

Minutes  
of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the  
**Ministry of Environment & Tourism  
and Environmental NGOs Forum**

Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011 at 14h30  
Kleines Heim Conference Center

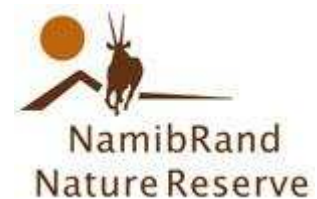


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# **Minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the *Ministry of Environment & Tourism* *and Environmental NGOs Forum***

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## **Agenda**

- 1. Welcome and Introductions – Dr Chris Brown**
- 2. Objectives and purpose of the Forum – Hon Mrs Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah**
- 3. Information sharing by NGOs**
- 4. Information sharing by MET**
- 5. Closing remarks – Hon. Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah**

### **1. Welcome**

Dr Chris Brown welcomed the Minister of Environment & Tourism (MET), Honorable Mrs Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah, senior officials of the MET and the directors or senior representatives of some 20 environmental non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to this the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Forum. He stated that the purpose of this 1<sup>st</sup> Forum meeting is to bring together environmental NGOs and MET to share information, to get to know each other better and to start the process of working more closely together in the interests of conservation, sustainable development and a good future for Namibia. He emphasized that Hon Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah is a strong champion of this approach to information sharing and positive collaboration, and that she has played a decisive role in the preparations for this Forum meeting.

### **Introductions**

All the participants introduced themselves and the organizations that they represent.. The detailed list of the attendees is attached at the last page of these minutes.

### **2. Objectives and purpose of the Forum**

Honorable Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah informed all the participants that she was glad to have this day finally realized. She mentioned that last year when she had a meeting with Dr. Brown, she requested for a strong environmental NGO forum to tackle environmental issues in Namibia. She went on to say that she wanted to know the different role players in the environmental sector. This then initiated the information sharing Forum that she strongly felt would succeed. She expressed many thanks to all the NGO representatives who found time to attend the first meeting.

Honorable Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah felt that this forum was really important as it involves face to face contact. She admitted that the sector has a limited critical mass of professionals and hence it is very crucial to know each other and to know who is doing what activity and make a positive impact

through working together. She emphasized that there is a need to manage the limited resources efficiently to ensure sustainable development according to the Namibian Constitution Article 98, and thus whether it is done privately or publicly, the aim will still be achieved.

She also pointed out that there is a need to avoid duplication and hence one hand has to know what the other hand is doing. When preparing National or even Convention reports, she stressed the need for inputs from all Environmental NGOs once they get to know each other and that by working together many problems would be solved.

Another important point that she noted is that the NGOs should operate as NGOs and not as corporate entities. The capital available would be for offering the service since they are non-profit making organizations.

She went on to say that the reason why the Ministry is opening up is that it wants to work together with the environmental NGOs in order to avoid monopoly and for NGOs to feed into government programmes. She commended some of the NGOs such as DRFN and NNF for collaborating with the Ministry and encouraged other NGOs to do the same.

She concluded by pointing out that MET is taking this initiative seriously which was pronounced by the presence of 3 other senior level officials from MET. She once again thanked all the NGO representatives for attending the meeting.

### **3. Information sharing by the environmental NGOs**

Each participating NGO gave a short presentation on their work, successes and challenges, and the opportunities they see when looking ahead. For those organisations that gave power point presentations, these are attached in Annexes at the end of the minutes.

#### **1. Africat (Annex 1)**

Derived from the phrase 'A Free Cat', it is involved in Environmental programmes and trainings. It has managed to change the way many Namibians think about cats and they have brought awareness to the communities.

Challenges: Reaching out to farmers (Communal Farmers are more tolerant) and funding

Opportunities: Education

#### **2. CCF (Annex 2)**

The Fund is involved in cheetah conservation, livestock guarding, schools education and conservation biology programmes amongst others. CCF's achievements include being a member of CANAM and the Rhino Custodian programme, and creating employment.

Challenges: Understanding cheetah ecology

#### **3. Eco Awards**

Eco- awards Namibia promotes sustainable development of tourism accommodation facilities in Namibia in order to set high environmental standards and to promote a sustainable sector. Issues

addressed through an independent assessment of key criteria include conservation management of land and natural resources; management of water, energy and waste; sharing of relevant environmental information, social responsibility, sense of place impacts, etc. Their membership is improving annually and more awareness on sustainable operations has been achieved.

Challenges: Despite having increased membership, there is still a lack of funding.

#### **4. EHRA**

The project aims at decreasing Human Elephant Conflict using several tactics. The personnel and volunteers assist with protecting water points by constructing protection walls, renovating local schools through a partnership with a secondary school in the UK, and conducting education programmes for community members, learners and the public to increase knowledge and awareness about elephants and their role in the environment.

Challenges: Funding for day to day running, old vehicles that need constant repair, Director's visa not approved, improving relations with MET about elephant issues.

Opportunities: Getting a research permit, working with MCA and WWF to help communities develop tourism opportunities, building better relationships with MET, expanding further North and perhaps building a base camp, as well as working in Caprivi..

#### **5. IRDNC**

Their work focuses on support to conservancies in the Caprivi and Kunene Regions. The organization evolved from a small community-game guard initiative, to providing conservancy registration support, to consolidating this support through long-term, field-based capacity-building, and is currently in a phase of diversifying support to sectors such as Holistic Range Management and commercialization of valuable plants. IRDNC's work with conservancies includes Natural Resource Management (Event Book, carrying out annual game counts, mitigating the impacts of human-wildlife conflict), Institutional Capacity-building (improving conservancy governance and management) and Enterprise Development (in the tourism and trophy hunting sectors).

Challenges: Human-Wildlife Conflict makes it difficult for the benefits of living with wildlife to outweigh the costs in some conservancies, improving accountability in financial management at conservancy level, ensuring that sufficient income is earned by conservancies to impact on the local economy at a household level. Though MET staff are committed, the MET's CBNRM Unit is understaffed and under-resourced and unable to provide the level of support and monitoring required by conservancies.

#### **6. LAC (Annex 3)**

The Centre is involved in research, outreaches, education and awareness programmes including offering legal support concerning developing agreements. It currently assists with the Constitutions of CBNRM.

Challenges: Limited staff, funding, assistance from interns that need constant supervision, regular engagement with government and solving problems within CBNRM.

Opportunities: Research on nuclear and renewable energy with interns, expanding educational programmes and broadening and strengthening integration of CBNRM.

#### **7. LCMAN (Annex 4)**

The Association is currently working on determining the number of carnivores in Namibia.

### **8. N/a'an ku sê (Annex 5)**

Some of the work they are engaging in is incorporating indigenous San skills to identify problem animals, develop innovative techniques and collar release and monitoring. They have a Lifeline clinic and a forum on wild dog conservation that started off successfully.

Opportunities: To work together, to be in partnership with the Ministry of Health

### **9. NACSO (Annex 6)**

A group of 15 NGOs that meet quarterly with the aim of sustainably support to conservancies and emerging conservancies. They work in 12 regions of Namibia where they deal with rural communities on livelihood issues, institutional and governance, and biodiversity management. The Association has produced a 5 year Strategic plan which is now operational.

Challenges: The MET- CBNRM unit is understaffed and needs support in the field.

### **10. NaDEET (Annex 7)**

It is involved in primary, secondary and community programmes on sustainable livelihoods, covering energy, water, waste and biodiversity management. NaDEET advocates for the use of solar energy, water counting and saving and producing fuel from recycled waste.

Challenges: Funding for salaries and running cost, access to sustainable living technology for participants e.g. solar cookers and ovens are not widely available.

Opportunities: 65% return rate, 67% use new solar cookers daily.

### **11. NRNR (Annex 8)**

It is one of the largest private nature reserves in Southern Africa. Their main focus is on promoting the conservation and sustainable use of indigenous biodiversity and landscapes.

Challenges: Registering as a private natural reserve on land that is zoned as agricultural land, veterinary restrictions e.g. double fencing to keep wildebeest, removal of road corridor fences and shifting of motor gates.

Opportunity: Cooperation with neighbors, develop an integrated holistic research programme, work with MET in helping to manage neighbouring park, establishment of an association for the co-development and management of Greater Sossuvleis and Namib complex.

### **12. NDT**

It integrates environment in social development work. The main geographic focus is in the Hardap, Karas and parts of Otjozodjupa region, as well as the north central regions. They are involved in natural resource management, institutional development and tourism support and with the CPP programme in 6 regions.

Challenges: The CPP programme narrowed down its initial objectives.

### **13. NARREC (9)**

Activities include wildlife rehabilitation with a focus on birds, centre-based environmental education from pre-primary through tertiary levels and provision of outreach information in the form of news articles, posters and booklets. Specific topics include:

Responsible pesticide use, Wildlife poison events, Predatory birds, Management of predators on livestock farms, Illegal capture and trade; Appropriate holding facilities, Irregularities concerning CITES bird species, General awareness on birds, and Bird ringing and tagging.

#### **14. NNF (Annex 10)**

Engages in implementation and management of various environmental projects that aim at sustainable development and they are also involved in management of projects finances.

Challenges: Collaboration between partners, matching capability and capacity for output, vision 2030 collaboration

#### **15. NEWS (Annex 11)**

NEWS is a membership based society and produces a bi-annual environmental magazine called Roan News and monthly newsletters and collaborates with NADEET in distributing the Bush Telegraph as their official youth magazine. They furthermore engage in monthly Enviro Talks and sponsor various research projects.

Challenges: Human resources, time, financial, small membership (particularly low in black community)

Opportunities: Outlet for MET resources, knowledge assistance, MET membership.

#### **16. SAIEA (Annex 12)**

It is an NGO that promotes sustainable development in Southern Africa and focuses on guiding and reviewing Environmental Assessments, sustainable development tools, training and capacity building, and networking.

Challenges in the Environmental Assessment sector: Environmental Management Act which is still a 'toothless dog', poor review capacity and Government ignoring its own legislation

Opportunities: Strategic Environmental Assessment, Collaboration with DEA and EIA unit.

#### **17. WWF (Annex 13)**

Its areas include partnerships, training, grants and technical assistance.

The focus is mainly on CBNRM with the objectives of developing human resources, restoring wildlife, market-based conservation among others.

Challenges: Conservancies are increasing more than the service provision, inadequate capacity, and shortage of conservation funds; need to develop long term support system and related financial support

Opportunities: Conservancies can be strengthened; Income opportunities can be increased, training and capacity building, permanent conservancy support system and sustainable finance.

The following common themes emerged:

#### ***Challenges***

- Communications between NGOs and between NGOs and MET. Improved communications would greatly facilitate better working relations, closer collaboration and greater efficiency in the sector
- Access to more reliable longer-term funding. This hampers the entire sector and is a major challenge for achieving long term sustainability in programme implementation and service delivery

- Capacity and human resources – this cuts across all sectors, NGO and GRN, and must be a focus for all partners
- Inefficient and poor administration of research permit system, sometimes using it as a mechanism to admonish NGOs
- The issue of park fencing between friendly neighbours with compatible land uses, where opening up systems would have huge conservation benefits
- The issue of poison use in Namibia, currently being one of the most damaging practices which impacts large numbers of endangered Red Data species, particularly birds of prey – the new Parks & Wildlife Bill should address this issue as a priority
- Issues around EIAs – the Environmental Management Act has not yet been brought into implementation through Regulations, the MET capacity to review EIAs and Environmental Management Plans is extremely poor and GRN often ignores its own legislation and policies
- It is a major challenge to increase benefits to conservancies so as to ensure that they are financially viable – this being a challenge faced jointly by MET and support NGOs
- A number of the existing forums for collaboration do not include MET as full members – if present, MET has a participation role, not a full membership role, e.g. on LCMAN and NACSO. These sectors would benefit by MET being a full and dynamic partner on the respective forums.

### ***Opportunities***

- Adopting open, co-managed landscape approaches for optimizing conservation, economic development, marketing and capacity enhancement, as well as part of climate change mitigation
- Strengthening compliance issues with MET in conservancies
- Adopting a vigorous planning and focused mobilization process to implement the key environmental and sustainable development aspects of Namibia's Vision 2030, as this will address many national problems and provide good opportunities for MET-NGO collaboration
- Coastal and marine issues have received limited attention from NGOs in Namibia. This is an area which deserves considerable attention, particularly considering the limited research, monitoring and management that has taken place
- The area of climate change and green economy is an exciting new field for expansion in Namibia and creates many opportunities for MET and NGOs to work together
- The whole area of environmental and ecological research needs urgent attention. Research in these sectors in Namibia has severely declined since Independence, as has the publication of research results. This is a very serious situation. It could be addressed and improved by MET and the NGO community working together. One of the requirements is to resuscitate or establish a new Namibian scientific journal for environmental and sustainable development research.
- The application of Strategic Assessments, such as developed for the Uranium province, could be extremely useful for a number of other aspects. Such an approach could be applied, for example, to water and land in Namibia. The advantage of this approach is that it cuts across perceptions, prejudices and misinformation, and places objective, analytical options in the hands of decision-makers. Namibia is rarely led by evidence-based strategic thinking. This is

an area where MET and the environmental NGO sector together could make a significant contribution

- Namibia's communal conservancy programme, a joint success story achieved by MET and NGOs, could be used more effectively as a global example to other countries. This is one of the most successful conservation stories of the past century at a global level, and considerably more should be made of it, both for Namibia and for other countries that could benefit
- As part of the above, the difficult issue of human wildlife conflict management needs to be addressed in a carefully planned and coordinated fashion. A number of NGOs have specialist knowledge and skills in this area. A closely planned and implemented programme of action between MET and LCMAN, for example, could significantly improve the effectiveness of helping communal farmers deal with the problem
- Many NGOs, as well as MET, have active environmental education and awareness creation projects and programmes. A national action plan, developed with all partners, and implemented collaboratively, would improve overall effectiveness.

While there are challenges, it is clear that most challenges can be turned into opportunities. Clearly more opportunities emerged than challenges, making it clear that good collaboration and strong partnership between the NGOs and between NGOs and MET would deliver huge benefits for Namibia's environment and for the people of Namibia. This is a very encouraging situation. It is up to us to turn these opportunities into positive actions.

#### 4. Information sharing by MET

##### **Ministry of Environment & Tourism, presented by Mr Nghitila, Director of the Directorate of Environmental Affairs (Annex 14)**

The conservation work that MET is involved in includes environmental management, policy development and implementation. It is also engaging in management of protected areas and rare and endangered species, integrated land management, environmental education among other areas.

2009- 2010 Achievements: 22 Tourism Concessions, 13 hunting concessions went through, 2177 head of wildlife translocated, Conservancy facilities e.g. offices (built? Numbers?), 64 registered conservancies to date, support to income generation through CPP, a programme that NDT and NNF are among the implementing agencies. Mr Nghitila highlighted that they really had to redirect the programme as this concern was mentioned by NDT during their reporting.

Challenges: The restructuring of MET to be responsive to their mandate and be more visible in this new forum, shortage of capacity to ensure knowledge management, expansion of protected areas which needs more resources, the sustainability of the CBNRM programme, support to MET initiatives e.g. NACOMA, CPP ISLM, CCA. He then mentioned that MET cannot do this on its own, but needs collaboration with NGOs.

Opportunities: Human Wildlife Conflict mitigation measures, nature based products enterprise development, conservancies support services, public awareness, coastal environment management, CBNRM, rural development and livelihoods, protected landscape initiative and joint research which has a gap at the moment.



Dr Brown thanked MET and all partners for attending the meeting. He mentioned that the presentations will be compiled and circulated to all.

## 5. Closing remarks

The Minister, Honorable Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah reiterated that she would go and evaluate this first meeting together with Dr. Brown as they both initiated the idea. She thanked all the representatives for putting aside time to prepare the presentations and share their information. She believed this was the beginning of a journey that would continue. Everywhere the issue of training and skill development is very crucial. She requested those into tourism to work hard and strike a balance. In Environment, she noticed from the presentations that they are working very hard to develop a balanced scheme.

Honorable Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah went on to say that NEWS mentioned that the black community is not getting involved; she responded by stressing that many black people are much closer to the environment and live with the environment every day and, as such, that they are not concerned as they probably think they know everything about the environment. She emphasized the need to work hard so that benefits will be realized by the communities who have taken care of the environment for years, for instance creating employment that will benefit the community.

About the Environmental Management Act, she mentioned that it had not yet been implemented because of capacity challenges, therefore MET needs to know the NGO skills. Waste management is another issue that she said did not come out strongly in the presentations. The Climate Change National Policy is now in place and she will present it to the Parliament. She urged all NGOs to be part of the implementation process.

She concluded by pointing out that the government is for people and there is a need to work together to form an inclusive structure. The proceedings will be sent to all and she hopes the next meeting will be more focused on one or two specific issues to allow the meeting to be more interactive and to develop a plan of work. She suggested that one NGO could be selected to be the secretariat to compile all the proceedings so that there will be one report at the end of the year. The Directorate of Environmental Affairs will continue to be a member and maintain momentum.

Honorable Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah thanked all for attending and then adjourned the meeting.

## Attendance Register

Organisation	Representative's name	Email address
1. Africat	Donna Hanssen	<a href="mailto:africat@mweb.com.na">africat@mweb.com.na</a>
2. Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)	Dr. Marker & Dr. Brewer	<a href="mailto:cheetah@iway.na">cheetah@iway.na</a>
3. Eco- Awards Namibia	Hazel Milne	<a href="mailto:admin@ecoawards-namibia.org">admin@ecoawards-namibia.org</a>
4. Elephant Human Relations Aid (EHRA)	Dr Betsy Fox	<a href="mailto:foxwoman@iway.na">foxwoman@iway.na</a>
5. Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)	Karine Nuulimba	<a href="mailto:karine.nuulimba@gmail.com">karine.nuulimba@gmail.com</a>
6. Large Carnivore Management Association of Namibia (LCMAN)	Dr. Rudie van Vuuren	<a href="mailto:rudie@naankuse.com">rudie@naankuse.com</a>
7. Legal Assistance Centre (LAC)	Dr. Ute Dieckmann & John Hazam	<a href="mailto:udieckmann@lac.org.na">udieckmann@lac.org.na</a> <a href="mailto:jhazam@lac.org.na">jhazam@lac.org.na</a>
8. Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO)	Maxi Louis	<a href="mailto:maxi@nacso.org.na">maxi@nacso.org.na</a>
9. Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET)	Viktoria Keding	<a href="mailto:vkeding@nadeet.org">vkeding@nadeet.org</a>
10. NamibRand Nature Reserve (NRNR)	Albi Brückner, Mike and Ann Scott	<a href="mailto:albi@namibrand.org">albi@namibrand.org</a> <a href="mailto:warden@namibrand.org">warden@namibrand.org</a>
11. Namibia Animal Rehabilitation, Research & Education Trust (NARREC)	Liz Komen	<a href="mailto:liz@narrec.net">liz@narrec.net</a>
12. Namibia Institute for Sustainable Development (NISD)	Dr. Chris Brown	<a href="mailto:chrisbrown.namibia@gmail.com">chrisbrown.namibia@gmail.com</a>
13. Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)	Dr. Julian Fenessy	<a href="mailto:jf@nnf.org.na">jf@nnf.org.na</a>
14. Namibia Environment & Wildlife Society (NEWS)	Peter Cunningham	<a href="mailto:pckkwrc@yahoo.co.uk">pckkwrc@yahoo.co.uk</a>
15. N/a'an ku sê	Dr. Rudie van Vuuren	<a href="mailto:rudie@naankuse.com">rudie@naankuse.com</a>
16. Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment (SAIEA)	John Pallett	<a href="mailto:John.pallett@saiea.com">John.pallett@saiea.com</a>
17. World Wildlife Fund in Namibia (WWF)	Chris Weaver	<a href="mailto:cweaver@wwf.na">cweaver@wwf.na</a>
18. Namibia Development Trust (NDT)	Ronny Dempers	<a href="mailto:rdempers@cdss.co.na">rdempers@cdss.co.na</a>

19. Ministry of Environment & Tourism (MET)	Honorable Netumbo Nandi Ndaitwah - Minister	
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20. Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA/MET)	Teofilus Nghitila - Director	<a href="mailto:nghitila@met.na">nghitila@met.na</a>
21. City of Revelstoke & NDP Standing Committee on Environment & Economy (Canada)	Toni Halberstadt	<a href="mailto:a.halber@telus.net">a.halber@telus.net</a>