



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

LAND-USE PLANNING:
TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



- POLICY DOCUMENT -

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM
PRIVATE BAG 13306
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

MAY 1994



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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 27th May 1994

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CIRCULAR NO. 24 OF 1994

To: All Heads of Directorates, Divisions, Sections & Outstations

**POLICY DOCUMENT: LAND-USE PLANNING: TOWARDS
 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

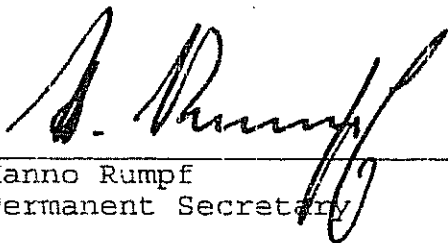
This document contains the approved Ministry policies on land-use planning for Communal State Land, Commercial Farmland, Proclaimed State Land, Urban Areas and Wetland Systems. Each section consists of a Preamble, the Policy and Guiding Principles.

The participatory approach and the sharing of decision-making that this policy document advocates underpins our Community-based Natural Resource Management Programme.

This document has its origins in the workshops organised by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, Hon Niko Bessinger, in 1990 and the subsequent workshops in 1991. Thereafter, the document was widely circulated to people both within and outside this Ministry for comments and review. Finally, the document was recommended for acceptance by the Planning Committee of this Ministry.

Additional copies are available from the Directorate of Environmental Affairs.

The previous circular dealt with Policy Document: Conservation of Biotic Diversity and Habitat Protection.


 Hanno Rumpf
 Permanent Secretary



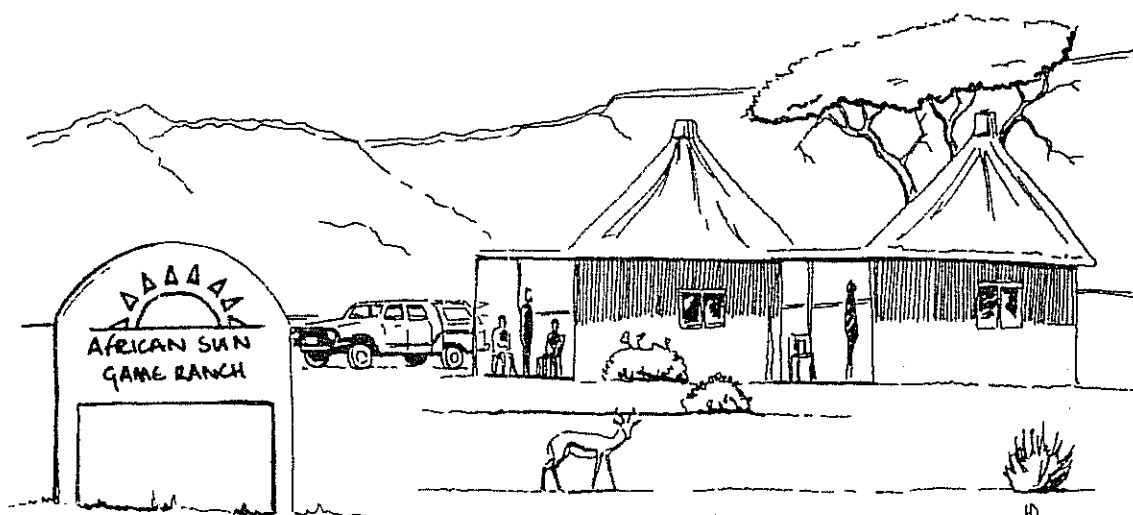
INTRODUCTION

Five different land tenure or physiographic land forms are addressed in this policy document. These are:

- a) Communal State Land
- b) Privately owned Commercial Farmland
- c) Proclaimed State Land
- d) Urban Areas
- e) Wetland Systems, including catchments

A policy document for each of these different categories of land has been developed. These documents were all approached with the same fundamental philosophy, which is as follows:

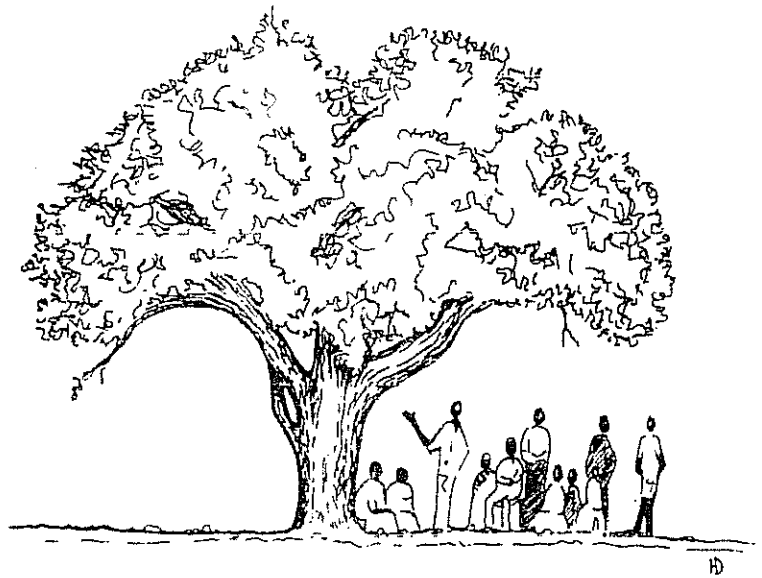
The Ministry of Environment and Tourism supports rational, sustainable and integrated planning of land use in all environments throughout Namibia according to the sound ecological principles contained in Article 95 (1) of the National Constitution. To facilitate appropriate land-use planning and subsequent land use, this Ministry supports the process of consultation with appropriate institutions to ensure that local communities are involved in all decision-making processes and to ensure that they enjoy maximum sustainable benefit from the land and natural resources with which they are associated and upon which they depend.



COMMUNAL STATE LAND

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The Ministry recognises the need for rational and integrated land use planning in rural areas in order to ensure that sustainable development may be achieved for the inhabitants of Namibia and that biodiversity and essential ecological processes may be maintained.
- 1.2 The Ministry recognises that development and conservation can and should be compatible.
- 1.3 The Ministry recognises that in order to achieve the goals of rational land use planning through the integration of conservation and rural development a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach needs to be taken.
- 1.4 The Ministry recognises that the success of all development projects will rest on the extent to which local communities have participated in the planning of land use and have real decision making power.



2. POLICY

In view of the above, it is the policy of this Ministry to encourage the rational and integrated planning of land use according to ecological principles in all rural areas within Namibia and to encourage the formation of suitable participatory structures so that local communities may participate in decisions and responsibilities concerning national resources, and enjoy maximum sustainable benefit from these resources (including wildlife and forestry products) upon which they depend.

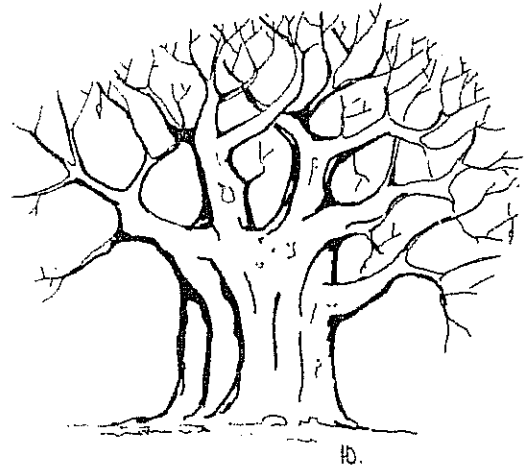


3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following are the guiding principles necessary to achieve the implementation of the above policy:

3.1 Re-empowerment

This should be the key principle in planning for community-based rural conservation. Re-empowerment of local communities means involving them in conservation by restoring the power to make decisions about the use of land and associated natural resources.

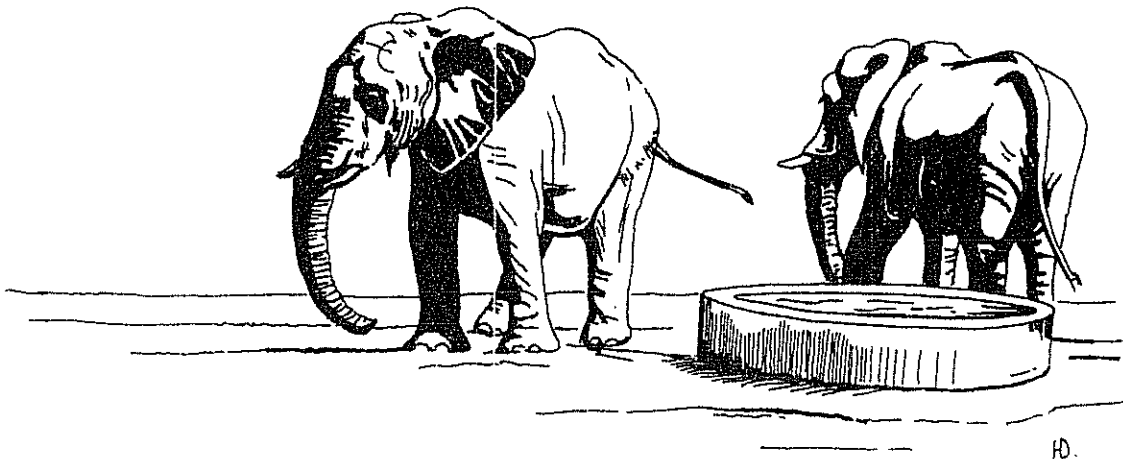


For re-empowerment to be achieved, appropriate institutions need to be identified or created for the community to be involved in decision-making and consultation with the authorities. These participatory structures should:

- a) be elected and non-political
- b) have legal status and powers
- c) attend to natural resource management and conflict resolution
- d) have regional flexibility

3.2 Consultation and participation

- a) Consultation and participation should form the basis of negotiations with communities, organisations and individuals regarding land use planning,
- b) consultation should be at grass roots level, across the community and inter-Ministerial,
- c) initial stages of consultation should be with both men and women until appropriate institutions have been established,
- d) as part of the process of consultation, government should provide an inter-ministerial advisory body at local level to provide technical input for community projects.



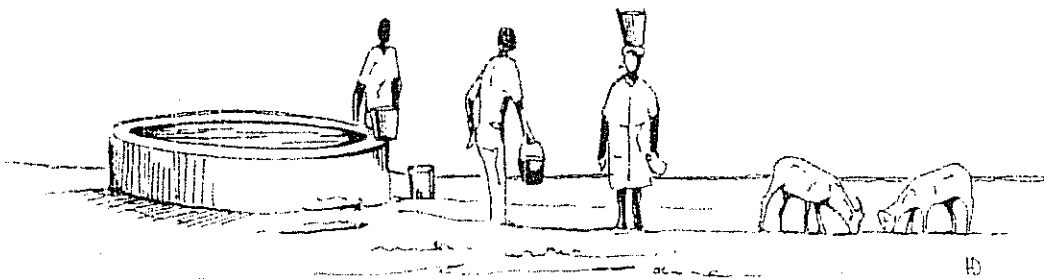


3.3 Self-sustainability

- a) There should be no ultimate dependency on funding and expertise from outside the community, although outside funding and expertise might be necessary from time to time,
- b) utilisation of resources should be on a sustainable basis and income or other direct benefits from utilisation would therefore be limited to sustainable offtake levels,
- c) rational and integrated land use planning should be based on data concerning natural and human resources gathered through socio-ecological research. The Ministry should form a multi-disciplinary team to carry out this research, in which local people would participate.

3.4 Motivation

- a) The Ministry's motivation should be to implement the best land use options for conserving bio-diversity (proclaimed areas would therefore form one of many available options and would not be the driving force behind land use planning).
- b) The Ministry needs to combine methods of providing protected environmental status with the recognition of land tenure rights. There should be close collaboration with other Ministries involved in land use and land allocation.



3.5 Rights of access and responsibility

- a) The appropriate institution for local decision making and consultation should have jurisdiction within a geographically defined area and should decide on land and resource allocation and utilisation,
- b) it should be recognised that in all rural areas (including land farmed commercially) the principle of "stewardship" over natural resources rather than ownership should be applied to individuals and communities,
- c) rights of access to resources and utilisation of resources should be linked to individual responsibility for their wise and sustainable utilisation. Individuals should be responsible to the appropriate institution which should have some powers of sanction in case of abuse.

3.6 Benefits

- a) Benefits should result from holding certain rights of access to and utilisation of natural resources and should not be seen as a reward for good behaviour,
- b) individuals and communities should determine the nature of benefits flowing from possible resource utilisation and how these benefits should be distributed or used.

3.7 Legislation

- a) Appropriate legislation must be drafted to provide for the necessary jurisdiction over living natural resources to be vested in the Ministry and local institutions,
- b) this legislation will need to provide for real decision-making power to be vested in local institutions and for communities and individuals to derive direct benefits from the utilisation of natural resources, including wildlife and forestry products, upon which they depend.



PRIVATELY OWNED COMMERCIAL FARMLANDS

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 The Ministry recognizes that an integrated and rational approach to resource management and utilization by commercial farmers has both long-term benefits for individual land-owners and serves the national interest by, for example, contributing to the conservation of soils, water and biotic diversity, generating foreign exchange, contributing to the self-sufficiency of the country and feeding the nation.
- 1.2 The Ministry recognizes that rangeland, wildlife and other components of the ecosystem are important resources on commercial farms and that economic and aesthetic benefits resulting from the wise management of these resources should accrue to the landowner.
- 1.3 The Ministry recognizes that, in cooperation with farmers, their relevant associations and other pertinent Ministries, it has an important role to play in the planning and promotion of appropriate management practices and in the development of a professional land ethic in keeping with the philosophy of biodiversity conservation and long-term sustainable utilization.

2. POLICY

In view of the above, it is the policy of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to promote management practices on commercial farms that aim to achieve the following objectives:

- (a) Optimise the benefits that accrue to landowners, both regarding economics and quality of life.
- (b) Optimise benefits that are in the national interest, by incentives to encourage the conservation of biotic diversity, the protection of threatened and endangered species and communities, and the promotion of sustainable land-use options.
- (c) Ensure the maintenance (and where necessary, rehabilitation) of healthy and productive land by means of incentives for appropriate land management practices.
- (d) Encourage the active participation of all farmers, their respective associations and other relevant Ministries in the management policies and practices directly or indirectly affecting natural resources in commercial farming areas.



3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

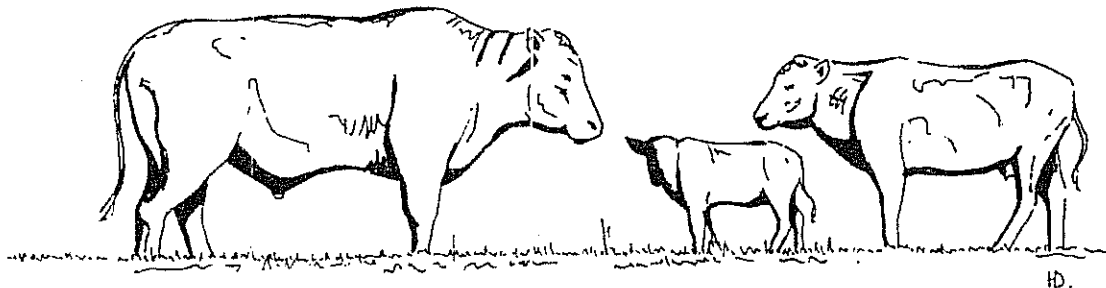
3.1 The Ministry should act as a catalyst and involve the commercial farming community in the decision-making process whereby the problems, needs and aspirations of farmers are identified and defined. Consultative and cooperative programmes should be undertaken with the various agricultural organisations on national and regional levels.

3.2 The status of rangeland, wildlife and other natural resources on private land and the owners' rights to use and benefit from these resources needs to be addressed with due cognisance being taken of the need to optimise benefits for farmers while, at the same time, safeguarding national interests.



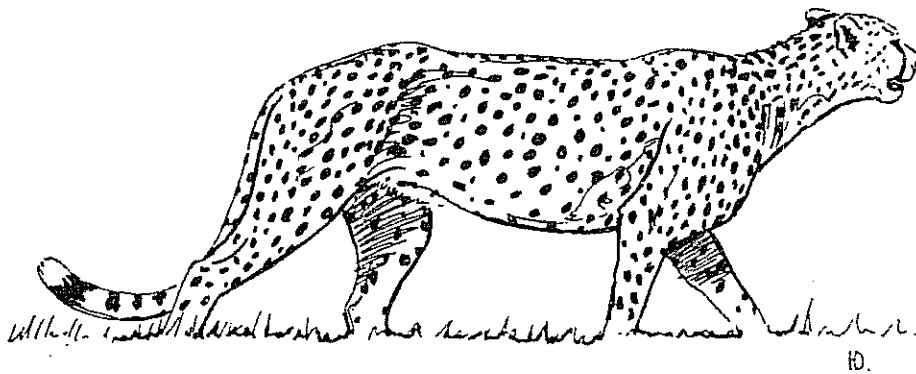
3.3 Research on the management and utilization of rangeland, wildlife and other resources should be encouraged on a cooperative basis with the Ministry of Agriculture, the farming community and other interested organisations. Research could be undertaken on existing agricultural research farms and privately owned farms as joint ventures.

3.4 Utilization of wildlife resources on a cooperative basis between neighbouring farmers should be promoted by providing incentives to encourage farmers to form "Conservancies". These Conservancies could also be appropriate in some communal areas, as well as spanning boundaries between communal and commercial farmlands. Such cooperative schemes would enhance the long-term viability of wildlife populations and economic returns.



3.5 The Ministry should provide a consistent, high-quality extension service to farmers. To enhance and promote the image of this Ministry in the farming community, it is important to have well-trained and motivated staff. In-service training with regard to extension techniques and all aspects of rangeland, wildlife, forestry and conservation management should be a priority.

3.6 At present no direct revenue from sport and biltong hunting on commercial farms is obtained by the State or this Ministry. The need for, and desirability of, generating revenue through the issuing of licence fees should be examined. The cost of a hunting licence should exceed the associated administrative costs but should not erode the present profits earned by the farmer.



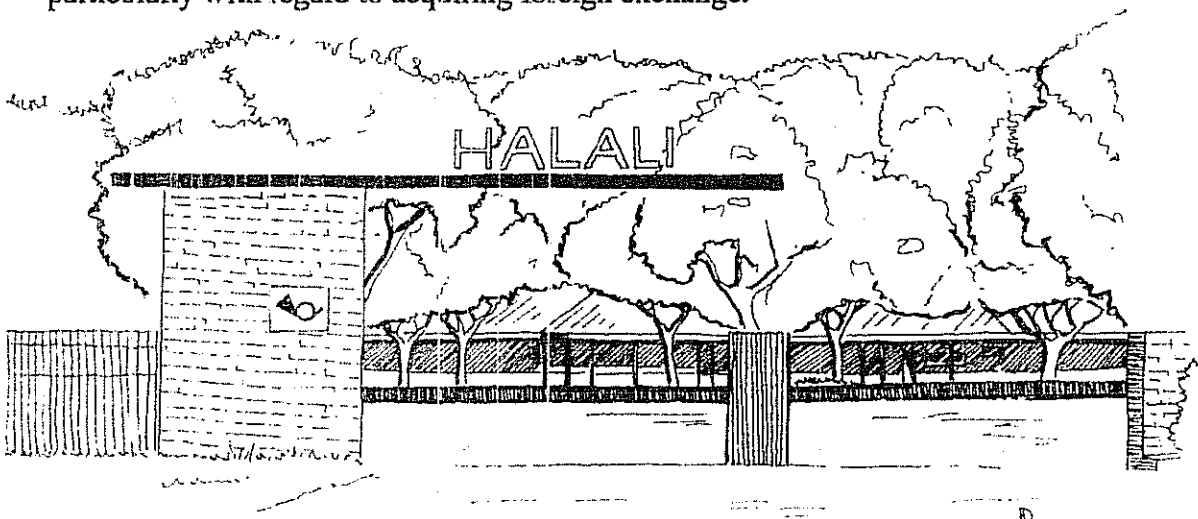
PROCLAIMED STATE LAND

1. PREAMBLE

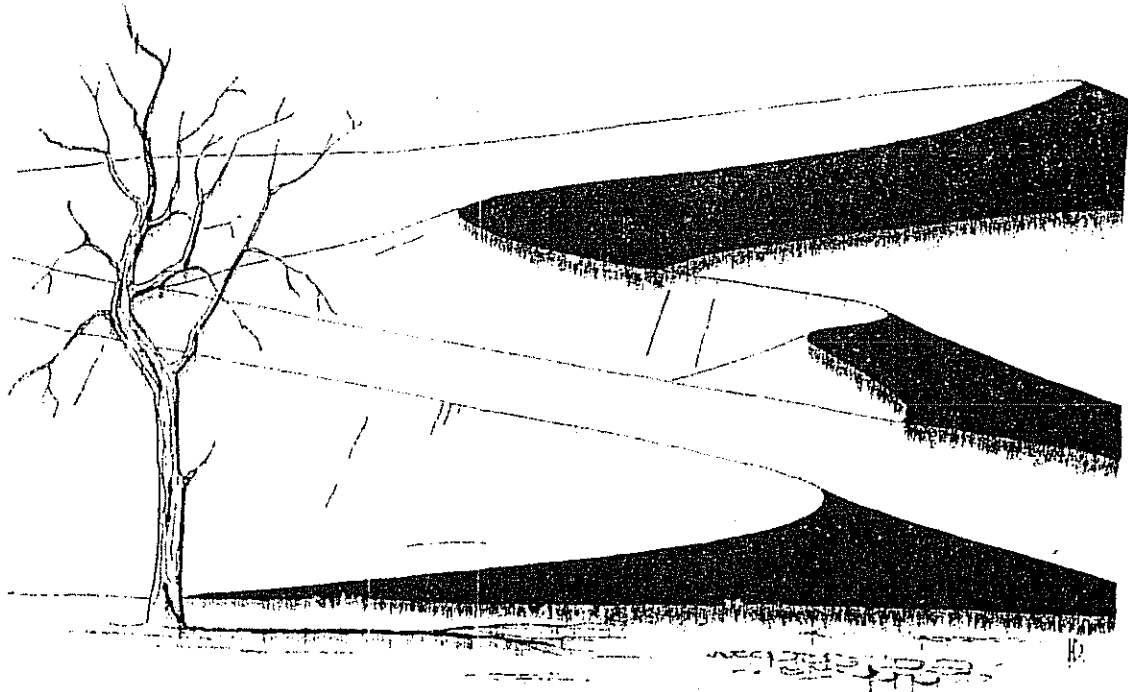
1.1 It is accepted that the proclamation of land for conservation purposes, as National Parks, Game Parks and State Forests, serves a number of regional, national and international objectives. These include:

- a) the protection of representative samples of the different habitats occurring in Namibia;
- b) the preservation of rare species, habitats and land-forms and the maintenance of biotic diversity;
- c) the protection of self-sustaining natural ecosystems from major interference by people, to serve as ecological baselines;
- d) the provision of research opportunities to further our understanding of ecosystems and their functioning, including all components of such systems;
- e) the provision of educational opportunities, for all members of society, especially children;
- f) the provision of recreational facilities, based on the aesthetics of the natural environment, both for Namibian citizens and visitors to Namibia;
- g) the option to manage resources, for the benefit of
 - other proclaimed areas and commercial enterprises (e.g. game translocation), and
 - neighbouring communities (e.g. by exporting resources and, where appropriate, allowing the harvesting of resources by people on a sustainable basis and in carefully zoned regions).

1.2 It is recognised that the tourism potential of Namibia is based mainly on the wildlife, scenic and wilderness resources of the country, and largely on those contained within the proclaimed Parks. These areas play an important role in the economy of Namibia, particularly with regard to acquiring foreign exchange.



- 1.3 It is acknowledged that proclaimed areas may require management intervention. Such intervention should not be aimed at maintaining the ecological *status quo*, since such systems are dynamic. Skillful and research-supported intervention should be aimed at preserving environmental quality with minimum human interference. Monitoring of natural and man-induced changes is essential.



2. POLICY

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism will maintain and, where appropriate, establish proclaimed conservation areas in Namibia. The Ministry will also enter into agreements with individuals, communities, private organisations and other government ministries on the administration of appropriate unproclaimed land for conservation purposes. These conservation areas will be administered and managed for:

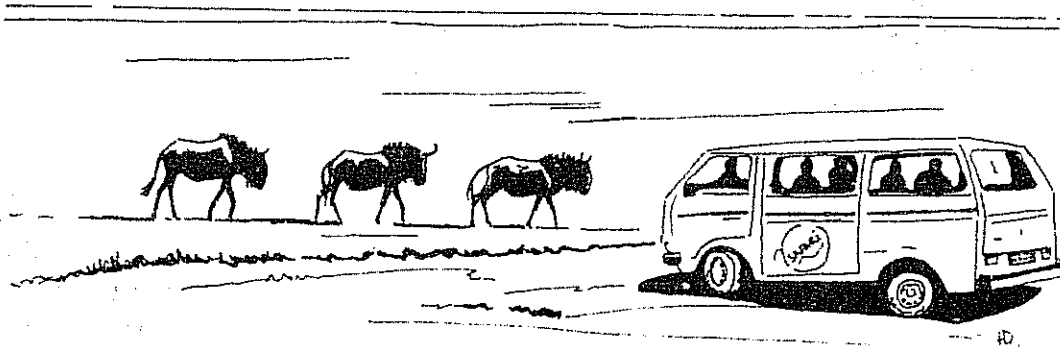
- (a) the protection of representative examples of the different habitats occurring in Namibia,
- (b) the preservation of rare species, habitats and land forms,
- (c) the maintenance of biotic diversity,
- (d) the protection of self-sustaining natural ecosystems,
- (e) the provision of research, educational and recreational opportunities, for Namibians and visitors.

The Ministry will integrate conservation areas in regional and national land-use planning so that they contribute economically and culturally at the local and national levels.

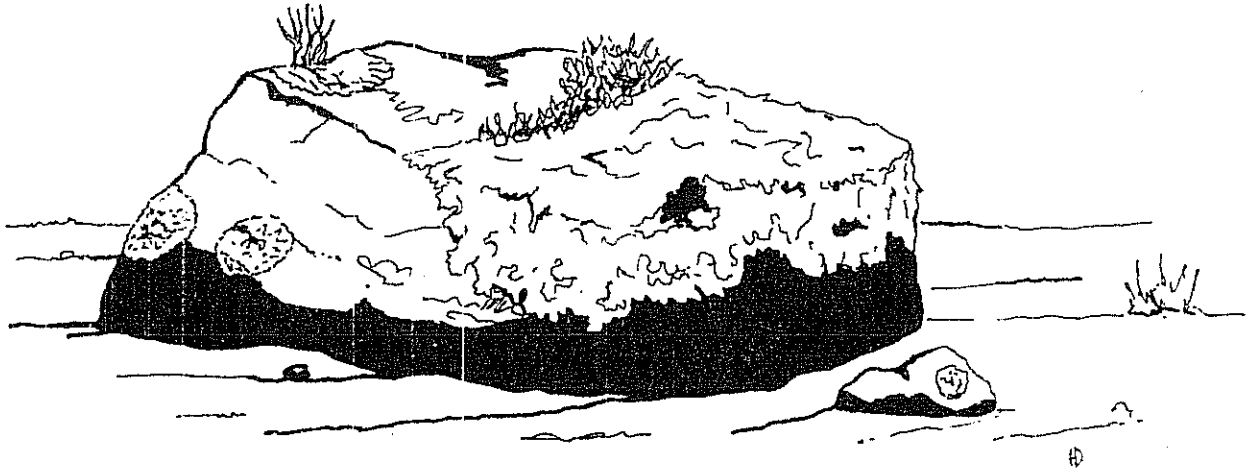


3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Proclaimed areas are viewed as particular land-use zones within larger administrative regions. As such, masterplans specific to proclaimed areas are not appropriate, as a land-use plan and environmental profile for each administrative region of Namibia would be prepared. Each proclaimed area (and unproclaimed area allocated to conservation) should have its own management plan. These should be dynamic and responsive to changing conditions and needs, while at the same time providing goals and objectives for management and research staff and a means of measuring achievements and documenting progress. At the same time management plans act as a useful point of reference for new staff and thus ensure continuity.
- 3.2 Consultation with communities neighbouring proclaimed areas should take place through appropriate consultative bodies in order to address problems and conflicts of interest, and to generate goodwill, cooperation and a feeling of empathy and pride in local people for their neighbouring park.
- 3.3 Where appropriate, proclaimed areas should be zoned for different levels of use, from wilderness areas through intermediate categories to multiple-use areas (the IUCN categories are useful, as they are internationally understood). The latter would be appropriate for buffer zones on the periphery of parks, to reduce conflict with neighbours and to allow resources in the park to be used in a regulated manner.



- 3.4 Incentives should be provided to the neighbours of proclaimed areas (on both privately owned and communally held land) to practice land-use options compatible to those in parks, e.g. tourism, live sale of game, hunting. Incentives could include (for example) removal of sections of park fence, access to park from neighbouring property, preferential allocation of game, assistance with the training of game guards.
- 3.5 Proclaimed areas should be integrated into local economies and cultures. This requires that, where appropriate, parks should:
 - (a) function as nett exporters of natural resources for local consumption,
 - (b) provide preferential employment opportunities for people from local communities,



- (c) encourage and support the development of appropriate industries and services by neighbouring communities, e.g. curios, traditional villages, camping and accommodation facilities, and
- (d) encourage private sector services and industries reliant on or benefitting from proclaimed areas to develop social and economic responsibilities for neighbouring communities.

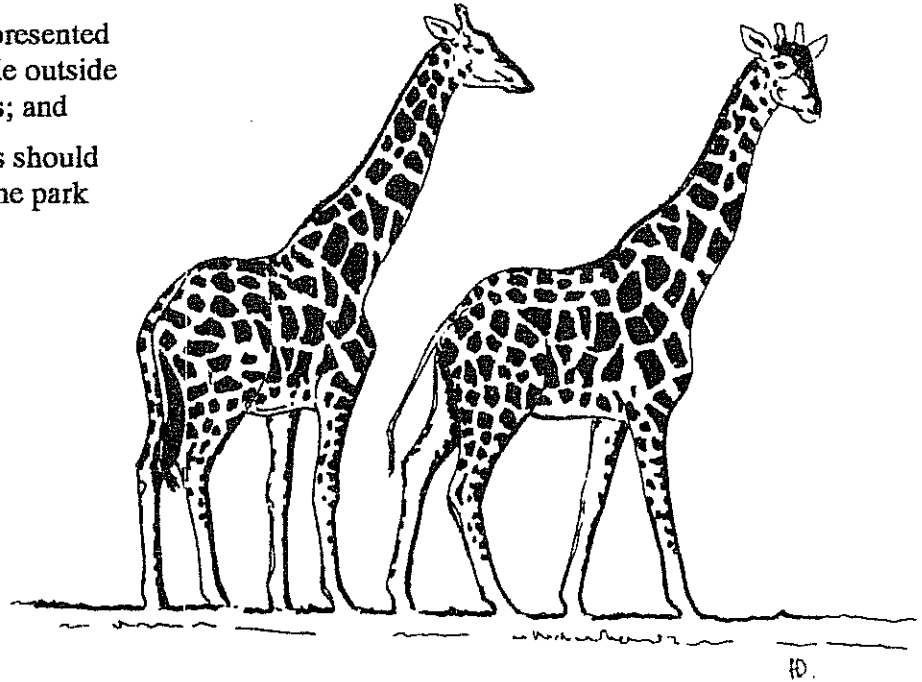
3.6 Historically, many of the proclaimed areas in Namibia were allocated to conservation because no alternative land-use was appropriate. As such, game parks were not scientifically selected to contain representative samples of all habitats, nor to contain the maximum biotic diversity. Major vegetation types, habitats and species in Namibia are, therefore, not represented in proclaimed areas. An evaluation of habitats and diversity within the country is needed to identify key areas requiring proclamation. If it is not possible to obtain land in these areas, then some other form of protection should be procured, e.g. by obtaining the commitment of land-owners for the establishment of conservancies and heritage sites.

3.7 In view of the fact that people working in Namibia pay taxes which help run the proclaimed areas, a differential price structure should be established for residents of Namibia (and SADC member citizens) and other visitors to the parks. Because proclaimed areas have education as one of their primary objectives, opportunities to visit National Parks should be afforded to all Namibians. In particular, Namibian children on educational visits should enter free of charge.

3.8 Areas protected by proclamation represent some of the best natural controls for scientific research. Therefore, research in these areas should be strongly encouraged. Furthermore, since protected areas are relatively secure environments, offering the potential for measuring long-term natural changes, the Ministry should actively support all relevant research relating to natural ecosystems and populations processes (including the influence of man) in these areas, providing that local communities of plants and animals and the functioning of systems are not threatened in the process.

3.9 A number of cases exist where people live within proclaimed areas. In certain cases (e.g. National Parks) these pose real and/or potential conflict situations. The following procedure should be adopted:

- (a) options should be presented for people to resettle outside of proclaimed areas; and
- (b) residual settlements should be integrated into the park management.



URBAN AREAS

1. PREAMBLE

It is recognised that the planning of urban development falls mainly to Town and Regional Planners under the jurisdiction of Municipalities and Town Boards. The purpose of this sort of development is "people upliftment". Thus development must be planned to meet legitimate needs and aspirations of the people. The following conservation and environmental principles are equally important in urban areas as in less developed regions:

- a) Development must be sustainable, e.g. water supply, waste disposal/recycling, goods and services.
- b) Planning should be tailored to meet real needs.
- c) Public participation is essential to ensure identification with projects and programmes.
- d) Planners should be sensitive to important ecological, aesthetic and physical features within urban regions.
- e) A multi-disciplinary approach to urban planning should be encouraged.

2. POLICY

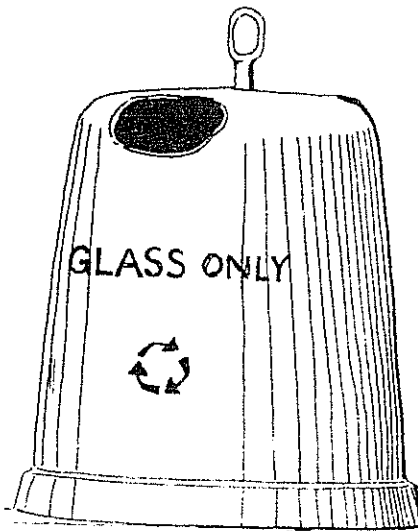
In view of the above, it is the policy of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to encourage the sensitive and integrated planning of urban areas based on the principles of:

- (a) sustainable development,
- (b) public participation, and
- (c) a clean, healthy environment that lends itself to educational, cultural and recreational fulfilment.



3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Urban planning is best performed by a multi-disciplinary team. Ecologists, sociologists and economists should all be introduced to the planning programme from the outset.
- 3.2 Development programmes should be evaluated at an appropriate level of detail by means of Environmental Assessment procedures.
- 3.3 The needs of communities should be carefully investigated, and the public should be fully involved in the planning, screening and implementation of development projects.
- 3.4 The sustainability of any development programme should be an over-riding factor in its evaluation.
- 3.5 Urban planning should incorporate natural resource assets within metropolitan areas. Thus open space systems promote education, recreation and conservation within a daily lifestyle.
- 3.6 Environmental education and awareness is essential for successful urban development and life.



WETLAND SYSTEMS

1. PREAMBLE

- 1.1 Water and wetland systems (defined here as the interface between aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, and including ephemeral systems and their catchments) in arid regions are one of the most limiting and threatened resources. These national assets support high biotic diversity but are also focal points of human concentration, and agricultural and industrial development. Unless carefully planned, wetland systems quickly become degraded, losing both their rich faunal and floral diversity, and their ability to sustain human population growth and development.
- 1.2 In order to achieve sound planning for the integration of resource management and sustainable development, a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach is needed. This must include international co-operation as many wetlands cross international boundaries.

2. POLICY

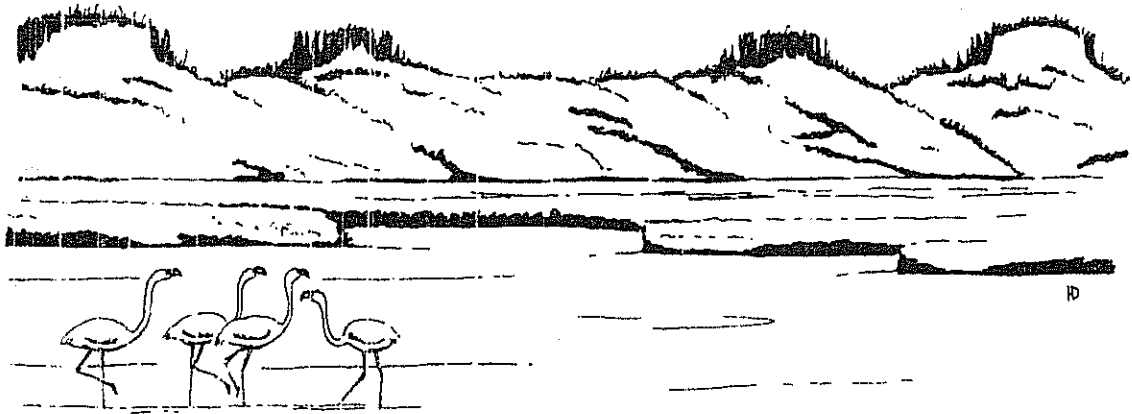
In view of the above, it is the policy of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to encourage the rational and integrated planning of wetland systems, in accordance with the philosophies of the Ramsar Convention on wetlands, based on the ecological principles of:

- (a) preservation of biotic diversity,
- (b) maintenance of life-support systems and
- (c) sustainable use.



3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The wise use of wetlands involves attention being paid to the following elements:
 - a) a national inventory of wetlands;
 - b) identification of the benefits and values of these wetlands;
 - c) a quantitative assessment of current use of wetland resources and the dependence of local people on these resources;
 - d) definition of the properties for each site in accordance with the needs of, and socio-economic conditions in, each region;
 - e) identification of catchment units for proper management of entire wetland systems;



- f) proper assessment of environmental impact, before and during execution of development projects;
- g) regulated utilization of wild fauna and flora, such that these components of wetlands ecosystems are not over-exploited.

3.2 Legislation: The preparation of suitable legislation, together with the Department of Water Affairs, entrenching the principles contained in the above policy, is of utmost importance. In particular, the following problem areas require attention:

- a) Coastal Mining - presently this Ministry has limited control and knowledge of major coastal and intertidal disturbances caused by heavy machinery and gravel pumps. There is no commitment to adhere to acceptable environmental standards by some mining companies, e.g. to rehabilitate areas and to leave island reserves to allow recolonisation of rehabilitated areas.
- b) Water abstraction - a number of systems are subject to a level of abstraction that exceed the rate of recharge. This results in down-stream degradation and in at least one important case, salt water intrusion. Such non-sustainable abstraction is very short-sighted and should be stopped; domestic and industrial water conservation practices need to be imposed. }
- c) Damming of rivers - a plethora of small to medium sized dams have been built on many drainage systems (e.g. the Kuiseb), which in combination, appears to have a dramatic effect on the flow rates downstream. Guidelines need to be established on all major drainage systems to ensure that rivers retain adequate flow rates in their lower reaches.
- d) Impacts of commercial and sport fishing on the West Coast - in terms of pressure on fish stocks, effects of vehicles on benthic inter-tidal organisms, tracks on adjacent gravel plains and litter. }
- e) Inland subsistence fishing - need to be assessed and regulated to ensure optimal sustainable use of resources.
- f) Overgrazing of floodplain areas - on inland wetlands by domestic stock, damaging and destroying fish breeding grounds, reducing silt-trapping properties of floodplains and leading to bank erosion and increased water turbidity.

- g) Cultivation within drainage lines and excessive removal of plant material.
- h) Destruction of riparian vegetation - clearing forest for cultivation. Results in loss of biotic diversity, instability of river banks, erosion and increased turbidity. Small riparian "reserves" are needed along river systems.
- i) Aquatic weed control - with specific legislation regarding possession, import and sale of invasive alien species.

3.3 Consultation: Two levels of consultation are needed for the successful implementation of wetland conservation:

- a) inter-ministerial (Agriculture, Water & Rural Development; Mines & Energy; Lands, Resettlement & Rehabilitation; Works, Transport & Communications), and sometimes international, when systems cross country boundaries, and
- b) with communities, to establish consensus on, and regulatory procedures for, *inter alia*, riparian reserves, fish stock management, grazing on floodplains.

A whole ecosystem approach is essential for wetland conservation and management to be effective.

