

200 3/99

P O Box 168
Opuwo
Okunene Region

14 June 1999

Honorable Mr. Philemor Malima
Ministry of Environment and Tourism
Private bag 13346
Windhoek

Honorable Minister,

Implementation of the Conservancy Policy – Sesfontein Constituency

First and foremost, allow us to thank you in advance for taking time from your busy schedule to attend to the above mentioned problem in our Sesfontein constituency.

Sesfontein is one of the biggest constituencies in the Okunene region, famous for its desert elephants. It means that in addition to the usual subsistence farming, many of the communal farmers have at the encouragement of Government and the SWAPO Youth League, established campsites and organized tour trips, in order to benefit from the growing number of tourists visiting our country and our area.

Government, particularly through the Ministry of Local Government and Housing's Directorate of Community Development has assisted many of these farmers to secure PTO's (permission to occupy a site for business purposes) in order to legalize and strengthen these grassroots developmental efforts. And encouraged others to apply for these permissions should they want to engage in tourism and environmental protection in the communal areas.

In 1996, our Government through your Ministry enacted the Nature Conservation Act. In our area the interpretation and implementation of this Act was introduced to us by NWF/IRDNC. We were told that this body was a tourism and rural development association that has been constituted out of bodies and individuals active in the tourism sector country wide. Thus, they organized meetings and visits to e.g. Caprivi, and spoke to us about issues such as conservancies, concessions and the proposed Wildlife Councils. They also suggested that we should start looking at establishing similar organs in our area if the exploitation of wildlife were to proceed in an organized manner. The community initially accepted many of these suggestions in good faith, especially those individuals who are involved in the tourism sector.

Ch... ..

believe that not even a single Government official of your own Ministry can claim to have satisfied himself/herself as to the legality and authority of such a committee.

We see the underhand manipulations and exploitation of the previously disadvantaged community members in Okaoko by the same former apartheid agents in your Ministry. We can only but conclude that several of the officials in your Ministry are only working in the interest of their former colleagues to our disadvantage in the Okaoko region.

Honorable Minister, therefore, we appeal to your personal involvement in seeing to it that justice is done in Okaoko.

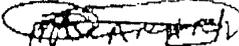
We suggest that the so-called Conservancy Committee should be disbanded and reconstituted in line with the provisions of the Act No. 5 of 1996, and under the proper supervision of your Ministry and the Okunene Regional Governor.

Failing which, your Ministry should immediately begin with the assessment of the outstanding PTO application and grant them on merit, contrary to the formal complaint of the so-called Conservancy Committee.

We hope that this appeal will enjoy your highest consideration.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely


P UARARAVI
PUROS Camp Site


J KASUPI
Camel Top Mountain Camp Site

cc Honorable Hifikepunye Pohamba, SWAPO Secretary-General
Honorable S. Tjongarero, Kunene Regional Governor
Honorable Pastor S Hendrik, Sesfontein Constituency Councillor
Mr. T Erkana – Permanent Secretary, MET.
Mr. N Shoombe – Permanent Secretary, MRLGH
Mr. J Iita – Permanent Secretary, MLRR
Ms M Kapere – Under Secretary, MET

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE WESTERN HOANIB RIVER
OCTOBER 1998

The biodiversity of the Hoanib river is threatened due to lack of control and over utilisation by the increasing number of ecotourists searching for the desert elephants and rhino.

The western Hoanib river has ten entrance points used by 4x4 vehicles of which six entry tracks are from the north:

1. Dubis
2. Ganumub
3. Tsuxib
4. Obias
5. Tsuwarugab
6. Skeleton Coast Boundary

Three entry points are from the south:

7. Skeleton Coast Boundary
8. Mudorib
9. Chudorib

Number 10 is from the west, Mowe Bay in the Skeleton Coast Park

1. Entry point 1. Dubis

This entry point has a good supply of water. According to the data collected by the SRT Swiss Friends Camp on tourist numbers entering the river at this point, this is the entrance most used by tourists searching for the desert elephants. The numbers are increasing annually.

It is proposed that this area is developed as a control point, overnight rest camp consisting of 4 self contained rustic bungalows, 8 camp sites with showers and toilets, a patrol base and training centre for

local residents in collaboration with:

The proposed conservancy

NACOFTA

The ~~conservancy~~ (DAS) NAMIBIA, Swakopmund, P.O. Box 224, Swakopmund, Namibia
email: srtrhino@africa.com.na

Andreas Kasoana (PTO)

Archie Gawuseb (PTO)

Desert Research Foundation of Namibia

Min. of Environment and Tourism

Swiss Friends (SRT)

2. Entry Point 2. Ganumub.

This is the second most used point of entry used by tourists coming from the north and safari companies not wishing to enter through the courtesy stop presently run by Swiss Friends, SRT and DAS at Dubis. Water is available at the junction of the Hoanib and Ganumub river.

An application for a PTO has been made by Jan Awuseb to have 6 small campsites with a control entry offering locally trained guides to the area and patrols of the river. (Not yet registered)

It is important that a campsite is developed at this point and that NACOFTA is asked to assist with the development.

3. Entry points 3. Tsuwarugab, 4. Obias, 8. Mudorib and 9. Chudorib

These entry points could be controlled by patrols from Ganumub and Dubis.

4. Entry Points 6,7, and 10. Skeleton Coast

It is proposed that these entry points are controlled from a base camp developed by the Skeleton Coast Park with provision of 4 campsites and toilets for tourists.

No *ad hoc* camping should be allowed in the Hoanib river without guides.

5. Management Aims

A Hoanib River Steering Committee should be formed to ensure co-ordination of the developments and management. Management will

include:

Architectural planning and design of the campsites

Equitable distribution and management of income

Assistance with fundraising projects

Information publications, marketing and promotion

Training in basic ecology and basic tourism hospitality

Supervision and maintenance of bungalows and campsites

Monitoring and photographic identification of the elephant and rhino in the vicinity of the western catchment

Recording age, sex and group size of elephant herds

Monitoring of wildlife and identification photographs of giraffe

Herbarium collection and identification of vegetation

Collection & identification of butterflies and other insects

Bird species list

6. Policy

1. No hunting will be allowed in the western Hoanib

2. No motorbikes will be allowed

3. No quadbikes will be allowed

4. No walking trails except under guidance of the appointed guides.

5. Photographers and Television companies will be required to have appointed guides or specialists in attendance at all times.

Promotion of biodiversity research

In the absence of a steering committee the SRT wishes to work with

NACOPTA as the advisor in negotiations with planning camps, community requests, architectural design, donors, partnerships with safari companies, ecotourism organisations and financial aspects of this joint venture.

7 The western Hoanib river is a National asset for Namibia which has unique biodiversity. The diverse assets of the Hoanib river and surrounds can bring much needed benefits to the local communities and the conservancy. The desert elephant and rhino which inhabit the western area are world renowned. These large animals are of no threat to local stockherding or farming developments, but are of great economic value to Namibian tourism. The western Hoanib from the Dubis entry and floodplains inside the Skeleton Coast Park is worthy of consideration for World Heritage status.

PO Box 224, Swakopmund, Namibia.
tel./fax 624 (0)64 40 38 29
email <srtrhino@iafrica.com.na>

Desert Elephants of the Hoanib

The Hoanib elephants have been studied, written about and photographed, they have graced the pages of numerous coffee table publications and glossy wildlife magazines, they have wandered across the screens of many a television and, even when an unfortunate tourist was killed by a Hoanib elephant, their popularity with the tourist and Namibian alike, has remained.

Fame reached the desert elephants in the early 1980's when they were saved from complete extermination by conservation action. The hunting forays by army personnel, government officials, special branch police and ministers of the previous government of South Africa were ended when, with community support, protests by conservationists were made to the world media and the South African government of the time. The elephants were saved, today some of the survivors of that time are known as the Hoanib elephants. The small herds, and even some single mothers, visit the western Hoanib river annually when the Albida pods fall, and the river floods to the dunes in the Skeleton Coast Park.

The small fragmented herds of Hoanib elephants are the best known of all the elephants in Namibia. Much is known about their habits and individual animals have an identification file, even their footprints are photographed and recorded. The most famous of the Hoanib elephant, is named Hoaruseb Bull. Hoaruseb was first recorded by a student, Mr. PJ Viljoen, at a time when the killing of the desert elephant was at its worst. Viljoen noted him in company with three small orphan elephants whose herds had been shot. Hoaruseb is known for his gentle nature, his fame has spread afar and, as a tribute to all the desert elephant, he has been immortalized in a life size bronze replica. The statue is in a private collection in the USA.

These elephants are a world renowned attraction for tourists seeking the specialist's experience; they are the centre of hot debate in conservation circles when the question of their unique adaptation to the desert is discussed. The future survival of these elephant depends upon the local community's conservation programme and the benefits of income which the tourists can bring to the rural west.

The Save the Rhino Trust, in collaboration with the local community, has embarked on a plan for the monitoring and management of these elephant. The programme will initially be incorporated into the community based rhino monitoring programme. The SRT with the community will need to develop the income potentials of the

increasing tourism which the desert elephants have attracted. The SRT Kaoko rhino project is presently partly funded by Swiss Friends.

During the 16 years of conservation work SRT has gained important insight to conservation and tourism in fragile areas. The project hopes to combine the monitoring of the elephants in their desert habitat with a programme of specialised tourism. The need is to generate income for training the community in conservation management and tourism hospitality.

The SRT's aim is to help develop a partnership between ecotourism experts with local communities and conservation . The project will work in direct co-operation with NACOBTA (The Namibian Community Based Tourism Association). The plans, with local community support, are to build a base camp, education centre and tourist bungalows with campsite. It is hoped that the architecture used in the development will incorporate local design and aesthetic use of natural materials.

Tourism development investors who may be interested in the SRT programme plans for the western Hoanib desert elephant should contact:

Blythe Loutit

Save the Rhino Trust

Fax 264 (0)64 40 38 29

email: srtrhino@iafrica.com.na.

With reference to the request from Mr. Andreas Kasoana, to draw up an agreement with Save the Rhino Trust for a partnership for the use of the PTO granted to Mr. Andreas Kasoana situated on the north bank of the Hoanib River, it is agreed as follows:

PROPOSAL FOR HOANIB RIVER RHINO AND ELEPHANT
MONITORING AND TRAINING BASE FOR SAVE THE RHINO TRUST IN
CO-OPERATION WITH ANDREAS KASOANA

1. The SRT will work in co-ordination with the organisation NAC OBTA to raise funds to finance the building of a rustic camp which will include a campsite and facilities for a tourist rest camp.
2. The training base will offer facilities to incorporate training in basic ecology, wildlife ecology, wildlife and tourist monitoring systems, local information, guided trails and active basic hospitality courses or the neighboring community.
3. The training base will offer assistance in designing tourist campsites
4. The SRT will do elephant and tourist monitoring patrols in the Hoanib river and surrounding areas, offering tourists a chance to join a guided outing while on a monitoring patrol.
5. The camp will work in close co-operation with the camp of Archie Gawuseb and any concession holder or conservancy in the area.
6. The sharing of income from tourists staying at the rest camp is to be decided by further discussions with Andreas Kasoana.
7. Income which may be allocated to SRT will be recycled into the restcamp for training and development.
8. SRT is desirous of co-operation with all parties for the benefit of the environment, the wildlife and the community.
9. As this PTO site is in need of special attention regarding the aesthetic appeal and must be built as complimentary to the majestic scenic positioning of the campsite, the SRT would preferably wish to consult with experienced architects and environmentally aesthetic builders and landscape designers before embarking on the development of the training base.
10. The SRT will pay all expenses to bring consultant advisors to the site of the PTO.

Signed: _____

Andreas Kasoana

Signed: _____

Blythe Loutit

Date: _____

Date: _____

CONSERVANCY BOARD
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP & COMMITTEES
(INCLUDING ADVISORS AND CONSULTANTS)

ADMINISTRATION
Vehicles
Equipment
Staff

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION
ONE REPRESENTATIVE
PER ORGANISATION

ECONOMICS ADVISORS
Budgets
Allocation of income
Donors

Social & Cultural ORGANISATIONS
Churches - Schools - Clinics
Women's League - Unions - Sport

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION & TOURISM ORGANISATIONS
Veld Committees - Indigenous Guides
Campsites - Traditional Villages

CONSERVATION BASED NGO'S
Commercial & Non-Profit Organisations
Education, Species Survival,
Research, Hunting

COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE
Gardens
Livestock
Water & Wildlife farming (Ostrich)

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE
Monitoring wildlife species
Wildlife Census & Hunting Quotas
Tourism impact

**HOANIB MEETING
7 MAY 1999**

Place: SESFONTEIN
Chairman: Mr. S. Tjongarero
Secretary: P.P. Kasaona
Translator: John K. Kasaona

AGENDA:

- 1. Sesfontein.**
- 2. Overview of the Hoanib**
- 3. Elephants in the Hoanib**
- 4. Rhino in the Hoanib**
- 5. Conservancy issues**
- 6. PTO's**
- 7. Traffic in the Hoanib**

Chairman

Thanking everyone present and letting the members of the meeting know what an honor it is for him to be chairman of this meeting, also saying how grateful he is that everyone came to an agreement as to which languages will be used.

A warm welcome extended to the following people:

Members of the Constituency.
Members of the Board.
Ministers and Directors present.
NGO's and Consultants.

And also a warm welcome to the LAC.11

1. Sesfontein

When we talk about Sesfontein, Damaraland, then we talk about a very valuable piece of land. Where conservancy is of great value. We call it the backbone of Damaraland and it is the most beautiful place that will draw many tourists. One thing we must keep in mind is that we are not the only ones that has a right to this land. The animals not present here today also has the right to that claim. Elephants has to be seen as friends and has to be protected but a solution has to be found for the two parties to live together in peace. Both humans and animals has the right to live off this land. If we could all work together to solve the problems in this area and to conserve what was left to us by our ancestors, we could all live in peace.

The Agenda of this meeting has been set up according to the time estimated for each topic. With this meeting we would like to come up with a workplan

We saw from the Regional Council that by working together, we could solve our problems, but the communities are divided into groups, and that brings us nowhere. Sesfontein, Khowarib, etc. used to work together, but now it is no longer the case. We have to make use of the sources given to us by nature and ensure that the future generation can also make use of it.

Traditional use of the Hoanib (in the past) - John Gawanab (Damara)

In the past, the Hoanib was a very safe place. No fighting, no arguing. It was a very peaceful place. Before you entered the Hoanib, you first had to talk to the ancestors.

The Hoanib was and is very important for the fact that the river always has water, especially underground. Where there is water, there is life. In the past people did not have livestock. They relied entirely on wildlife. The people living in the area had their own hunting spots. When an animal from one hunting spot went into someone else's hunting spot, the owner of that hunting spot would go in and shoot the animal. The hunting spots were divided into plots and each plot

had an owner. Animals such as elephant and rhino were respected. When you saw elephant and rhino tracks, you left the area as soon as possible. Birds use to give an indication whether there were wildlife around. People used to live in the Mutorip area. The same people used to share their harvest areas. A child was sent down to the area to see if there was enough food, but the people always had food. The people of Sesfontein were brought here by the Namas who taught them about religion and horticulture.

Chairman: Thanking the Damaras for making their valid contribution.

Johannes Ganamub. - (Herero) Thanking the Chairman for giving him the chance to speak. In the Herero language a river is called Ondondu. It is only the Kasaona people that lived in this area along the river. The river has plant and animal life. The trees used to provide food for human consumption. Some of the trees also provided food for animals. We practiced traditional hunting on Gemsbok, and after the animal was slaughtered, the belly was used as a water container and the hide as a blanket. Springbok were caught with snares and Zebra with bow and arrow. People used to live in peace. The elephants using the river are very peaceful. They do not like noise that is why we are expecting from the conservancy in the Hoanib, to respect what we have here and not to change or disturb anything..

Chairman: Thanking the Herero's for their contribution and also and saying that Johannes made a very important statement about people who are not used to elephant could endanger the lives of elephants. Elephant and all wildlife has become a global concern and we should all (Ministries, NGO'S, Communities) work together on protecting them.

Chairman: Are there any questions or more contributions?

Director: I would like to know under which tribe the Kasaona fell.

Chairman: They were under the Namas but they actually were Hereros. Kakurukonje was the headman.

2. **OVERVIEW OF THE HOANIB (Dr. Keith Leggit)**

Thank you Mr. Tjongarero and everyone present.

I have some notes that I want you to read at a later stage. I am just following up on what has been said here already. The river starts at Otjivasandu to the Hoanib and finishes at Mowebay. The catchment is about 17 000 square km. The Eastern part is called the Ombonde and on your way to Khovarib you find the Hoanibriver. Most of the rainfall is in Otjivasandu, but lower down it is about zero. The rainfall varies from 15mm in Sesfontein to 120mm in Khovarib. In dry areas water is very important. (The area has about 1000 Springbok, 200 Oryx). Finally we come to the document that covers the whole area. We are working partners in this event.

(Including conservationists, NGO's and the Ministry).

Director: When they operate in the area, to whom do they submit their information?

Dr. Keith Leggit: To the Steering Committee and to the donors.

Chairman: I support the question of the Director. I think the Regional Council and the Ministry needs reports of what is happening.

Dr. Keith Leggit: Pastor Hendricks is in the Steering Committee.

Chairman: The Regional Governor must receive an official report each month, not only from the councillor.

Mr. Tsuseb: What is your timing on this project.

Dr. Keith Leggit: 3 Years. Until 2001.

Lucky Kasaona: I have heard about evaluation and monitoring. How is it done?

Dr. Keith Leggit: The training are given by us or by someone appointed by the Committee, and above all, I am also available.

Boas Ertjies: Is there any threat in the flow of the river, except the rainfall?

Dr. Keith Leggit: Overgrazing. Too many tourists will decrease the value of the area.

Boas Ertjies: Do you have any recommendation on your study?

Dr. Keith Leggit: It is too early to do the recommendation.

3. **ELEPHANTS IN THE HOANIB** - John Patterson

- Benefits to the Community
- Camping Sites
- Qualified Tour guide

I did not prepare myself for this meeting, but when I am out of line, I am sure you will be able to help me. There are about 60 elephants in the Hoanib area, but when disturbed too much, they cross the small rivers to drink at Ouses. Every tourist visiting, wants to see desert elephants. The importance of the Hoanib to the tourists are the desert elephants, where films are made and where they can take photos. The animals are very often disturbed by cars crossing the Hoanib. I

think we must look at the conservation and value of the elephants in the Hoanib.

Director: Since the catchment is small, and you want to establish a lodge, how will you guide tourists through the river?

J. Patterson: With the right tour guide, everything is possible. They should look at the following:

- Unnecessary camping sites.
- Unqualified persons not to walk on foot.
- Monitoring of tourists in the area.

4. **RHINO IN THE HOANIB** - Simson Urikhob (Deputy Director)

The Hoanib does not have Rhino, but they move across it from tributaries. Water is very important because they depend on it for survival. We put up a gate where tourist can get information before driving into the Hoanib. To MET, IRDNC and the Regional Governor I would like to say that we are willing to co-operate in the development of the area.

Jasper Kasaona: What is the changes in the behaviour of Rhino today to those of the past?

S. Urikhob: They don't move around. It is only the bull that moves around.

P. Kasupi: What happened to the money that was collected at the gate in the past?

S. Urikhob: I do not want to dig in the past.

Director: We still don't have the status of the Rhino in the Hoanib.

S. Urikhob: We have the necessary information at the office for anyone interested.

John Kasaona: In the past, were there any rhino living in the area?

Director: Maybe there is information at the office, but I have never followed it up.

Mr. Tsuseb: What is the percentage of the calves up to date?

Director: Calves are born at Otjijapa, but they disappear.

Obedt Hambo: What does Nature Conservation do about this?

Chairman: The community must assist Nature Conservation with the monitoring of rhino.

Nahor Howaseb : We keep record of rhino and give the report through to the IRDNC, MET, Conservation and the Community. Obedt is also a member.

Director: I will assist him since these are endangered species. Why don't we call an urgent meeting to discuss this problem?

Owen Smith: Because of a lack of co-ordination and information. The community are trying their best.

Boas: Do they disappear or does somebody find a carcass.

S. Urikhob: The people feeding the camel found a dead cow about 2 or 3 times, took photos and sent it to us.

5. CONSERVANCY ISSUES

The MET was in charge of Game monitoring. Foot patrols are there to try and identify animals, and game monitoring. Community Game Guards does the same work. Administering of Law, including illegal hunting, stray tourists, not using main roads. In the park you can fine someone but in the open areas it is impossible.

Problems that you can identify:

- Unguided tours.
- Camping at water points and under trees which elephants eat from.
- Uncontrolled filming and publication in the Hoanib.

6. PTO's - Lucky Kasaona

Two PTO's have been given in the same area. One to the community, the other to an individual. Will there not be conflict. Two parties have come together and agreed to form one PTO. Problems with PTO's are that they are being appointed without the knowledge of the community. Different ministries have been contacted regarding this problem. There is a lack of co-operation between the Headman, Ministry of Local Government and Housing and MET. Chairman: SCC has the right to appoint PTO's when they are legally registered. This problem needs priority attention therefore we ask the Director to please sort this out with the Ministry.

7. TRAFFIC IN THE HOANIB - Dirk Silver

Tourists drive in the Hoanib without any discipline. Damage are being caused by motorbikes and 4x4's and also tourist that leaves their litter near or in the river.

Present Plan - Sesfontein

- Everyone is aware of the problems we have at the river.
- Look for possible solutions.
- Palmwag concession is a problem.
- To protect the river frequent meetings has to be held with all parties involved.

Suggestions to protect the river.

- Area No. 1: Must be made smaller.
- Area No. 2: We are asking for the area to be made smaller because Palmwag does not have the sources to protect the river.
- Area No. 3: Trophy hunting area.
- Area No.4: Area not in dispute, therefor area belonging to PTO's and the community.
- Area No.5 Khowarigb schlutch - Farming.
- Area No.6: Environmental Centre.
- Area No. 7: Was a hunting camp, but MET did not approve.

Lucky - Area No. 7:- Uncontrolled vehicles: Animals are being prevented from going to the River.
Camping near the water points.

Rules for trespassers: Control points.
Cars to be minimized.
Tourguides.
Specified roads for motorbikes.
Pamphlets.
Permits.

Status - Benefits to the community: To set up a Lodge.
Entrance fee.
Horse/Camel riding.

PTO's: Two PTO's at the same place to different people.
Only one Lodge to be set up.

Gaobeb: I would like to congratulate the Sesfontein conservancy with their progress.
It is a very sensitive issue to set up a Lodge with noisy engines that will cause a disturbance in the area.
Tourism is a very sensitive issue - Theft and burglary.
The tourist wants to encounter Africa the way he heard or read.
Criminals and theft has to be avoided.
Keep the area clean.

Stefanus: Palmwag concession: Oppressing the community.

- There are obstacles that slows the process of conservancy forming.
- People are claiming areas where there are no members.
- The chiefs has the right to decide what has to be done in an Area.

Brian Jones - Summary(Problems)

- Uncontrolled Tourism.
- Benefits to communities.
- Large area occupied by Palmwag.
- PTO's. - L.A.C ; B.J. ; B E. to set up a workplan that will make it easier to handle PTO's.
- Training.
- Status.

If we don't get assistance from leaders, there won't be any progress in the area.
PTO's should not be allowed without any knowledge of the community or the area.

Boas Ertjies: Are we talking about a part of the Hoanib or the whole river?

BJones: Specifically area 1 and at the schlutch for dual purpose.

Maxie: Would like to have the same meeting in June covering Benefits to the communities; conservancies; Ideas.

Prerequisite of the Regional Council is that if the land belongs to the community,

Any income should also go to the community.

Filming: As soon as the conservancy has been legally registered.

Committee would like to see the following in the Hoanib area:

Workplan.

Involvement (Committee; LAC; NGO's; Councillor; Leaders.)

Training: Tourguides; Managers; Tourism.

Tour operators would also like to assist in this matter.

Committee and Community should also be involved in training.

NACOBTA.

Communication is also a great aspect in the area. We have to get multilingual people to assist the tourists.

Tourguide can be young person from the community.

Training has to be done on a contract basis. (\pm 3 years)

Ugab River Camp. Recycling, Tourism IT.

1. Grass roots project
2. No bureaucracy proj.
3. Yes. a herd of elephants came by last night in the moonlight - they're headed ~~to~~ in the direction of the Skelley Coast Park.
4. Oh this is so so romantic - this is what I have dreamed of all my life. Can I volunteer to work here?
5. Have you seen the lovely little girl over there? ~~45~~ Are all these families benefitting from the tourists?
6. What an interesting place.
Kawango & runs for the Ugab.
Himba Danara Kawango Ousambo
Herero

Shingwetzi
Scirperoides

2/10/05

Chief Jeremia Gaobaeb
P.O. Box 123, Khorixas
Sesfontein

30 June, 1999

The Chairperson

Re: Meeting in Swakopmund on 30th June, 1999

Points of concern

1. I.R.D.N.C. , S.R.T., and NACOBTA are operating in my area, (Sesfontein Constituency)
2. WWF, World Wildlife Fund, and I.R.D.N.C. are only inviting my subordinates, why am I not involved or invited to any meetings taking place, as the area is under my mandate.
3. On investigation by MET, people from Khowarib and Purros are unhappy about the methods used.
4. Khowarib community want their own conservancy (zoned) as well as Warmquelle and Purros
5. Only IRDNC is acknowledged in the Sesfontein Conservancy and not SRT or any other operating organisations. They are never invited to any meetings taking place. Why?, when the SRT in particular has monitored the wildlife in the area for the last 18 years.
6. Who gave IRDNC the rights to take away the PTO's?
7. Only the Chief, the Governor and the Ministry of Lands and Resettlement may sign the PTO forms.
8. The way that matters are handled at present are causing conflict in our region.
9. No monitoring of tourism and wildlife is done by the present conservancy donors, and game guards are not taught the proper methods.

This is the communities, under my jurisdiction's, requests. They are busy proceeding with their petition.



Chief Jeremia Gaobaeb

29 Jun. '99 10:40

FAX

Blythe,
Copies for Joshel
Guttenmeyer
P. 2
P. 1

Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation
P O Box 9681 Windhoek Namibia
Tel: 264-61-228506/9 Fax: 264-61-228530

To: **JOKKEL GRUTTEMAYER - DAS**

28th June 1999

Re: Recommendations for the Hoanib meeting (sorry it was not included in the document delivered earlier)

Dear *Sir*

Herewith receive the recommendations of the Hoanib meeting as indicated in the previous document.

We are sorry that we could not get it to you together with the other document.

Kind regards,

Sandi Tjaronda.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HOANIB RIVER MEETING SESFONTEIN, KUNENE REGION, MAY 7-8, 1999-05-11

1. Introduction

A meeting to discuss the current and future utilisation of the Hoanib River was held at Sesfontein from May 7-8, 1999. The meeting was called by the emerging Sesfontein conservancy and was attended by a wide range of stakeholders. These included the Governor of Kunene Region (who chaired the meeting), the Councillor for the Sesfontein constituency, traditional leaders, the Director of Resource Management and other officials in the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, NGOs, and other interested parties.

This document summarises the main conclusions and recommendations of the meeting. Minutes of the meeting have been prepared separately.

2. Conclusions

The meeting concluded that there were four main problems associated with the utilisation of the Hoanib River west of Sesfontein:

- ◆ There is no appropriate legislation to control tourism (especially self-drive tourists) in the Hoanib. Uncontrolled tourism leads to environmental damage and disturbance of wildlife. Many tourists leave their rubbish in the river bed, create new tracks, camp close to water holes or on elephant paths, and harass elephants from vehicles. A new trend is the use of the river by people flying microlight aircraft and using four-wheeler and other types of motorcycle. An associated issue is the lack of infrastructure in the area such as good roads and lodges and campsites, which encourages tourists to drive off road and camp in unsuitable places.
- ◆ At present the local community and the emerging conservancy (which represents the community) receive no financial benefits from the use of the river by tourists and tour operators. However, the land is communal land and although formal title rests with the State, the land essentially belongs to the community, which should therefore benefit from its use by outsiders. The ability of the community, through the conservancy, to gain income from use of the river is made more difficult by the fact that the river falls within the Palmwag Concession area.

- ◆ Although the number of tourists and tour operators using the river is increasing, there is no agreed and approved management plan for the area which can guide decision-making on the use of resources and the issue of PTOs for tourism development. In one case for example, two PTOs were issued in the same area for similar purposes. A management plan is needed which can specify the type of development appropriate for the river, how and when grazing and other local uses can integrate with tourism activities, and what restrictions need to be placed on tourists.
- ◆ In order to fully realise the potential benefit from the river, community members require training in a general understanding of tourism, and in the skills necessary for working in and running lodges and campsites.
- ◆ Despite being an area of ecological and cultural importance, the Hoanib River west of Sesfontein has no special protection or special status. Both the main groups that used the river in the past, the Hereros and Damaras, view the river as a holy area which should not be subject to disturbance. Both groups had rules in the past for using resources in the river and its adjacent area, and view the conservancy approach as a way to restore the former management system and status of the river.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Lack of appropriate legislation

The meeting agreed that the conservancy needs to be able to exert control over the entry of tourists into the conservancy and specifically the Hoanib River area. Examples of regulations that might be made by the conservancy are the following: a) tourists must be accompanied by a local guide; b) tourists must stay on designated tracks; c) tourists must camp only at designated places; d) tourists must not disturb wildlife; e) control points should be erected at the entrances to the Hoanib; f) tourists must obtain a permit to enter the Hoanib; g) no helicopters or motorbikes will be allowed in the Hoanib; h) the number of vehicles allowed to enter the Hoanib at any one time will be restricted according to a set carrying capacity.

Recommendation: that the draft Tourism Act should include a provision that enables conservancies to draft their own regulations for controlling tourism and establishing special zones within the conservancy where extra restrictions will apply. The regulations should include provision for the conservancy to charge a fee to self-drive tourists.

Recommendation: that the tourism concession rights received by a conservancy on registration be investigated as a mechanism for controlling tourism and, if necessary, strengthened.

Recommendation: that ways are found of ensuring enforcement of the regulations that are made by the conservancy, both by the MET and by the conservancy.

Action: Brian Jones (an independent consultant), Boas Erkkie (MET), and Gabes Gariseb (MET) were tasked with taking these recommendations to the appropriate people in Windhoek dealing with the draft Tourism Act.

3.2 Lack of benefits to the Community/conservancy

The meeting agreed there were three target groups for increasing income to the community/conservancy from tourism in the Hoanib. These are the commercial tour operators, private self-drive tourists and film makers.

3.2.1 Income from tour operators

Recommendation: the conservancy should prepare information to tour operators explaining that they must negotiate with the conservancy for access to its land, once the conservancy is registered. NACOBTA can assist in conveying information to operators at the TASA AGM.

Recommendation: the conservancy should investigate the establishment of control points at access points to the river to control entry, provide information and collect fees (the use of the conservancy office should also be considered for this purpose).

Recommendation: a meeting should be convened as soon as possible with the Palmwag concessionnaire to discuss the payment to the conservancy of levies collected in the past and to finalise the negotiations on the development of a new concession with the conservancy instead of the MET.

Recommendation: the conservancy should begin negotiations with the Sesfontein Fort as soon as possible.

action: All recommendations to be implemented by the conservancy committee.

3.2.2 Income from private tourists

This will be covered if conservancies are able to charge a fee to self-drive tourists under the draft Tourism Act. However, a voluntary fee could be charged in the meantime.

Recommendation: the conservancy should prepare an information pamphlet for self-drive tourists explaining what they should and should not do in the conservancy in general and in the Hoanib in particular.

Recommendation: that the pamphlet should explain the aims and objectives of the conservancy and request that tourists pay a fee for entering the conservancy (once it has been registered).

Action: recommendation to be implemented by the conservancy committee.

3.2.3 Income from film makers

Recommendation: the conservancy should draft guidelines for fees to be paid by film makers who use the conservancy in general and the Hoanib in particular.

Action: recommendation to be implemented by the conservancy committee.

3.3 Management plan for the Hoanib

Recommendation: the conservancy should call a meeting of all stakeholders to begin developing a management plan for the Hoanib River west of Sesfontein. The following stakeholders should be involved:

Conservancy Committee
Regional Councillor for the Sesfontein constituency
MET
NGOs (Including NACOBTA)
Representatives of the Sesfontein Fort and Palmwag Concession
Traditional leaders
Legal Assistance Centre

(Brian Jones was identified as a possible facilitator for the process.)

Action: The conservancy committee to convene a meeting to begin the process of developing a management plan for the Hoanib before June 15, 1999.

3.4 Training

The meeting agreed that conservancy members needed training in a general understanding of tourism (e.g. the needs of international tourists), as tour guides and in running campsites and lodges.

Recommendation: that the conservancy committee make use of existing training courses such as those provided by NACOBTA, NATH, and tour operators such as Etendeka.

Recommendation: that general training in tourism be provided to various target groups such as the traditional leadership, councillors, and the community in order to enhance their understanding of tourism.

Recommendation: that the community game guards be used to provide training in bushcraft (e.g. for tour guides).

Recommendation: that the Sesfontein Fort provides training to conservancy members as tour guides and in the use of German.

Action:

1) *Conservancy committee to identify 10 suitable candidates for training. Candidates should be able to speak English and Afrikaans reasonably well. They should be bound by contract to work in the conservancy for a certain period in return for their training.*

2) *Conservancy committee to contact the relevant organisations to investigate and arrange training opportunities.*

3) *Conservancy committee to ensure that provision of training at all levels is made part of the conservancy's agreements with tourism operators such as the Sesfontein Fort and Palmwag and any new operators.*

3.5 Status of the Hoanib

The meeting agreed that the previous holy status afforded the River by its past inhabitants should be kept in mind for all future planning.

Recommendation: that the Hoanib River west of Sesfontein be zoned as a special area within the conservancy and this should be reflected in the proposed management plan for the area. Farming should still be allowed within this special zone under some form of regulation (e.g. in times of drought). The existing conservancy land use and zoning plan should be used as a starting point for plans to zone the Hoanib as a special area.

Action: The conservancy committee to review its zoning plan for the Hoanib and revise this if necessary in conjunction with the development of a management plan for the river west of Sesfontein.