

Landscapes Conservation

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**INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE IS KEY
TO LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT – LANDSCAPES MEETING**

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Editor's Notes

Since inception, the NAM-PLACE Project has been involved in numerous activities across the five landscapes they manage. They are namely Mudumu (Zambezi region), Greater Fish River Canyon (!Karas Region), Greater Sossusvlei (Hardap region), Greenbelt Windhoek (Khomas) and Greater Waterberg (Otjozondjupa region)

All the five landscapes are faced with challenges of breaking barriers in management of biodiversity and creating a harmonious living between humans and wildlife across different land - use, a task that the project has taken to heart.

In this first edition of landscapes conservation Newsletter, it is with excitement that as the project we get to share our achievements, challenges and some education of what we do. The mandate is not the easiest to attain but with such a dedicated team and stakeholders, it has been manageable.

Read about the highlights from the landscape conservation meetings and AGM's that were held earlier this year Landscapes, some under new management, are hard at work implementing resolutions and working towards a fruitful 2014.

The Mudumu landscape started the year on a high note, commissioning two of the important projects in the Zambezi region. Read about the Nkasa Rupara bridge and patrol camps in the Mudumu Landscape and how they bridge the social and economic divide among the people and wildlife. Some of the programmes envisaged by the project need intervention with neighbouring countries through Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA's) to attain high level of success by launching the National Policy on Protected Areas' Neighbours and Resident Communities MET reiterated, the

continued impact of landscape involvement and opportunities that are available for the communities in the future.

While paying attention to the activities on the programme, we cannot ignore the rise of wildlife crime within the country, the subject that the Ministry of Environment and Tourism take seriously. Plans are underway to launch the two programmes in the second quarter of 2014, with the hope that interventions will send strong message to illegal hunters. Before the implement of these programs, we remind you about the plight of the rhino and why we should protect them from illegal hunting.

Enjoy our read.
And for any information related to the publication and news covered, contact our Communication Consultant.



M. Kandume

Landscapes meeting seasons kicks-off!

LANDSCAPES MEETING SEASONS KICKS-OFF!

The NAM-PLACE project held a marathon of Annual General Meetings for three landscapes in February. From the Southern extreme of the Orange River, right through to North East of Zambezi it was not work as usual. Landscape Management Committees were hard at work in efforts to close off the activities of 2013 to make way for the new challenges for the 2014. So what are the highlights for the AGM's?



Greater Fish River Canyon Annual General meeting

Greater Soussusvlei Landscape – Game will be set free when fences are put down. Farmers have agreed to the exercise and very corporative on advancing biological diversity management in the desert

Greater Waterberg Landscape – NAM-PLACE is ready to support plans and activities that address biodiversity and reduction of human wildlife conflict in the landscape.

Okamatapati and Ozonahi Conservancies are scheduled to hold their AGMs during the first half of this year, 2014.

Mudumu Landscape – Clamping down on the illegal activities that are overcrowding improved parks management of wildlife and biodiversity. Awareness programme for the landscape will be implemented to educate school children on environmental and anti-poaching matters.

by Manini Kandume



Patrol camps in Mudumu North and South are launched

PATROL CAMPS IN MUDUMU NORTH AND SOUTH ARE LAUNCHED

The handing over of the patrol camps to Sobbe, Mayuni, Mashi and Kwandu conservancies in Mudumu North is seen as one of the milestones in curbing crime in the area. The construction of the Mudumu North and Mudumu South Patrol camps was prioritized by the Mudumu Landscape Management committee during the formulation of the landscape 5-year Strategic Management Plan in 2012 due to criminal activities such as illegal hunting of elephants that occur in the area.

Wildlife is an important element of tourism and poverty alleviation and generally rural development. As was stipulated by the SADC Committee on Environmental affairs for member states, Mr. Colgar Sikopo Director of Regional Services and Parks Management reiterated the importance of these patrol camps, as they fall within seven action points for a Strategic Environmental Management plan towards the management of biodiversity and human-wildlife conflict reduction, for the improved management of national parks in SADC.



Mudumu North patrol camp



Key stakeholders listening to speakers



Community Law enforcement Team with the Director of Regional Services and Park Management at Mudumu North patrol camp

The existence of the camps is not only restricted to the use as law enforcement stations in the park. They are also meant to serve as central information points, distribution of aid and for other social programmes. Government can use the camps to mobilise the nearby communities towards achievement of National Development Goals. The construction of patrol camps compliments other law enforcement initiatives in the region that has seen the reduction in the number of elephants killed illegally in the region from 78 in 2012 to only 38 in 2013. A number of related arrests have also increased since 2013

Most important after the handover of these camps to the conservancies, are elements of sustainability and management of the camps. As highlighted by Mr. Uri Matundu, the landscape specialist from NAMP-LACE, the conservancies should take responsibility in ensuring that the camps remain in respectable condition. They are important for social development in the area.

by Manini Kandume

Opening of Nkasa Rupara bridge

OPENING OF NKASA RUPARA BRIDGE



Signage at the new bridge

After long deliberations and hard work, the bridge that serves as access into Nkasa Rupara National park in Wuparo conservancy was completed and opened for public use. The community had previously built a convenient but not strong wooden bridge, that was not safe for cars, cattle and people to use. On many instances, tourists travelling to and from the Nkasa Lupala lodge would narrowly drive through or land in the water flowing through. As a result, safety was compromised and businesses around the Nkasa Rupara National Park suffered increasing losses in profits.



Hon. Minister Uahekua Herunga (left) and Hon. Governor of Zambezi, Lawrence Sampofu are cutting the ribbon to open the new bridge

The Minister of Environment and Tourism, Honourable Uahekua Herunga, opened the bridge on 29 March 2014 at a ceremony which saw the presence of stakeholders who expressed gratitude at how their concerns are taken into consideration by the regional and national leadership. As is customary, the Minister urged the community to guard the bridge jealously and use it for the benefit of the conservancy. The people and businesses should benefit equally and should not the bridge as a corridor for illegitimate and unprogressive activities that undermine development in the conservancies.

The bridge became the third access bridge into the park and conservancy. The constructions of these bridges were made after long deliberations and hard work, the bridge that serves as access into Nkasa Rupara National park and Wuparo conservancy was completed and opened for public use. The community had previously built a convenient but not strong wooden bridge, that was not safe for cars, cattle and people to use. On many instances, tourists travelling to and from the Nkasa Lupala lodge would narrowly drive through or land in the water flowing through. As a result, safety was compromised and businesses around the Nkasa Rupara National Park suffered increasing losses in profits.

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At the same event, the Honourable Minister officially launched Management and Development plans of Bwabwata, Mudumu and Nkasa Rupara National Parks. Deputy Director for Northeast Region, Cletius Maketo, Chief Control Warden of Zambezi Morgan Saisai and Chief Control Warden of Kavango East and Kavango West Regions Evaristo Nghilai received the plans from the minister. The plans will guide the improved management of the three parks.

by Manini Kandume



Deputy Director for Northeast Region, Mr. Cletius Maketo (centre), Chief Control Warden of Zambezi Morgan Saisai (left) and Chief Control Warden of Kavango East and Kavango West Regions Evaristo Nghilai (right)

TEN REASONS TO SAVE THE RHINO

1. Rhinos are critically endangered At the turn of the 19th century, there were approximately one million rhinos. In 1970, there were around 70,000. Today, there are only around 28,000 rhinos surviving in the wild. Three of the five species of rhino are "Critically Endangered" as defined by the IUCN (World Conservation Union). A taxon is classified as critically endangered when the best available evidence indicates that it meets any of a range of pre-determined criteria. It is therefore considered to be facing an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild. The Southern subspecies of the white rhino is classified by the IUCN in the lesser category of being "Near Threatened"; and the Greater one-horned rhino is classified as "Vulnerable"; even this is considered to be facing a high risk of extinction in the wild. In 2014, some of us are lucky enough to be able to travel to Africa and Asia to see them in the wild. In 2024, when our children have grown up, will they still be able to see wild rhinos?
2. Rhinos have been around for 40 million years Rhinos have been an important part of a wide range of ecosystems for millions of years; we must not let them join the dodo in extinction.
3. Humans have caused the drastic decline in numbers Poachers kill rhinos for the price they can get for the horns (used for traditional Chinese medicine, for high-status gifts in Vietnam and for quack cures invented by criminal syndicates to drive up demand); land encroachment, illegal logging and pollution are destroying their habitat; and political conflicts adversely affect conservation programmes.
4. Rhinos are an umbrella species When protecting and managing a rhino population; rangers and scientists take in account all the other species interacting with rhinos and those sharing the same habitat. When rhinos are protected, many other species are too, not only mammals but also birds, reptiles, fish and insects as well as plants.
5. Rhinos are charismatic mega-herbivores By focusing on a well-known animal such as a rhino (or, to use the jargon, a charismatic mega-herbivore), we can raise more money and consequently support more conservation programmes benefiting animal and plant species sharing their habitat.
6. Rhinos attract visitors and tourists Rhinos are the second-biggest living land mammals after the elephants. Together with lion, giraffe, chimpanzee and polar bear, the rhino is one of the most popular species with zoo visitors. In the wild, rhinos attract tourists who bring money to national parks and local communities. They are one of the "Big Five", along with lion, leopard, elephant and buffalo.
7. In situ conservation programmes need our help Protecting and managing a rhino population is a real challenge that costs energy and money. Rhino-range countries need our financial support, and benefit from shared expertise and exchange of ideas.
8. Money funds effective conservation programmes that save rhinos We know that conservation efforts save species. The Southern white rhino would not exist today if it were not for the work of a few determined people, who brought together the 200 or so individuals surviving, for a managed breeding and re-introduction programme. Today, there are some 20,405 (as at 31 Dec. 2012) Southern white rhinos. With more money, we can

support more programmes, and not just save rhino populations, but increase numbers and develop populations. The Northern white rhino subspecies may just have become extinct, but it is not too late to save the rest.

9. Many people don't know that rhinos are critically endangered. Not just that, but how many people know that rhinos also live in Asia? Or that two species have just one horn? Or that the horn is not used as an aphrodisiac? We have even heard some people say that they are carnivores. If people do not know about these amazing animals and the problems they are facing, how can we expect them to want to do something to help save rhinos?

10. We all have an opportunity to get involved! You can help raise awareness of the plight of the rhino! The more we do all together, the more people will learn about rhinos and the more field projects we will be able to support. There are lots of fundraising ideas scattered, as well as ways to donate directly to Save the Rhino.

http://www.savetherhino.org/support_us/donate/ten_good_reasons_to_save_rhinos



Patrol camps in Mudumu North and South are launched
NATIONAL POLICY ON PROTECTED AREAS' NEIGHBOURS AND RESIDENT COMMUNITIES IS OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism demonstrated once again the importance of communities in the management of protected areas in the country when it launched the National Policy on Protected Areas, Neighbours and Resident Communities. The policy that was developed with support from NAM-PLACE Project was officially launched by the permanent secretary of MET on behalf of the Honourable Minister of Environment and Tourism on 28 February 2014 at Okaukuejo, Etosha National Park.

The aim of the Policy is to contribute to the improvement of conservation efforts of Namibia's protected areas, provide greater social equity in accessing benefits from protected areas and stimulate local economic development through creating business opportunities linked to protected areas.

The Objectives of the policy include: to define and strengthen the relationship between protected areas, neighbours and resident communities; and to promote management of natural resources with protected area neighbours across larger landscapes, including Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) and Transfrontier Parks (TFP), for enhanced ecosystem conservation and socio-economic development.

The main strategies aimed at achieving the aim and objectives of the policy Engagement of neighbours and/or residents of Protected Areas are (1) Promoting Socio-economic development and benefits; (2) Integrated park management, zoning and landscape conservation; (3) Building community skills, liaison and communication; and (4) Transfrontier conservation and ecosystem management across larger landscapes.

Speaking at the Launch on behalf of the protected areas neighbours and those living inside, Chief Seth Kooitjie of the Topnaar community said that they are delighted with the policy as it enables government to engage closely with them in promoting socio-economic development of the people and parks. He further thanked the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and stakeholders in a job well done in developing the policy.

Speaking on behalf of the Honourable Minister of Environment and Tourism, the Permanent Secretary of Environment and Tourism, Simeon Negumbo said that the policy will contribute towards improvement of conservation efforts of Namibia's protected areas, provide greater social equity in accessing benefits from protected areas and stimulate global economic development through creating business opportunities linked to protected areas.

by Michael Sibalatani



Chief Seth Kooitjie & Permanent Secretary, Simeon Negumbo

Removal of fences in the greater Sossusvlei Namib Landscape
REMOVAL OF FENCES IN THE GREATER SOSSUSVLEI NAMIB LANDSCAPE



The main purpose of fences erection is to facilitate the application of conservation practices by providing a means to control movement of animals and people. Farmers usually install fences to demarcate and protect their areas of farming. Worldwide, the

issue of removal of fences has been discussed and seen as a danger to animals rather than safety to land. There are regular reports of animals being caught in fence traps and eventually dying due to shock, stress, thirst and hunger before they are released.

In the United States of America, continuous research is undertaken to come up with appropriate design of fences that can be erected, instead of the design used mainly in Namibia and SADC region. The fences will meet both landowner objectives to protect property and manage livestock while reducing injuries to wildlife. Fences can injure and/or create a barrier to wildlife if not designed and installed correctly. Animals can collide or become entangled with fences, which frequently results in injury or death. Fences can also be barriers to animal movement that can limit access to important habitat resources or separate young wildlife from adults. (NRDC CA, May 2012)

In Namibia fences are not ideal for wildlife. The attempts translate to injury or death of animals, instead.

The Namib Rand in the Southern Namibia is no exception. NAM-PLACE caught up with Nils Oederdaal, of the Namib Rand Nature Reserve on the discussion about the removal of fences in the farms.

1) What are the implications of the Cattle Grid removal on wildlife movement, conservation status and other biodiversity factors

The removal of internal cattle grids allows us to remove road corridor and internal fences. Fence in our ecosystem serves as ecological barriers, which restrict the free movement and migration of wildlife. The ability for animals to move freely in search of grazing in a hyper arid eco-system like the Namib is crucial in order for them to prosper. It is generally agreed by ecologists that the Namib ecosystem needs to be as open and as unrestricted as possible in order to be robust.

Road corridor fences were designed to keep livestock off the roads and these fences are not effective in restricting wildlife movement. Wildlife will continuously endeavor to cross or get past fence in

search of grazing or water. Under calm conditions wildlife will always find a way through or across a fence, either by finding a weak place in the wires, by jumping over or by going underneath the fence. The problem comes when animals are stressed or weak, for example animals that have calmly made it over one fence and are in a fenced of road corridor, where they have to cross a second fence to get out are often stressed and panic when a vehicle approached on the road. In the case of trapped or panicked animal, such a fleeing animal will often run straight into a fence or get caught or trapped trying to cross the fence. Animals caught in fences are often unable to free themselves and eventually die while trapped or snagged to the fence.

In an informal meeting with the Roads Authority of Namibia (May 2013), the institution confirmed that they agree that it is better not to have fences in areas where there is no livestock.

From conservation and wildlife perspective then, clearly it is better not to have fences.

2) What has been the visible or tangible impact of removal of cattle grids?

The removal of fences has restored a natural, open ecosystem where wildlife can roam, migrate and move freely without restrictions of artificial barriers.

3) What value did the removal of cattle grids bring to NRNR

Improved biodiversity ecosystems and management, restored natural habitats, more robust ecosystems and ultimately healthier wildlife populations.

4) Does the removal of cattle grids have any implications on tourism?

Yes, the scenic appeal of an open and natural landscape is much higher for visiting tourists than a closed off or "un-natural" landscape. The natural landscape for a large open and holistic landscape has much more photographic and scenic value and is considered more beautiful and memorable to visitors.

Not encountering stressed or panicked wildlife inside fenced-off road corridors also ensures that tourists have a pleasant experience as they causally observe animals next to the main road. In the past we would often get complaints from tourists or other visitors that they were delayed due to animals trapped on the road, upset that animals they encountered panicked and jumped into the fence or that they even observed animals "killing themselves" in or on the fence while trying to escape them as their car approached.

by Jonas Heita

Farm / Nature Reserve / land Unit	Size (ha)	Open Boundary with	Total Fence Removed	Total Size of Landscape Area Connected
Namib Naukluft Nature Reserve (NamNau Reserve)	25 000 ha	Gondwana Desert Reserve	14 km	44 900 ha
Gondwana Desert Reserve	15 500 ha	NamNau & Agama Nature Reserves	14 + 18 km's	
Agama Nature Reserve	4 400 ha	Gondwana Desert Reserve	18 km	
Namib Rand Nature Reserve (NRNR)	202 288 ha	Springbokvlakte Reserve	20 km	217 288 ha
Springbokvlakte Nature Reserve	15 000 ha	NRNR	20 km	



Namibia is prone to veld fires, which poses a serious challenge to the national economy through reduction of grazing land which undermines the agricultural productivity a pillar national economic in the country. Further veld fires also destroy a range of forestry products

coordinating efforts from different stakeholders has been advocated as strategic move. Community awareness campaigns, precautionary measures such as creation and maintaining of fires breaks and key water points as well as stocking on necessary firefighting equipment and protective clothing all makes up part the integrated fire veld fire management.

In addressing this predicament, the GWL through the Namibia Protected Landscape Conservation Areas Initiative (NAM-PLACE) assisted by the Cheetah Conservation Fund and the Directorate of Forestry of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry offered a 2-days training to more than 30 members of the African Wild Dog, Okamatapati, Otjituuo and Ozonahi communal conservancies, Waterberg Plateau Park, Affirmative and Resettlement Farmers with the GWL. This training aimed at building capacity for veld fires management within the landscape. Topics on fire prevention and suppression were covered during this training.

The Directorate of Forestry offers continuous support to the four communal conservancies through the development and maintenance of fire breaks/cut lines. The further capacitate this landscape, the NAM-PLACE project procured firefighting equipment for the trained stakeholders.

by Lodika Halueendo

The Otjituuo and African Wild Dog Conservancies' management Committee receive firefighting equipment handed over by Ms. L. Halueendo of NAM-PLACE.

which most rural areas rely on for their everyday livelihood. In year 2013 alone, about 70million hectares of national grazing land was destroyed as a result of veld fires. The Greater Waterberg Landscape (GWL) which situated in the central Namibia falls within the highly veld fires prone zone within the national context.

In efforts to address veld fire concerns and curb their effects, an integrated veld fire management approach, drawing and

Greater Waterberg Landscape's Communal Conservancies
**GREATER WATERBERG LANDSCAPE'S COMMUNAL CONSERVANCIES
 ADDRESSES CONSERVANCIES INSTITUTIONAL GOVERNANCE**



Members of African Wild Dog and Otjituuo conservancies' management committee on the final day of training at Okatjikona Environmental Education Centre

The communal conservancies' portion of the Greater Waterberg Landscape (GWL) makes up the biggest area of the total landscape (85%). This is made up of the African Wild Dog, Okamatapati, Otjituuo and Ozonahi, all which

also elected their conservancies' new management committees to reign for the next three years, with the responsibility of spearheading the development and management of their conservancies.

The new Otjituuo Conservancy Management Committee comprised of the following members, drawn from the general conservancy community, 4 village blocks and 4 Traditional Authorities: Katjiveri K.; Uzera S.B.; Rukoro U.; Kazengurura U.; Upingasana U.; Katjipi V.; Kakunandero U.; Mutjavikua L.; Tjombonde S.; Anton T., with a female gender representation of 50%. Four representatives are yet to be nominated from their respective blocks. The African Wild Dog Conservancy Management Committee's 13 members comprises of Kandinda A.; Tjiami K.; Kaangundue F.; Katjeringo B.; Kavetuna M.; Novengi C.U.; Tjaverua B.; Mberirua T.; Tjombe N; Muvangua S.; Kamujame K.; Mureti M.; and Kaura K. also drawn from the general conservancy community, 4 village blocks and 3 Traditional Authorities, with female representation of 40%.

To ensure that the newly elected committee members grow the competence and confidence in carrying out their respective responsibilities, 3-days capacity development training was offered to these committees during 7-9 March 2014, held at Okatjikona Environmental Education Center in Waterberg. Subjects covered during the training range from Legislations and Policies governing the communal conservancies in Namibia; specific roles and responsibilities of the different conservancy committee portfolios; dispute resolutions; decision making, and records keeping among others.

Participants to the training demonstrated the aspiration of taking their conservancies ahead, further presenting their additional capacity development needs and requesting the supporting institutions to offer continued support.

by Lodika Halueendo

were established in 2005. To date, these conservancies trail behind in the realisation of the aspirations and objectives, a trend attributed to among others, the weakness of the institutional structures. It resulted in the decision by the Landscape Management Committee (LMC) that these conservancies require dedicated interventions in this regard for the landscape to succeed. Among aspects identified for intervention in these conservancies is the need to formally define, constitute, and implement the governance structures of the four conservancies. Activities such as review of the constitutions, development and management plans, regularly holding Annual General Meetings and election of the Management Committee members were among others singled out as the starting blocks of reviving these conservancies.

During the last quarter of 2013, the African Wild Dog, Otjituuo and Okamatapati Conservancies held their Annual General Meetings on 05 December, 21 November and 02 November 2013 respectively. At these meetings, the African Wild Dog and Otjituuo Conservancies successfully reviewed and adopted their amended constitutions and



Otjiseva river flowing through the landscape. The colour green is attributed to rich organic nutrient.

The Windhoek Greenbelt Landscape, located with the Khomas hochland plateau redirect efforts to avert possible water quality deterioration. The landscape covers an area of about 697km², and is about, less than 20km from Windhoek, comprising of fifteen (15) freehold farms and Daan Viljoen Game Park, a state protected area and has an estimated population of about 400 people. The WGBL has no municipal, piped water supply and mainly depend on groundwater supply. In addition to a number of dams that supply water mainly for wildlife and livestock, the landscape has a network of ephemeral rivers.

Due to a number of industrial developments and some waste water treatments works upstream of this landscape, the landscape members feared a possible water contamination that would pose a threat to the environment and subsequently compromising the biodiversity and general livelihood within the landscape. With support from NAM-PLACE project, the Landscape Management Committee commissioned an assessment on water quality to inform themselves on the status quo of the situation for informed decisions.

Following the completion of this assessment, the WGBL intends to develop and implement a proactive "Water Quality Monitoring and Management System" that will cover continuous sampling and analysis of strategic points within and around the landscape aimed at ensuring that the water quality parameters are monitored and contained within the safe, approved limits as defined by the regulatory authorities and international standards. Once this is realised, the landscape also hopes to participate in the establishment an "Integrated Water Quality Discussion Forum" comprising of all the relevant stakeholders within the Swakop river catchment". The Landscape chairman described this envisaged plan as a yardstick for checking out on one another to ensure the environment and its resources are safely utilised.

by Lodika Halueendo

Next Edition
IN THE NEXT EDITION

- Sesriem Police station – Launch in June
- Klein Karas Garden project – Launch August
- Look out for the NAM-PLACE stand at the Tourism Expo – 04 -07 June 2014
- Mudumu Waste Management plans - How far we have come
- Windhoek Greenbelt Landscape Water Quality continues
- |Ais|Ais Solid waste management pilot program

