



South West Africa Administration

WHITE PAPER

on the

ACTIVITIES OF THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES

for

1968

NATURE CONSERVATION AND TOURISM

GENERAL REVIEW

The total number of persons visiting nature conservation resorts and game parks increased by 16% compared with the 1967 figures, largely as a result of good rains and extensions and improvements to the available facilities. .

144,605 persons visited the various game parks and resorts in comparison with 124,215 persons during the previous year. During the June-July school holidays large numbers of visitors had to be turned away owing to shortage of accommodation. Revenue increased from R164,039 to R186,478.

Good progress was made in the field of research. Various projects which included ecological surveys, research and game capture and transport techniques were concluded.

The Accommodation Establishments and Tourism Ordinance 1967 (Ordinance 29 of 1967) as well as the regulations for the grading of accommodation establishments came into operation on 2 December 1968. The purpose of this legislation is to establish minimum requirements with which hotels, motels, guest farms, rest camps, caravan parks and safari undertakings have to comply. All these institutions should be registered before 2 December 1969. Loans were granted to the value of R221,000.

GAME RESERVES AND RECREATION RESORTS

The Etosha National Park

41,206 persons in 9,346 vehicles, 334 caravans and 92 aircraft visited the Etosha National Park in comparison with 39,192 persons in 9,555 vehicles, 220 caravans and 71 aircraft in the previous year. More and more safari companies are entering this line of business and organised groups account for a growing percentage of the visitors. The luxury touring bus service of the South African Railways was particularly successful. Although the number of tours to the Etosha Park was doubled, the total occupation figure for the buses was 94.4%.

The Administration's tourist shops were as usual well supported and their revenue increased from R101,963 in 1967 to R102,019 during 1968. Accommodation and entrance fee rose from R43,699 to R50,315. Income from the restaurants and dining rooms let in the park amounted to R2,392.

The public, by means of circulated questionnaires was given the opportunity of commenting on tourist facilities, and information thus obtained will be of use for future planning.

Several development programmes were completed. The power station at Okaukuejo is practically completed. While the reservoir, pump station and pipeline at Otjivasandu were completed, the plans for a new rest camp were approved and building operations are to commence shortly. Two concrete and two earth dams were constructed. Public conveniences quarantine camp was erected at the Sprokieswoud. At Namutoni a large black faced impala, brought in from elsewhere. 103 miles were re-gravelled. 215 miles of additional fire breaks were graded. Including main roads, the Etosha park now from Sachsenheim to Namutoni is expected to be completed early in 1969.

Once again poachers were a nuisance and more than 70 were arrested.

Bush fires destroyed approximately 5, 000 square miles of valuable grazing. The first of these fires was started by vagrants in February, and three others broke out accidentally. Three cases of deliberate arson occurred, and six fires spread from Native territory.

Hardap Recreation Resort

36, 617 persons in 9, 352 vehicles and 150 caravans visited the Hardap Recreation Resort in comparison with 40, 266 persons in 10, 317 the previous year. The visitor figure dropped by 3, 649 which is 9. 1 %. 29, 325 were day visitors and only 7, 292 (22%) stayed overnight. When the modern rest camp, at present under construction, is completed it is expected that more travellers will stop overnight.

The 40-mile-long boundary of the nature reserve in which fair numbers of kudu, gemsbok, springbok, hartebeest, and ostriches are found, was fenced in with a game and jackal- proof fence. A start was made with the construction of a road network in the nature reserve.

Revenue from gate and camping fees amounted to R13, 237 in comparison with the R9, 025 of the previous year.

Angling increased in popularity and competitions were organised. Water skiing took place regularly and various regattas were held. 160 motor and sailing boats counted during the year.

Various development works are in progress or have been completed. The storage tank, sewage and water networks and Purification works at the new layout are practically completed. Construction of the new rest camp will begin early next year. A great deal of time was spent in planting grass and trees.

Daan Viljoen Game Park

The Daan Viljoen Game Park's increasing popularity was responsible for a record number of visitors. There was an increase from 30, 342 visitors during 1967 to 47, 860 in 1968 – a rise of approximately 57%. The majority were, however, day visitors. Revenue increased from R8, 765 to R15, 857.

Except for one ablution block which is nearing completion and the veld kitchen which will be started next year, the building program was completed as follows:

2 low water bridges with floodwater pipes, an additional picnic place for a group of 30 visitors, the observation point at the dam wall which was made safe and two huts for the gatekeepers. In front of the restaurant and next to the dam wall more parking areas were laid out and 15 miles of new fires breaks, and patrol roads were constructed. A new sewage scheme, to replace the present tank sewage system, is rapidly nearing completion.

Two bush fires, caused by visitors were controlled before any notable damage was caused. The game bred very well this year. Amongst the eland, mountain Zebra, gemsbuck, impala and kudu the increase was particularly good. No poaching was reported.

Ai- Ais Hot Springs

The contractor, who is building a new rest camp at the Ais- Ais Hot Springs has already completed approximately 30% of his contract. According to expectations the camp will be opened to the public early in 1970.

About 20 miles of new road to the Fish River Canyon was completed by the roads branch. 900 date palms and 300 quiver trees, aloes and succulents were planted. A flood- water stone wall was built between the river and the camp.

Altogether 4, 480 persons signed the visitors book at the Fish River Canyon. This figure is estimated to be only 60% of the number of people who visited the canyon. 117 persons undertook walking tours from Ai -Ais to the canyon and 39 visitors walked from Ai – Ais to the Orange River. Most of these visitors came from the Republic. Further improvements were affected at the canyon. A 200 ft. long stone wall was built to safeguard visitors. % Shaded picnic spots and barbeques were provided.

Gross Barman Hot Springs

These hot springs were closed to the public for health reasons. Construction of the resort at the springs will begin during 1969.

Cape Cross Seal Reserve

3, 269 persons in 627 vehicles visited Cape Cross in comparison with 2, 310 persons in 534 vehicles the previous year. 2 officials were on duty to exercise better supervision. Revenue amounted to R627.

Namib Desert Park

9, 731 persons in 2, 265 vehicles visited the park, in comparison with the 1, 348 persons in 310 vehicles in the previous year. As a result of good rains in the upland areas visitors were able to see large concentrations of game. Several camping sites were laid out and roads improved. New regulations for better control were promulgated.

Sandwich Harbour is gaining in popularity as a tourist attraction and is already known internationally for its angling possibilities. The large variety of birds found there has also won acclaim and ringing of young birds in their breeding areas for research purposes has begun.

Naukluft Mountain Zebra Park

The Park is at present not open to the general public as the access roads and camping sites have not yet been completed. Twenty mountaineers and 12 scientists assisted with the reconnoitring of possible climbing routes and scientific surveys.

Windhoek Game Park

The game park remains popular, particularly during weekends and during the tourist season.

Surplus game and progeny were transferred to the Daan Viljoen Game Park.

Quick grass and reeds were planted next to the recently completed retaining dams. In the meantime, animals are still being fed on lucerne and concentrates. Veld reclamation works will be undertaken during 1969.

Head Office and General

Inspections and patrols were carried out throughout the territory by the Regional Services Section. Game problems reported by farmers were investigated and the necessary steps taken. 111 gemsbuck were caught in areas in which they caused damage and were removed to various reserves of the Administration. 12 gemsbuck were presented to the Transvaal Provincial Administration and 40 impalas were captured in the Kaokoveld and removed to the Etosha National Park. Two rhinos were also transferred from farms.

Repairs and clearance work were undertaken in scenic areas such as the Brandberg Nature Reserve, the Mukorob, the Hoba meteorite, Twyfelfontein, the Spitzkoppe, the Omaruru River Nature Reserve, the Petrified Forest, and the Waterberg Nature Reserve.

During the year various talks and lectures were held over the radio and to various organisations, youth groups and tourists by senior officials of the branch. Nature conservation and publicity films were shown regularly in the National Etosha Park. The branch also assisted in the making of films in the Etosha National Park and the Namib Desert Park.

Municipalities and hotels were given advice concerning the lay-out of caravan camping sites, rest camps and recreation resorts and the planning of and improvements to hotels.

Officials of the branch represented the Administration at meetings of the National Committee for the International Biological Programme, the South African Fauna Research and Advisory Committee, the National Co-ordinating Board on Nature Conservation, the Pilot Committee of the Namib Desert Research Station, and the S. W. A Publicity Association and served on the Committee of Investigation into the Development of the West Coast for Tourism.

PERMITS ISSUED DURING THE YEAR FOR THE SHOOTING< CAPTURE< KEEPING AND EXPORT OF GAME

Shooting of Game

The following permits were issued to farmers for the shooting of game in order to protect grazing: -

Gemsbok	229
Kudu	345
Springbok	783
Ostrich	25
Zebra	297
Total	1, 687

The number of trophy hunters from overseas increased by 40% and a correspondingly larger number of permits were issued for this purpose, viz:

Gemsbok	75
Kudu	78
Eland	51
Springbok	60
Hartebeest	58
Zebra	72
Blue Wildebeest	
(Brindled Gnu)	15
Ostrich	62
Duiker	16
Steenbok	14
Warthog	63
Total	564

Magistrates issued only 228 hunting licences in comparison with the previous year's 453. The S. W. A Nature Conservation Board has suggestions to the Executive Committee in this connection.

Capture of wild animals

Permits issued to farmers to capture for and keep game on their farms: -

Gemsbok	110
Kudu	8
Eland	34
Hartebeest	10
Zebra	3
Ostrich	33
Giraffe	6
Duiker	5
Steenbok	9
Bloubokkie	
(Dik Dik)	1
Total	290

This figure represents a decrease of 15% in comparison with the figures for the previous year.

Permits for the export of animals to zoos and game reserves included the following: -

Eland	97
Gemsbok	89
Giraffe	17
Zebra	63
Hartebeest	25

Kudu	45
Springbok	47
Gnu	5
Cheetah	50
Suricate	15
(Mongoose)	10
Leguar	2
Cape Wild Dog	10
Brown Hyena	1
Lynx	11
Baboon	22
Mongoose	10
Jackal	12
Hyena	4
Aard wolf	6
Tortoise	20
Wild Cat	1
Honey Badger	4
Spring Hare	6
Warthog	2
Lion	3
Pythons	4
Birds	4, 245

An export levy was imposed on animals exported overseas.

Research

Approval was obtained for the publication of the branch's own scientific research journal. An important milestone has thus been reached. The first edition of this publication entitled "Madoqua" will appear early in 1969.

The following research has been completed:

‘‘An Introduction to the Orientational Behaviour of Wild Ungulates in the Etosha Game Park.’’

‘‘Some Raptors of Etosha National Park.’’

‘‘Die Ekologie van die Damara Dik-Dik’.

‘Die Ekologie van die Swartrenoster in Suidwes-Afrika’.

Anthrax again claimed many animal lives in the Etosha National Park. At least 300 animals, mainly wildebeest and zebra, died in the vicinity of Namutoni during the anthrax epidemic. Only four cases of rabies were diagnosed during the year.

For the first time in Southern Africa, a black rhino was immobilised from a helicopter.

The branch ‘s own aircraft was used to ascertain the extent of bush fires in the Etosha National Park, to count the game and to determine the distribution of game in the Kaokoveld.

A South African Airways aircraft was used to transport 12 young gemsbok from Windhoek to the Langjan Game Reserve near Pietersburg, and 40 black-faced impalas were transported from Ohopoho to Namutoni in a South African Airways Aircraft.

Investigations and expeditions to various nature conservation areas in Southwest Africa were undertaken in collaboration with overseas and South African scientists.