

NEWSLETTER

Ministry of Environment and Tourism



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Ministry
strategises on
tourism growth



CONTENTS

Editor's Note	1
Access, benefit sharing to reduce poverty	2
MCA hand-over equipment and infrastructure to MET on Etosha	3
Govt invests N\$220 million, restoring Gross Barmen	4
Ministry strategises on tourism growth	5
Namibian vultures under threat	6
World Tourism Day Commemorated	9
Namibia hosts the 5th sustainable tourism symposium	10
Mangetti benefit communities	11
Namibia records an increase in tourism	13
Performance Management System nears completion	13
New Appointments	14



Romeo Muyunda

Editor's Note

Parting shot?

Welcome to the last edition of the year 2014. Normally, this time is characterised by a hype of activities and excitement for the festive season.

Most of the staff members put in leave to join families and friends in festivities. Some look back and evaluate their achievements as well as their challenges as they plan for the New Year ahead.

In short, this is a joyous period. One can tell by looking at vegetation that has started to blossom. Considering the landscape of Namibia, a little green makes it more beautiful.

Consideration of that, we would like to wish all our readers and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism staff members a safe, joyous, and blessed festive season.

Furthermore, we wish you a prosperous and a Happy New Year. For as much as this is an exciting period, it is prone to eventualities that can be fatal and dangerous. We, therefore, urge our readers to be cautious, especially when driving to various destinations.

This year is particularly interesting because the country elected a new leadership. Staff members are encouraged to shift into a change management attitude.

At the ministry, we look back into the year where we have been a family based on the framework of team spirit to achieve desired results.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has excelled in delivering its set mandate. This is coupled with the signing of performance agreements talked about elsewhere in this issue.

Smart partnership has also played a vital role in the development of the sector. In this issue, we look at the assistance by the MCA to construct infrastructure in the Etosha.

The ministry has done so well in line with the constitutional provision to maintain and protect ecological systems for the benefit of all citizens, particularly those in rural areas where we should be commended for a job well done in ensuring communities are involved in protecting the environment. This initiative has earned the country international recognition.

However, the probable biggest challenge for 2014 is the escalating cases of rhino and elephant poaching that have hit record levels. As a ministry we should revisit our strategies and reinforce them to counter this disturbing trend.

With those few observations, I wish you excitement while reading this information packed last edition of the year. I encourage those who would like to contribute to the newsletter to do so by contacting me on the given details. (rmuyunda@met.na)

Happy New Year and Merry Christmas!
God Bless!!!

Access, benefit sharing to reduce poverty

Minister of Environment and Tourism, Uahekua Herunga, called on Namibian Indigenous and Local Communities (ILCs) to take ownership and prepare themselves for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

Hon. Herunga made the call during the opening of a workshop on access and benefit sharing for ILCs on the 5th August at the Habitat Research and Development Centre in Windhoek.

Over 110 Traditional Authority representatives and community leaders, researchers, representatives from n-governmental organisations, conservancies attended the workshop.

Two expert negotiators on behalf of ILCs at the Convention on Biological Diversity also attended. These were the executive director of the Indigenous Information Network, Ms Lucy Mulenkei from Kenya, and Mr. Gladman Chibememe of the Earth Healing Association from Zimbabwe.

The workshop sought to raise awareness of access and benefit sharing and to engage ILCs on the national implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from their use.

Briefing the participants on Namibia's implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, Hon. Herunga noted that the country was the 35th to accede to the Nagoya Protocol on the 13th May 2014.

Namibia's own domestic access and benefit legislation has already been passed by the Cabinet Committee on Legislation for principal approval by Cabinet.

It is on the agenda for discussion during the 10th session of Namibia's Fifth Parliament.

The Environmental Commissioner, Teofilus Nghitila, who was the director of ceremonies, highlighted the country's commitment to implementing the concept of access and benefit sharing and its potential as a tool for the upliftment of Namibia's rural communities.

Access and benefit sharing, through regulating access to genetic resources by commercial companies and researchers and by promoting fair and equitable benefits for local communities, is considered to be the missing link in terms of moving products considered traditional towards the commercial marketplace.

There are more than 4 300 plant species in Namibia, of which about 700 are found only in the country. There is a wealth of traditional knowledge of these species and their application for nutritional and medicinal purposes.

However, the majority of this knowledge is unknown or untapped in terms of commercial exploitation.



Minister of Environment and Tourism, Hon Uahekua Herunga

ILCs raised the need for more capacity building and technology transfer to create opportunities for local level value addition and more sustainable value chains for genetic resources associated with traditional knowledge.

In response to this need, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, in collaboration with other partners and stakeholders, is currently in the process of conducting a feasibility study on the establishment of a Research and Development Centre for genetic resources associated with traditional knowledge and biotrade in Namibia.

A key outcome from the current ILCs workshop is expected to be a strategy for engaging ILCs in the national implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. The workshop closes on Friday 8th August.



Hon. Minister Uahekua Herunga (far right) Madam Akwenye MCA-N CEO (left) andUnveiling the plaque at the handover of New constructed houses in Etosha

MCA hand-over equipment and infrastructure to MET on Etosha

Staff at Etosha will have very little to worry about particularly regarding accommodation after the Millennium Challenge Account-Namibia handed over recently completed houses to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

The houses, with associated infrastructure at Ombika and Galton Gate, were constructed by MCA-Namibia at the value of N\$357 million.

There are 54 houses at Ombika, 35 at Galtone Gate were built, while others 30 were renovated for the Junior Staff Village in Okaukuejo. The houses are electrified, have running water, sewerage and are equipped with fridges, stoves and solar geysers.

In addition to the houses, the land was serviced for 49 more houses at Ombika and Galton Gate to make it easier for the ministry to construct in future.

The MCA further upgraded the Olifantsrus waterhole with new camping facilities, an exotic walkway with the state of the art game viewing hide.

The hide strategically enables tourists and visitors at the water hole to have a closer view of the wildlife in a safe environment. The MCA also constructed the Galton Entrance Gate with a new and refurbished look.

Receiving the houses and infrastructure on behalf of government, the

Minister of Environment and Tourism Hon. Uahekua Herunga pointed out the importance of positioning Namibia's national parks in such a way that infrastructure offered to staff members and tourists is of acceptable standard.

He noted that the infrastructure development in Etosha National Park and the grants towards community-based natural resources management are fruits of a good cooperation between the Republic of Namibia and the United States of America.

The minister pledged his ministry's commitment to making necessary budget provisions to maintain and keep the donated equipment and infrastructure in a good state.

Furthermore, Hon. Herunga commended his staff for their commitment to the protection of the environment, wildlife and conservation and community development.

On her part, the MCA-N chief executive officer, Madam Penny Akwenye highlighted the achievements done in the tourism sector. She stressed that the infrastructure will motivate MET employees and improve their productivity.

The MCA compact ended in September and this was one of the projects they embarked on and completed successfully.

MCA-Namibia also provided support in the areas of education and agriculture respectively.

Govt invests N\$220 million, restoring Gross Barmen

Government gave N\$220 million to Namibia Wildlife Resort (NWR) for the revamping of its Gross Barmen facility. The resort's management initially requested for N\$65 million for the upgrading of the facility, Zelna Hengari, NWR managing director said.

The money was spent on contractor fees, project management fees, furniture and fittings and operational expenditure.

N\$11 million of the N\$220 million is still untouched which Hengari said will be used for other purposes.

Over 200 temporary jobs were created during the construction phase. The people were recruited from Okahandja and the surrounding area.

In addition, 127 jobs were created for the operation of the camp – 50% of recruits are from Okahandja area and more than 100 more permanent jobs will be created when it opens.

Gross Barmen was officially closed and handed over for redevelopment in December 2010 due to its dilapidating condition.

The Namibia Tourism Board chief executive officer, Digu //Naobeb, assured the Ministry of Environment and Tourism that he is confident the facility meets the minimum standards set by the tourism industry. One of the resort's blessings is the natural hot springs that come from a depth of 2 500 metre and exit the ground at 65°C.

Environment minister Uahekua Herunga thanked the government for creating political stability because it creates a favourable platform for the tourism industry to grow.

He also said Namibia is ranked 2nd after Singapore in the world as the best tourism industry by a New York based agency. Namibia is also the best family tourism destination according to Herunga.

Herunga said he wishes to take Namibians around the globe so that they can see what other countries are experiencing for them to appreciate Namibian more.

However Herunga said the tourism sector falls short in service delivery. "Tourists compare services wherever they go, I urge Namibian's to step up its service delivery to fully participate in the competitive tourism sector," he said.

President Hifikepunye Pohamba said he is impressed by those working in the sector for the work they do.

"I think we have done well in the past 24 years," Pohamba said.



He further said that Namibia faces many challenges but also making efforts to provide services to the people.

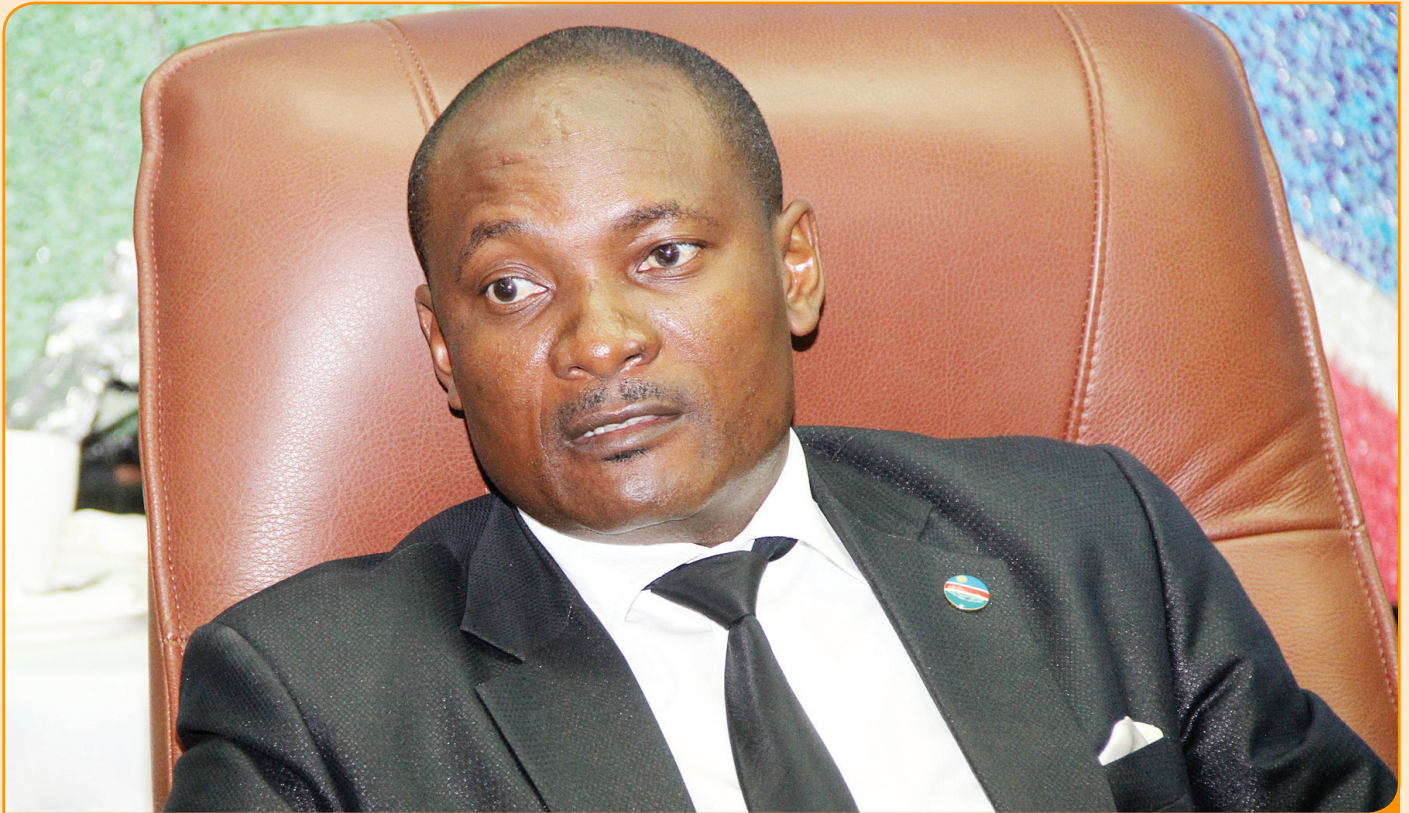
"Yes we have problems but we have tried, today you can travel from Zambia to Opuwo on a tarred road," Pohamba said. Pohamba also told the management of NWR to keep good maintenance of the facility.

"We do not keep maintenance of our facilities," Pohamba said. He further told NWR management to ensure proper use of resources, and to give dividends to government.

"If you have a state company always asking for assistance from government, than it is meaningless because it is established to give back to its owner so that the government can bring about development," Pohamba added.

"Look at Air Namibia, they are always asking for assistance instead of giving their dividends," Pohamba added. He then asked every Namibian to always smile in welcoming tourists in the country.

Ministry strategises on tourism growth



Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism in its quest to develop the tourism sector in the country has developed the National Sustainable Tourism Growth Strategy and the National Tourism Investment Profile and Promotion Strategy.

These strategies have been developed in alignment to the national policy on tourism for Namibia and in response to vision 2030. The documents will cover a ten year period, and outlines the monitoring and evaluation plans and a long-term sustainability of the tourism sector. The strategies provide a framework to foster coordination and collaboration across public and private sectors.

Recently the Ministry held a consultative workshop in the capital to verify and validate the strategies with the stakeholders. The aim was to identify any critical and important gaps that may not have been addressed; strengthen, verify and validate the actions and strategies proposed in the two documents.

The Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism, Hon. Pohamba Shifeta officiated at the workshop and stressed the importance of the two strategies in nation building and economic development as stipulated in the country's fourth national development goals and vision 2030.

In his address, Hon. Shifeta stressed that Namibia has a strategic advantage in terms of tourism development and growth in the Southern African region due to its well-developed infrastructure, good communications systems, efficient financial sector, rich cultural diversities, unique landscape and wilderness areas.

He emphasized that, The Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Government as a whole wants to put in place strategies that would provide a holistic and coordinated approach in ensuring that growth and development in the tourism sector is recorded and noticed thought out the country and in Africa.

He expressed confidence that the documents will provide guidance to take advantage of the opportunities available to the country and to address those challenges that could obstruct the progress.

He called upon participants at the workshop to formulate implementable strategies that will be translated into action and not simply lie idle on shelves and gather dust. Hon. Shifeta stressed that government, tourism state own enterprises, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and development partners – must work together towards the implementation of the strategy.

The strategies are expected to be finalized before the end of the year.



From-Right (SEM Shilongo- Director, Kenneth Uiseb- Deputy Director- Research and Monitoring) Elizabeth Komen- NARReC and Holger Kolbert- Senior Conservation Scientist- MET

Namibian vultures under threat

Only four out of six vulture species exist under vulnerable conditions in Namibia because of poisoning and other harmful chemical substances.

The revelations were made at a recent booklet launch on poisons and pesticides in Windhoek recently.

In a key note address delivered on his behalf by Sem Shikongo, the Director of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Hon. Uahekua Herunga, the Minister of Environment and Tourism expressed concern that on a global scale the populations of many vulture species are under pressure and some are facing extinction.

The minister noted that all the vulture species in Namibia are listed as either threatened or endangered under the International Union of Nature Conservation Redlist categories.

He further said there were increased incidents of other vultures that die from eating poisoned carcasses. The other source of poison that threatens vultures is the widespread use of chemicals by farmers to control predators.

As a result, the significant and worrisome decline in vulture populations, the ministry, in collaboration with the Namibia Animal Rehabilitation Research and Education Centre (NARREC) compiled a booklet on safe use of poisons and pesticides not only for conservation but everyday use.

While at the event, the deputy director for monitoring, research and planning, Mr. Kenneth Uiseb received the Marc Durr Award for his

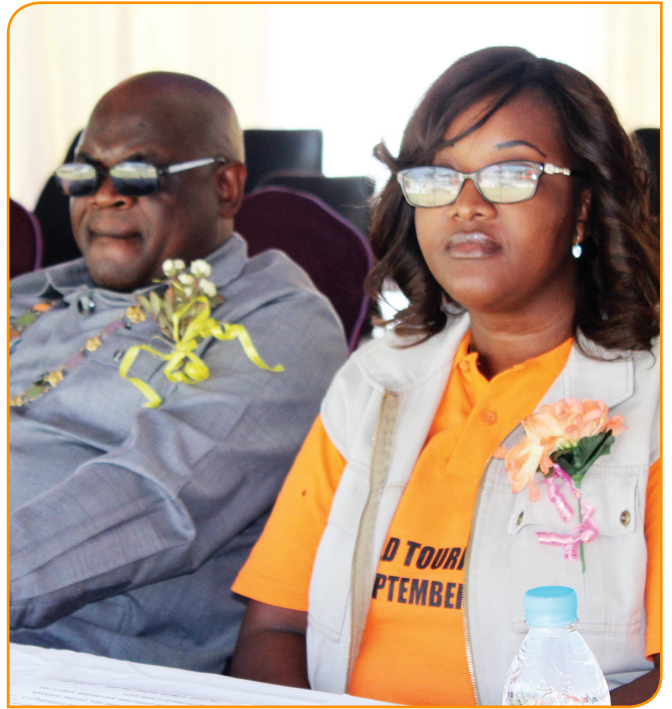


Kenneth Uiseb receives the Marc durr award

dedication in vulture protections.

Marc Durr is famous for his efforts to conserve vultures before he died of cancer. The award handed to Mr /Uiseb was formulated in his memory.







Zambezi Region, Governor Hon. Alpheas Sampofu

World Tourism Day Commemorated

Namibia has joined the rest of the world in commemorating World Tourism on 27 September 2014 in the Zambezi region. The World Tourism Day celebrations are celebrated each year based on a theme selected by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation.

This year the day was celebrated under the theme “Tourism and Community Development”. The theme draws special attention to the role tourism plays in contributing to community development.

Tour operators, conservancy representatives, school children and members of the community attended the event.

The key message from the Minister of Environment and Tourism was delivered on his behalf by the Governor of the Zambezi Region, Hon. Alpheas Sampofu.

In the address the minister stressed that the main purpose of World Tourism Day is to foster awareness among the nations and peoples of the world about the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political and economic values.

The minister added that at national level, the day is significant in creating awareness on the contribution of tourism, celebrate the poten-

tial of tourism and ensure commitment to the development of sustainable tourism.

He noted strongly that community based tourism should involve the local population in the decision making process in accordance to local priorities.

The Minister, further said, Namibia has great tourist opportunities attributed to among other things the diverse cultures, unique landscapes, wilderness areas, ecosystems and biological diversity of which the minister said should be guarded jealously.

“Poaching has become a thorn in the flesh for tourism development, and it is therefore in all of our interests to work together; in order to eradicate this evil deed that is threatening the plight of Namibia and its ‘greatest wildlife recovery story’ ever told,” he stressed

Sem Shikongo, the Director of Tourism in MET highlighted on the opportunities that are available in the tourism sector of the country particularly in the Zambezi.

He noted with great concern that domestic tourism that would see local people benefit, is neglected and called upon operators to explore this opportunity.



Namibia hosts the 5th sustainable tourism symposium

Namibia will host the 5th International Symposium and Annual Conference of Partners of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism (GPST) in February next week.

The theme for the 2015 symposium is: “Advancing Sustainable Tourism: Securing the Legacy of Our Cultural & Natural Heritage”.

GPST is a global initiative under the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) meant to introduce sustainability principles into the mainstream of global tourism.

The partnership aims to make tourism more sustainable by affiliating with governments, destinations, enterprises and consumers in the tourism supply chain to implement projects that are innovative and transformative.

There will be discussions and exchanges on the latest research on consumer trends, private sector innovations and destination success stories.

The symposium brings together partners, experts and practitioners from the public and private sectors and the civil society in an event that features research, practice and implementation of sustainable tourism programmes and actions globally.

It provides the partners an opportunity to present and share sustainable tourism initiatives and innovations, work carried out in commu-

nities or those that are related to preserving the natural environment, or in making tourism more sustainable at destinations.

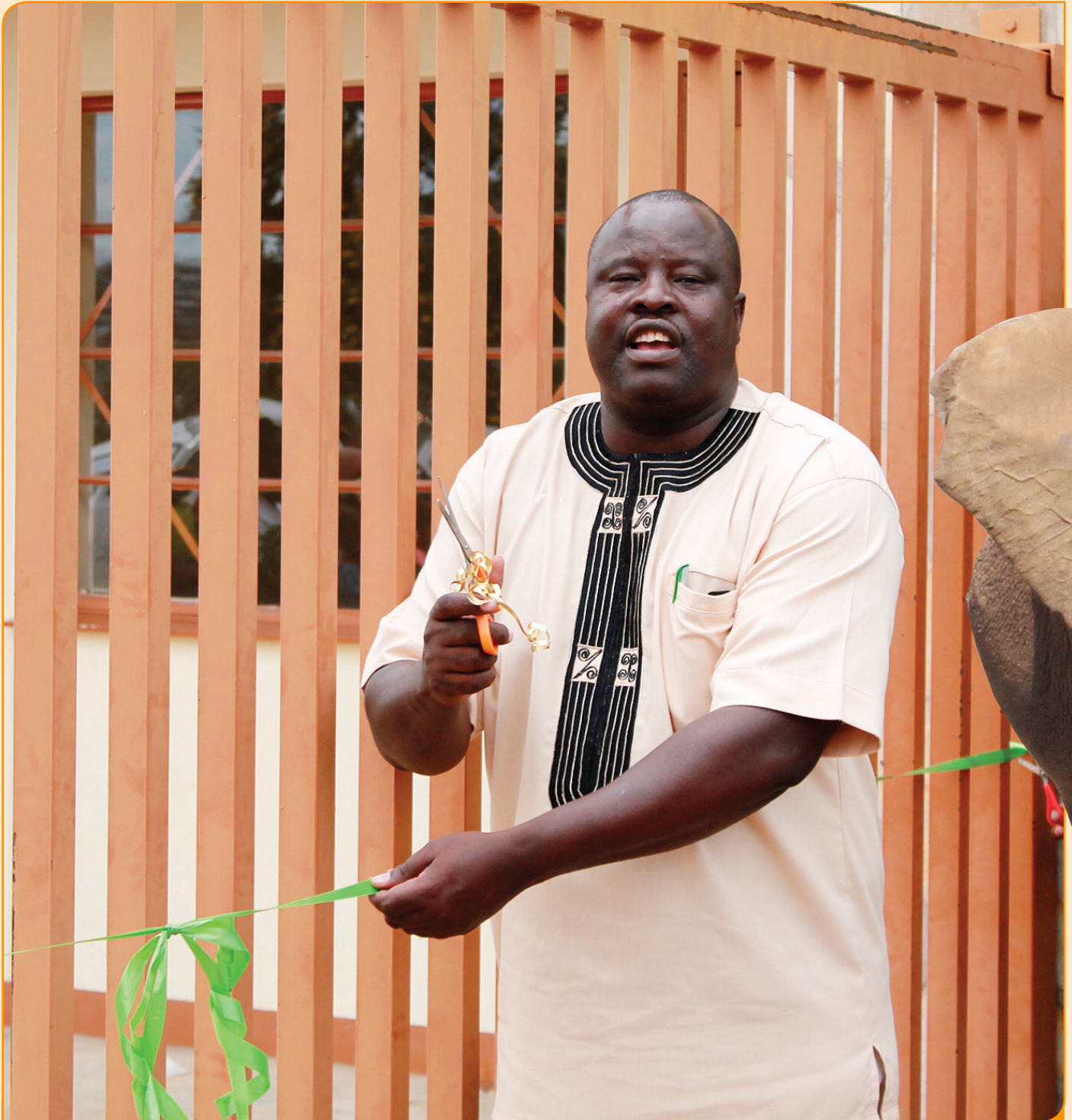
The Minister of Environment and Tourism Uahekua Herunga said the symposium is an ideal meeting place for networking between partners, decision-makers and potential funding agencies and for developing and exchanging ideas for sustainable tourism projects.

Government will host the event in conjunction with the Namibia Tourism Board, Hospitality Association of Namibia, Tour and Safari Association of Namibia and Eco-Awards Namibia

Herunga stressed further that Namibia’s investment as host country for the event demonstrates its commitment to sustainable tourism development and its willingness to share the destination’s progress and best lessons with the international community.

He added that in selecting Namibia, the Global Partnership for Sustainable Tourism is recognising Namibia’s achievements in becoming one of the world’s leading destinations working to find the most effective balance between conservation, tourism and community development.

The minister called on industrial players and Namibians to join for delivering yet another global event never to be forgotten as part of the quest to becoming the most competitive tourism destination in Africa.



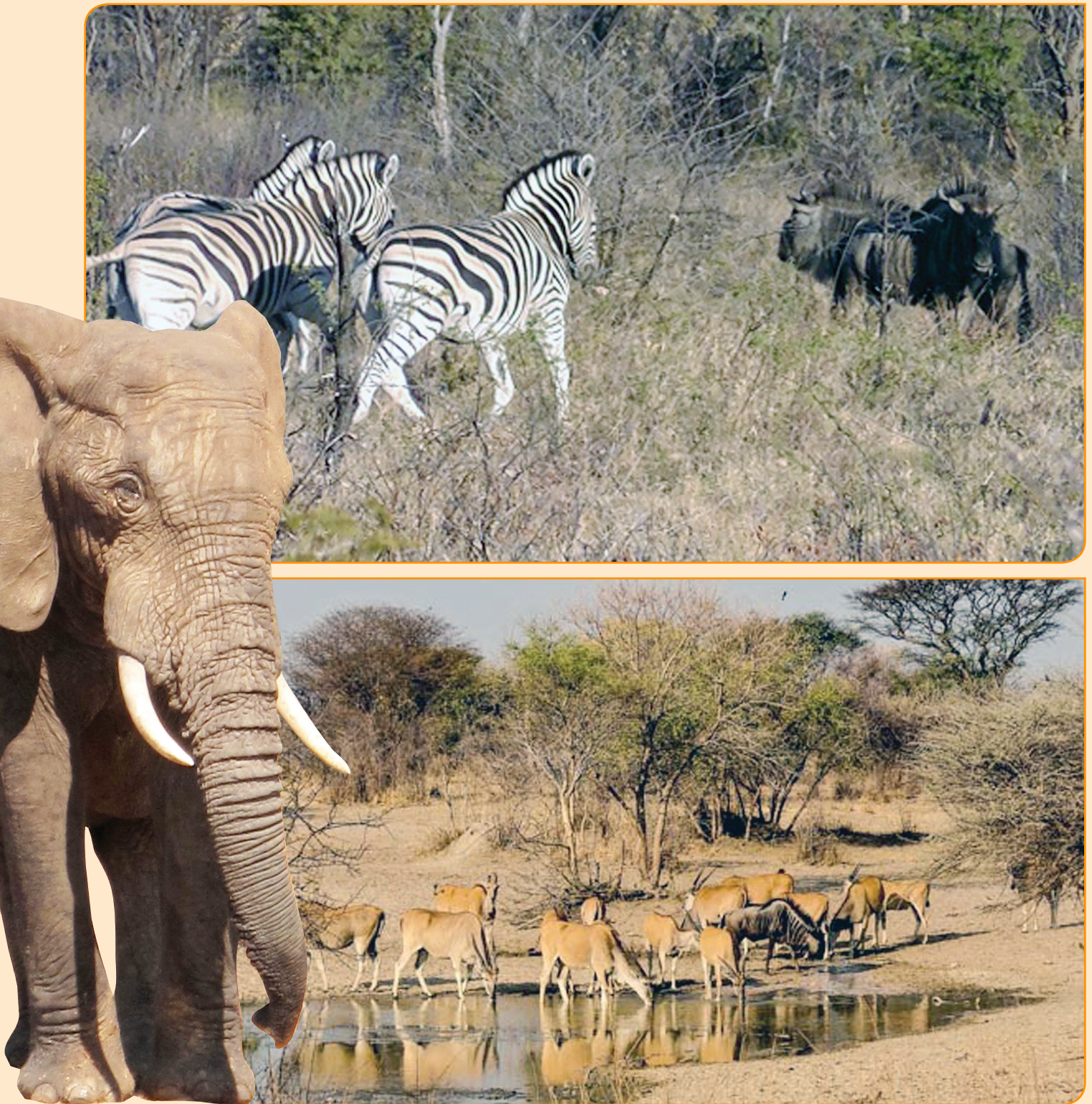
Minister of Environment and Tourism, Hon Uahekua Herunga

Mangetti benefit communities

Traditional authorities and communities in the Kavango West Region will financially benefit from Mangetti National Park which was officially opened on 10 October by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, Uahekua Herunga.

In 1992, the Ukwangali Traditional Authority requested that Mangetti should be proclaimed as a conservancy under the management of the ministry and for the benefit of the traditional authority and the community.

The minister, in his key note address, said a compulsory fee will be paid to the traditional authorities for using the park.



He also said that his ministry plans to establish a bush lodge in the park and that over one million Namibian dollars have been generated from trophy hunting.

Mangetti generates about N\$900 000 from trophy hunting every year, he noted.

In 1988, the transitional government approved that the Department of Nature Conservation should manage Mangetti, however, the park had no legal status until 2008.

A management committee was established, which included the Ukwangali Traditional Authority, the Okavango Administration Second Tier Authority, and the Agriculture and Nature Conservation.

After independence, the Environment Ministry accepted full responsibility for the management of the Mangetti Game Camp working together with the Ukwangali Traditional Authority on whose land the Mangetti is.

“Mangetti National Park is very special. It is a pristine piece of nature. It is known for its typical savannah landscape, abundant biodiversity and a range of large species such as elephants, elands, rhinos, blue wildebeest, zebras, giraffes and rare antelopes,” the minister said.

The most abundant species in the park are elands and blue wildebeest with the population of over four hundred (400) two hundred (200) respectively.



Performance Management System nears completion

Namibia records an increase in tourism

Statistics released by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism recently show that tourist arrival numbers increased by an impressive 5,5% from 2012 to 2013, and that tourist figures increased by 9% for the same period respectively.

The environment ministry launched the 2012/13 report on tourist statistics in Windhoek in October 2014.

The figures indicate that overall tourism market for Namibia, both in 2012/13, were behind Angola, South Africa, Germany, United States and Portugal.

And regardless of the tourists' origins, most people visited Namibia during the season between May-September which accounted for 42% of all tourists travelling to Namibia.

The report was officially launched by Hon. Uahekua Herunga, the Minister of Environment and Tourism.

The minister stressed that an ever-increasing number of destinations worldwide have opened up, turning tourism into a key driver of socio-economic progress through revenue generation, creating jobs and infrastructure development.

The minister expressed confidence and satisfaction that Namibia's tourism sector performance especially inbound demand remains remarkably strong despite persisting global economic crisis.

Saying that Namibia has been voted as

the fastest growing tourism destination in the world, the minister called on stakeholders to continue to make the best endeavours to ensure that the country remains a value for money destination by providing excellent service.

Herunga also said tourism in Namibia is one of the fastest growing sectors made unique by its multiplying effects in contributing to the gross domestic product (GDP).

He added that Tourism touches every aspect of society with its impact being felt even in rural areas of the country.

The minister noted that despite an impressive increase, the figures show that Namibia needs to enhance its image in terms of promotion and marketing to deepen its positions as a destination.

Partly, he explained, the tourism industry needs to diversify its products, address seasonality and manage growth strategically.

The minister emphasised on the importance of developing the aviation industry stating that over half of tourists enter Namibia through Hosea Kutako International Airport.

He also called on African countries to work together and complement each other since they are competing with giants.

The tourism statistics were produced with the assistance of Millennium Challenge Account-Namibia.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism is progressing in implementing performance management policy after the signing of the agreements.

The process is expected to cascade down to staff members to the level of chiefs before it rolls out to all others.

So far, training on performance management system for middle level managers was conducted and is expected to be signed December.

The policy is meant to support the aspirations and objectives of Vision 2030 through organisational and individual management plans.

It is also meant to provide a strategic and operational tool designed to manage organisational, individual and team performance to realise organisational goals.

Staff members are required to sign the agreements with their supervisors and are both responsible for the implementation of the system that emanates from the national to individual objectives, including the elements of Vision 2030, National Development Plans, institutional strategic and annual plans.

The system will also consider performance agreements and personal plans; quarterly review and annual staff leadership assessments.

The policy applies to all members fully employed in the public service irrespective of their employment status.

Supervisors are encouraged to view the system as a critical part of their management and supervisory role, and not as additional work.

Furthermore, supervisors are expected to review and conduct end of year performance appraisals of their staff members, while staff members reserve the right to appeal to the next level supervisor where they perceive unfair practice.

For further clarification contact the human resources department.

New Appointments

Tshiguetha Julia-nappointed as Human Resource Practitioner from 1 September 2014 in Windhoek
Masule subbort- Appointed as Human Resource Practitioner from 1 August 2014 in Windhoek
Namungongo A.S.C- Appointed as Ranger from 1 September 2014 in Otjovasandu
Nangolo P.N- Appointed as Ranger from 1 September 2014 in Otjovasandu
Shapwa T.K – Appointed as Ranger From 1 September 2014 in Halali
Shagam D.I- Appointed Ranger from 1 October 2014 in Okakuejo
Haufiku E.P – Appointed Ranger from 1 October 2014 in Okakuejo
Amadhila T.I.S- Appointed as Ranger from 1 October 2014 in Okakuejo
Kaukuata U- Appointed as Warden from 1 November in Windhoek
Hangula Simon H- Senior Conservation Scientist from 20 November 2014 in Windhoek

Promotions

Lushetile Mwaka- Promoted to Senior Conservation Scientist from 1 November 2014 in Windhoek

Transfers

4. Ashili Paulus- Senior Conservation Scientist as of 1 November in Windhoek

Transfers



**Siyere E.M – Computer Technician
as of 1 August 2014 in Windhoek**



**Muyoba Victor- Human Resource Practitioner
as of 1 September 2014
in Windhoek**



**Hainghumbi Hafeni – Human Resource Practitioner
as of 1 November 2014
in Windhoek**

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