

ENTERPRISE AFRICA

# MERCATUS POLICY SERIES

POLICY COMMENT No. 10

COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL  
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION  
IN NAMIBIA:  
A CASE STUDY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Can indigenous people protect their environment and, at the same time, develop strong businesses that help diversify their livelihoods and alleviate poverty? In Namibia, the answer is yes.

Through community-based natural resource management (CBNRM), Namibians who form conservancies now have legal rights to manage wildlife and benefit from tourism. With these secure rights, and with help from NGOs and the government, something extraordinary is happening: wildlife numbers, which were decimated by war and poaching, are rising, and ecosystems are rebounding. Namibians also now have the chance to build businesses based on eco-tourism and related activities, and these businesses are helping to improve the lives of conservancy members.

Namibia's experience with CBNRM may provide a strong model for other countries: devolving secure legal rights to local people has gone a long way towards promoting positive outcomes both in terms of conservation and economic development.

While it is among the best examples of CBNRM in Africa, the Namibia program has some weaknesses. These include:

- no legal right for conservancies to exclude unwanted/harmful outsiders;
- a confused process for resolving conflicting land use claims; and
- an institutional environment that imposes unnecessary costs on entrepreneurs and small businesses.

By addressing these weaknesses and continuing to support capacity-building efforts for conservancies, the Namibian government and the international donor community could further strengthen this exciting enterprise-based solution to poverty in Africa.

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For more information about the *Enterprise Africa!* project, visit us  
online at [www.mercatus.org/enterpriseafrica](http://www.mercatus.org/enterpriseafrica) or contact Karol Boudreaux at  
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## ENTERPRISE AFRICA! RESEARCH APPROACH

### LOCAL SOLUTIONS FROM LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

This study, as with all the studies conducted by the *Enterprise Africa!* research team, is based largely on information gathered in Africa from Africans. The Mercatus Center's Karol Boudreaux and South African-based Free Market Foundation's Eustace Davie, Temba Nolutshungu, and Jasson Urbach comprise the core of our research team. The unique approach of the *Enterprise Africa!* team helps ensure that our studies reflect what's actually happening in the communities in which we work, rather than an outside view of how things might be.



Eustace Davie, Jasson Urbach,  
and Linda Baker

For *Community-based Natural Resource Management and Poverty Alleviation in Namibia: A Case Study*, we had very able assistance in Namibia from Miss Linda Baker, who has a strong knowledge of the area we studied and the experience of CBNRM in the country. The research team was also fortunate to be able to draw on the knowledge and expertise of staff members of the World Wildlife Fund's LIFE (Living in a Finite Environment) project—especially Mr. Andee Davidson and Mr. Chris Weaver, former staff members of Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism—as well as members of several conservancies.

With the groundwork for a productive stint of field work laid, team members traveled to Namibia to speak with stakeholders in the CBNRM process, including conservancy leaders, conservancy members, employees at tourist facilities, tribal authorities, and business people.

We then cross-referenced this local information with literature and other relevant data. Colleagues in South Africa and the United States captured and peer-reviewed the picture that emerged.

The goal of our study is to provide a unique view of how the institutional environment created by local policy enables or inhibits productive enterprise-based solutions to poverty and ultimately affects the well being of members of the community in question. Our unique approach to this research, which relies substantially on local experience and knowledge, helps to ensure that the picture we paint is tied to the world it intends to depict.



Eustace interviewing Aloysius at  
Damaraland Camp

# COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN NAMIBIA: A CASE STUDY

## INTRODUCTION

Poor people cannot invest in the environment nor do they have the power and resources to limit damage to local resources, particularly where ill-conceived policies and greed are factors, for example, soil nutrient depletion, deforestation, overfishing and other environmental damage. *The vicious circle of poverty exacerbates environmental degradation, which in turn limits opportunities for development.*<sup>1</sup>

Many people believe that economic development and environmental protection are unavoidably at odds. They believe that economic growth and increased prosperity lead to a degraded environment. The United Nations report cited above argues that the poor are incapable of protecting their local resources. In neither case is this necessarily true. Economic growth and environmental protection can be mutually reinforcing. Even very poor people can protect their environment and, in the process, create more opportunities for economic growth.

When governments allow people to benefit directly from environmental protection, people—poor people and wealthy people—will respond to these incentives and find ways to maintain and improve their natural environments. The key is creating appropriate incentives within an institutional environment that effectively devolves rights to manage natural resources and that encourages entrepreneurial activities.

Namibia provides a powerful example of poor people investing in and protecting their environment. The result is environmental protection and expanding opportunities for entrepreneurship and economic development. Government policies provide incentives to conserve environmental resources; these policies create a pathway towards economic development and natural resource conservation. There is visible evidence of this beneficial relationship in Namibia. Today, across the beautifully rugged northwest corner of the country, animals are returning. As springbok, oryx, desert elephant, zebra, giraffe, lions, and leopards reoccupy the land, the local people are protecting, not poaching, them and building

<sup>1</sup>United Nations Environment Programme, *Africa Environmental Outlook 2—Our Environment, Our Wealth* (Nairobi: UNEP, 2006): 485, <http://www.unep.org/dewa/africa/publications/AEO-2/aeo-2report.asp>. Emphasis added.

businesses that take advantage of their presence, thereby creating jobs, generating income, and improving standards of living. A policy that transformed incentives for people living on communal land transformed their attitudes toward wildlife.

In 1996, the Namibian government amended existing legislation to give local people some right to manage wildlife and benefit from tourism. Before 1996, only certain white farmers had this right. For everyone else, including black Namibians, many of whom live on state-owned communal land, wild animals were government property. Thus the people had little reason to protect them.

Now though, the introduction of Community-based Natural Resource Management (hereafter, CBNRM) has many local people seeing wild animals, even troublesome animals such as elephants and rhino, as a key to an improved future. The reason for this change is that wildlife attracts tourists. Increasingly, tourists who are interested in these resources visit Namibia. These tourists will bring money and expanded trading opportunities to rural areas.<sup>2</sup>

The Namibian government's policy of devolving wildlife management rights to local communities has created a new class of property rights. These property rights give local people incentives to develop businesses and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities, producing multiple benefits for local communities, such as jobs and training. During the past ten years, this pro-development policy has benefited Namibia's people and natural resources.

This study investigates how Namibia's changes to its property rights environment through CBNRM are alleviating poverty in some communities. CBNRM allows local people to group together into conservancies. If a conservancy meets certain requirements, the government gives its members the right to manage some wildlife found within its borders. In addition, conservancies can now benefit from tourist activities within their borders. This devolution of property rights provides local people with positive incentives to protect and conserve the wildlife and other natural resources on their land and to find entrepreneurial ways to benefit from tourism, including:

- entering into a joint venture with an experienced safari or lodge company to run a tourist lodge;

<sup>2</sup> A newly released study by the World Travel & Tourism Council argues, "Namibia has the potential to become one of Africa's leading travel and tourism economies over the next decade, providing a service industry complement to mining, agriculture and fishing for economic growth and development. Tourism is also emerging as a real opportunity for job creation, social cohesion, and economic growth." See *Namibia: the impact of travel & tourism on jobs and the economy* (London: United Kingdom, World Travel & Tourism Council, 2006): 6, [http://www.wttc.org/publications/pdf/fin2\\_WTTC\\_Namibia\\_report1.pdf](http://www.wttc.org/publications/pdf/fin2_WTTC_Namibia_report1.pdf).



This craft shop near Spitzkoppe demonstrates the increased trading opportunities tourism can bring to a rural area.

- creating and operating a campsite;
- contracting with a professional hunter for trophy hunting of some animals;
- developing a crafts business; and
- operating cultural or information centers.

This study investigates the benefits created by the government's policy of devolving some property rights to local people. These benefits include job creation, developing a variety of skills, building local institutions, building social capital, and enhancing food security. These tangible and intangible benefits are improving lives in rural Namibia and contributing to economic development. We also examine some of the problems local people face as they build conservancies and propose policy changes to improve chances for further economic development. This

study builds on and extends existing research on poverty alleviation and CBNRM in Namibia by drawing on field work and interviews conducted with conservancy members and other CBNRM stakeholders to show how CBNRM contributes to poverty alleviation.

#### **A. CREATING POSITIVE INCENTIVES**

When government officials create policy, they can create both positive and negative incentives—inducements—for persons to engage in particular behaviors. Sometimes government policies offer carrots (rewards) for good behavior; sometimes they threaten with sticks (punishments) for bad behavior.

Suppose New York State wants more drivers to obey a 60-mile-per-hour speed law. The government can offer a carrot and reward drivers who consistently drive within the speed limit. Using

traffic cameras and speed detection devices, the government can identify "good" drivers and pay them a particular sum each year as a reward. Such a policy could create positive incentives for drivers to obey speed limits.

Private companies also rely on positive incentives to encourage customers to engage in particular behaviors. Private medical insurers reduce their rates for customers who do not smoke, who drink only in moderation, and who get regular exercise, creating positive incentives for customers to act in particular ways by rewarding them for those behaviors.

The public and private sectors rely also on negative incentives, sticks, to alter people's behavior. By charging higher premiums to customers who smoke, drink like fish, and spend vast amounts of time on the couch watching television, insurers create negative incentives to discourage "bad" behavior. We might say that the insurer is creating a *disincentive* to smoke, drink alcohol, and be lazy. As the costs of behaving in particular ways rise, the benefits of avoiding the behavior will also rise.

Property rights are one powerful way to create incentives.<sup>3</sup> The ability to securely use and retain any profits from the use of property creates incen-

tives for rights holders to identify high-valued uses of property and to maintain that property. If property owners can personally benefit from the effective use and maintenance of property, they are more likely to expend resources identifying valuable ways to use and conserve property.

For example, suppose Jane owns a piece of land on which coffee trees grow. Jane might choose to view the trees as little more than pretty shrubs. On the other hand, if selling coffee beans is profitable, she might decide to use the trees to generate an income. If Jane lives in a secure property-rights environment and if selling coffee beans is profitable, there is a strong likelihood that she will nurture her trees. Why? Because Jane knows that if she maintains the trees, if she mulches and prunes them, she will have more opportunities to sell the beans for a higher price at a future date than if she uses the trees as shrubs or if she neglects them. However, if the property-rights environment is insecure, if for example Jane believes the government is likely to seize her crop, or if she lives in an area with very high crime rates and worries that thieves will steal her crop, she is less likely to incur the expense and trouble of protecting and nurturing the trees. She will not benefit from such efforts; the thief or the government will.

<sup>3</sup> See Karol Boudreaux, *The Role of Property Rights as an Institution: Implications for Development Policy*, Mercatus Policy Series, Policy Primer No. 2, (Arlington, VA: Mercatus Center at George Mason University, 2005): 12-14, [http://www.mercatus.org/repository/docLib/MC\\_GPI\\_PS-property\\_2005\\_5\\_3.pdf](http://www.mercatus.org/repository/docLib/MC_GPI_PS-property_2005_5_3.pdf).

By allowing people to trade property broadly and by improving processes for registering or defending property, governments expand property rights, and owners will invest more and take greater care of property. The result is more opportunities for trade, entrepreneurship, and economic development.

Private owners have powerful incentives to take care of their property. Communal owners also have incentives to care for the community's property, though it is easier for some community members to let other members do the hard work of caring for the property. These shirkers "free-ride" on the management and stewardship efforts of others. People have few incentives to conserve government property. They do not benefit directly from conservation efforts, so they often overuse un-owned, open-access property. The result is a situation known as "the tragedy of the commons."

In Namibia, the government's policy of devolving some property rights to communal groups of local people, conservancies, and allowing them to benefit from tourism creates positive incentives for the local people to conserve local wildlife. It differs greatly from the old system of government ownership of wildlife,

which essentially led to a tragedy of the Namibian commons.

## **B. NAMIBIA AND CBNRM**

### **B1. NAMIBIA**

Namibia lies along Africa's southwestern coast. A large and dry country that includes the Namib and the Kalahari Deserts, Namibia was formerly a German colony known as South-West Africa. South Africa took control of the territory in 1915, ending Germany's short, exploitative, and ruthless colonial rule.<sup>4</sup>

After the First World War, South Africa administered South-West Africa on behalf of the League of Nations. When the United Nations (UN) replaced the League of Nations at the end of World War II, it asked South Africa to hand the territory over for it to administer. South Africa ignored the UN, annexed the territory, and imposed apartheid.

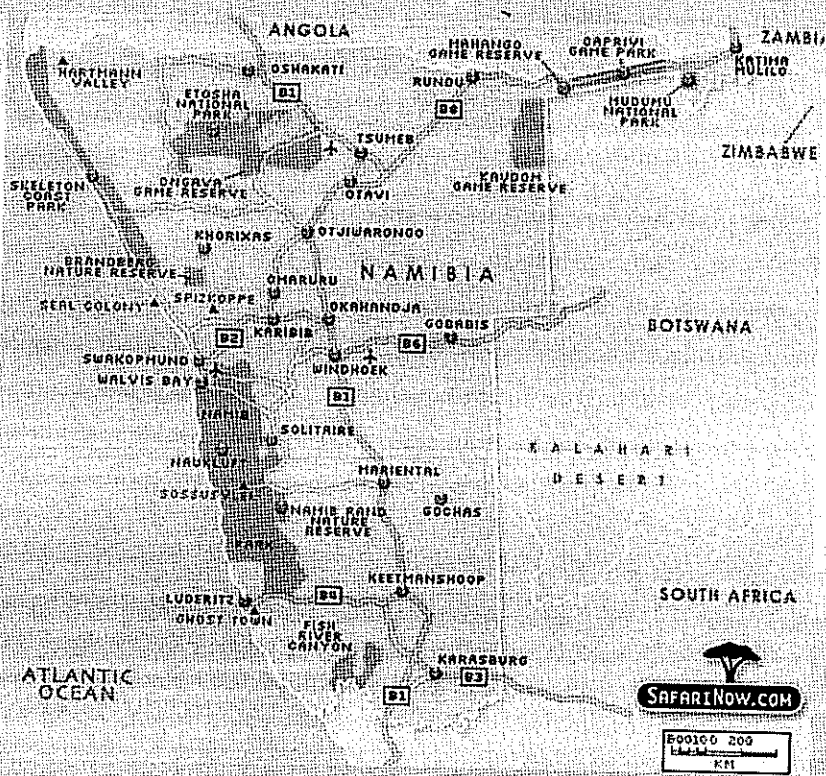
In 1966, SWAPO (the South West African People's Organization) began an armed uprising against South African forces. This struggle lasted until 1989 and had devastating results for the wildlife, particularly in northern Namibia. The country became independent in 1990, and the

<sup>4</sup> For more on the German rule in Namibia and for an excellent review of the breadth of African history, see John Reader's impressive work, *Africa: A Biography of a Continent* (London: Penguin Books, 1998): 587-590.



FIGURE 1

# NAMIBIA



Source: Map courtesy of SafariNow.com, <http://www.safarinow.com/destinations/namibia/map.aspx>

people elected SWAPO leader Samuel Nujoma as president. Although SWAPO remains the ruling political party, the country retains strong economic ties with South Africa.<sup>5</sup>

Today, Namibia is lightly populated with 1.8 million people, most of whom live in the middle and

northern portions of the country where rain is more plentiful. While the country does have significant mineral wealth, including diamonds, lithium, uranium, and gold, and a growing fisheries industry, most inhabitants are subsistence farmers. Life expectancy at birth is only 43 years, and there is an adult HIV/AIDS prevalence rate

<sup>5</sup> Namibia trades close to 85 percent of its imports and 33 percent of its exports with South Africa. See "Namibia," *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2006), <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/wa.html>.

of 21 percent. In 2005 the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US\$ 7,000 was well above that of many other African nations though income is unevenly distributed.<sup>6</sup> Given high rates of rural poverty and unemployment, programs that alleviate poverty and create economic development are very important to Namibia's people and government.<sup>7</sup>

## B2. HOW POLICY MAKES A DIFFERENCE: CBNRM IN NAMIBIA

[I]t is important to recognize that CBNRM is a specific approach with specific characteristics. It is separated from other approaches by its emphasis on the devolution of authority

over natural resources (particularly wildlife and forests) from the state to defined groups of resource users on communal land. . . . At its core this form of CBNRM aims to create the right incentives and conditions for groups of resource users within defined jurisdictions to use natural resources sustainably.<sup>8</sup>

In many countries over time, local people worked together to manage resources such as forests, fisheries, grazing lands, etc.<sup>9</sup> More recently, centralized government agencies, such as departments or ministries of the environment, supplanted some of these institutional arrangements, which drew on deep local knowledge.

<sup>6</sup> For 2004 country rankings of GDP per capita, adjusting for purchasing power parity (PPP), see "Rank Order, GDP, per capita (PPP)" in *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2004), <https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/rankorder/2004rank.html>. In a report from the mid-1990s, Ashley and Barnes report: "Gross Domestic Product was \$N10,394 million in 1994 (\$US2,927 million). However, this relatively high average per capita income masks a sharply dualistic economy. Average annual per capita income among the top 10 percent of households is about \$N17,500 compared to \$N1,500 in the rest of the population." See Caroline Ashley and Jon Barnes, "Wildlife Use for Economic Gain: the potential for wildlife to contribute to development in Namibia," (Research Discussion Paper, No. 12, Department of Environmental Affairs, 1996): 7, [http://www.met.gov.na/publications/research/rdp\\_0012.pdf](http://www.met.gov.na/publications/research/rdp_0012.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> See "Namibia: Integrated Ecosystem Management through the National Conservancy Network" (Project Report, World Bank/IFC/M.I.G.A., Washington, DC, 2002): 6, [http://www.gefweb.org/Documents/Council\\_Documents/GEF\\_CI9/Namibia\\_Integrated\\_Ecosystem.pdf](http://www.gefweb.org/Documents/Council_Documents/GEF_CI9/Namibia_Integrated_Ecosystem.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Brian T.B. Jones, *CBNRM, poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods: Developing criteria for evaluating the contribution of CBNRM to poverty reduction and alleviation in southern Africa*, CASS/PLAAS occasional paper series No. 7 (Centre for Social Studies (CASS), University of Zimbabwe/ Programme for Land and Agrarian Studies, University of the Western Cape (PLAAS) programme 'Breaking New Ground: People-Centred Approaches to Natural Resources Management in Southern Africa, 2004): 4, <http://www.sarpn.org.za/documents/d0001451/index.php>.

<sup>9</sup> There is a large, and growing, literature on CBNRM. A seminal work in this area is Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: the evolution of institutions for collective action* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1990). The Digital Library of the Commons, hosted by Indiana University, home to Elinor and Vincent Ostrom, is also a very valuable resource. It is available at <http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/view/subjects/cpr-na.html>. A CBNRM bibliography may be found at "Literature, Authors," The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Network, <http://www.cbnrm.net/resources/literature/author.html>.

Today CBNRM uses that deep local knowledge, long-standing patterns of behavior, and institutional arrangements in rural areas to manage some natural resources.

By devolving some of the legal rights to manage some natural resources from the national or provincial-level government to local groups, CBNRM efforts recognize that in cases where local people enjoy property rights over these resources, are directly involved in decision making regarding the resources, and when they directly benefit from the resources, they can be effective stewards of the resources.<sup>10</sup>

For the past ten years, Namibia has had an expanding CBNRM project. The efforts began in the 1990s, when the government of Namibia decided—with substantial input and financial support from non-governmental organizations (NGOs)—to introduce CBNRM in an effort to conserve and use wildlife and other renewable

living resources on communal land and promote tourism and rural economic development in communal areas.<sup>11</sup>

In the early 1990s, the post-independence government conducted socioeconomic surveys to identify the problems and concerns local communities had in relation to the environment and conservation.<sup>12</sup> In 1992 the government drafted the “Policy on the Establishment of Conservancies” to address the needs identified by these surveys.<sup>13</sup> The following year, the government partnered with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to fund and develop a CBNRM project called Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE).<sup>14</sup> In 1995 the government developed and approved a policy for the creation of community-level conservancies. This second policy, called the “Policy on Wildlife Management, Utilization, and Tourism in Communal Areas,” ensured that the same rights to manage wildlife

<sup>10</sup> CBNRM is not without its critics. See, for example, Stephen Turner, “A Crisis in CBNRM? Affirming the commons in Southern Africa” (paper presented at the 10<sup>th</sup> IASCP Conference, Oaxaca, Mexico, August 9-13, 2004), [http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/archive/00001501/00/Turner\\_Crisis\\_040508\\_Paper361.pdf](http://dlc.dlib.indiana.edu/archive/00001501/00/Turner_Crisis_040508_Paper361.pdf) for a discussion of critical assessments of CBNRM efforts in southern Africa.

<sup>11</sup> “Wildlife management, utilization and tourism in communal areas,” MET (Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Namibia) 1995. The NGO Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) played a key role in the promoting CBNRM in Namibia. See Brian Jones, “The Evolution of a Community-based Approach to Wildlife Management at Kunene, Namibia,” in *African Wildlife & Livelihoods*, David Hulme and Marshall Murphree, eds. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001): 160-176.

<sup>12</sup> Brian T.B. Jones, “Community management of natural resources in Namibia” (Scandinavian Seminar College’s Africa Project, SSC Africa Project No. 37, 1999): 6-7.

<sup>13</sup> “Namibia: Integrated Ecosystem Management,” 9.

<sup>14</sup> For more on the LIFE project, see “WWF on the ground in Namibia,” [http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/africa/where/namibia/life/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/africa/where/namibia/life/index.cfm).



CBNRM helps make people effective stewards of resources, such as these rock etchings in Twyfelfontein Conservancy.

that applied to freehold land also applied to conservancies on communal land.<sup>15</sup>

In 1996 the Natural Conservation Amendment Act (Act 5) amended the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1975 and put the 1995 policy into effect, giving people living on communal land the same rights to manage wildlife as commercial farmers through the creation of communal area conservancies.<sup>16</sup> Conservancies must:

- have a defined border;

- have a defined membership;
- create a representative management committee; and
- have a legally recognized constitution that provides for a wildlife management strategy and equitable benefits distribution.<sup>17</sup>

Groups that meet these requirements may apply to the Ministry of Environment and

<sup>15</sup> "Namibia: Integrated Ecosystem Management," 9. While private citizens, predominantly white commercial farmers, hold some 52 percent of land in Namibia as freehold property, the state owns the remaining 48 percent, holding it as either national parks or communal land. Wolfgang Werner, "Land and Resource Rights: Namibia Case Study" (Pan-African Programme on Land and Resource Rights, Cairo, 25-26 March 2000): 2, <http://www.acts.or.ke/paplr/docs/PaperCairo-fianloutput.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Brian T.B. Jones, *Rights, Revenue and Resources: The problems and potential of conservancies as community wildlife management institutions in Namibia*, Evaluating Eden Series, Discussion Paper No. 2 (London: International Institute for Environment and Development, 1999): 9, <http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/7795IIED.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> See Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Programme Details, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, <http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/cbnrm/cbnrmHome.htm>.

Tourism (MET) to have their areas declared a conservancy.<sup>18</sup>

The policy vests the legal right to manage and use wildlife and to benefit from the non-consumptive use of the wildlife—interpreted to mean benefiting from tourism in communal areas—in a conservancy’s management committee, not directly in the conservancy’s members. The management committee that heads each conservancy not only has rights regarding the use of wildlife, it has obligations to create and maintain membership lists, to create game management plans, to create dispute resolution mechanisms, to hold annual meetings, and to report to conservancy members.

Coupled with the “Policy on Promotion of Tourism in Communal Areas,” Act 5 created an institutional framework that provides local people with incentives to search for profitable ways to manage wildlife and develop tourist-related facilities within conservancies.<sup>19</sup> Conservancies can use their rights in the following ways:

- to hunt for animals for the use of conservancy members (“own-use”)

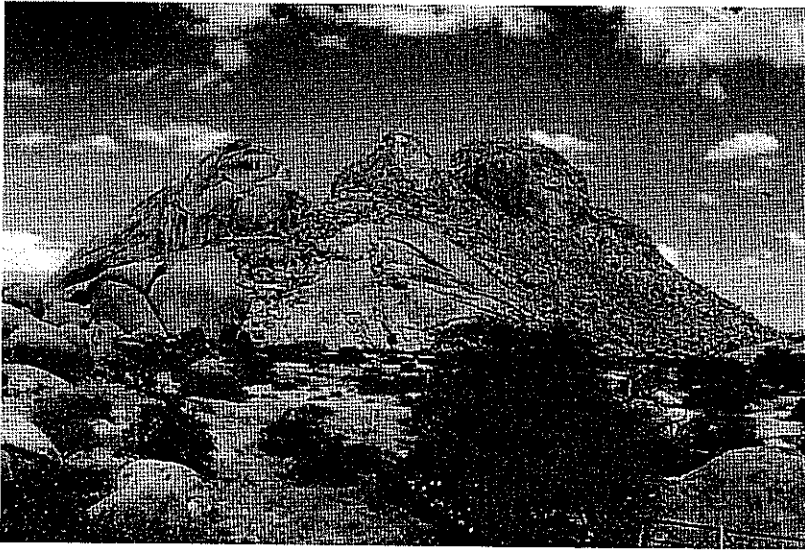
- to capture and sell game;
- to cull game;
- to manage protected game;
- to become a game preserve that permits trophy hunting with a quota; and
- to engage in non-consumptive use. This primarily means tourist-related activities that use game, but the definition also encompasses other recreational, educational, cultural, or aesthetic uses.<sup>20</sup>

The 1996 legislation required that conservancies draft constitutions, elect management committees, and develop management plans for their resources and distribution plans for any income. Conservancies must also hold regular meetings, at which conservancy members discuss the direction of the organization, hear of future plans, and vote on proposals to use resources or engage in businesses. These requirements force the local people to build systems of local governance and to decide

<sup>18</sup> Brian T.B. Jones, “Policy, Institutions and Practice: the Impact of Namibian CBNRM Policy and Legislation on Rural Livelihoods” (Working Paper 25, Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification (WILD) project, 2003): 10. The MET “declares” new conservancies in the *Government Gazette*, an official publication. Thus, new conservancies are referred to as “gazetted.”

<sup>19</sup> “Namibia: Integrated Ecosystem Management,” 9. Jones notes: “The policy recognizes that where tourism is linked to wildlife and wild landscapes, the benefits to local communities can provide important incentives for the conservation of these resources.” Jones, “Policy, Institutions and Practice,” 12.

<sup>20</sup> Jones, “Policy, Institutions and Practice,” 11.



Spitzkoppe, Southern Kunene

how to manage both the natural resources and business opportunities.<sup>21</sup>

The government believed this effort was likely to succeed based on similar experiments in Zimbabwe (the CAMPFIRE program),<sup>22</sup> Zambia, and Botswana. These southern African countries had devolved some rights to manage wildlife to local groups, with positive results

for conservation. In addition, in the late 1980s, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) created a successful community game guard system in the Kunene region of Namibia.<sup>23</sup> IRDNC worked with local leaders to promote conservation efforts, as well as to improve relations between local groups and the national environment ministry. These successful local and

<sup>21</sup> If Namibia's CBNRM had only focused on conservation, the government might have had political difficulty implementing it. The fact that the project held potential for economic development by spreading the benefits of the country's natural endowment among the black majority helped solidify political support for the project. See Jones, "Community management of natural resources."

<sup>22</sup> For a discussion of the CAMPFIRE program, see James C. Murombedzi, "Policy Arena: Devolution and Stewardship in Zimbabwe's Campfire Programme," *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 11(1999): 287-93. See also Simon Metcalfe, *Campfire: Zimbabwe's Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources* (Harare: Zimbabwe Trust & Centre for Applied Social Sciences, University of Zimbabwe, 1993).

<sup>23</sup> See S. Andrew Long, "Disentangling Benefits: Livelihoods, Natural Resource Management and Managing Revenue from Tourism: The Experience of the Torra Conservancy, Namibia" (DEA Research Discussion paper, No. 53, November 2002): 2. See also, "A Brief History of CBNRM in Namibia," *Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Programmes*, <http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/cbnrm/Enhancing%20conse,%20devand%20dem.htm>.

regional projects provided a basis for Namibia's CBNRM program.

The government had one other reason to think an incentive-based approach to wildlife conservation would succeed. In 1968, the pre-independence government gave white commercial farmers the right to manage wildlife found on their freehold land and benefit from the wildlife and related commercial activity,<sup>24</sup> formalizing these rights in the Nature Conservation Ordinance (No. 4 of 1975).<sup>25</sup> In 1997, Namibia created the first communal conservancy: Torra Conservancy. In the subsequent years, the government has created more than 40 conservancies.

Experts have noted, however, that these rights are conditional. Conservancies must meet registration conditions before acquiring the rights. Committees must persuade residents to join and then register members. Conservancies must successfully negotiate their boundaries with neighbors. Conservancies need to draft and

adopt a constitution. All of these activities are time consuming and costly, and it can take years for conservancies to meet these requirements. In addition, the MET may withdraw conservancy rights. By retaining the ability to withdraw rights, the national government maintains some important levers of control over conservancies.

Jones notes:

The legislation (1996) does not say on what grounds the Minister may take such action, although the original intention of the legislation drafters in MET was that rights could be withdrawn if the MET believes the conservancy is not using its wildlife sustainably, if there was persistent evidence of financial malpractice, or if the committee was blatantly unrepresentative of the community. The fact that the grounds for withdrawal of rights are not defined gives the MET wide powers in this regard.<sup>26</sup>

Rights are conditional, and they are limited. Conservancies do not set the quota number for

<sup>24</sup> See Jonathan I. Barnes, James MacGregor, and L. Chris Weaver, "Economic analysis of community wildlife use in Namibia" (DEA Research Discussion Paper, No. 42, August 2001), <http://www.met.gov.na/publications/research/RDP42.pdf>. The 1968 law created positive incentives for conservation efforts by allowing white farmers to keep "all income derived from the use and sale of game animals." Jones notes that "[w]ith farmers enabled to make management decisions over and gain benefits from the wildlife on their land, a multi-million dollar wildlife industry has developed and some species which had disappeared, such as lion, elephant and rhinoceros, have in some cases returned." Jones, "Community management of natural resources," 3-4.

<sup>25</sup> Jones, *Rights, Revenue and Resources*, 11. The 1975 law did make some provision for the use of wildlife by people living in communal areas. In some cases, the government would issue permits to allow locals to hunt or use wildlife for feasts. It also permitted trophy hunting on communal land, but under the 1975 law, the national government retained any revenue from these activities. See Jones, "Policy, Institutions and Practice," 8.

<sup>26</sup> Jones, "Policy, Institutions and Practice," 13.

hunting animals in the lucrative trophy market, though they retain the revenue from such hunts. Conservancies hold only limited rights to deal with problem animals, such as elephants, hippos, or predators. Conservancies also have vanishingly few rights to exclude unwanted outsiders from conservancy land. These limitations create less secure rights for conservancies and their members. With less secure rights, conservancies have reduced incentives to invest in conservation and in conservancy-based entrepreneurial opportunities.

### C. CBNRM AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION: THE BENEFITS OF CBNRM IN NAMIBIA

As of the summer of 2006, there were 44 registered conservancies in Namibia and another 30 "emerging" conservancies.<sup>27</sup> In May 2006, we visited five conservancies in the Kunene region, in the upper northwest corner of Namibia. These five conservancies are all several years old, but some are more successful than others. Success takes many forms, including financial self-sufficiency or movement in that direction; an improved natural-resource base, particularly

increased numbers of wildlife; or the creation of viable management and governance institutions that allow for dialogue with conservancy members, traditional authorities, the Namibian public sector, donor agencies (where applicable), and the wider world. I will discuss some of the challenges these conservancies face and suggest policy changes that would enhance conservancies' ability to succeed.

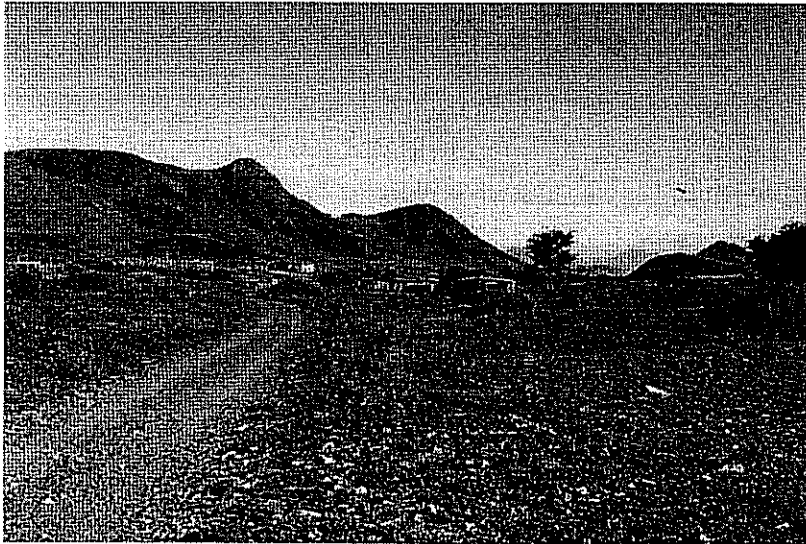
Most people in these conservancies raise livestock to earn income.<sup>28</sup> Conservancy members also use government pensions and/or remittances from family members to supplement household incomes. Ashley writes:

Agriculture (livestock keeping and/or crop production) is a core activity for virtually all rural households, but the sole activity of virtually none . . . a common strategy is for household members to undertake a range of activities which each in some way contributes to one or more of household needs. Most households rely on a range of natural resource uses and on off-farm income from employment or remittances. Diversified strategies are essential in Namibia because of the semi-arid to arid conditions in

<sup>27</sup> Interview with Mr. Andee Davidson WWF/LIFE Namibia, April 30, 2006, Windhoek, Namibia. For a list of conservancies as of 2003, with date registered, size, and membership figures, see Appendix.

<sup>28</sup> See B. Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods in Namibia: A Summary of Preliminary Findings" (Wildlife Integration for Livelihood Diversification (WILD) Project, Working Paper No. 20, Department for International Development, August 2002): 19-20, <http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/wild/WILDworkingpapers17-21/WP%2020%20-%20Interim%20findings.pdf>.





Bergsig, in the Torra Conservancy. Villages like Bergsig offered few employment opportunities for people before the creation of the conservancies.

which even the highest rainfall areas are marginal for rain-fed crop growing and drought is a common occurrence.<sup>29</sup>

Before the conservancies, opportunities to diversify livelihoods were very limited. There were few employment options for people living in this region aside from subsistence farming. Finding work usually meant leaving the area.

Conservancies are changing this. The first step in the process is increasing the stocks of wildlife on their land. As wildlife numbers increase, conservancies hope to attract more tourists and

generate increasing amounts of income and other benefits.<sup>30</sup>

In northwest Namibia wildlife populations are increasing dramatically. Both aerial surveys and road counts show strong increases in the numbers of elephant, springbok, zebra, and oryx. The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations reports:

[A]erial surveys . . . show that elephant numbers more than doubled (from the early 1980s), while springbok, oryx and mountain zebra populations increased over 10 times between 1982 and 2000. Independent esti-

<sup>29</sup> See Caroline Ashley, "The Impact of Tourism on Rural Livelihoods: Namibia's Experience" (Working Paper 128, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), London, 2000): 9, <http://www.odi.org.uk/publications/wp128.pdf>.

<sup>30</sup> See World Travel & Tourism Council (2006: 21). The study states that the travel and tourism industry directly generates 3.7 percent of Namibia's total gross domestic product and accounts for 4.7 percent of total employment. Ibid. at 5, 12.

mates suggest that black rhinos have more than doubled in the past 30 years.<sup>31</sup>

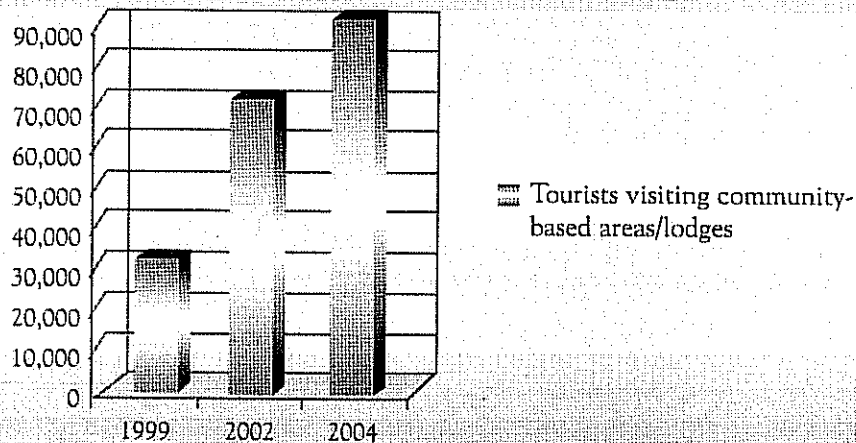
This report attributed much of this population increase to the “reduction and virtual cessation of illegal hunting and the steps taken by conservancies to manage human/wildlife conflict.”<sup>32</sup> With property rights over wildlife, conservancies have strong incentives to limit poaching and manage human/wildlife conflict. Conservancies manage their resources with an eye towards preserving valuable assets.

Over time, effective natural resource management leads to other benefits, including:

- job creation;
- helping local people develop a variety of skills;
- increasing aesthetic and cultural benefits, such as more secure access to game meat; and
- strengthening social capital.

FIGURE 2

### NAMIBIA'S INCREASING TOURIST TRADE



Source: World Travel & Tourism Council, 2006.

<sup>31</sup> *Namibia's communal conservancies: a review of progress and challenge* (Windhoek, Namibia: Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, 2004): 23.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

FIGURE 3

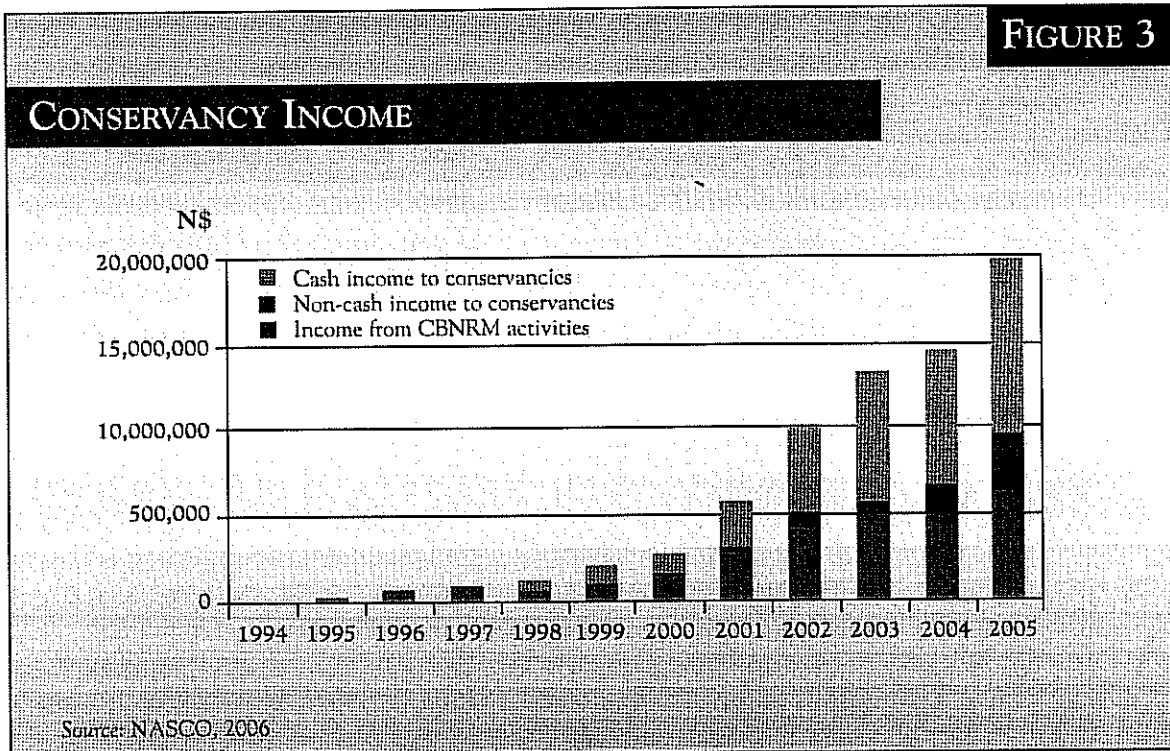


Figure 3 illustrates the growth of cash and non-cash benefits for Namibian conservancies over the past 12 years. This chart shows how significantly benefits have increased since the start of the first conservancies in 1997.<sup>33</sup>

Figure 4 identifies the main sources of income for conservancies during 2005. This income is cash

income, with the exception of “use of own game” and “trophy meat distribution.”<sup>34</sup>

**C1. CREATING JOBS AND INCREASING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

Cash and non-cash benefits are increasing at the same time that numbers of wildlife are increasing. Increasing wildlife numbers are a draw for tourists.

<sup>33</sup> Income from CBNRM activities “is generated from activities that are either outside conservancies or, in the case of those inside conservancies, there is no formal relationship between the particular enterprise and the conservancy. This can occur where the enterprise pre-dates the formation of the conservancy. The majority of this N\$6 million is generated by small tourism enterprises (campsites, traditional villages and tour guiding), thatching grass and crafts.” See *Namibia’s communal conservancies: a review of progress and challenges* (Windhoek, Namibia: Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations, 2006), Chapter 4.

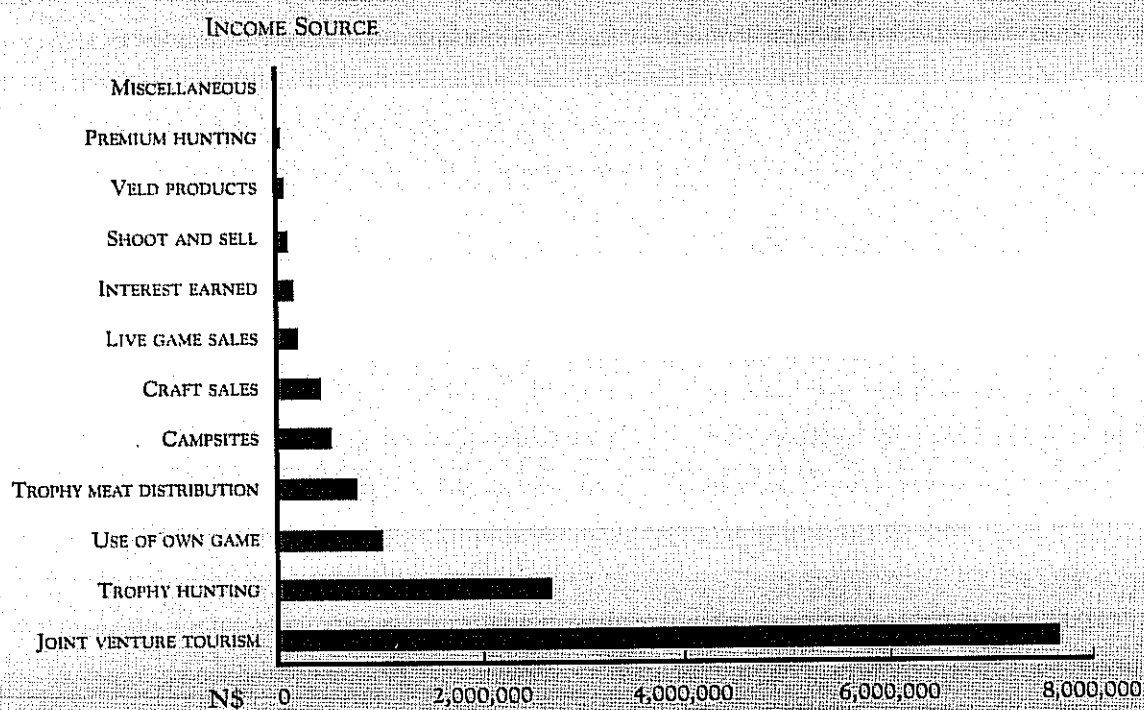
<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

Conservancies are entering into agreements to cater to these tourists: through joint venture lodges, campsites, hunting concessions, and other services. These agreements create local jobs and steady sources of income. Only 10 years into this program, CBNRM has had real success conserving wildlife and creating opportunities for rural economic development, thereby alleviating rural poverty.

Joint venture lodges for tourists are the most profitable activity Namibian conservancies undertake. In 2005, joint venture tourist lodges generated a total of N\$7,643,943 (approximately US\$1,100,000), just over 55 percent of all conservancy income.<sup>35</sup> As the Namibia Association of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Support Organizations (NACSO) reports:

**FIGURE 4**

**A BREAKDOWN OF CONSERVANCY INCOME**



Source: NACSO, 2006

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

This is a clear indication of the successful approach of bringing registered conservancies with tourism potential together with private sector investors, who recognise a viable opportunity and help conservancies "unlock" this potential. In these joint ventures, both partners are bringing something of value to the table. The conservancy brings the tourism development rights, a commitment to actively manage the natural resource (especially wildlife), and a desire and willingness to learn and become involved in the tourism industry. The investor brings capital, expertise in tourism and access to the market. The partnerships are structured in ways to maximize benefits to both parties.<sup>36</sup>

Lodges provide hundreds of full and part-time jobs in areas where there are few employment options other than subsistence farming,<sup>37</sup> and joint venture agreements require lodge operators to employ and train local people whenever possible.

For example, Tsiseb Conservancy operates a joint venture lodge with Aubrey Jaeger, a white Namibian experienced in the hospitality industry. White Lady Lodge is a lovely resort at the foot of the Brandberg Mountains, an area with a growing number of game animals.

Both Aubrey and the conservancy benefit from this arrangement. If he builds a business and generates a profit, Aubrey benefits financially. The conservancy benefits because Aubrey pays the conservancy a minimum of N\$250,000 per year (approximately US\$37,150) for the right to operate the lodge. After 20 years, when Aubrey's lease expires, he and the conservancy may renegotiate the terms of their agreement or the conservancy may take full control of the lodge.

Tsiseb pursues other opportunities closely tied to the tourism business, including:

- a campsite,
- shoot-and-sell hunting,
- trophy hunting, and
- guide services at a local Heritage Site.

Each of these activities creates jobs.<sup>38</sup> Each helps some local people develop skills and abilities that expand their possibilities of employment and their abilities to run businesses and manage wildlife. As business opportunities expand, the local economy improves.

Tsiseb generates enough income that it is now financially self-sufficient; it no longer receives

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> The conservancy directly employs nine people. Another 25 people have jobs working at the lodge, the campsite, with the trophy hunter, or at the center. Interview with Mr. Eric Xaweb, May 2, 2006, Uis, Namibia.



Thanks to her job as a guide at the Twyfelfontein Heritage Site, Thekla Tsaraë can stay near her family.

government or donor grant money. At their most recent annual meeting, conservancy members decided to set aside N\$30,000 (approximately US\$4,500) to provide micro-loans for people within the conservancy, which they hope will spark further entrepreneurship and additional economic development.<sup>39</sup>

Tsiseb is not the only conservancy that provides jobs for local people. Close by, Twyfelfontein Conservancy is quite small with less than 100 members and has one major natural attraction—the Twyfelfontein Heritage Site with its beautiful rock engravings. Because of its small size, this conservancy sees the rock engravings as the key tourist draw, and careful stewardship of this

resource benefits local people like Thekla Tsaraë, a young woman who works at the Twyfelfontein Heritage Site.

A member of Doro !Nawas Conservancy, Thekla has worked as a guide at the Twyfelfontein Heritage Site for three years, taking some of the 40,000 tourists that visit each year on short hikes to see the lovely engravings.<sup>40</sup> During this time she has taken several training courses in natural history and botany, increasing her knowledge of the local area. Her job allows Thekla to stay near her family and not have to go to the city to look for work—something that Thekla believes is a major benefit of the job.

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Mr. Eric Xaweb, May 2, 2006, Uis, Namibia.

<sup>40</sup> Even though Thekla is a member of neighboring Doro !Nawas conservancy, she works at the Twyfelfontein Heritage Site as a guide. The Heritage Site is now managed by the national ministry, and because Twyfelfontien has a very small number of members, any tourist facilities within its borders hire members of nearby conservancies and other local residents.



Cornelia, the assistant manager of the award winning Damaraland Camp, has benefited from the existence of a joint venture.

Twyfelfontein also has a thriving joint venture. The large and comfortable Twyfelfontein Lodge has 56 guest rooms and a 30-year lease from the conservancy with an option to renew. At the end of the agreement, the community will fully own the lodge. About 80 people work at the lodge, which draws its labor pool from three conservancies: Sorris Sorris, Doro !Nawas, and Twyfelfontein. The lodge offers a variety of services for guests and trains local people to provide these services, building on and strengthening local knowledge as locals learn astronomy, botany, and/or biology in order to educate curious tourists.

One of the most successful joint ventures between a conservancy and a private company is the Damaraland Camp, located in the Torra

Conservancy and operated by Wilderness Safaris. Overlooking the beautiful Huab River Valley, Damaraland Camp consists of a main reception/dining building surrounded by 10 tents. The entire facility is comfortable and luxurious, yet has a small ecological footprint.

Local leaders in Torra—together with the NGO IRDNC, Wilderness Safaris,<sup>41</sup> and the MET—began negotiations for this joint venture in 1994. At the same time, Torra residents were also negotiating with another company to develop a larger site with greater potential for income.<sup>42</sup> Several variables, including a shorter lease term, smaller tourism-only area, and lower risk factors, led the Torra residents to choose Wilderness Safaris over its competitors.

<sup>41</sup> Wilderness Safaris is a major up-scale safari company, headquartered in South Africa, but with a series of lodges throughout Namibia and southern Africa. For more information, see <http://www.wilderness-safaris.com>.

<sup>42</sup> Ashley, "The Impact of Tourism," 11.

In 1996 the parties signed a 15-year joint venture agreement. Shortly afterwards the camp was built and began operating. Within a year, Damaraland Camp won a "Silver Otter Award" for tourism and sustainable development and for its work with the local community. In 2003, Damaraland Camp won a World Legacy Award, and in 2005 the World Travel & Tourism Council selected Damaraland Camp one of four winners of a leading environmental award, the "Tourism for Tomorrow Award" for conservation.<sup>43</sup>

This joint venture serves as a model for other Namibian conservancies. The camp has a Joint Management Committee, made up of Wilderness Safaris and Torra Conservancy representatives, which meets regularly. Wilderness Safaris agreed to finance the project for the first ten years, pay an annual rent to the conservancy, and employ local people whenever possible. In addition, it pays ten percent of accommodation and activities turnover to the conservancy during these initial ten years. During years 11-15, Wilderness Safaris has an option to renew the agreement, but will transfer 20 percent of the camp's assets to the conservancy. At end of agreement, the conservancy will own Damaraland Camp in its entirety. Damaraland Camp has helped Torra become the

first economically self-sufficient conservancy in Namibia. The camp generates 40 percent of Torra's income, helping the conservancy function without donor aid. In 1997 Damaraland Camp generated N\$50,000; in 2004 it generated approximately N\$300,000.

Unlike the other conservancies, #Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy already owns the tourist lodge located within its boundaries, the Grootberg Lodge, a mid-range lodge located atop the Grootberg Mountains and run by a professional management company, EcoLodgistixs. The conservancy wrote a proposal to the European Union (EU) for funding for the lodge, and the EU gave them a N\$4.5 million grant to build it.<sup>44</sup>

It is the first year of operations for the lodge and for managers from EcoLodgistix: Melissa and Andrew Gillies and Dominic and Simonetta du Raan. As well as working to establish a good business, they are attempting to "raise the bar" for tourism in Namibia.<sup>45</sup> They want to set up a string of mid-market lodges across Namibia that focus on "providing great food, great service, really professional guiding, and an educational experience for guests, all for an excellent value." So far, they

<sup>43</sup> For more information, see "Best Practices in Responsible Tourism—WTTC's 2005 Tourism for Tomorrow Awards" (The World Travel & Tourism Council, April 8, 2005), [http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2005\\_2nd/Apr05\\_WTTC\\_Tourism.html](http://www.hotel-online.com/News/PR2005_2nd/Apr05_WTTC_Tourism.html).

<sup>44</sup> See "Namibia's first community lodge inaugurated," July 2005, <http://www.met.gov.na/latestnews/lodge.htm>.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with Melissa and Andrew Gillies, May 5, 2006, Grootberg Lodge, Namibia.



have hired and trained 20 local people and now employ 14.<sup>46</sup>

CBNRM is creating jobs in rural areas where there are few other formal employment options.

While the number of jobs created to date is not huge—hundreds, not thousands—these jobs with their steady income make a big difference for low-income workers and their families. Jobs at joint venture lodges, campsites, or in crafts production

Landina Guim is the first black woman to serve as a game guard in Namibia. In 1997, the #Khoadi//Hoas Conservancy chose soft-spoken Landina out of a pool of twenty candidates to be one of their "environmental shepherds." Environmental shepherds perform a wide variety of tasks for the conservancy, including monitoring of wildlife and livestock, helping with disease control, and monitoring for floods and fire.

During her time as a shepherd, Landina patrolled five different parts of the conservancy, mostly on foot. While on patrol, she lived in a tent, eating and drinking what she packed in. Among her many tasks, Landina identified poachers. Because the community depends on wildlife to generate income and other benefits they have incentives to protect the animals from poaching. The conservancy hires people like Landina to monitor animals within their land. If Landina encountered a poacher in the field and the poacher did not see her, she would run back to the central office to get help. However, if the poacher did see her, she had to negotiate with poachers to remain unharmed.



Landina Guim, Namibia's first female environmental shepherd (game guard), served on the #Khoadi//Hoas Conservancy.

In addition to the poachers, Landina's biggest problems were elephants and cheetahs. Cheetahs eat the donkeys, goats, lambs, and calves raised by the local people. Elephants trample water sources and damage crops. She had to learn how to deal with these dangerous animals as part of her job as an environmental shepherd. Today, with this valuable skill set, Landina runs the #Khoadi//Hoas campsite.

<sup>46</sup> Melissa and Andrew get employees to improve their skills by giving them more responsibility. So, the barman helps with the check-in process and is learning to do the accounts. Ibid.



At White Lady Lodge, Rewae and Cecil have the opportunity to develop useful skills.

provide a way for people in Namibia to spread the risks they face living in a dry environment where it can be difficult to raise sufficient crops or livestock when droughts arrive. These jobs also help local people in other ways.

## C2. INCENTIVES TO TRAIN/TO INVEST IN HUMAN CAPITAL

The jobs related to CBNRM provide income and help families make ends meet. These jobs also build valuable human capital: local people acquire and develop skills that they can use to build other businesses or to work in other areas. As the stock of human capital increases, the local

people may seize entrepreneurial opportunities more readily, and the hope is that they will be able to improve local economies.

Lodges provide opportunities for young people to learn a variety of skills. At the White Lady Lodge, Cecil Brandt and Rewae are two of the lodge's 12 employees. They are each learning skills they can use in Namibia's growing tourism sector.<sup>47</sup> Rewae, a young woman in her 20s, welcomes this opportunity. She took the unusual step of going to tertiary school to get a certificate in tourism, because "tourism has been in my heart since secondary school." She is happy working at White

<sup>47</sup> "Tourism in Namibia is the fastest growing economic sector, currently accounting for more than 20 percent of Gross National Product, a turnover of \$N1.2 billion, a 14 percent growth rate per annum and contributing 12 percent of foreign exchange earnings." "Namibia: Integrated Ecosystem Management," 14. For more detailed information on the Namibian tourism sector, see Directorate of Tourism, Namibia Statistical Report 2004, <http://www.met.gov.na/latestnews/met2004.htm>.

Lady where she can get first-hand experience in the hospitality trade. This is valuable because her dream is to open her own campsite.

Charles Moloto is one of the assistant managers at the Twyfelfontein Lodge. Like many of the employees at the lodge, he started working at a lower-skill job but is now helping to manage the facility. He told us that the lodge provides jobs for a number of people, some conservancy members and some not. While local people might start as cleaners, they often receive training and move to other jobs—just as Charles did. And nearby Twyfelfontein Heritage Site, where Thekla Tsaraë works, provides an outlet for local people to sell crafts and generate some income. As a result of working with the joint-venture lodge and thanks to the income generated at the Heritage Site, Twyfelfontein Conservancy earns a good income and can now afford to open a kindergarten and a clinic.

At Torra Conservancy, vibrant Pascolina (Lena) Florry tried to find a job in Windhoek. When she could not, she returned to her home town, lived with her parents, and tended goats. In 1996, the conservancy announced the launch of its joint venture with Wilderness Safaris. Lena decided to apply for a position with the company. The company first chose her to work as a housekeeper in Wilderness's Ongava Tented Camp, located in

another section of Namibia, and then trained her as a waitress for another Wilderness camp. The company soon recognized that Lena's real talent is management and chose her to train as an assistant manager at the Damaraland Camp in Torra.

Lena now oversees all operations at Damaraland, the first black woman to manage a camp in Namibia. She is one of the Wilderness Safari's most productive managers and won the Namibian "Tourism Personality of the Year" Award in 2005. Thanks to her hard work and the opportunities offered by the Torra Conservancy, Lena now has a good career and is able to support her young daughter.

Wilderness is the biggest employer in Torra Conservancy, and Damaraland Camp is a vital part of the region's improved economic climate. Wilderness Safaris has trained approximately 60 community members who now work in Wilderness Safaris's camps throughout Namibia. Wilderness Safaris chooses conservancy members to operate the camp to the greatest extent possible. Today, all of the staff, including the managers, are from Torra. These wage earners help support their families, purchase goods in the local store, invest in small stock animals, improve homes and water systems, pay schools fees, buy clothes, and more.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> In a livelihoods household survey conducted in 2002, the MET notes that 38 percent of households in Torra Conservancy had no income. "Formal employment," such as jobs in CBRNM-related activities, is the top source of cash income in the community. See "Torra Conservancy, Kunene," <http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/wild/WILDconservposters/Torra%20final%20print.pdf>.

Nearby, Doro !Nawas Conservancy has partnered with a local investor and with Wilderness Safari to run the Doro Nawas Lodge, which sits on five kilometers of land that has desert elephants, cheetahs, oryx, rhino, springbok, and more. This

camp employs 34 staff members, the majority of whom are from the local area.<sup>49</sup> Just as they do at Damaraland Camp, Wilderness Safaris provides a wide variety of on-going training for staff members, giving staff additional valuable skills and

Crosley Goraeb is a member of #Khoadi //Hoas conservancy. He works as a guide at the Grootberg Lodge, which is owned by the conservancy. Crosley moved to this area with his father when he was a child, and he attended the village school and secondary school. After his senior year, he went back to the farm to help his father. It looked as though he might be stuck working on a farm rather than using his education, and this was frustrating. Finally, Crosley found a temporary job waiting tables at another lodge, but this job only lasted six months. He was on the farm again.



Crosley Goraeb, doing what he likes to do

When conservancy officials and lodge managers started interviewing for jobs at the Grootberg Lodge, he went to the conservancy office and applied. Based on his prior experience, the management hired him to work as a waiter, but Crosley asked the management if he could learn to do guide work. They agreed, and Crosley received guide training. He now works as a guide and is training to be an assistant manager at the lodge. His income allows Crosley to help support his father and three siblings.

Crosley wants to keep trying new things. "I see the open picture in front of me. You have to do what you like to do. If you want to study more, you come to the management and tell them and they help." Before he worked at the Lodge, he had to stay on the farm and look after the animals. "When you do this (work on the farm), if you've been to school, you start to fall back. Your level of study and knowledge drops." At Grootberg, Crosley has challenges and opportunities, and the conservancy benefits from having such an enthusiastic and talented employee.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Interview with Mr. Bryan Holmes, assistant manager, Doro !Nawas Camp, May 4, 2006, Doro !Nawas Conservancy, Namibia.

<sup>50</sup> Interview with Crosley Goraeb, May 2006, Grootberg Lodge, #Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy, Namibia.

enhancing the customers' experiences. For example, when we visited, one of the barmen was away training in astronomy so he could run star-gazing activities as well as tend bar. Some waiters were training to work as game guards. Because the company places a strong emphasis on training, Wilderness Safaris's employees have expanded opportunities to work in the hospitality industry.

### C3. OWN-USE AND TROPHY HUNTING THAT PROVIDE FOOD AND INCOME

Other important benefits that conservancies provide include legal access to meat through own-use hunting, the income from sale of animals, and income from trophy hunting. Some of the conservancies we visited sell live game to other conservancies, private reserves, national parks, or zoos. This generates a relatively small amount of income, approximately 1.4 percent of all conservancy income (see Figure 2 above). Conservancies also have annual quotas to hunt some game for the use of the conservancy's members and arrange for local hunting of springbok, kudu, zebra, and other animals.

Conservancies typically distribute the meat from own-use hunts to local people to supplement their diets.<sup>51</sup> Conservancies may also keep some meat

and distribute it to families when there are funerals, to traditional authorities when celebrations or ceremonies take place, or to conservancies holding their general meetings. NACSO's forthcoming report on conservancies in Namibia states:

In 2005, the total income generated from direct wildlife utilisation was N\$4.77 million or 35% of all conservancy income. Most importantly, whilst the total income from wildlife utilisation has increased, it is the diversification of different types of wildlife utilisation that has been significant. For example, there was an impressive increase during 2005 in income generated by other direct wildlife utilisation activities including 'premium' hunting, 'own-use' hunting, 'shoot and sell' and live game sales. Income generated from these activities totaled N\$1.34 million. Over the years between 1999 and 2005, conservancies have cumulatively earned a total of N\$16.5 million from direct wildlife utilisation.<sup>52</sup>

While own-use hunting provides important non-cash benefits for conservancy members, trophy hunting<sup>53</sup> is a major source of cash income for conservancies. In 2005, there were 12 trophy hunting concessions across 16 Namibian conser-

<sup>51</sup> Besides providing food, these hunts may have the benefit of engaging conservancy members more directly with conservancy activities. Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods," 30.

<sup>52</sup> *Namibia's communal conservancies*, 2006, Chapter 4.

<sup>53</sup> For more information on trophy hunting in Namibia, see the Namibia Professional Hunting Association's website, <http://www.natron.net/napha/>. Trophy hunting is regarded as a sport while own-use hunting is always for the purpose of providing food for the community.

vancies. The MET sets quotas to hunt threatened or problem animals. Conservancies that have these quotas may sell them to professional hunters, who bring other, paying hunters to the area to track and shoot the animals. Conservancies enter into contractual agreements with the professional hunters that are similar to those with lodge operators. Trophy hunter contracts might, for example, specify that the professional hunter must train local people as guides and employ other local people whenever possible, thereby creating some jobs. Trophy hunting agreements might also specify that the conservancy has the right to the meat from the kill.<sup>54</sup> By providing some jobs, income to the conservancy, and meat to members, trophy hunting might "strengthen local support for wildlife and conservancies because people see the link between wildlife and conservation in the form of a tangible, immediate benefit."<sup>55</sup>

As conservancies work to diversify their sources of income, trophy hunting might play a smaller, though still important, role in conservancies' management strategies.<sup>56</sup> NACSO notes that "[t]rophy hunting increased in real terms but

declined as a percentage of total income from 36% in 2003 to 26% in 2005. However, trophy hunting concessions still currently provide the second highest source of income for conservancies, in 2005 generating N\$3.44 million (approximately \$495,000 U.S.), of which 77% was from concession fees and 23% from meat distribution."<sup>57</sup>

Conservancies are required to develop plans to distribute benefits. Conservancies may pay out cash benefits after they have paid operating costs, which may include vehicle maintenance, salaries, and other expenses, such as relocating wildlife or maintaining water holes.<sup>58</sup> Some conservancies, Torra for example, have distributed cash to households. However, this is not the major use of cash. Some conservancies, such as #Khoadi //Hoas, are holding cash in an account until there is clearer community agreement on how to spend the money. Torra now chooses to use its income to support programs that benefit the community as a whole, such as improving the local school and building a kindergarten. At annual meetings, conservancy committee members must present plans for using any benefits, and community members then have an opportunity to discuss and

<sup>54</sup> Conservancy members in Torra and #Khoadi //Hoas have questioned the way in which meat from trophy hunting is distributed. See Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods," 30-31.

<sup>55</sup> *Namibia's communal conservancies*, 2006, Chapter 4.

<sup>56</sup> At Doro !Nawas Camp, Assistant Manager Bryan Holmes told us that there is a possibility that overseas investors will buy out the worth of the trophy hunting, an intriguing market-oriented solution. Interview with Mr. Bryan Holmes, assistant manager, Doro !Nawas Camp, May 4, 2006, Doro Nawas Conservancy, Namibia.

<sup>57</sup> *Namibia's communal conservancies*, 2006, Chapter 4.

<sup>58</sup> For a discussion of how benefits are used, see *Namibia's communal conservancies*, 2004, 39-45.

debate options. Annual meetings can be contentious, but this is to be expected. Conservancies are actively building new governance and management structures that will evolve over time and in response to changes in the local environment.

Own-use and trophy hunting contribute income, create jobs, help develop skills, and provide meat for local people, but hunting can create tension and conflict if there isn't a transparent process for using the income or distributing the meat. In addition, because hunters often place a premium on hunting potentially destructive animals, such as elephants, local people may experience human/wildlife conflict from having animals that outsiders desire in their conservancies.

#### C4. RIPPLES THROUGH THE LOCAL ECONOMY: OTHER BUSINESSES

As the natural environment improves and wildlife numbers increase, conservancies hope to take advantage of the booming eco-tourism trade and attract more visitors. To date, conservancies have focused on entering into joint-venture agreements with lodges and, in some cases, with trophy hunters as a means of generating income. Over time, we would expect to see local people start other businesses: some designed to serve the tourist industry, others designed to meet local needs, so long as the institutional environment in Namibia is favorable to doing business. We saw

some limited evidence of business development on the conservancies we visited.

For example, members of the Tsiseb Conservancy are trying to capture some of potential tourist business at their new information center in Uis.

The center includes:

- a small information center;
- an internet café;
- a crafts store (which sells local ostrich eggs, locally painted frames, mirrors, and rock paintings, and some crafts from other areas);
- a coffee shop that serves breakfast and lunch; and
- offices and meeting space for the conservancy.

These small businesses employ six people directly and several more indirectly. Conservancy chairman, Eric Xaweb told us, "The people really, really understand tourism. They understand that we must make a team effort here."<sup>59</sup>

Locals recognized that tourists travel through Uis on their way to the Skelton Coast to the west, to Etosha National Park to the northeast, and to the rugged northwestern section of the country. At

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Mr. Eric Xaweb, Chairman, Tsiseb Conservancy, May 2, 2006, Uis, Namibia.



Entrepreneurship on the ground  
in the Sesfontein Conservancy

first, some members of the conservancy resisted locating the center in downtown Uis, because it is considered a "white" area, but the majority of conservancy members recognized the value of the location. The conservancy got a bank loan, bought the property, and put up the building. They also arranged for water and electricity to make the stop more attractive and useful for tourists. Because they can directly benefit from serving tourists, the local residents had incentives to try to capture some of this business.

As with any small business, these activities may succeed or they may fail. To the extent that the Namibian government makes it easier to do

business by lessening red tape and the costs associated with running a formal business, local entrepreneurs should benefit.<sup>69</sup>

Other conservancies would also like to see the local economic base expand. In Sesfontein Conservancy the community has had difficulty getting organized, so they do not have the scale of commercial activity that Torra or Tsiseb does. But conservancy members are looking to change this. Coordinator of Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Kunene Region John Kasaona noted, "This is the main issue of conservancies: to contribute to the livelihood of the community. We want to encourage people to

<sup>69</sup> In 2006, Namibia is ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> out of 175 in terms of ease of doing business. In Africa, only South Africa and Mauritius rank higher than Namibia. See "Doing Business: Economy Rankings," <http://www.doingbusiness.org/EconomyRankings/>. The country's rankings in the categories of "Starting a Business," "Registering Property," and "Trading Across Borders" are all high, suggesting the government could remove regulatory barriers in these areas.



come up with their own initiatives also. This community has a bakery, a self-catering business, a tire repair shop. These are good. We want to help keep the young people off the streets."<sup>61</sup>

Neighboring Anabeb Conservancy's chairman told us that the local people have a longstanding involvement with conservation. "Conservation in general in this area has a long history. We were born and bred with wildlife. The conservancy legislation strengthened us further."<sup>62</sup> While the government brought CBNRM to the communities, the government's main contribution, he believed, was to create incentives for people to build on these interests. "We have a lot of ideas, and when we have enough income, we will do more projects—like gardening to help meet the needs of the community, boreholes for livestock. However, we need some economic development first."<sup>63</sup>

Hopefully, such projects will strengthen the local economy and provide people with opportunities to use and build human capital. In the meantime, there is some evidence that conservancies are helping to develop social capital in areas where people had experienced divisive colonial rule and apartheid.

#### C5. SOCIAL CAPITAL THAT PROVIDES COMMUNITY STRENGTH

In her work studying the effects of tourism in rural Namibia, Caroline Ashley makes a strong case that one striking intangible benefit conservancies provide to members is enhanced social capital. Ashley writes:

Social capital refers to the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihoods, such as relationships of trust, social norms, networks, and membership of groups. Engagement in tourism can affect social networks and community organization in a number of ways, positively and negatively. . . . Managing community tourism enterprises, negotiating a joint venture or deciding how to spend bed-night levy income, all require development and change of community institutions.<sup>64</sup>

Ashley suggests that conservancies help to build and strengthen social capital in at least three ways.

1. They strengthen household links with the broader community. By identifying and registering members and engaging

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Mr. John Kasaona, Coordinator of Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Kunene Region, May 4, 2006, Warmquelle, Namibia.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Sesfontein and Anabeb conservancy leaders and traditional authorities, May 4, 2006, Warmquelle, Namibia.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ashley, "The Impact of Tourism," 15-16.



A chief and a member of the Anabeb Conservancy strengthening his social capital

these members in conservancy activities, conservancies help members develop stronger ties with the conservancy community and its leaders and expand their social networks. In addition, voicing opinions in public forums might build members' confidence.

2. They strengthen the capacity of conservancy committee members to guide and lead others. Over the years, conservancies must identify and register a body of members, draft a constitution, and create committees to draft management and disbursement plans. These activities, which are often new to committee members, require particular skills. NGOs, such as IRDNC and WWF/LIFE, have provided extremely valuable support in helping to train members through work-

shops and other methods. Over time, governance in conservancies should improve as committee members learn to consult more closely with members, improve leadership skills, acquire the ability to develop and enact a mission and vision for the conservancy, use dispute resolution techniques and skills, and identify new ways to improve management.

3. They increase and improve ties to the wider world. Conservancies are receiving increasing attention from NGOs, the Namibian government, private parties interested in developing tourist ventures, and scholars and journalists interested in how CBNRM works in Namibia. Regular contact with all of these groups allows committee and conservancy members to build negotiating skills, receive new

ideas, gather useful information, and earn respect and some degree of prestige with outside groups.<sup>65</sup>

Discussing the benefits, cash and non-cash, of CBNRM, Brian Jones quotes Garth Owen-Smith and Margaret Jacobsohn, who co-direct the NGO Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC): "Although much attention has been given to the cash benefits generated by these projects, an equally or possibly more important benefit has been the social re-empowerment that has resulted from local communities regaining some control over the management and conservation of their wildlife resource."<sup>66</sup>

#### **D. DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES AT DIFFERENT CONSERVANCIES**

While CBNRM holds out the promise of benefits for Namibian conservancies, this promise has not materialized in the same way in different conservancies. As noted above, the conservancies we visited had divergent experiences implementing CBNRM. These varied experiences highlight some of the difficulties, challenges, and successes of CBNRM implementation and conservancy development in Namibia.

##### **D1. TORRA**

Gazetted in 1998, Torra is one of the four oldest

conservancies in Namibia. It has become a model for conservancy development both because the conservancy was the first to achieve financial independence and because it has experienced significant rises in numbers of game.<sup>67</sup>

Located in the southwestern part of Kunene, Torra is a large, relatively homogenous conservancy of 352,000 hectares. The local residents raise livestock to survive. Through the 1970s, the area had a variety of wildlife, including predators such as lions, but by the 1980s, wildlife numbers had plummeted due to the stress placed on both human and animal populations by armed conflict, drought, and heavy poaching.

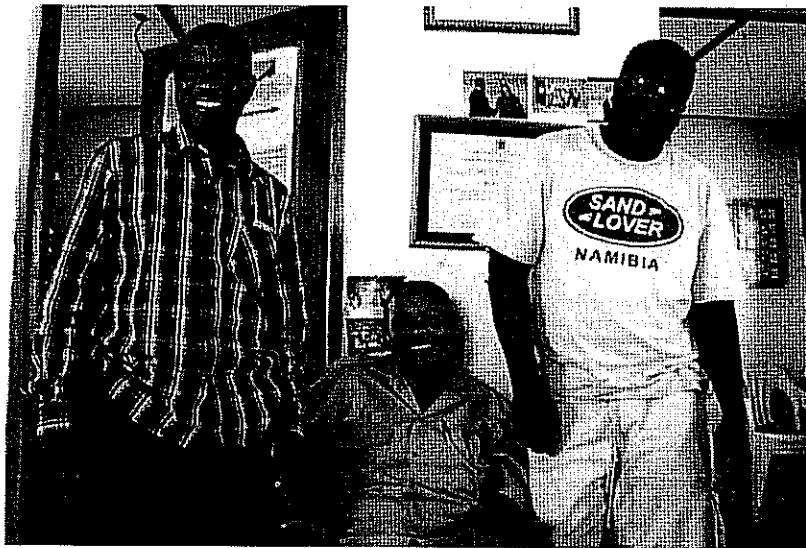
Until the 1990s, the local people had only grazing rights and farming rights over this land. The national government managed and controlled all other resources. Because the government owned all the wildlife, people had few incentives to conserve animals. Instead, they would run off or kill predators or other problem animals. When local people suffered losses from predators or from other wildlife, they had little hope of compensation. While the people bore the costs of wildlife, the only benefits wildlife offered them came through poaching valuable species such as rhino.

In the 1980s conservationists from IRDNC came to the area to talk with the local people about

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>66</sup> See Jones, "The Evolution of a Community-based Approach," 167.

<sup>67</sup> For a discussion of the Torra Conservancy, see Long, "Disentangling Benefits," 2002.



Benny Roman, Paula Adams,  
and Vitalis Florry in the offices of  
the Torra Conservancy

protecting and preserving their dwindling natural resources. Working closely with local leaders, the IRDNC entered into partnerships with people in the Kunene region to end poaching. IRDNC would train and educate local people on conservation efforts and provide financial support to create some jobs. The local people would serve as community game guards. Trained to watch for and stop poachers when they can, these guards remain the "backbone" of community-based natural resource management in the area. Today, the game guards continue to conduct monthly patrols and keep "event logs" to track animals and human/animal conflict.<sup>68</sup> From these initial efforts, Torra and other Kunene conservancies have grown.

In May 2006, we met with three of Torra Conservancy's committee members, Ms. Paula Adams, Mr. Benny Roman, and Mr. Vitalis Florry. Before the conservancy, the local unemployment rate was close to 80 percent. Today the numbers have improved. Before the conservancy, many people left the area and their families to look for work in the cities (Windhoek and Swakopmund). Today, families stay together because there are jobs locally.

The conservancy helps local people supplement their livestock-based livelihoods and gives many valuable training.<sup>69</sup> Now people eat regularly, which was a problem in the past. People also can pay school fees and afford clothing and good shel-

<sup>68</sup> See "The Kunene Project," Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), <http://www.irdnc.org.na/kunene.htm>.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Mr. Benny Roman, Torra Conservancy, May 3, 2006, Bergsig, Namibia. See also Long, "Disentangling Benefits," 10-11.

ter. There's even more transportation than there was in the past. The conservancy purchased a car it uses, when necessary, as an ambulance to take people to the hospital in Khorixas, 135 kilometers from its town of Bergsig.

Torra Conservancy provides benefits at the community, not the individual, level. The conservancy feeds older members who may wait for hours in line to receive their monthly pensions. The conservancy also provides Christmas boxes with gifts of clothing and other items to old-age pensioners. It is building a kindergarten and gave N\$10,000 (approximately US\$1,440) to the local farmer's association. It provides meat for funerals and for celebrations put on by the traditional authorities. However, not all conservancy members are pleased with the way the conservancy has distributed income and meat. How the conservancy will address these problems remains a challenge.<sup>70</sup>

## D2. SESFONTEIN AND ANABEB

Also located in the Kunene region, the area where IRDNC has been active for years, the Sesfontein and Anabeb Conservancies were among the first to become involved with commu-

nity-based conservation. However, they have only recently begun to experience some of the benefits of this involvement.

In Warmquelle, we met with Mr. John Kasaona, Coordinator of Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Kunene region, and some 25 conservancy members and traditional leaders.<sup>71</sup> Mr. Kasaona explained that at first people in the area wanted to create a single conservancy. He told us that the local people decided to split the area into three conservancies in order to reduce communications problems. The split however led to a variety of problems, including border disputes, and the conservancies' leaders had real difficulties working together.

After years of controversy, a dispute resolution committee, composed of representatives from outside conservancies, investigated the problems. When this committee uncovered nothing very serious, the conservancies' leaders were finally able to resolve their differences.<sup>72</sup> The problems and delays, however, kept the conservancies from pursuing businesses opportunities or joint ventures.

<sup>70</sup> Long notes, "[i]n broad terms the community have (sic) decided what they would like to do with the income. They have opted against individual cash dividends and instead want to concentrate on making the income work for them over the long term by funding some sort of development initiative." Long, "Disentangling Benefits," 12. But a DFID study from the same year points to concerns conservancy members have over the distribution of benefits. Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods," 28-29.

<sup>71</sup> As the IRDNC coordinator for the Kunene region, Mr. Kasaona facilitated the meeting.

<sup>72</sup> Andrew Corbett and Brian T.B. Jones, "The legal aspects of Governance in CBNRM in Namibia" (paper presented at the 2nd CASS/PLAAS regional meeting, Cape Town, South Africa, October 16-17, 2000): 4, [http://www.cbnrm.net/pdf/corbett\\_001.pdf](http://www.cbnrm.net/pdf/corbett_001.pdf).



Meeting with the members of the Sesfontein and Anabeb Conservancies and traditional leaders

Now that these conservancies have settled their governance issues,<sup>73</sup> they are starting to see benefits. In May 2006, they were negotiating with potential investors for three concessions to develop campsites. They hope to earn N\$200,000 (approximately US\$28,800) by the end of 2006. And, they see more opportunities coming.

In the past ten years, the conservancies have seen increasingly higher levels of community involvement and numbers of wildlife in the conservancies. Before the conservancies came, poaching and drought were destroying the game.<sup>74</sup> With a different set of incentives, there is less poaching; people are doing more to protect the animals.

"Wildlife numbers are now way up, and this makes us happy," said one conservancy member. "Before, we had no say over the wildlife. Now we can say how much to harvest. This is something we're proud of. And today, we can contract with any investor. Now, we have a contract with a professional hunter, and that never happened before. We are planning for many more things."<sup>75</sup>

"Now, with conservation, people can get jobs," said another. "With the initial start-up of jobs, we can get the young people involved. We have plans to make more campsite jobs, and this will mean fewer young people in the streets. That is something the conservancy is trying to make happen. The young people are going to workshops to

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Mr. John Kasaona, May 4, 2006, Warmquelle, Namibia.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Sesfontein and Anabeb conservancy leaders and traditional authorities, May 4, 2006, Warmquelle, Namibia.

be trained. This brings knowledge and skills back to our community."<sup>76</sup>

We asked, what do the people of Sesfontein and Anabeb want people in other countries to know about them? "The thing we want people in developing countries to hear," replied John, "is that people make a big deal out of small mistakes, and when the communities get things wrong, this is what happens. But, people should give the communities an equal chance to learn from their mistakes and grow. Eventually, they will learn and move forward. We're all making mistakes. In the West, you make mistakes. You have 12 years of school and college, and you make mistakes, but we haven't had this much school or this much time. Even big corporations make mistakes, but they go on. We may make mistakes, but we learn and improve."<sup>77</sup>

### D3. #KHOADI //HOAS

#Khoadi //Hoas has 364,000 hectares, 2,000 registered members, and a total of 10,000 people living in their area, significantly more members than the other conservancies we visited. In addition, NGOs have supported #Khoadi //Hoas less consistently than Torra. It is also one of the few conservancies that grew out of a pre-existing institution, the Grootberg Farmers' Union.<sup>78</sup>

The administrative head of the conservancy, Bob Guibeb, said the conservancies were a good thing

for the people because previously they didn't benefit from any wildlife in Namibia. Thus, the main aim for the #Khoadi //Hoas conservancy is to better the lives of its people. "In the beginning," he noted; "because we were one of the first conservancies, it was difficult. We started with nothing. Even the government didn't know what to do. But we all started to work. There were no funds. So we ran around to NGOs for help. The problem was communication and information being lost. We would send people to Windhoek to talk with NGOs and the government—they would come back to talk with us—but somehow things would not be properly communicated."

In order to deal with this problem, the #Khoadi //Hoas conservancy and other stakeholders created the Western Contact Group to collect information from many NGOs at a central location in Windhoek. Now, however, the conservancy works with an organization called FIRM, the Forum for Integrated Resource Management.

Bob said the change was necessary "because the people in Windhoek didn't know what we needed on the ground; they had no idea. They would come up with things we didn't need. This forum (FIRM) lets us talk and tell them directly what people need. The old approach (the Western Contact Group) was very much a top-down approach but now there's a more integrated

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Mr. John Kasaona, May 4, 2006, Warmquelle, Namibia.

<sup>78</sup> Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods," 18.



The view from Grootberg Lodge,  
#Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy

approach to work with a variety of donors—NNE, WWF, DRFN, NAPCOD, and others. This is more bottom-up, and it allows for feedback.”<sup>79</sup>

“We’ve been helped by WWF,” Bob acknowledged, “but this program will come to an end.” #Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy is nine years old, but unlike Torra, which has been able to generate reasonably large sums through its joint venture with Wilderness Safaris, the only income #Khoadi //Hoas has earned is from hunting. While they are very happy to have the Grootberg Lodge up and running, Bob believes it will take between five and six years before the lodge can provide significant benefits to the community. The conservancy also opened a campsite last year, which it hopes will generate additional income.

#Khoadi //Hoas also struggles with the problem of how to benefit everyone in so large a conservancy. “We’re not like some conservancies who only have 100 or 200 people,” he said. “We have thousands. So, we try to benefit groups, like pensioners. Or we can concentrate on providing compensation for elephant damage.”<sup>80</sup>

#Khoadi //Hoas current community benefits include:

- elephant damage compensation,
- small-stock loans,
- two renovated schools,
- support for pensioners,

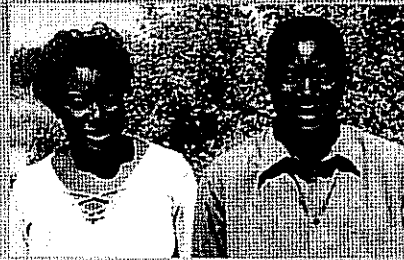
<sup>79</sup> Interview with Mr. Bob Guibeb, administrative head, #Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy, May 5, 2006, Palmwag, Namibia.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.



## REVELING IN RHINO

The return of the rhino reflects the conservancies' common commitment to conserving and having control over wildlife. Sesfontein and Anabeb conservancies proudly protect the rhino in their areas. But, they complain that the national government keeps the right to deal with this animal to itself. The conservancies want to have full rights to manage wildlife, even problem or protected animals, such as the rhino.



Helga /Howoses and Bob Guibeb rejoice at the return of the rhino.



The Klick Valley, #Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy, is where rhino now roam.

Bob Guibeb at #Khoadi //Hoas feels the same way. "Years ago the rhino were here. When we came in 1972 (from South Africa), the rhino were here. But then, they were removed. The government sent them to Etosha and other places, to make room for people and crops. After the conservancy was formed, we started to ask: 'What happened to our rhinos? We want them back.' We had lots of meetings over the years about this issue. Finally, the stakeholders decided that they must be brought back. #Khoadi

//Hoas was chosen to get two male rhinos. If they settle then we'll get some females. We were chosen among the first conservancies to get the rhinos because we look after our animals and we have taken responsibility for them."

"Wildlife numbers are really increasing. I see increases in every species. When we started, there was no wildlife. The animals were owned by the Ministry, so people poached them. Everyone was poaching. *What ownership means is you have to take care of it.*" (emphasis added)<sup>81</sup>

Bob's comments echo those of Damaraland Camp manager Lena Florry, who has said:

"People come here to see the desert elephants, the magnificent scenery and wildlife, the black rhino, and the local people," said Lena. "We have stopped poaching because people value wildlife and see what tourism can do."<sup>82</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Jan Vertefeuille and Joanna Ben, "Conservancy movement takes off in Namibia," *Eco tourism, peopleandplanet.net*, October 11, 2005, <http://www.peopleandplanet.net/doc.php?id=2557>.

- support to the traditional authorities,
- some office equipment, and
- 11 alternate water points for elephants built using money that came from the government's Game Products Trust Fund.

Bob suggested that to meet some of the needs of this community, the government could assist with more training. Some conservancy committees do not know what their legal responsibilities are, especially in the initial, start-up stage. A more comprehensive training program would help conservancies to work more quickly and effectively. And, he suggested, the government must look for funding to help the community with human/wildlife conflict.<sup>93</sup>

But the biggest problem the conservancy faces is effective communication between the committee and the community. "People don't know what the conservancy is doing. Between meetings things are happening, and people don't know what's going on. So, communication still needs to be improved."<sup>94</sup>

The experiences of Torra, #Khoadi //Hoas, Sesfontein, and Anabeb conservancies highlight the importance of local leadership, supporting organizations, and communications. These con-

servancies, all of which were gazetted in the late 1990s, faced similar challenges drafting constitutions, creating viable management institutions, building local support for conservancy efforts, and developing and implementing effective resource management plans. However, they have succeeded to different degrees, in part based on local leadership and the abilities of local leaders and conservancy officers to work effectively with neighbors, commercial partners, supporting organizations, and traditional authorities. Financial, institutional, and conservational successes require consensus building within the community, a commitment to skills development, and the ability to work effectively with the MET and with commercial partners. With time, all of these conservancies have found ways to address joint goals of effective natural resource management and economic development.

As the conservancy movement spreads across Namibia, it is essential that organizations such as NACSO and their members continue to provide support to emerging and developing conservancies. Conservancy members, supporting institutions, and their commercial partners are developing local knowledge of how best to create CBNRM institutions from the ground up. Developing effective strategies to share this knowledge, inside and outside of Namibia, is vital.

<sup>93</sup> Interview with Mr. Bob Guibeb, May 5, 2006.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

## **E. BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS**

While it gives real and growing benefits to the local people in conservancies, CBNRM in Namibia continues to face a series of challenges. Broadly speaking, conservancies face issues in the areas of legal and regulatory uncertainty, capacity and governance, and human/wildlife conflict.

However, there is one significant barrier to growth that Namibian conservancies currently do not face—political instability. The government has been stable and non-predatory and has left conservancies to develop in their own manner, in their own time. Leaving conservancies to define themselves and then develop a governance and management apparatus is a time consuming process, but it seems to promote a greater sense of autonomy and is a truer bottom-up approach to both rural development and natural resource conservation. Political stability gives conservancies the freedom to develop in a less stressful environment. This stability, combined with the willingness of the Namibian government to allow conservancy development to be locally driven, contrasts with what has happened to the CAMPFIRE program in Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, the national government devolved the rights to manage wildlife to rural district councils (RDCs), already existing political units.

The idea was that RDCs would then devolve their powers to manage natural resources to local communities. Research suggests that this devolution did not happen to the extent intended. Furthermore, RDCs have retained revenues designed for local communities, diluting the CBNRM incentive structure.<sup>65</sup>

The extreme political instability that now wracks Zimbabwe compounds the problem of the weakened CBNRM's incentive structure. Land tenure is highly insecure, except perhaps for the politically favored; the economic situation has dramatically deteriorated; and violence and censorship have increased. Conditions are desperate, and the country is no longer a desirable tourist destination, which directly threatens CBNRM efforts. Had the country been more stable politically, CAMPFIRE might well have offered a more viable strategy for rural economic development and natural resource conservation.

### **E1. LEGAL/REGULATORY UNCERTAINTY**

Legal and regulatory problems in Namibia fall into two major categories: problems related to tenure insecurity and problems related to resource use rights and resource management.

Tenure insecurity results from the fact that the state, not the communities, owns the communal land in Namibia, yet conservancies have ostensi-

<sup>65</sup> See B. Jones and M. Murphree, "The Evolution of Policy Conservation in Namibia and Zimbabwe" in *African Wildlife & Livelihoods*, David Hulme and Marshall Murphree, eds. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001): 45.

ble control over the land. This divide between ownership and responsibility creates uncertainty. Jones argues: "The lack of secure group land tenure is probably the main constraint to CBNRM within Namibia."<sup>86</sup> According to recent legislation:

[A]ll communal land areas vest in the State in trust for the benefit of the traditional communities residing in those areas and for the purpose of promoting the economic and social development of the people of Namibia, in particular the landless and those with insufficient access to land who are not in formal employment or engaged in non-agriculture business activities.<sup>87</sup>

Under rules of customary law, which are still in force in Namibia to the extent that they do not conflict with constitutional or statutory rules,<sup>88</sup> traditional authorities or chiefs allocate land use. The Communal Land Reform Bill protects some privileges of chiefs and traditional authorities related to land allocation.<sup>89</sup> The law is designed to:

Provide for the allocation of rights in commu-

nal land; to establish Communal Land Boards; to provide for the power of Chiefs and Traditional Authorities and boards in relation to communal land; and to make provision for incidental matters.<sup>90</sup>

Chiefs and traditional authorities retain the right to allocate land for residential use and grazing rights. These rights are now subject to the approval or veto of a new institution called Communal Land Boards (CLBs). CLBs also consider and decide on applications for rights of leasehold for commercial ventures on communal land. They are supposed to establish and maintain land-rights registries.<sup>91</sup> In practice, this means that most rights that involve householders are handled by traditional authorities, while outsiders must seek approval for land use requests from the CLBs.<sup>92</sup>

For example, if a company wishes to enter into a joint venture with a conservancy, it must seek approval of both the appropriate CLB and the traditional authority (or authorities if a conser-

<sup>86</sup> Jones, "Policy, Institutions and Practice," 25.

<sup>87</sup> *Communal Land Reform Act*, Act 5, Chapter III, Sec. 17, *Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia*, August 12, 2002.

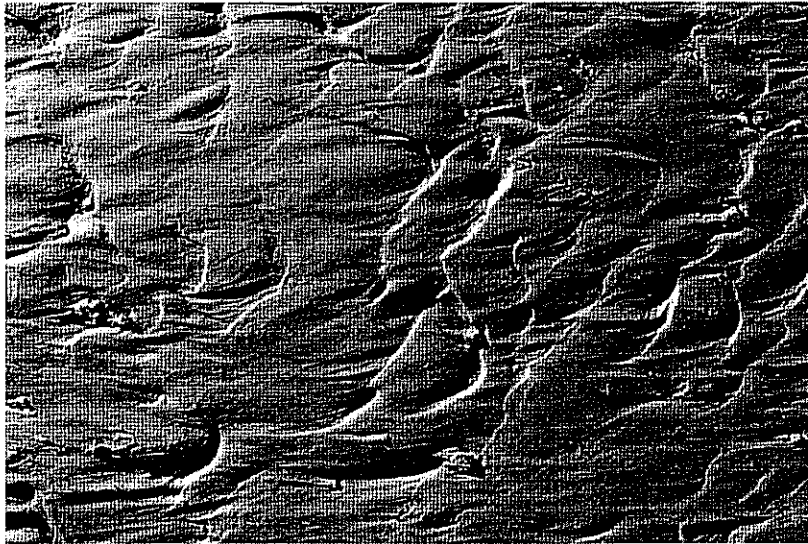
<sup>88</sup> See Corbett and Jones, "Legal aspects of Governance in CBNRM," 4.

<sup>89</sup> *Communal Land Reform Act*, Act 5, *Government Gazette of the Republic of Namibia*, August 12, 2002.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, Preamble.

<sup>91</sup> Adding a further layer of complexity, in some situations, the Minister of Land, Resettlement and Rehabilitation may approve certain grants for rights of leasehold. *Ibid.*, Chapter III, Sec. 30(3).

<sup>92</sup> Corbett and Jones argue that the 2002 Act seems to "transfer ultimate authority over and right to allocation of communal land from traditional leaders to Communal Land Boards." Corbett and Jones, "Legal aspects of Governance in CBNRM," 5.



Ephemeral river beds, such as this one, serve as highways for animals. Unfortunately, they also serve as highways for freeloading tourists.

vancy encompasses more than one traditional authority). In addition, the national government seems to approve such agreements. And while CLBs are required to have at least one conservancy representative from each conservancy that exists within its borders, other members—who must include representatives of the traditional authorities and from the farming community, women, and civil servants—could easily override conservancy concerns.

In practice, this situation creates confusion and can lead to conflicts. If a traditional authority authorizes someone to use grazing rights in an area that a conservancy committee has designated as a “tourism” (wildlife viewing) area, it is unclear which use allocation would win out. CLBs would, presumably, weight alternative uses, but standards for evaluating such competing uses are unclear. Although conservancies

can zone land within their borders, CLBs or traditional authorities can potentially override zoning decisions.

And, although the national government owns communal land, it does not always police the land effectively, and so another form of tenure insecurity arises: local communities are unable to exclude other users from their land. Conservancies can keep outsiders from using game within their borders, but they have only circumscribed abilities to limit other uses of their resources.

Conservancy members often complained that they could not keep people from entering their land in 4x4s, driving through—often on dry riverbeds that animals also use—and camping without paying a fee. While there seems to be a social norm in Namibia of freely camping wher-

ever one wishes, this clearly creates problems for conservancies.<sup>93</sup> In addition to unwanted tourists, conservancies have difficulty keeping outsiders from using grazing lands within their borders.<sup>94</sup> Conservancies want to maintain and protect their resources, but if outsiders can, with impunity, enter and make use of the land, conservancies are forced to bear the costs associated with these intrusions (lost income, potential damage) without having the authority to keep unwanted outsiders out.

Thus, a disconnect exists between what Murphree calls the "propriatorship" of this resource and the actual control of the resource.<sup>95</sup> The national government actually owns the land and by extension has ultimate control of the land, but conservancies are the on-the-ground proprietors of the land. This disconnect creates conflicting incentives. The CBNRM program creates positive incentives to preserve and maintain resources, but the current land-tenure arrangement creates incentives for people to view communal land as open-access because the

government does little to limit unwanted incursions and because conservancies are unable to exclude outsiders. In addition to unwanted tourists, conservancies also have difficulty keeping outsiders from using grazing lands.<sup>96</sup>

If property rights are analogized to "sticks in a bundle," conservancies hold only a thin bundle of sticks and lack some sticks that would make their property rights more valuable: the right to exclude outsiders and the ability to make final decisions over uses of land within their boundaries.<sup>97</sup> Blackie and Tarr's comment that "[t]he legal status of communal state-owned land, which covers 41 percent of Namibia, is confusing" is certainly appropriate.<sup>98</sup>

## E2. HUMAN/WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Another legal issue that bedevils conservancies is the problem of institutional control over problem or threatened wildlife. Conservancies have the right to manage some, but not all, of the wildlife within their borders. They set quotas for own-use of some game, not for the use of all game. The

<sup>93</sup> "Namibia: Integrated Ecosystem Management," 11.

<sup>94</sup> Jones, "Policy, Institutions and Practice," 25.

<sup>95</sup> See Marshall W. Murphree, *Communities as Resource Management Institutions*, Gatekeeper Series No. 36 (London: International Institute for Environment and Development, 1993) <http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/8284IIED.pdf>.

<sup>96</sup> Jones, "Policy, Institutions and Practice," 25.

<sup>97</sup> The "sticks in a bundle" analogy is commonly made by legal and/or economic scholars. For an explanation of the concept, see Boudreaux, *Role of Property Rights*, 4-7. Anthropologists find the concept somewhat lacking in terms of complexity and richness. For example, see Katherine Verdery, *The Vanishing Hectare* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003): 14-20.

<sup>98</sup> Rob Blackie and Peter Tarr, *Government policies on sustainable development in Namibia*, Research Discussion Paper, No. 28 (Windhoek: Directorate of Environmental Affairs, 1999): 8, [http://www.met.gov.na/publications/research/rdp\\_0028.pdf](http://www.met.gov.na/publications/research/rdp_0028.pdf).

Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) retains primary control over problem animals and over threatened animals. The MET, for example, sets the hunting quotas for these animals, not conservancies. The number of cheetah that may be hunted in a given period (if any) is set by MET officials, not by conservancy members. Some conservancies expressed dissatisfaction with this process and said the MET sets such quotas too low, which means conservancies lose potential revenue from the trophy hunting of these animals.

In addition, conservancies can only deal with problem animals if they threaten humans or livestock, not if they trample water sources or ruin crops. However, the government places restrictions on the issuance of firearms licenses. An individual is eligible to get a gun license only if he/she has a safe place in which to lock and store the weapon. This may not always be possible in rural homesteads, as Jones notes.<sup>99</sup> For many individuals, it may be too expensive to purchase weapons and ammunition to deal with predators. So, *de facto*, conservancies may not be equipped to deal with animals that threaten humans and/or livestock. This is compounded by the fact that the MET has a reputation for being a slow responder. Conservancy members feel that it takes too long to get the official permission to deal with problem animals. While the MET is trying to finalize a human/wildlife conflict policy, this was not complete when we visited.

<sup>99</sup> Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods," 23.

In cases where animals harm water resources or infrastructure, conservancies must contact MET representatives, who are responsible for capturing or shooting the animal. This incomplete control creates problems on the ground for conservancies. MET can be slow to respond to requests for help. In the meantime, animals can inflict significant harm. For example, elephants can trample water sources and wreck gardens or fences. In a dry country like Namibia, water sources are scarce and hence quite valuable. Destruction of water sources or crops imposes high costs on local people.

At Torra Conservancy, we spoke with Vitalis Florry about problems they have with predators. In 2005, conservancy members lost 125 small stock to predators that include cheetahs, hyenas, lions, jackals and leopards. Vitalis noted that in the past, the farmers would kill these animals. Now, they try to find uses for these resources. He said that the committee members want to see how they can best use these resources for tourism and weigh this against the costs to farmers of livestock losses. One use—though not the only one—for predators is to get a quota from the MET to hunt these animals, but, he said, the government does not give the conservancy sufficient quotas for the trophy hunting of predators. Last year they had quotas for only two hyenas and for one cheetah. This means that the costs of problem animals may exceed the benefits, especially as

the conservancy is called on to compensate members when livestock are killed.

Vitalis said the biggest problem they face is that the people live on communal land and they have no fences. This means that domestic animals such as goats are not always kept in kraals (the Afrikaans word for corrals). They often wander on their own, so are easy targets for predators. While the conservancy would like to attract predators, because predators are attractive to tourists, local farmers suffer losses when predators arrive. Conservancies need to create compensation schemes that keep farmers happy while also allowing for some predators within conservancy boundaries. Also if conservancies had a more complete devolution of legal authority over the wildlife within their borders, they would be able to respond more quickly to problem animals and they would have increased incentives to protect threatened animals, such as the desert elephants, found within their borders. For example, leaders of Anabeb Conservancy talked about the human/wildlife conflict in these terms:

Wildlife is one of our assets and so we protect it. We know the hyena is not friends with the lamb, but we still protect it. If you have one handicapped child who can't see out of one eye and a healthy child, you don't throw the one with the bad eye out. If you have two

children and one is a thief, you try to help him. We are trying to find ways to reduce this problem. We have compensation schemes. This isn't a solution, but we keep thinking about it. As wildlife increases, so do predators. We also try to corral our livestock. We try many ways to teach the farmers. We tell them to train herders (because they send their livestock out to graze without a shepherd to protect them) and other things.<sup>100</sup>

However, as things currently stand, conservancies lack these much-needed sticks in their property rights bundle.

CBNRM does require local people to make trade-offs. The program focuses on providing positive incentives to conserve natural resources. Yet, in order to live with increasing number of game—including predators—local residents must give up space they could otherwise use for raising livestock or growing crops. Increasing numbers of predators in an area, such as lion and cheetah, mean that livestock predation is an on-going problem. For example, "in Kunene, just under half of respondents (to survey) reported that they had lost stock to predators."<sup>101</sup> In #Khoadi //Hoas, 87.9 percent of respondents reported livestock losses from predators and 75 percent reported damage from elephants. In an area such as

<sup>100</sup> Interview with Sesfontein and Anabeb Conservancy leaders and traditional authorities, May 4, 2006, Warmquelle, Namibia.

<sup>101</sup> Jones et al. "Wildlife, Tourism and Livelihoods," 23.





One species that doesn't pose much threat of a human/wildlife conflict

Kunene, where raising livestock is still the primary livelihood strategy, such losses are a serious concern. Having more wild animals in your backyard is not always considered a boon.

To address the problem of livestock and human loss, some conservancies, like Anabeb, have created compensation schemes that pay members when they suffer losses. Torra, for example, does pay for losses, but members have expressed dissatisfaction with the way in which compensation is paid, i.e., some members may receive preferential treatment in terms of compensation.<sup>102</sup> Torra conservancy also raises small stock animals specifically to replace animals lost to predators.<sup>103</sup>

Recently, a new compensation scheme called HAC SIS has started to address problems of compensation when humans and wildlife come into conflict. The Human Animal Conservancy Self-Insurance Scheme (HAC SIS) provides a mechanism for conservancies to pay approximately 50 percent of the claims to people suffering losses. The remaining 50 percent of funding comes from the United Nations' Global Environmental Facility and is funneled through local NGOs, including Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC).<sup>104</sup>

CBNRM in Namibia is focused on increasing tourist-related activities within conservancies in

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> See "Project Life—Value of Wildlife," World Wildlife Foundation, [http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/africa/where/namibia/life/project/community\\_conservancies/value\\_wildlife/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/africa/where/namibia/life/project/community_conservancies/value_wildlife/index.cfm).

<sup>104</sup> See Wezi Tjaronda, "Conservancy Wins Human-Animal War," *New Era* (Windhoek), October 28, 2005, <http://www.sanwild.org/noticeboard/newsjuldec/Conservancy%20Wins%20HumanAnimal%20War.HTM>.

order to generate income for local people. Catering to tourists also means less space available for livestock and crops for long periods. (Tourist camps and lodges take up space, and joint venture agreements may last 15 to 20 years.) Conservancy members consider these costs when weighing the benefits of CBNRM against the benefits of increased income, job creation, and skills building. To date, the trade-offs related to joint ventures seem to be worthwhile for conservancies, but there is real concern over the trade-offs involved in having greater numbers of predators and problem animals within conservancy borders.

### E3. CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

There are a number of internal problems that plague the development and growth of conservancies. Conservancy members spoke repeatedly of the continuing need for outside support to help them to develop skills, especially skills related to financial management, bookkeeping, improving communications capabilities, and business development. Up to this point, NGOs, such as IRDNC, WWF/LIFE, the Namibia Nature Foundation, the Rossing Foundation, NACSO and others, have provided essential financial and technical support.

NGOs have played a key role in the development

of conservancies in Namibia. In the 1980s, the Namibia Wildlife Trust together with the Endangered Wildlife Trust of South Africa (EWT), hired Garth Owen-Smith—a pivotal figure in Namibian conservancy efforts—to discuss the problem of dwindling wildlife with traditional leaders.<sup>105</sup> Owen-Smith opened lines of communication with these leaders and helped create the community game guard program. With the help of EWT funding, this program gave local people part-time jobs monitoring wildlife and reporting poaching. The game guard program proved quite successful: it involved local people in conservation efforts and provided some small incentives for them to preserve wildlife.

In the 1980s, Owen-Smith began working with anthropologist Margaret Jacobsohn.<sup>106</sup> Together, they created the "Puros Project," which provided Herero and Himba people with revenue from tourism companies traveling through their lands. Local people decided how to spend this money. The Puros Project provided local people with incentives to conserve wildlife by providing income related to wildlife tourism. Jones notes: "The link that people made between the cash income from tourism and the wild animals tourists came to see affected people's attitudes towards wildlife, particularly dangerous species

<sup>105</sup> For a discussion of the central role played by NGOs, in particular IRDNC, in the development of Namibia's CBNRM program, see Brian Jones, "The Evolution of a Community-based Approach," 160-176.

<sup>106</sup> Jacobsohn and Owen-Smith continue to run IRDNC. See IRDNC website, <http://www.irdnc.org.na/structure.htm#structure>.

such as lions and elephants."<sup>107</sup> Local people understood that the presence of these animals potentially had greater value to them than the stock losses and other damage that some of them suffered. After independence, Owen-Smith and Jacobsohn worked with MET officials to draft the new CBNRM policy. Since 1995, they have worked intensively with local communities in the Kunene and Caprivi (northeast Namibia) regions to create viable conservancies.

In addition to IRDNC, a number of other NGOs have played important supporting roles in Namibia's CBNRM program. For example, since 1993 the World Wildlife Fund's Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) program<sup>108</sup> has provided training, technical support, and grants and has disseminated information to CBNRM stakeholders. The Namibia Nature Foundation is another important partner in the CBNRM program, providing support services related to best practices, monitoring and evaluation services, and research and other resources related to the Namibian environment and Namibia's conservancies.<sup>109</sup> Similarly, the Rossing Foundation—a partner with the Namibia Nature Foundation and others

who make up the NASCO (Namibia Association of Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Support Organizations) group—also provides training and materials for conservancies and CBNRM partners.

However, such outside donor support is unlikely to last in perpetuity; therefore conservancies need to plan to become financially self-sufficient and accountable to conservancy members, as well as effective managers of valuable natural resources. Sharing the local knowledge that successful conservancies have already developed is one way to approach the challenge of creating self-sufficient conservancies. In addition, because self-sufficiency is intimately tied to economic activity on conservancies, the Namibian government should carefully examine the environment for doing business on conservancies. To the extent that the government can amend policies to make it easier to do business on conservancy lands, the government should pursue such policies. Clarifying issues surrounding land tenure would be one important step in this direction. Devolving additional rights to conservancies to manage resources would be another. However,

<sup>107</sup> Jones, "The Evolution of a Community-based Approach," 164. Jones continues: "Jacobsohn (1990) relates how young men of the community tracked down a lioness so that conservation officials could capture and relocate it away from the village. Previously men of the village would have tracked and killed the predator as a threat to their families and their livestock." This suggests that attitudes towards wildlife became more positive, more protective, once a clear tie between benefits and wildlife was established.

<sup>108</sup> The WWF/LIFE program is "implemented by WWF through a cooperative agreement with USAID." See "About Project Life," World Wildlife Fund website, [http://www.panda.org/about\\_wwf/where\\_we\\_work/africa/where/namibia/life/project/index.cfm](http://www.panda.org/about_wwf/where_we_work/africa/where/namibia/life/project/index.cfm).

<sup>109</sup> See generally, Namibia Nature Foundation, [www.nnf.org.na](http://www.nnf.org.na).



Eric Xaweb, chairman, and members of the Tsiseb Conservancy

conservancies are dynamic, evolving over time, and need time to reach organizational maturity.

Although Torra Conservancy is one of the few financially self-sufficient conservancies, committee members still worry about how to build and strengthen management and business capacity. Benny Roman, of Torra, said the conservancy committee still needs training. He told us, "There is still a need for institutional capacity building in terms of administration, management, and financial reporting."<sup>10</sup> They are trying to improve so that more decisions are taken democratically among their 600 members. His sense was that, after some years where communication was difficult and people were not always happy with committee decisions, members are happier because the committee is going out to talk with them.

Tsiseb Conservancy has faced similar difficulties. When we asked about current obstacles, Eric Xaweb told us:

- The very idea of a conservancy created unrealistic/high expectations among the people. They thought that, if they formed a conservancy, they would soon be rich.
- Strategic planning is still a challenge. The conservancy needs a better common vision of where it is going and what it wants to achieve.
- The way committees are formed needs to be revised. People with capacity need to be on committees. Otherwise, you could have problems with mismanagement of funds. Eric Xaweb suggested that

<sup>10</sup> Interview with Mr. Benny Roman, Torra Conservancy, May 4, 2006, Bergsig, Namibia.

conservancies should, perhaps, have the jurisdiction to nominate based on expertise.

- Conservancy members may not understand business well. (For example, they may not understand what the term "projected income" means.)
- Because people are spread out over such wide distances, it is difficult to convey information to members.
- There have been problems with the hunting quota. People think the conservancy is over-hunting or corrupt. This creates problems related to perceptions of fairness.

And yet, Eric Xaweb believes that "overall, conservancies are one of the best things the government has done."

## **E** POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The barriers and constraints outlined above suggest the Namibian government can create even greater benefits for local people if it modifies the institutional environment to bring incentives into better alignment with local action. If the government wishes to see local people do more to conserve and protect natural resources while at the same time pursuing new business opportunities, government officials should provide local

people with additional legal rights to manage these resources. In addition, because the government seeks to link conservation to economic development, the government should pursue reforms that make it easier for conservancy members and others to do business in Namibia.

To date, the government's policy of devolving some rights to manage wildlife and to benefit from tourism is providing local conservancies with incentives to protect wildlife, to find ways to live with predators, and to search for entrepreneurial opportunities to serve tourists. The results are improvements in standards of living in some conservancies: schools are being repaired and improved; people have better, quicker, and easier access to hospitals; people's diets have improved; and some members have jobs that support themselves and family members.

By clarifying issues related to the allocation of land use rights, the government would strengthen the incentive structure for conservancies to carefully manage their resources. By devolving additional rights to manage resources to conservancies, the government would create a closer alignment between incentives to protect and conserve wildlife and community action. Today, this alignment is not as close as it could be because of problems related to tenure insecurity and a cumbersome regulatory process that makes it time consuming and costly to deal with unwanted outsiders and with problem and threatened animals.

## FI. CLARIFY THE PROCESS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICTING USES OF COMMUNAL LAND

The Communal Land Reform Act (CLRA) creates ambiguities regarding customary land rights and land-use allocations on communal land. It recognizes that traditional authorities have the legal power to approve or end customary land rights, subject, however, to approval by Community Land Boards (CLBs).<sup>111</sup> But conservancy committees have the authority, under the 1996 amendment to the Natural Conservation Act, to create management plans for conservancy territory.

The result is that allocations made by traditional authorities could come into conflict with conservancy management plans. CLBs are supposed to resolve any such disputes that arise, but the CLRA does not specify the standards for evaluating such disputes. In situations where tenure is less secure, individuals have reduced incentives to protect and conserve resources. If the situation remains confused, or becomes more uncertain, people might view the resources involved as open-access resources and treat them with vastly less care than they would if rights were more clearly specified.

The government should consider amending the CLRA to specify a process of consultation between conservancies, traditional authorities, and CLBs in cases where conflict arises.

If conflicts can not be resolved through a consultative process, then the CLRA should set standards for determining which allocation should take precedence in the case of a conflict: conservancy uses or allocations by traditional authorities.

To improve transparency and accountability, the CLB should make its decisions in such situations available to the public.

In addition, although the government is ultimate title holder of land, it should give conservancies greater discretion to manage which outsiders—particularly tourists—are allowed onto the land. If necessary, the government should amend the Natural Resources Act to allow conservancy management committees to create binding rules regarding use of communal land by outsiders.

The law requires conservancy committees to draft management plans. As a part of this process, management committees could develop clear rules regarding the use by outsiders of conservancy property in consultation with traditional authorities who manage customary land rights and grazing and farming allocations.

The government must provide conservancies with a meaningful power to keep unwanted and potentially destructive outsiders off conservan-

<sup>111</sup> *Communal Land Reform Act*, Chapter IV, para. 20.

cy property. Conservancy property is, under the current circumstances, essentially open-access property that is typically overused and misused by those who can access it. To remedy this problem, and to bring incentives into better alignment with local action, the government should provide conservancy committees with authority to manage entry onto conservancy land. Unless conservancies hold this stick in their bundle of property rights, they have fewer incentives to guard and protect the valuable resources they manage.

## F2. DEVOLVE ADDITIONAL LEGAL RIGHTS

The government should devolve additional legal rights to conservancies in two areas: first, conservancies should be given additional rights to set quotas for hunting predators and problem animals and for managing problem animals; and second, conservancies should be given additional rights to manage leaseholds within conservancy territory.

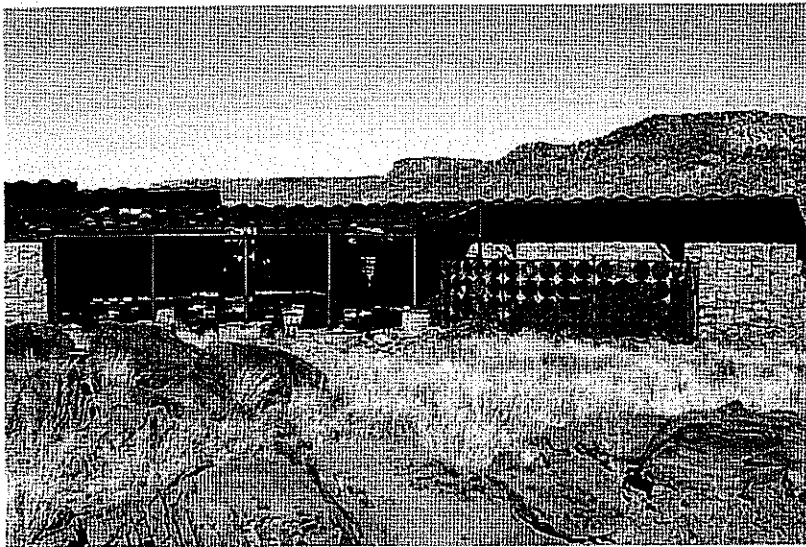
With striking consistency, conservancy members expressed frustration over the cumbersome regulatory process involved in dealing with problem animals. They must apply first to local MET officials for assistance and then wait for officials in Windhoek to take action to deal with the animal. During this waiting period, an animal might inflict significant harm to people or property.

Conservancies, especially more mature conservancies, have demonstrated their abilities to carefully manage wildlife. The government

should give conservancies the legal right to determine how best to manage problem animals when these animals harm or pose a threat of harm to conservancy members and their property. It may require conservancy committees to draft and publish a set of procedures for managing problem animals. To promote accountability and transparency, a conservancy should also document the process of deciding how best to respond to a problem animal. However, given their strong records in protecting and managing wildlife resources, conservancies should be given the right to deal with problem animals.

The government should also strongly consider providing conservancies with additional rights to manage leaseholds within conservancy territory. Currently, commercial leaseholds, such as those needed to establish joint-venture tourist lodges, require the approval of CLBs. Each time a new commercial activity is proposed within a conservancy, the appropriate CLB must approve a new leasehold.

It would be easier to do business with conservancies if CLBs issued a single "head" leasehold to conservancies. Conservancies could then allocate the rights to engage in commercial activity to the people or the corporate entities that they deem most likely to produce positive results for the conservancy. This change would provide conservancies with thicker bundles of rights over their resources and would strengthen the incentive structure the current CBNRM program has created.



Twyfelfontein Heritage Site. Can entrepreneurship spread beyond state sponsored enterprises?

### F3. DO MORE TO ENSURE THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT IS SUPPORTIVE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The Namibian government wants to protect and conserve the valuable natural resources found within its borders. Clarifying tenure issues and devolving additional rights to manage resources to conservancies would help accomplish this goal. Such changes to the legal and regulatory environment would enhance the positive incentives to manage resources that the current CBNRM program is already generating.

The government also seeks to use conservancies, and CBNRM, as tools to promote economic development in rural areas. The government would like to see more entrepreneurship taking

place on conservancies. Government officials, NGOs, and conservancy members would all like to see more small and medium-sized enterprises developed within conservancies or outside the boundaries of conservancies. The hope is that conservancy members will develop valuable skills and gain business experience as a result of working for conservancies or with joint-venture partners.

In order to build businesses, entrepreneurs must operate in an institutional environment that supports freedom of contract, has strong and effective contract enforcement mechanisms, has well-defined and enforceable property rights, and has limited government interference with market transactions.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>112</sup> See Israel M. Kirzner and Frederic Sautet, *The Nature and Role of Entrepreneurship in Markets: Implications for Policy*, Mercatus Policy Series, Policy Primer No. 4 (Arlington, VA: Mercatus Center at George Mason University, 2006), [http://www.mercatus.org/repository/docLib/20060612\\_Nature\\_Role\\_Kirzner\\_Sautet\\_ACTUAL\\_w\\_links.pdf](http://www.mercatus.org/repository/docLib/20060612_Nature_Role_Kirzner_Sautet_ACTUAL_w_links.pdf).



The institutional environment for doing business in Namibia is good in comparison to most African nations (although the country's ranking on the World Bank's Doing Business indicator slipped from 39 to 42 between 2005 and 2006).<sup>111</sup> However, the government could take steps to improve further the institutional environment for doing business. Specifically, the government should streamline the process for registering a business with government agencies to reduce the number of days it takes to obtain a certificate to start a business, to register for VAT, and to register workers for Social Security and Workman's Compensation. To the extent the government can create for business people electronic registries and "one-stop shopping" options where they can register for all needed licenses in one office rather than in multiple offices, it should.

Additionally, the costs of exporting and importing goods from Namibia are high and could be reduced to encourage business activity and to provide a more competitive environment for entrepreneurs operating in the country. The government could reduce the red tape involved in exporting and importing in Namibia by reducing the numbers of documents required to move goods into and out of the country and by

using electronic filing whenever possible. The costs of registering property in Namibia are quite high also.<sup>114</sup> These costs would be a burden for some entrepreneurs, but as much of the economic activity in conservancies would require leaseholds, the major concern should be with the efficiency of the Community Land Boards, as they are responsible for approving leasehold permits.

#### F4. SUPPORT CAPACITY BUILDING

Funded by a combination of private and public monies, with significant financial help from international development agencies, such as USAID, DFID and others, NGOs have worked for decades supporting CBNRM efforts throughout southern Africa, but when donor interests do not track with local desires, problems have arisen with the focus and direction of some projects.<sup>115</sup> In Namibia, though, NGOs have played an important role helping conservancies move along the path to self-sufficiency. They provided important support during the development of the CBNRM movement, offering initial support for legislative changes that devolved some rights to local people. NGOs have also been instrumental in helping local people to create conservancies and develop the skills to manage wildlife resources and business activities.

<sup>111</sup> See "Doing Business: Economy Rankings," <http://www.doingbusiness.org/EconomyRankings/>.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> Jones and Murphree, "The Evolution of Policy Conservation," 54.

Namibian NGOs work from a strong base of local knowledge regarding the needs and opportunities that exist for CBNRM efforts. These organizations, over time, develop good understandings of on-the-ground needs of conservancy members and attempt to meet many of these needs. Given that NGOs have good local knowledge and incentives to respond to the demands of their donors for transparency, good stewardship of donor resources, and positive project outcomes, NGOs play an important complementary role in Namibian's CBNRM efforts.

The conservancy members with whom we spoke all talked of the need for continuing support for capacity building, especially in the areas of financial and business management. NGOs can continue to play an important role supporting conservancies that need these services. However, as more conservancies move towards financial self-sufficiency, the need for, and the desirability of, NGO support should lessen.

## CONCLUSION

My wish is that we can change things, that we can have more wealth so that the people can come up. In the past, it seemed the world was going downward. Now, with these good rains things seem to have changed. . . . It seems as if I'm seeing the result of our efforts. Now big numbers of wildlife are here.

With the rains, the fields are better. The fields help the animals. Wealth and growth are coming to this area. This is what I want to see in the future: the whole environment will change, and people will live life like in the old days.<sup>116</sup>

During the past ten years, the Namibian government, with involvement from NGOs and local communities, has created a vibrant community-based natural resource management program. This program devolves some rights to manage wildlife and to benefit from the non-consumptive use of wildlife through tourism activities from the central government to local communities. This devolution provides the rural people of Namibia, a great many of whom are poor, with incentives to conserve wildlife and wildlife habitat and to act entrepreneurially to attract tourists to this beautiful country.

Today, more than 40 conservancies exist, and more are awaiting government approval. Creating these conservancies is a time consuming and costly process. Despite these costs, Namibians are increasingly turning towards conservancies as a means of improving local economies and environments, bringing wildlife back to communities, building skills, and increasing local initiative. Although the benefits of CBNRM have been somewhat slow to appear, many conservancies are moving towards self-suf-

<sup>116</sup> Interview with Mr. Benny Roman, May 4, 2006, Torra Conservancy, Bergsig, Namibia.



Will CBNRM offer these children a future on the #Khoadi //Hoas Conservancy?

iciency, and more cash and other non-cash benefits are now flowing into local economies.

In addition, creating a conservancy generates new reserves of social and human capital. Assuming management responsibility and developing the conservancy provides people with a sense of engagement with neighbors, traditional authorities, conservancy leaders, and the outside world. This intangible benefit should strengthen local communities as previously disenfranchised people exercise voice through self-governance.

For all the good that has occurred in Namibia through the CBNRM program, barriers constrain the program's growth. The major barriers include:

- an unclear and insecure land tenure environment;
- a need to devolve more rights to manage wildlife and other resources to local groups;

- a need to improve the institutional environment for doing business in Namibia; and
- a continuing need to build local capacity to govern in an accountable and transparent fashion and to manage local enterprises.

To provide even greater incentives to conserve and protect natural resources and to further promote local entrepreneurship, the Namibian government should make tenure more secure by clarifying how Community Land Boards should reach decisions if and when land-use allocations conflict. The government should also devolve rights to conservancy committees to set quotas for trophy hunting and to take appropriate actions to manage predators and problem animals. In order to promote more economic development on conservancies and by conservancy members who

build human capital working with conservancies, the government should also enact reforms that make it easier and less costly for conservancy-based entrepreneurs to do business.

By creating a set of positive incentives for local people to conserve and protect Namibia's valuable natural resources, and by giving people opportunities to build human and social capital,

the Namibian government has gone a long way down a path towards economic development and wildlife conservation. By taking a few more steps to devolve additional legal rights to conservancies to manage resources and by strengthening the institutional environment for doing business in the country, the Namibian government could do even more to help its citizens prosper and flourish.

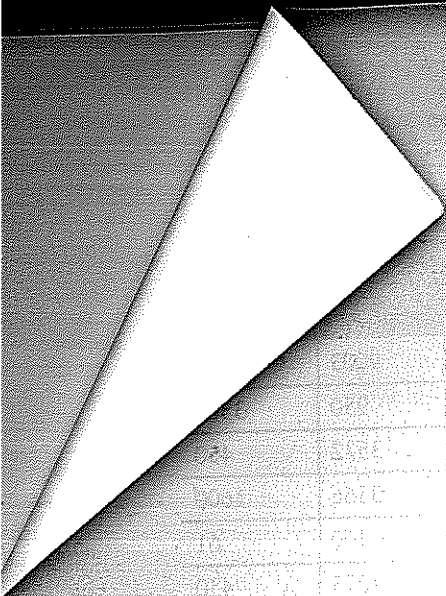
*We thank the many conservancy members who met with us, Dr. Margaret Jacobsohn of IRDNC, and the staff of WWF Namibia, especially Andee Davidson. Without their help, this study would not have been possible.*

## APPENDIX

	NAME	REGION	BIOME	DATE REGISTERED	SIZE (KM <sup>2</sup> )	TOTAL REGISTERED MEMBERS
1	Nyae Nyae	Otjozondjupa	Woodland	Feb-98	9003	752
2	Salambala	Caprivi	Woodland	Jun-98	930	3500
3	Torra	Kunene	Desert	Jun-98	3522	450
4	#Khoadi//Hoas	Kunene	Desert/Savanna	Jun-98	3366	1600
5	Uibasen- Twyfelfontein	Kunene	Desert/Savanna	Dec-99	400	61
6	Doro !Nawas	Kunene	Desert/Savanna	Dec-99	4073	430
7	Kwandu	Caprivi	Woodland	Dec-99	190	1800
8	Mayuni	Caprivi	Woodland	Dec-99	151	1500 900
9	Wuparo	Caprivi	Woodland	Dec-99	148	1700
10	Puros	Kunene	Desert	May-00	3568	85
11	Tsiseb	Erongo	Desert	Jan-01	8083	950
12	Ehi-Rovipuka	Kunene	Savanna	Jan-01	1975	500
13	Marienfluss	Kunene	Desert	Jan-01	3034	121
14	Oskop	Hardap	Shrub Savanna	Feb-01	95	20
15	Sorris Sorris	Kunene	Desert/Savanna	Oct-01	2990	380
16	Mashi	Caprivi	Woodland	Mar-03	297	718
17	Omatendeka	Kunene	Savanna	Mar-03	3565	374
18	Otjimboyo	Erongo	Desert/Savanna	Jul-03	745	148
19	Unkwaluvi	Omushati	Savanna	Jul-03	1437	25000
20	!khob-!Naub (Kalk Plateau)	Hardap	Shrub Savanna	Jul-03	2747	429
21	//Gamaseb	Karas	Shrub Savanna	Jul-03	1748	495
22	//Huab	Kunene	Desert Savanna	Jul-03	1817	364
23	Orupembe	Kunene	Desert	Jul-03	3565	132
24	Sanitatas	Kunene	Desert	Jul-03	1446	76
25	Anabeb	Kunene	Savanna	Jul-03	1570	337
26	Sesfontein	Kunene	Savanna	Jul-03	2591	438
27	Okangundudumba	Kunene	Savanna	Jul-03	1131	448
28	N#a Jaqna	Otjozondjupa	Woodland	Jul-03	9120	782
29	Ozondundu	Kunene	Savanna	Jul-03	745	173
TOTAL					74,052	38,063

CBNRM SUB-DIVISION, AUGUST 2003.

Source: Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Community Based Natural Resource Management, Fact and Figures,  
<http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/cbnrm/conservancies.htm>



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