

# Keep Namibia's wildlife on the land!



*Understanding the conservation benefits of wildlife use in Namibia*





*Life in rural areas is often tough, yet returns from wildlife use can make a real difference*



*Healthy populations of most historically-occurring species roam suitable habitat*



*Hunting has always been a part of African culture*



*Wildlife often comes into conflict with livelihood staples such as crops, but losses can be offset by the returns generated from wildlife use*



*Elephants are a great tourism attraction but can be difficult for farmers to live with*



*A wide range of returns from natural resources helps keep natural habitats intact*



*Nambia protects wildlife in national parks, in community conservation areas and on private land*



*Wildlife use funds the often difficult task of well over 500 community game guards*

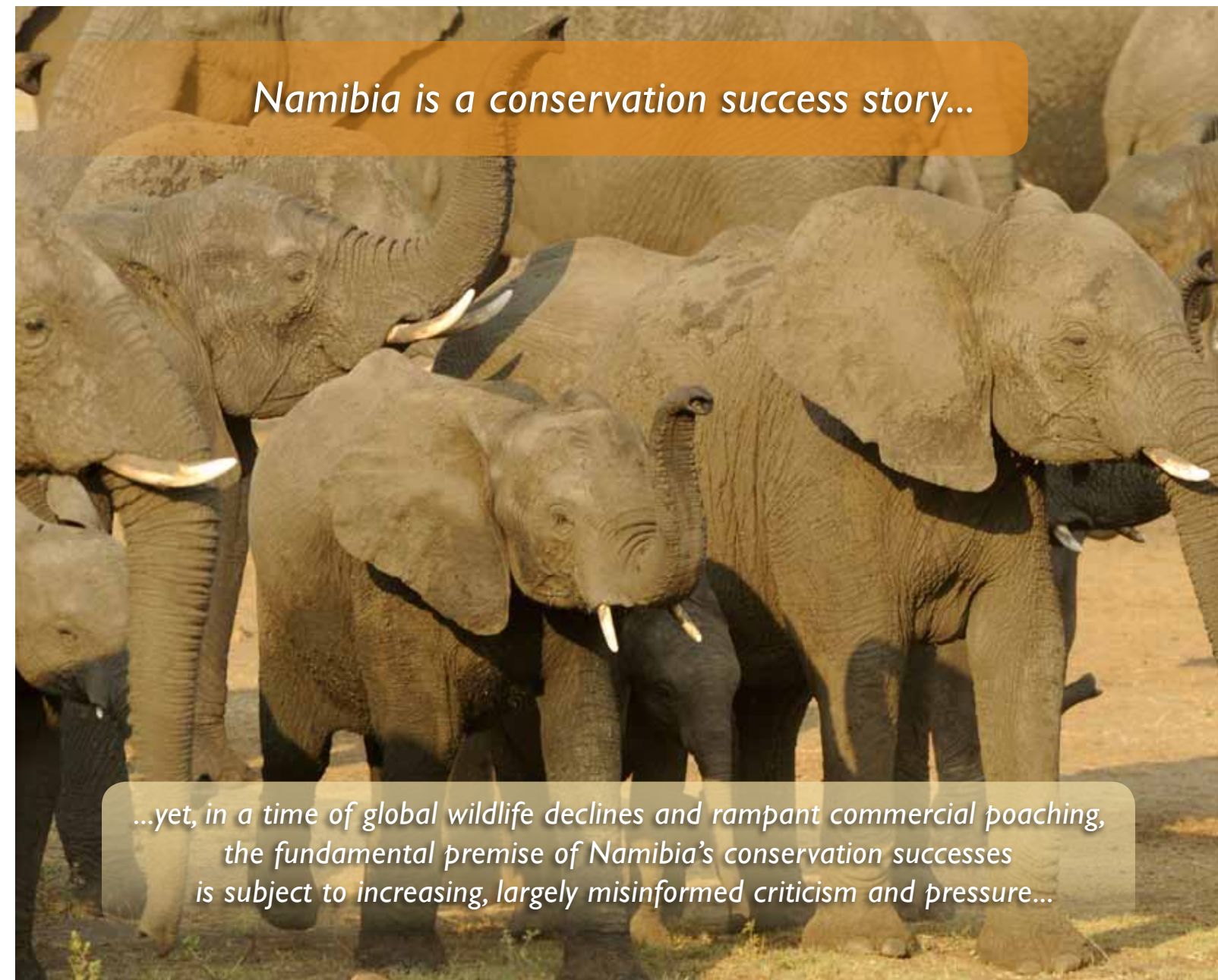
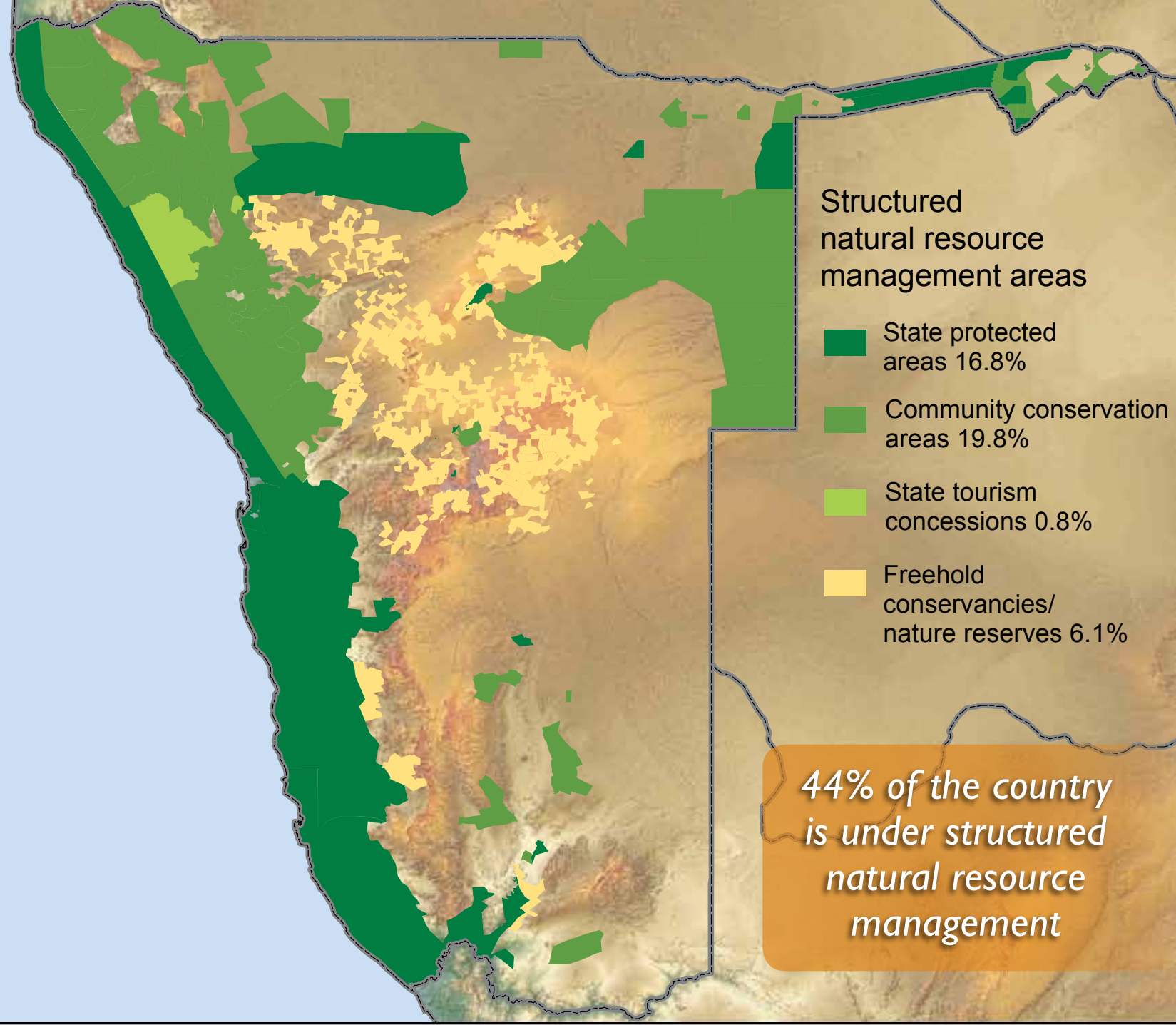


*It is possible to balance various land uses such as stock herding, crop production and wildlife management*



*Lions and other large predators occur on farmland but must be managed to minimise conflicts*







## Namibia is a conservation success story:

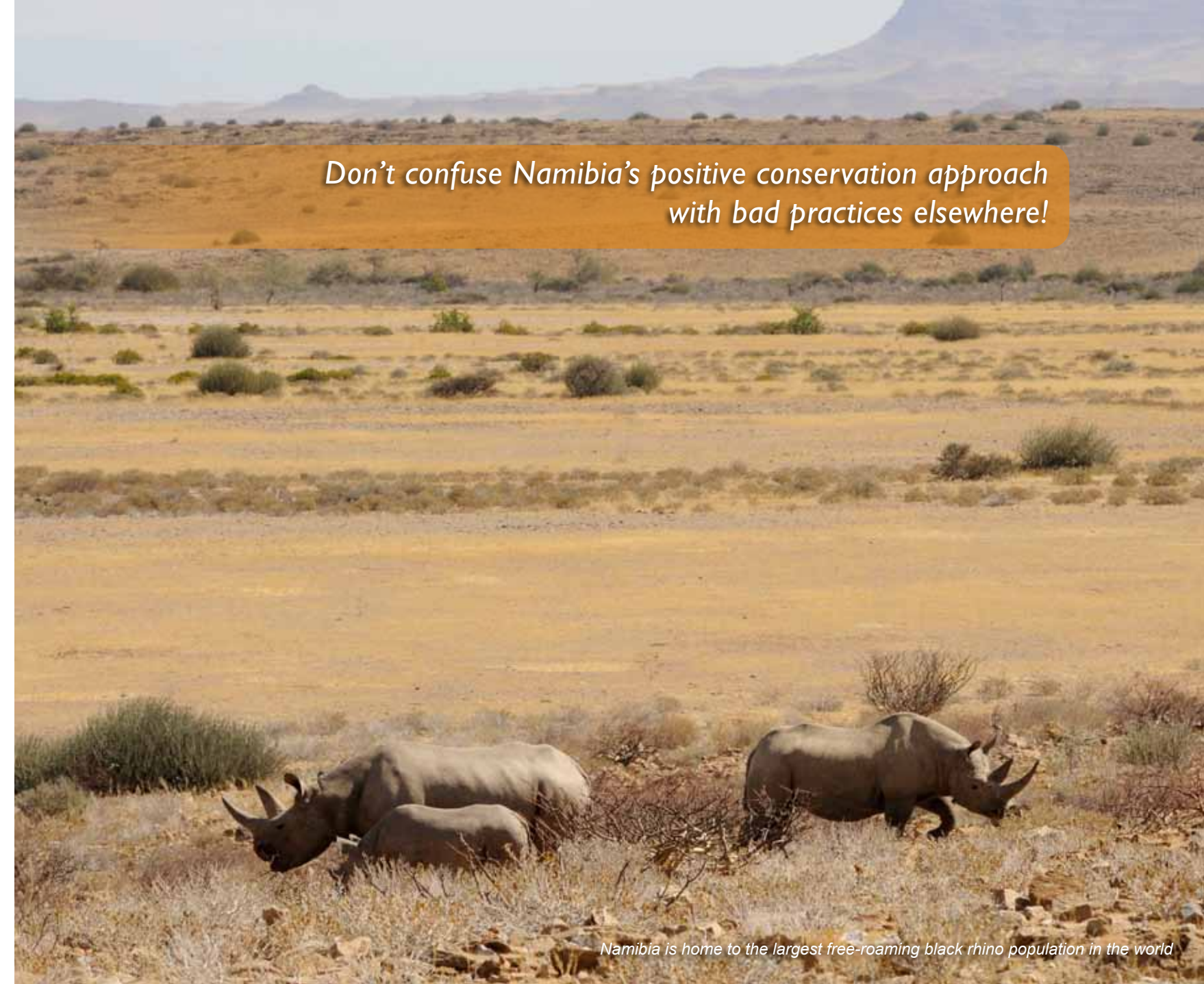
### Conservation highlights:

1. **Namibia has healthy populations of black and white rhinos**, including the largest free-roaming black rhino population outside parks in the world.
2. **Namibia's elephant population has grown** from an estimated 7,500 animals in 1995 to around 20,000 today – a large percentage occurs outside parks.
3. **Namibia has healthy lion populations** in several national parks and an expanding lion population outside parks, which has grown in north-western Namibia from an estimated 25 animals in 1995 to around 150 today.
4. **Namibia has the largest population of free-roaming cheetahs** in the world – the vast majority of which occur outside parks.
5. **Namibia has healthy giraffe populations** in several national parks and an expanding giraffe population outside parks.
6. **Namibia has healthy leopard populations** in several national parks and leopards occur across much of Namibia's private and communal farmlands.
7. **Namibia has a healthy crocodile population** with a large percentage occurring outside parks.
8. **Namibia has translocated** more than 10,000 animals of 15 different game species – including rare and valuable species such as black rhino, sable and giraffe – out of parks into communal areas to boost populations there.
9. **Namibia has reinstated several species** that had become locally extinct in communal areas.

### Background information:

1. **Namibia's economy is largely reliant on natural resources**; about two-thirds of the population live in rural areas and are directly dependent upon natural resources for their livelihoods.
2. **Wildlife populations have shown dramatic recoveries** on both private and communal farmland after drastic declines prior to independence due to drought, poaching and detrimental policies.
3. **Healthy populations of nearly all historically-occurring species roam suitable habitat**; those species of particular conservation concern are receiving special attention.
4. **Agricultural policies and approaches**, rather than conservation practices, have limited the population health of some species such as buffalo and wild dog.
5. **Wildlife is managed and protected** in national parks, in community conservation areas and on private land across well over 40% of Namibia.
6. **The success is based on giving wildlife a real value** for the local people who manage and protect it – and bear the cost of living with it.
7. **Community conservation generated over N\$ 72 million** in returns for rural communities and facilitated around 6,500 jobs during 2013.
8. **Community conservation contributed about N\$ 478 million** in net national income to Namibia's economy in 2013.
9. **The sustainable use of wildlife and other natural resources** is enshrined in Namibia's constitution; natural resources are a part of our national heritage to be used sustainably for the benefit of present and future generations of Namibians.

Don't confuse Namibia's positive conservation approach with bad practices elsewhere!



Namibia is home to the largest free-roaming black rhino population in the world



## Namibia offers real solutions for wildlife outside parks:

In Namibia, most communal land (around 40% of the country) and privately-owned land (around 43% of the country) is used to generate a living for the land holders. Livestock herding, crop production and game management are the main land uses. **Conservation outside national parks** therefore means giving wildlife a tangible value so that people keep it on the land – rather than eradicating it in favour of livestock or crops.

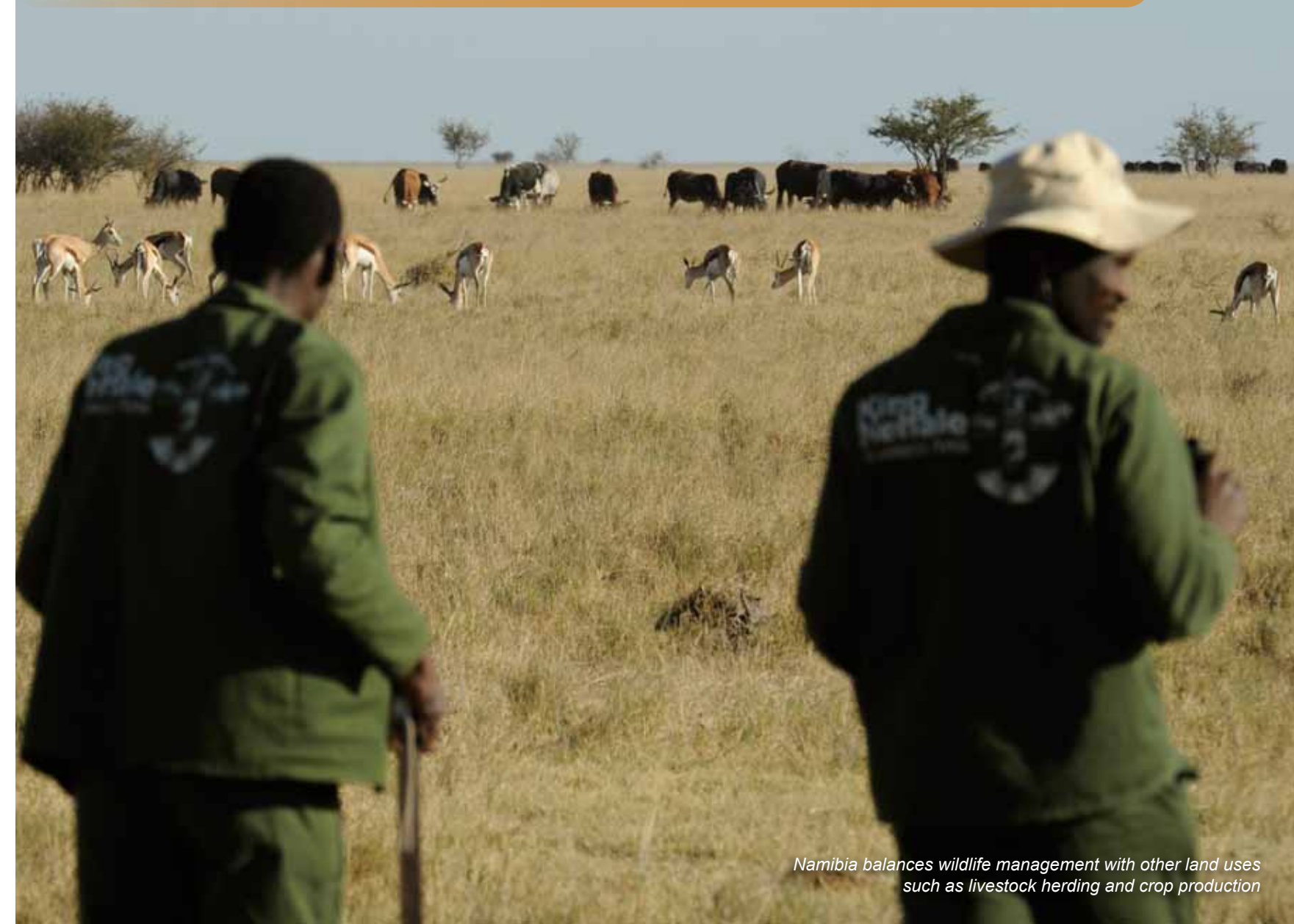
*Keeping wildlife on the land means living with wildlife – wildlife that can be dangerous and destructive.*

### **Disney is not reality – in real life...**

- ... lions, crocodiles and other predators eat livestock and sometimes kill people
- ... elephants raid crops and destroy water installations and also sometimes kill people
- ... many other wild animals such as hippos, buffaloes and rhinos can also be difficult and dangerous to live with

- **Wildlife use is a traditional and integral part of life in rural Africa** – hunting is a part of African culture. This was the same in Europe and America – when people still lived from the land and the wildlife was still there.
- **Namibia protects around 17% of its land in national parks** – that's more than most countries.
- **Community conservation areas cover close to 20% of Namibia** and embrace around 175,000 people.
- **Wildlife conservation outside parks must be seen as wildlife management for the benefit of the people** – not wildlife preservation for the benefit of an urban ideal.
- **Rural people need the land to survive** – for livestock herding, for crop production and for wildlife management.
- **Wildlife management outside parks is an economic activity** – just like farming – otherwise wildlife will be pushed out by land uses that generate better returns from the same land at lower costs.
- **Photographic tourism is an ideal use of intact ecosystems with healthy wildlife populations**, but can only be practiced in accessible areas with enough scenic interest and/or high wildlife densities – this leaves large areas without tourism value or income.
- **Wildlife use funds community conservation structures** – including more than 80 communal conservancies and around 530 community game guards.
- **Wildlife use funds anti-poaching activities** by government agencies, community conservation organisations and private sector initiatives.

Don't confuse farmland  
with national parks!



Namibia balances wildlife management with other land uses  
such as livestock herding and crop production



## Namibia practices adaptive management:

*Namibia uses a variety of systems to monitor and manage wildlife populations. The systems differ between national parks, community conservation areas and private farmland and are tailored to meet local needs. Management is by no means perfect in all areas or at all times. Yet the general approach of actively using wildlife outside parks for the benefit of rural communities has proven to be successful, enabling healthy wildlife populations and strengthening local livelihoods. Namibia's dynamic conservation community ensures that environmental concerns are publicly recognised. While a balance between economic development and conservation in rural Africa is often problematic, most stakeholders strive to address issues. Collaboration between government, local communities, support NGOs and the private sector is a key to Namibia's conservation success.*

*No management approach or system is perfect. The flexibility to adapt to changing needs and circumstances is more important than any one system or approach.*

- **The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has clear compliance requirements for wildlife management and use.**
- **Rigorous wildlife monitoring systems** include aerial surveys, road counts, foot patrols and remote wildlife tracking using cutting edge technology.
- **Stringent wildlife use control systems** facilitate effective management and minimise misuse.
- **Active monitoring of wildlife use tracks the effects of offtakes** over time to enable adaptation to population changes.
- **Regular quota revisions for wildlife use** are based on monitoring data and scientific guidelines.
- **Land use objectives differ between national parks, community conservation areas and private farmland**, resulting in varying wildlife densities in different areas.
- **Challenges are a part of wildlife management**, especially when attempting to balance the needs of large, dangerous wildlife with the needs of poor rural communities.
- **Increasing human-wildlife conflict is a result of increasing game numbers and a sign of successful conservation**; it is also one of the biggest challenges for wildlife management outside parks.
- **Wildlife in open, unfenced systems is free to roam and is susceptible to drought and disease**, resulting in natural population fluctuations.
- **Continually adapting activities to changing circumstances facilitates sustainability.**

*Don't confuse sound conservation practices with isolated negative incidents!*



## Using wildlife keeps it on the land!

### What exactly is the sustainable use of wildlife?

The well-controlled use of wildlife is based on scientific principles and sound knowledge. Namibia has one of the most intensive wildlife monitoring and utilisation control systems in Africa. Game populations are monitored through a variety of systems and annual counts. Offtakes are carried out according to annual quotas based on sustainable harvest rates. The offtakes are controlled through permits and reporting requirements. The effects of offtakes are also monitored and harvest rates are adapted to keep populations healthy. This enables a percentage of wildlife to be used without negative impacts on overall populations.

*The legal use of wildlife has enabled land holders to see wildlife as part of their livelihood, resulting in significant wildlife recoveries on both communal and private land.*

### Sustainable wildlife use can include these activities:

- **Conservation hunting** (fair chase hunting targeting old males and less than 3% of the total population).
- **Harvesting of wildlife for meat** (using minimum-impact methods and offtake rates well below natural population growth rates).
- **Live capture and translocation** (moving surplus animals from high density areas to low density areas within their natural range).

### Legal wildlife use...

- Is carried out by local land holders.
- Creates incentives to keep wildlife on the land.
- Keeps natural habitats intact.
- Provides alternative income and strengthens rural livelihoods, especially in remote, arid environments.
- Enables a mix of land uses including livestock and cropping.
- Strengthens resilience against impacts from climate change.
- Strengthens resilience against external economic or political influences and reduces dependency on agriculture.
- Pays for conservation structures and anti-poaching activities.
- Provides meat for rural communities and farm staff.
- Ensures stakeholders have a real interest in conserving wildlife.
- Reinforces traditional cultural values related to wildlife.
- Safeguards indigenous knowledge about wildlife

### Poaching...

- Is stealing from the rightful owners – the local communities.
- Steals valuable wildlife products for sale in other areas or countries.
- Takes the wildlife value out of the country and provides no local benefits.
- Undermines conservation activities.
- Undermines tourism and other legal wildlife uses.
- Has a severe impact on high value species.

*Commercial poaching, especially of rhinos and elephants, is a huge threat to Namibia's valuable wildlife and to a variety of industries based on that wildlife.*

*Don't confuse legal wildlife use  
with poaching!*



*Legal wildlife use enables a mix of land uses and facilitates a balance between wildlife management and other livelihood activities*



## Conservation hunting is a positive, traditional and legal land use!

### What exactly are wildernessing and conservation hunting?

Legal, well-managed conservation hunting, fishing and other harvesting of indigenous resources emphasise natural experiences in healthy environments. **These activities promote the protection of free-roaming indigenous wildlife in its natural habitat** and can be combined under the term wildernessing – to experience wilderness and to take part in its natural dynamics through regenerative activities based on traditional human survival skills.

### Conservation hunting is based on clear conservation criteria:

- Hunting targets only free-roaming indigenous species in natural habitats.
- Hunts have clear conservation outcomes.
- Hunting offtakes are sustainable, based on scientifically accepted offtake rates.
- Returns from hunts go directly to the communities conserving the wildlife.
- Hunting operators are able to provide proof of conservation results.

Conservation hunting and other wildernessing activities promote balanced land use, wildlife conservation and habitat protection while generating significant returns for land holders, local communities and conservation activities.

### The Namibian hunting fraternity generally promotes guidelines for ethical hunting, including:

- Stalking game in natural habitat to ensure a wilderness experience and fair chase.
- Ensuring minimum suffering for hunted animals.
- Targeting mature animals that can be harvested without negative impacts on the overall population.
- Ensuring that all meat and other products of all hunted animals are used.
- Hunting predators in an ethical manner only as part of predator management.

Ethics may be considered a personal value statement and can differ between individuals and cultures. Hunting ethics should be directly linked to conservation outcomes, primarily to promote the protection of free-roaming indigenous wildlife in its natural habitat.

### These and similar practices make no conservation contributions and should not be seen as part of conservation hunting:

- Canned hunting (shooting animals in small enclosures).
- Put-and-take hunting (releasing trophy animals for the sole purpose of shooting them).
- Breeding of rarities such as black springbok, golden oryx etc. for the trophy trade.
- Introduction of exotic species such as blesbok, nyala etc. for the trophy trade.
- Unethical shooting of animals based only on trophy size (rather than fair chase hunting based on a wilderness experience).
- Genetic manipulation of species gene pools to enhance trophy quality.

Don't confuse conservation hunting  
with canned hunting and other bad trophy hunting practices!



Conservation hunting promotes the protection of free-roaming, indigenous wildlife in its natural habitat



## Use it – or lose it!

### What would be lost, if wildlife could not be used to generate income outside parks?

*Hunting bans, which could consist either of Namibia stopping the activity of hunting, or of other countries stopping the import of hunting trophies – thereby closing the market – would have detrimental effects for wildlife outside parks, and for people currently benefitting from that wildlife.*

- *The loss of income to the national economy is currently not quantified, but is likely to be over a billion Namibia Dollars.*
- *A hunting ban would result in at least N\$ 33 million of lost annual income for conservancies and would have a direct impact on at least 48 of the 50 conservancies currently generating returns from natural resources.*
- *Loss of hunting income would result in at least 30 conservancies becoming financially unsustainable.*
- *If no immediate alternative income streams could be secured, a large percentage of the currently 530 game guards employed in conservancies across Namibia would stand to lose their jobs.*
- *The loss of natural resource management structures would have immediate negative effects on wildlife populations and the health of other natural resource stocks.*
- *The loss of community game guards would significantly reduce Namibia's ability to combat poaching, especially of free-roaming rhino and elephant.*
- *Discontinuing regular wildlife monitoring and annual game counts would seriously undermine any effective wildlife management.*
- *The loss of natural resource returns for local communities would result in an immediate reduction in people's tolerance of problematic wildlife such as elephants, lions and other predators.*
- *Reduced tolerance of wildlife would lead to increase retaliatory killing of problematic animals.*
- *A reduced sense of ownership over wildlife would lead to increased bush-meat poaching as well as poaching of high-value species.*
- *Across much of the currently 160,244 square kilometres of community conservation area, wildlife would no longer be considered a land-use priority and would be replaced by other uses such as livestock.*

### Using wildlife ensures its value for land holders!

*The economic value of wildlife creates the incentive for land holders to diversify land use activities to include wildlife. If wildlife is not used, but preserved only for its own sake, it has little place outside parks, because land outside parks is used to generate rural livelihoods and contribute to the national economy.*

- *Eat game meat to keep wildlife on the land – eat beef and put more cattle on the land.*
- *Harvesting sustainable numbers of wildlife keeps overall populations healthy and avoids over-stocking.*
- *Go wilderness to truly experience Africa's natural splendour and traditional human survival skills.*
- *Wilderness and ethical hunting promote wildlife conservation and habitat protection.*

*Don't confuse wildlife use  
with wildlife loss!*



*If wildlife has no value for local land users, it is replaced by other livelihood activities*



## Guided by science, not opinion!

In a modern world of inter-connectivity, social media and concerned global citizens, well-meaning but at times misinformed international opinion and pressure don't always bring positive change – they also have the ability to influence and change legitimate local activities for the worse. Local communities and environments are often the worst-affected.

- **Namibia has excellent knowledge of its wildlife populations**, based on ongoing research and regular, rigorous monitoring activities and systems.
- **Namibia has excellent monitoring and control mechanisms** in place for wildlife use.
- **Namibia conforms to CITES and IUCN specifications for wildlife use**, as well as those outlined by the International Convention of Biological Conservation.
- **Namibia has several decades of positive experience with sustainable wildlife use** – which has led to significant wildlife increases.
- **In-depth understanding of wildlife dynamics, based on scientific principles**, should not be dismissed on the basis of uninformed external public opinions.
- **Calls for a hunting ban in Namibia are based on urban values and opinions, not on rural conditions and needs**, and are often orchestrated by animal welfare organisations.
- **Namibia has a well-documented, successful approach to conservation**, which should not be derailed by misinformed international opinion and pressure.
- **A small, economically secure urban elite is challenging legal and highly beneficial activities** in Africa from an idealistic moral standpoint.
- **A hunting ban dispossesses and disempowers local decision-making** and enforces a foreign moral view upon Africans.
- A hunting ban would have the most negative impacts on those elements that the international public is attempting to support – wildlife populations and local people outside national parks.

### Further information resources:

Community conservation areas in Namibia - [www.nacso.org.na](http://www.nacso.org.na) (especially the annual Community Conservation Report)

Sate protected areas in Namibia - [www.met.gov.na](http://www.met.gov.na)

International regulations regarding wildlife trade - [www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)

International biodiversity conservation - [www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)

Base conservation practices on sound science,  
not on public opinion!



Namibia uses scientific principles and cutting-edge technology to monitor and manage wildlife populations



A publication of:  
**NACSO Natural Resources Working Group**  
[www.nacso.org.na](http://www.nacso.org.na)

# INFORMATION ADAPTATION APPLICATION



**The Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO)** embraces a variety of NGOs and individual members, who provide a range of technical and funding support to community conservation. Three NACSO working groups, namely the **Natural Resources Working Group** (NRWG), the **Business, Enterprises and Livelihoods Working Group** (BELWG) and the **Institutional Development Working Group** (IDWG), facilitate coordinated service provision to rural communities. More information: [www.nacso.org.na](http://www.nacso.org.na)

