href="http://www.campsyncro.com">www.campsyncro.com</a>
Chobe Savanna Lodge	Zambezi	Kasika	Delta Safaris	Tel: +27 83 960 3391 <a href="http://www.desertdelta.com">www.desertdelta.com</a>
Chobe Villas (Kings Den) and Restaurant Boat	Zambezi	Kasika and Impalila	Zambezi Queen (O&L / Flame Lilly)	Tel: +264 61 431 8111 <a href="http://www.chobewatervillas.com">www.chobewatervillas.com</a>
Damaraland Camp	Kunene North	Torra	Wilderness Safaris	Tel: +264 61 274500 <a href="http://www.wilderness-safaris.com">www.wilderness-safaris.com</a>
Desert Rhino Camp/ Hoanib	Kunene North	Marienfluss	Wilderness Safaris	Tel: +264 61 274500 <a href="http://www.wilderness-safaris.com">www.wilderness-safaris.com</a>
Doro !nawas Lodge	Kunene South	Doro !nawas	Wilderness Safaris	Tel: +264 61 274500 <a href="http://www.wilderness-safaris.com">www.wilderness-safaris.com</a>
Epupa Falls Campsite	Kunene North	Epupa	Kaokohimba Safaris	Tel: +264 65 685 021 <a href="http://www.kaoko-namibia.com">www.kaoko-namibia.com</a>
Etaambura	Kunene North	Orupembe	Namibia Conservancies Safaris	Tel: +264 64 406 136 <a href="http://www.kcs-namibia.com.na">www.kcs-namibia.com.na</a>

Joint Venture	Area	Conservancy	Private Sector Partner	Contact
Etendeka Lodge	Kunene North	Anabeb and Omatendeka	Big Sky Cities Lodges Dennis Lieberman	Tel: +264 61 239 199 <a href="http://www.etendeka-namibia.com">www.etendeka-namibia.com</a>
Grootberg Lodge	Kunene South	≠Khoadi-//Hôas	Journeys Namibia	Tel: +264 61 239 199 <a href="http://www.etendeka-namibia.com">www.etendeka-namibia.com</a>
Hoanib Elephant Camp (Obias Giraffe Camp)	Kunene North	Sesfontein	Natural Selections Safaris	Tel: +264 61 2256616 <a href="http://www.naturalselection.travel">www.naturalselection.travel</a>
Hobatere Lodge	Kunene South	≠Khoadi-//Hôas	Journeys Namibia	Tel: +264 61 228104 <a href="http://www.journeysnamibia.com">www.journeysnamibia.com</a>
House on the Hill	Kunene North	Orupembe	House on the Hill - Trevor Nott	Tel: +264 81 124 6826 <a href="mailto:knott@iafrica.com.na">knott@iafrica.com.na</a>
Jackalberry Tented Camp	Zambezi	Wuparo	Ruggero Micheletti	Tel: +264 66 686101 <a href="mailto:rugero.micheletti@gmail.com">rugero.micheletti@gmail.com</a>
Kapika Waterfall Lodge (Chief Kapika Tented Lodge)	Kunene North	Epupa	Kapika Waterfall Lodge CC	Tel: +264 65 685 111 <a href="http://www.kapikafalls.com">www.kapikafalls.com</a>
Kavango Retreat	Kavango	George Mukoya & Muduva Nyangana	Namibia Exclusive Safaris. Vitor Azevedo	Tel: +264 81 1287787 <a href="http://www.nes.com.na">www.nes.com.na</a>
KAZA Safari Lodge (Impalila) and Cascade Island Lodge (Ntwala)	Zambezi	Impalila	Flame of Africa	Tel: +27 31 762 22424 <a href="http://www.flameofafrica.com">www.flameofafrica.com</a>
Kazile Lodge	Zambezi	Mashi	African Monarch Lodges	Tel: +264 81 124 4249 <a href="http://www.africanmonarchlodges.com">www.africanmonarchlodges.com</a>
Khaudum Camp	Kavango	George Mukoya & Muduva Nyangana	Namibia Exclusive Safaris. Vitor Azevedo	Tel: +264 81 1287787 <a href="http://www.nes.com.na">www.nes.com.na</a>
Khowerib Community Campsite	Kunene South	Anabeb	African Eagle (PTY) Ltd	Tel: +264 61259681 <a href="http://www.africaneaglenamibia.com">www.africaneaglenamibia.com</a>
Kuidas Camp	Kunene North	Torra	Skeleton Coast Fly-in Safaris.	Tel: +264 61 224248 <a href="http://www.skeletoncoastsafaris.com">www.skeletoncoastsafaris.com</a>
Kunene Camp	Kunene North	Marienfluss	Skeleton Coast Fly-in Safaris	Tel: +264 61 224248 <a href="http://www.skeletoncoastsafaris.com">www.skeletoncoastsafaris.com</a>
Kunene River Lodge	Kunene North	Kunene River	Kunene River Lodge	Tel: +264 65 274300 <a href="http://www.kuneneriverlodge.com">www.kuneneriverlodge.com</a>

Joint Venture	Area	Conservancy	Private Sector Partner	Contact
Leylandsdrift	Kunene North	Puros	Skeleton Coast Fly-in Safaris.	Tel: +264 61 224248 <a href="http://www.skeletoncoastsafaris.com">www.skeletoncoastsafaris.com</a>
Madisa Camp	Kunene South	Sorri Sorris	Whipp's Wilderness Safaris	Tel: +264 81 698 2908 <a href="http://www.madisacamp.com">www.madisacamp.com</a>
Malanrus Camp	Doro !nawas	Kunene South	Namibia Tracks and Trails	Tel: +264 81 269 7271 <a href="mailto:info@namibia-tracks-and-trails.com">info@namibia-tracks-and-trails.com</a>
Mashi River Safaris Camp	Zambezi	Mashi	Mashi River Safaris	Tel: +264 81 461 9608 <a href="mailto:mashiriversafaris@gmail.com">mashiriversafaris@gmail.com</a>
Matiti Rhino Tracking	Torra	Kunene North	Matiti Safaris	Tel: +264 61 259 041 <a href="https://www.matitisafaris.com/contact-us">https://www.matitisafaris.com/contact-us</a>
Nambwa Tented Lodge	Zambezi	Mayuni	African Monarch Lodges	Tel: +264 81 124 4249 <a href="http://www.africanmonarchlodges.com">www.africanmonarchlodges.com</a>
Namushasha Lodge	Zambezi	Mashi	Gondwana Collections	Tel: +264 61 230 066 <a href="http://www.gondwana-collection.com">www.gondwana-collection.com</a>
Nkasa Lupala Tented Lodge	Zambezi	Wuparo	Gafil CC. Simone Michelleti	Tel: +264 81 147 7798 <a href="http://www.nkasalupalalodge.com">www.nkasalupalalodge.com</a>
Nkasa West Lodge Concession	Zambezi	Wuparo, Balyerwa, Dzoti	Natural Selections	Tel: +264 61 2256616 <a href="http://www.naturalselection.travel">www.naturalselection.travel</a>
Okahirongo Elephant Lodge	Kunene North	Puros	Lions in the Son	Tel: +264 65 685 018 <a href="http://www.okahirongolodge.com">www.okahirongolodge.com</a>
Okahirongo River Lodge	Kunene North	Marienfluss	Lions in the Son	Tel: +264 65 685 018 <a href="http://www.okahirongolodge.com">www.okahirongolodge.com</a>
Okotmutati Safaris & Tours CC	Ehi-Rovipuka	Kunene	Roger Collinson	Tel: +264813104130 <a href="mailto:okomsaf@iway.na">okomsaf@iway.na</a>
Omarunga Camp	Kunene North	Epupa	Camelthorn Safaris - Fritz Schenk	Tel: +264 64 403 096 <a href="http://www.omarungalodge.com">www.omarungalodge.com</a>
Omatendeka Lodge	Kunene North	Omatendeka	Namibia Exclusive Safaris. Vitor Azevedo	Tel: +264 81 1287787 <a href="http://www.nes.com.na">www.nes.com.na</a>
Ondili-Adventure Camp	Uibasen Twyfelfontein	Kunene South	Lumeris Investment	<a href="https://www.ondili.com/en/lodges-en/twyfelfontein-adventure-camp/">https://www.ondili.com/en/lodges-en/twyfelfontein-adventure-camp/</a>
Ongongo Camp	Kunene North	Anabeb	Ongongo Hospitality Training Centre CC	Tel: +264 61 239643 <a href="http://www.ongongo.com">www.ongongo.com</a>
Ozohere Himba village and Campsite	Ohungu	Erongo	Vinice Kambongarera	Tel: +264 81 295 9783 <a href="mailto:ozohere@lodge@gmail.com">ozohere@lodge@gmail.com</a>

Joint Venture	Area	Conservancy	Private Sector Partner	Contact
Sorri Sorris Lodge	Kunene South	Sorri Sorris	Namibia Exclusive Safaris. Vitor Azevedo	Tel: +264 81 1287787 <a href="http://www.nes.com.na">www.nes.com.na</a>
Spitzkoppe Lodge CC	Erongo	#Gaingu Conservancy	Spitzkoppe Lodge CC: Melt Hugo	Tel: +264 811287751 <a href="http://www.spitzkoppelodge.com">www.spitzkoppelodge.com</a>
Tsaurab Campsite	Sorris Sorris	Kunene South	EHRA	Tel: +264 64 402 50
Twyfelfontein Country Lodge	Kunene South	Uibasen Twyfelfontein	Namibia Country Lodges	Tel: +264 61 374 750 <a href="http://www.twyfelfonteinlodge.com">www.twyfelfonteinlodge.com</a>
Uukwaludhi Safari Lodge	North Central	Uukwaluudhi	Uukwaluudhi Safari Lodge - Johann Liebenberg	Tel: +264 81 1245177 <a href="http://www.uukwaluudhi-safarilodge.com">www.uukwaluudhi-safarilodge.com</a>
Uukwaludhi Safari Lodge	North Central	Uukwaluudhi	Uukwaluudhi Safari Lodge - Johann Liebenberg	Tel: +264813104130
White Sands Lodge and Campsite	Kyaramacan Association	Kavango East	Rovejema Lodge & Camping Group	Tel: +264 81 395 2960
Zambezi Mubala Lodge	Zambezi	Sikunga	Gondwana Collections	Tel: +264 61 230 066 <a href="http://www.gondwana-collection.com">www.gondwana-collection.com</a>
Zambezi Queen	Zambezi	Kasika	Mantis Collection	Tel: +27 21 715 2412 <a href="http://www.zambeziqueen.com">www.zambeziqueen.com</a>
Zovu Elephant Lodge	Kasika	Zambezi	Rueben - 0814013960	Tel: +264 66 252 581
//Huab Under Canvas	Kunene South	//Huab	Ultimate Safaris	Tel: +264 61 248137 <a href="http://www.ultimatesafaris.na">www.ultimatesafaris.na</a>

## CONSERVATION HUNTING PARTNERS

Conservancy	Region	Hunting Operator	Contact Person	Operator Email
/Audi	Kunene	Game Trackers Africa	Jaco Oosthuizen	jaco@gametrackersafrica.com
#Gangu	Erlongo	Nick Nolte Hunting Safaris cc	Nicolaas Nolte	isabelnolte@icloud.com
//Huab	Kunene	Omuwiwe Hunting Lodge	P. Scott	pieter@omuwiwe.co.za
#Khoadi-//Hôas	Kunene	Estreux Safaris	Anton Esterheizen	info@estreuxsafaris.com
!Khore !Goreb	Kunene	Game Trackers Africa	Jaco Oosthuizen	jaco@gametrackersafrica.com
Anabeb	Kunene	WildVeld Safaris	M. Misner	markmisner@comcast.net
Balyerwa	Zambezi	Divan Labuschgne Safaris CC	Divan Labuschgne	huntingdivan@gmail.com
Bamunu	Zambezi	A.S.S Hunting Safaris in Partnership with Chapungu-Kambako Hunting Safaris (Pty) Ltd	J.A. Ipinge	hafeni2@gmail.com
Doro !nawas	Kunene	Sumsare Safaris	Gerhard Erasmus	infor@sumsare.net
Dzoti	Zambezi	Ondjou Safaris cc	H. van Heerden	vhsaf@africaonline.com
Ehirovipuka	Kunene	WildVeld Safaris	M. Misner	markmisner@comcast.net
Eiseb	Omaheke	Dzombo Hunting Safaris	Jacobus Wasserfall	wasserfallj42@gmail.com
Epupa	Kunene	Cornie Coetzee Hunting Safaris	C. Coetzee	corniecoetzeesafaris@iway.na
George Mukoya	Kavango East	Ekuja Hunting Safaris	D. Swanepoel	ekuja.hunting@gmail.com
lipumbu ya Tshilongo	Oshana	Uukwaliudhi Safari Lodge PTY (Ltd)	J. Liebenberg	johan@uukwa.com
Impalila	Zambezi	Sable Hills Safari Namibia cc	Lloyd Underhill	sablehillssafarinamibia@gmail.com
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Conservancy	Region	Hunting Operator	Contact Person	Operator Email
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Kyarmacan Association	Kavango East	Hunt Africa Safaris	J. Chapman	info@huntafrica.com.na
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Mashi	Zambezi	Omujeve Safari (Pty) Ltd	C. Kruger	corne@omujevesafaris.com / cornek79@gmail.com
Maurus Nekaro	Kavango West	JJ Hunting Safaris	Karel Jaco Van Heerden	jaco.vanheerden@ymail.com
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Okongoro	Kunene	Wild Namibia Hunting Safaris cc	Brink Grobler	groblerbrink@gmail.com
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Ombujokanguindi	Kunene	Gert van der Walt HS	G.van der Walt	gvdwhuntingsafaris@iway.na
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Wuparo	Zambezi	Caprivi Hunting Safari cc	D. Muller	capriviuntingsafaris@iway.na









COMMUNITY CONSERVATION  
PARTNERS:





Community conservation in Namibia grew out of the recognition that wildlife and other natural resources are vital in communal areas, and that the value of these resources can be unlocked if local communities are empowered to manage and utilise resources themselves.

For more information go to:  
[communityconservationnamibia.com](http://communityconservationnamibia.com)