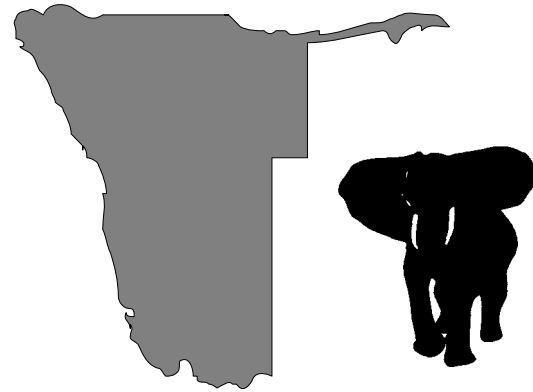




Republic of Namibia

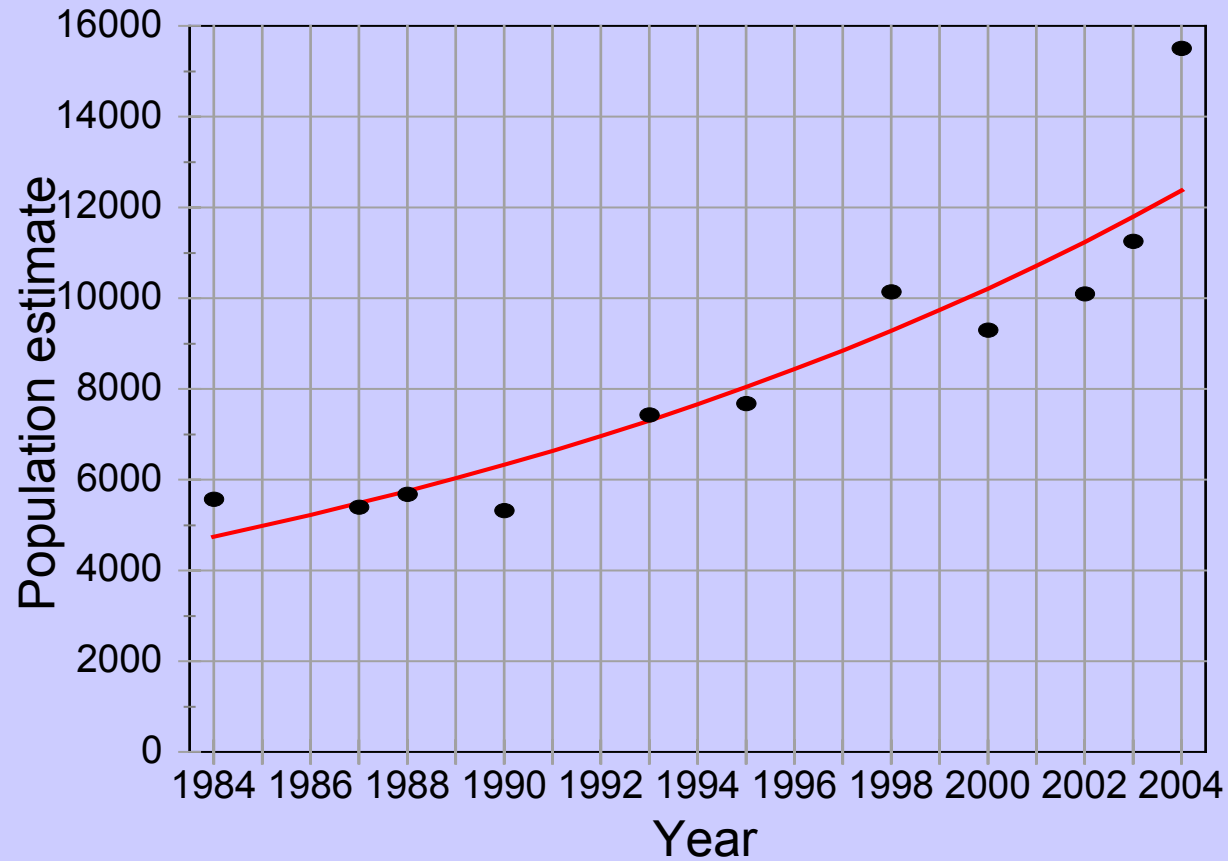
# Elephant Management in Namibia

Historically, elephants occurred at low densities throughout Namibia

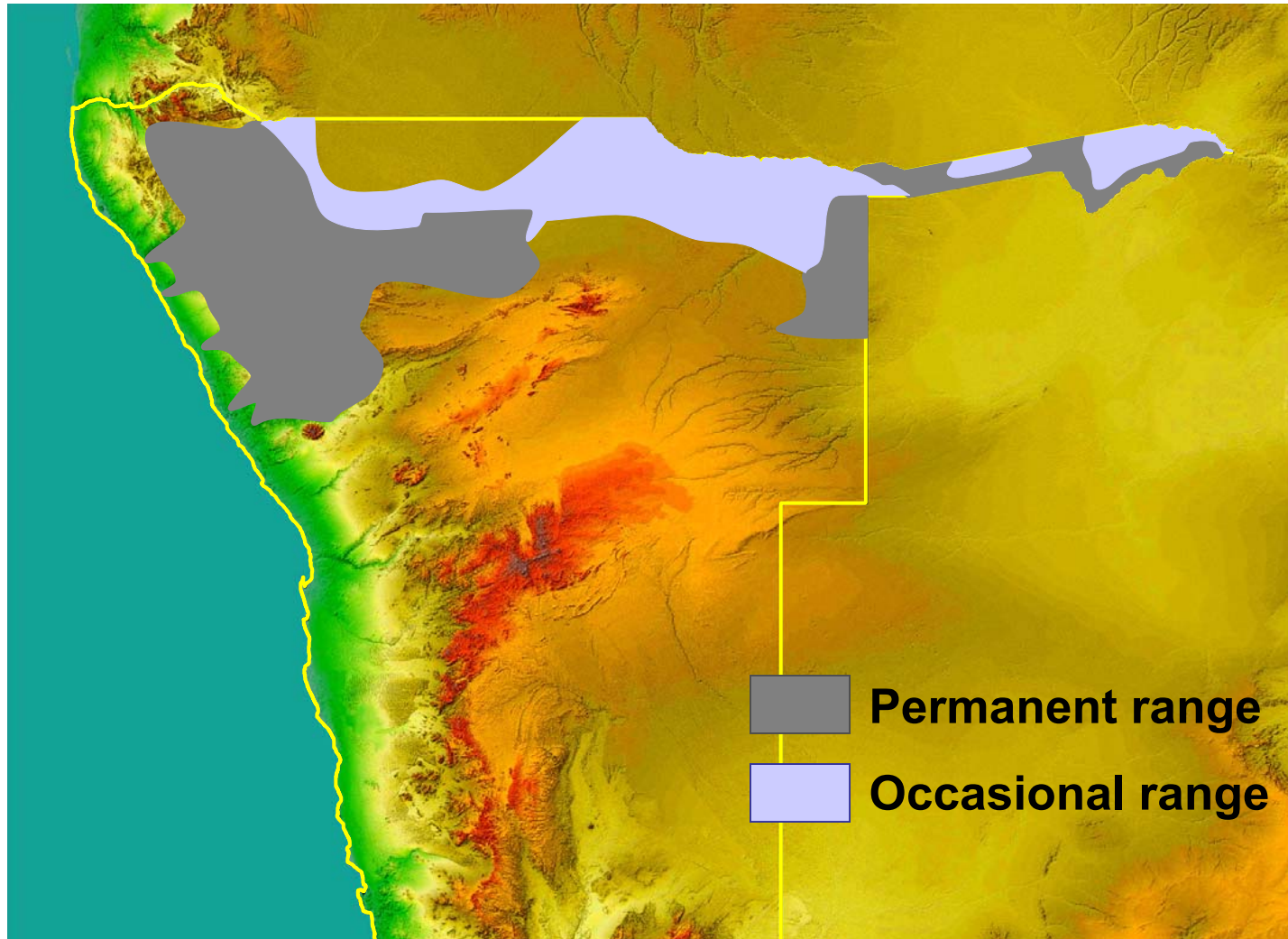


Hunting and increasing pressure from humans reduced the range and brought the population to near extinction at the turn of the 20th century.

# Namibia's elephant population is now increasing



Although they are currently restricted to the northern parts of the country



# Latest elephant population estimates for the various areas

Area	Year of previous estimate	2003 estimated elephant population	2004 preliminary estimates	Estimated elephant population
Caprivi	2003	5740	8700	8700
Khaudom	2002	1687	3000	3000
Tsumkwe	2000	755	1000	1000
Kunene Region	2000	663		663
Etosha National Park	2002	2417	2000	2000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>11262</b>		<b>15363</b>



# Protected Areas

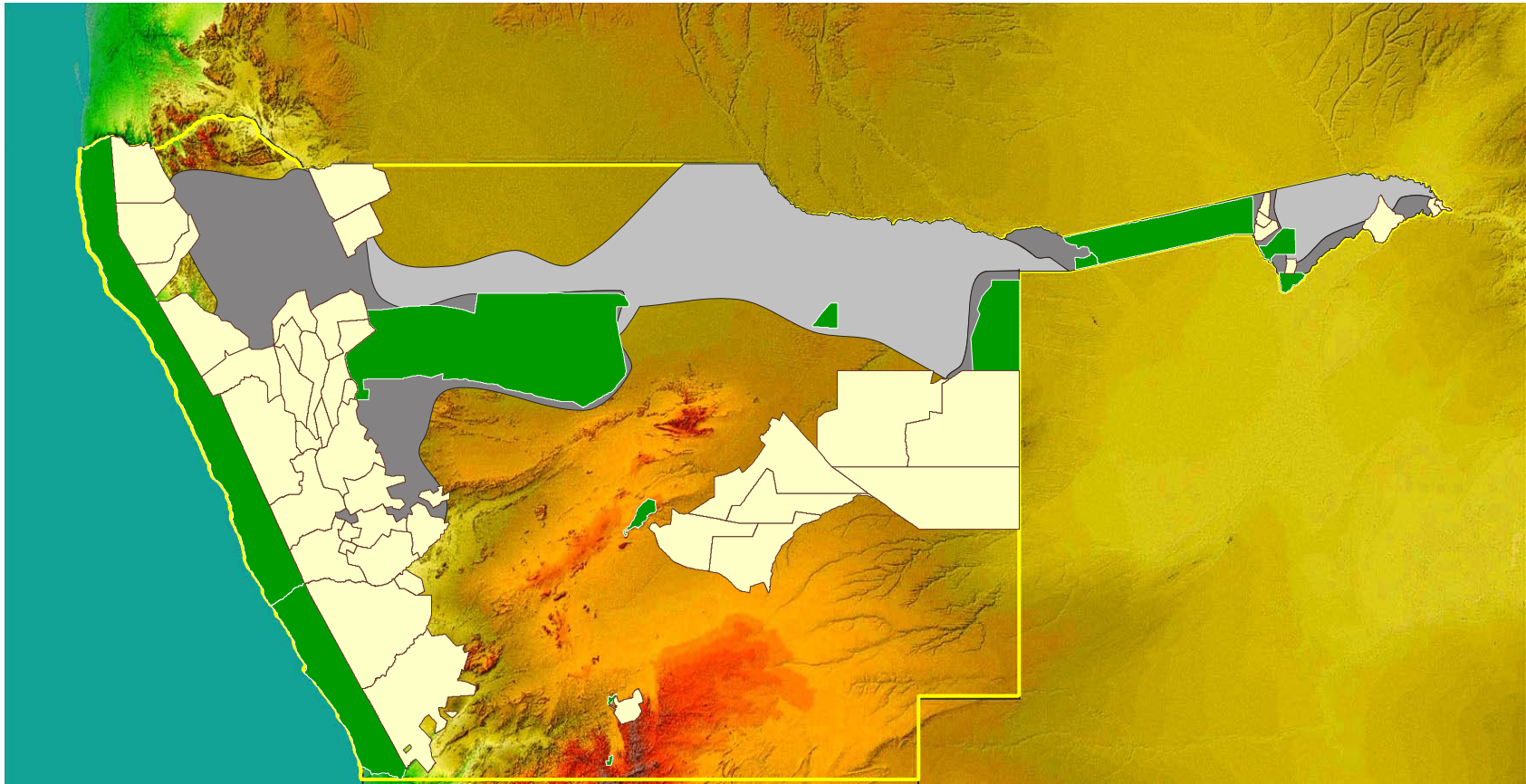
Namibia's protected areas cover almost 14% of the country, but elephants also occur outside of protected areas.

It is considered vital to their long term survival that elephants retain access to range in and out of protected areas and important movement corridors.

# Conservancies

Namibia has therefore embarked on a programme of encouraging the formation Conservancies - with the objective of benefiting communities through the sustainable utilization of natural resources as well as maintaining biodiversity.

Today there are over 40 registered and emerging conservancies with 150,000 members managing wildlife over an area of 100,000 square kilometres in the areas where elephant populations are expanding in Namibia.



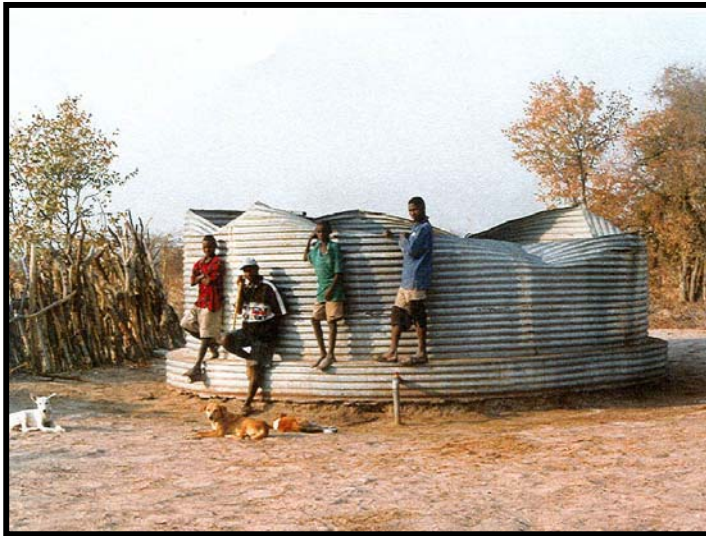
Elephants      Permanent range      Occasional range  
Protected Areas      Conservancies

The continued spread of conservancies  
is one strategy to secure elephant range



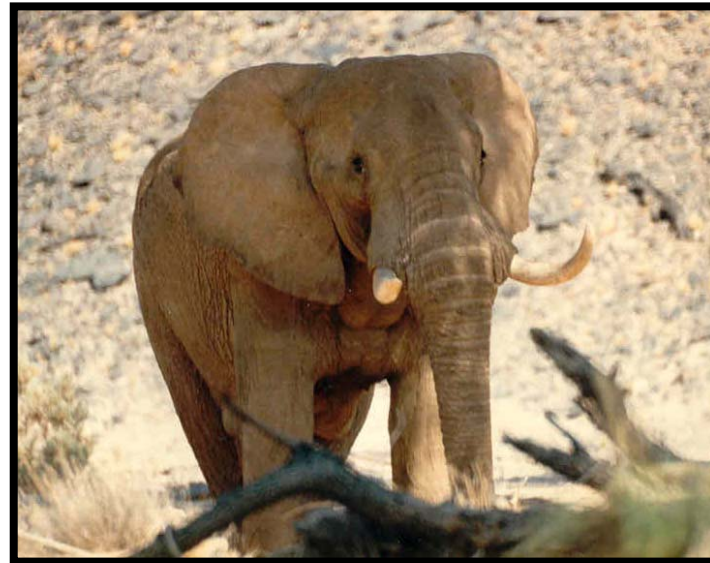
# Human/elephant conflict

The incidence of human/elephant conflict is increasing with the increasing elephant population



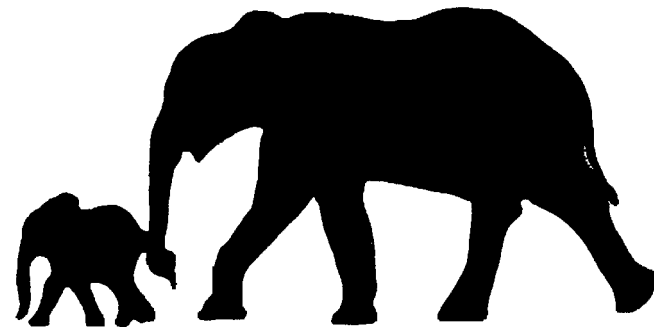
# Mitigation measures

- Electric fencing of gardens
- Protection of water installations
- Looking at alternative cash crops



But the most important strategy is to  
create the highest value possible for  
elephants

Elephants are potentially one of the  
most valuable wildlife species in Namibia  
and could play a major rôle in economic  
development and sustaining biodiversity  
as a primary land use.

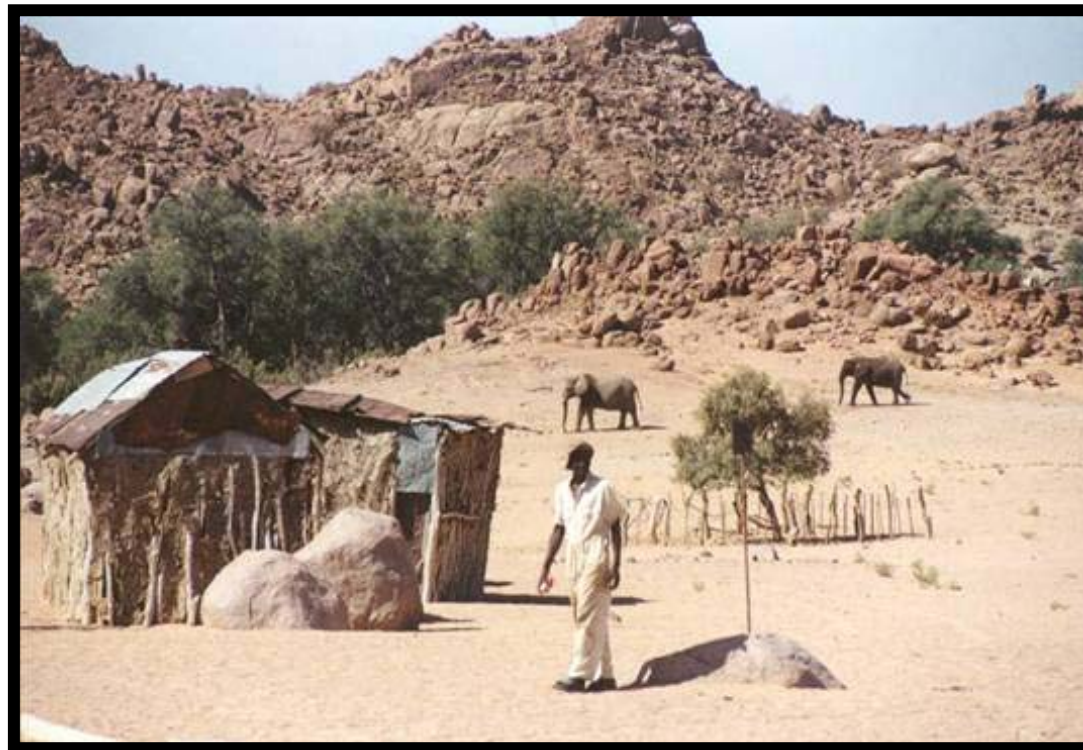


- The presence of elephant greatly enhances any **tourism** product
- One of the first significant incomes derived by conservancies is through **trophy hunting** of elephants.
- Through natural mortalities, elephants produce a valuable resource in the form of **ivory and hide**.

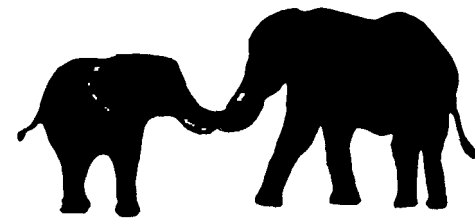




It is for this reason that Namibia has persistently approached **CITES** with proposals that would maximize the value of elephants, through the controlled trade in their products.



- Loss of range is considered the biggest potential long-term threat to the Namibian elephant population.
- So far, the elephant population has been steadily increasing, and expanding into areas of former range.
- *However this dispersal is dependent on the willingness of rural communities to tolerate living with and sharing resources with elephants.*



# Biodiversity

Namibia recognizes that elephants have the potential to severely impact biodiversity - particularly in protected areas.

Namibia's Constitution entrenches the conservation of biological diversity - and where necessary, measures will be taken to ensure that one species does not have detrimental impacts on other species.

The elephant population of Etosha National Park is currently naturally regulated through the high incidence of anthrax.

There are, however, concerns about the rapidly increasing populations in the north-eastern parks.

For example, the dramatic increase of elephants in Khaudom could quite easily have a dramatic impact on the roan antelope population.



# Research

A number of research projects are currently underway, looking at elephant movements. These could help identify possible corridor areas for natural dispersal.



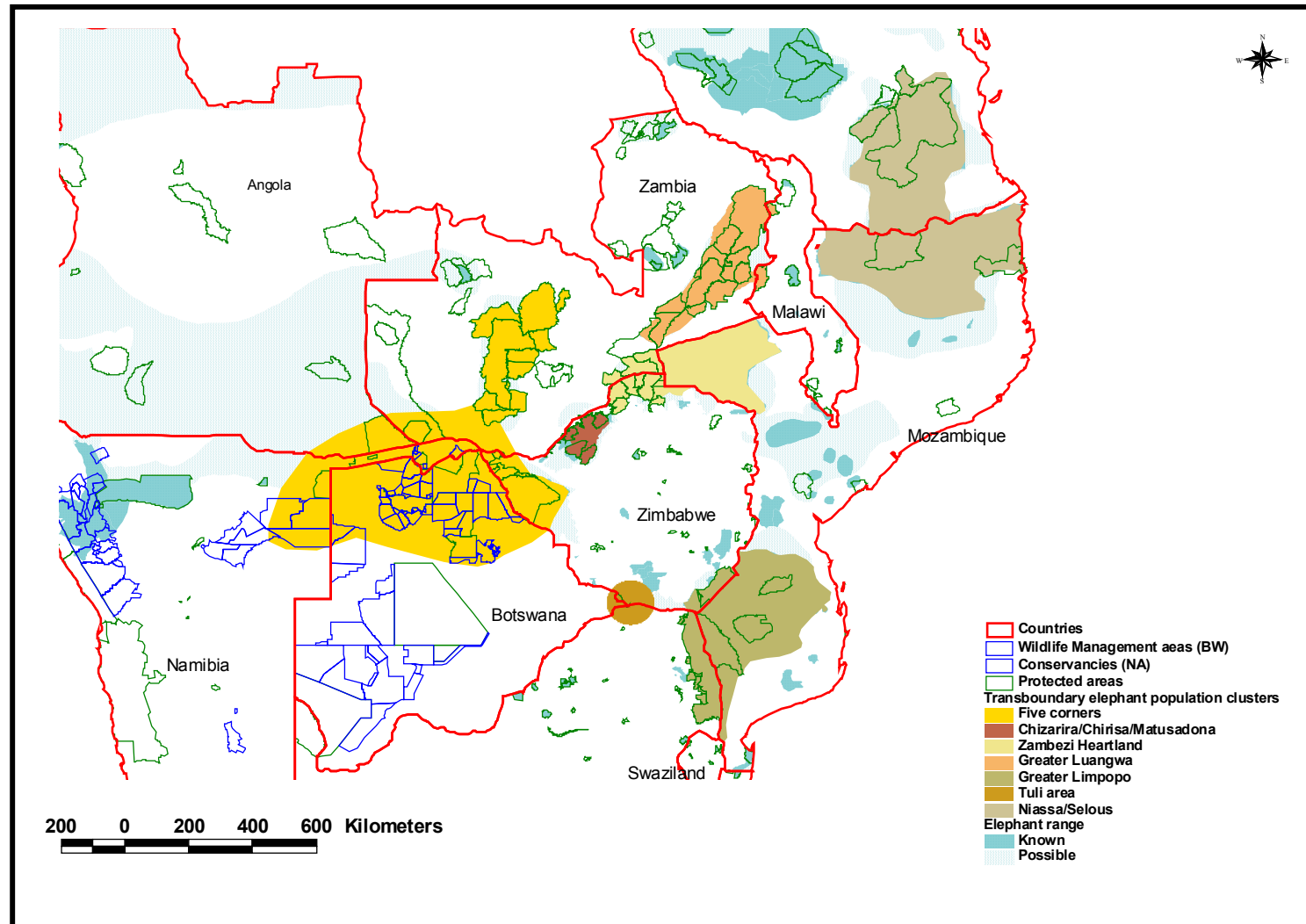
# Transboundary management

Many elephant populations are distributed near international borders

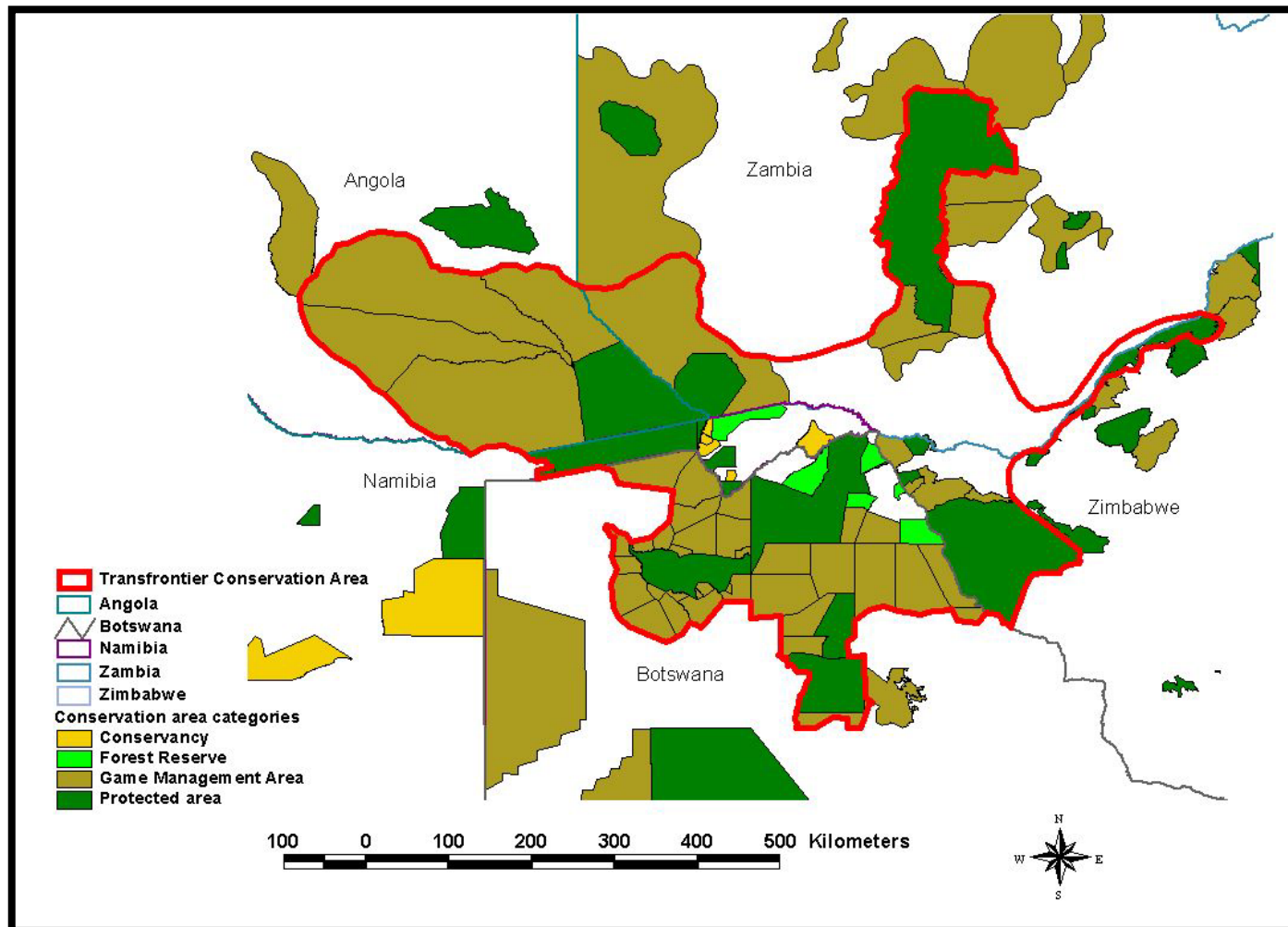
Some countries have a problem of too many elephants whilst others have few, opening avenues for natural dispersal or translocation.

Transfrontier cooperation is therefore essential to address some of the challenges of elephant management.

Namibia has already collaborated with neighbours regarding the aerial survey of the shared elephant population identified as the "five corners" cluster.



Namibia holds critical areas of dispersal and migration routes for the largest African elephant population. The OUZIT initiative (Okavango Upper Zambezi International Tourism Initiative) provides an opportunity for coordinated management of natural resources, including elephants.





End

