



South West Africa Administration

WHITE PAPER

on the

ACTIVITIES OF THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES

for

1969

NATURE CONSERVATION AND TOURISM

GENERAL REVIEW

The gradual increase in the number of visitors to the Administration's game parks and recreation resorts over the past years was maintained during the year. Altogether 156,746 visitors were accommodated compared with the 144,000 of the previous year.

The above-mentioned figure represents the total number of visitors accommodated in rest camps and is not an indication of the number of people who visited South West Africa.

During peak periods the lack of accommodation still posed a problem, but it is hoped that this will be solved on completion, in the near future, of the new rest camps at Ai-Ais Hot Springs and the Hardap Recreation Resort.

The staff increase, which made the division of duties possible between nature conservators and tourist officers, led to greater efficiency. New branch offices were opened at Otjiwarongo and Keetmanshoop. Game catching was put on a firmer basis with the formation of a game catching team.

World attention was focussed on nature conservation in South West Africa when a large scale rescue operation of flamingoes was undertaken in the Etosha National Park and was covered by television units, radio and newspaper reporters and photographers.

The Accommodation Establishments and Tourism Advisory Board commenced activities early in the year and several loans were granted for improvements to existing establishments as well as for new buildings. All accommodation establishments were registered and the grading system was put into operation.

In the field of research, a milestone was reached on the Publication of the first issue of a new research periodical. Several important projects were undertaken.

TOURISM

The increase in the number of visitors to all game parks and resorts, except the Daan Viljoen Game Park, may be ascribed mainly in the number of caravans. Altogether 1, 228 caravans were counted in the Etosha National Park, the Daan Viljoen Game Park, and the Hardap Recreation Resort, as against the 484 of the previous year.

The completion of the tarred road to Namutoni added to the popularity of this camp as a point of entry to the Etosha National Park. During the season (16 March to 31 October) 17,443 persons were accommodated at Namutoni, 10,645 at Halali and 16,290 at Okaukuejo. 1,397 persons visited the park for a day only. Of the total number of visitors 46 per cent (25,759) came from the Republic and 2, 590 from overseas. Altogether 486 caravans and 207 buses entered the park.

The total revenue from accommodation and entry fees, the tourist shops and filling stations amounted to R244,309. Rent for the restaurants amounted to R3,764.

At present a new 21 mile stretch of road, passing Halali, is under construction. During the year grading was done on 907 miles of road and fire-breaks, 296 miles of fire-breaks constructed and 24 miles gravelled. The advantage of the fire-breaks was proved by the fact that only 450 square miles of grazing was destroyed by fire, compared with the nearly 8,000 square miles the previous year.

Fire-fighting equipment was supplied to all camps at Etosha, Hardap and Daan Viljoen.

Improvements in the Etosha camps were concentrated mainly on the caravan and camping sites. At Okaukuejo a wire fence was erected along the stone wall after lions followed their prey over the wall and feasted in the camp on several occasions.

Luxury flats to accommodate touring groups are being erected at the Okaukuejo and Halali camps. A larger power station at Okaukuejo was completed and a new one for Namutoni has reached the planning stage

The Automobile Association provided valuable services to tourists during the school holidays.

The Hardap Recreation Resort was visited by 38,625 persons in 10,537 vehicles. Of this number 9,534 were from the Republic - a 28 per cent increase over the previous year. The number of caravans increased by 417 per cent from 150 in 1968 to 625 in 1969. The total revenue amounted to R16,715. In May erections commenced for a new rest camp which should be opened to the public early in 1971. In the meantime four hundred and fifty indigenous trees, intended for the new camp, were planted in drums.

In the Daan Viljoen Game Park the swimming-pool stood empty for three months because of the drought. This park experienced a decrease in the number of visitors from 47,860 in 1968 to 41,224 in 1969. However, in spite thereof, revenue rose from R15,875 to octet indicating a longer average stay per visitor than in the previous year.

Improvements include a parking area layout at the swimming pool, slate around the pool and an additional 12 shelters with seats. The swimming-pool was made shallower and re-tiled. The whole of the rest camp has been fenced and road signs to the new extensions erected.

The Namib Desert Park was visited by 10,290 persons. Of these, 5367 visited the popular fishing resort of Sandwich Harbour. Revenue amounted to R2,111.

170 miles of road were graded, and signposts erected. The planned camping sites along the Kuiseb River could as yet not laid out.

Approximately 75 per cent of the new rest camp at the Ai-Ais Hot Springs has been completed. It is hoped to open the camp to the public in the latter half of 1970. Twenty ton of pebbles was brought from Oranjemund and built into the outer wall of the main building. Loose rocks on the mountain slopes, which could endanger the camp, were removed. A rockery was laid out against the Noorcdberg.

Succulents, aloes and a large variety of rocks were collected with the assistance of neighbouring farmers.

A short-cut through the mountains from Ai-Ais to the Fish River Canyon was opened to the public.

Altogether 7,290 persons signed the visitors' book at the main look-out point; 142 completed hikes down the . Canyon to Ai-Ais. Name-boards, notice-boards and sign posts were erected and fire-places built at the look-out points. A trail was built down the slope to the sulphur spring.

The Cape Cross Seal Reserve was proclaimed a game reserve. Of the 3,045 persons who visited Cape Cross in 666 vehicles, 600 more than 600 were from the Republic. Revenue came to R666.

The fishing resort of Torrabaai was visited by 497 persons as against 379 the previous year. The average length of stay was six days and the revenue R2, 357.

The West Coast attracted an estimated 6,000 campers. The problem of littering will probably be solved once the planned camping sites have been laid out.

NATURE CONSERVATION

After an initially good year, as far as rain was concerned, the drought took on grave proportions towards the end of 1969, especially in certain parts of the south and in the Khomas Highland. Large numbers of mountain zebra, , springbok and ostrich died. The number of permits that had to be issued to farmers for the shooting of game to protect their grazing showed a sharp increase (41 per . cent).

The biggest project of the year was the rescue of nearly 30, 000 flamingo chicks in the Etosha National Park. The water on the pan dried up earlier than usual and the adult birds had to fly away in order to save themselves. They left an estimated 100,000 young. Of those not rescued and transferred to Fisher's Pan almost 60,000 of the stronger reached other waters on their own. The world learnt about this rescue operation when newsmen and photographers from far and wide descended on the park: television units from : the British Anglia Television and the News Film Service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation, the Argus Africa News Service, distributing news and pictures world wide, as well as newspapermen from Windhoek. Programmes were broadcast in the internal and external services of the S.A.B.C.

Picture stories of the operation were published in magazines such as South African Panorama, South African Digest, the German periodical: Buntu Illustrierte, the Farmer's weekly and the German scientific magazine: Journal Für Ornithologie.

Where game - especially the rarer types - had been caught age and moved on a limited scale in the past few years, the newly formed catching team proved to be successful by the fact that in the few months the team has been in existence, 160 head of game have been transferred. Of these 39 were rare blackfaced impala, caught at Omuhonga in the Kaokoveld and taken to Otjovasandu. Twenty kudu were exported to Free State. The Administration will receive 20 blesbok a return early in 1970. The kudu were caught in the Daan Viljoen Game Park, where the drought assumed serious proportions towards the end of the year. The dams dried up and the boreholes could barely supply the animals with the necessary water until the first rains came. Throughout whole year only 212.7 mm. of rain fell in the park, compared with 367.6 mm. in the previous. Year.

Two branch offices were opened at Otjiwarongo and Keetmanshoop. Many inspections were carried out.

Farmers who complained about damage caused by protected game, were assisted as far as possible. Three giraffes and two elephants had to be shot and many elephants were driven from farms.

During the year in- service training of nature conservation was initiated.

The entrance road to the Naukluft Mountain Zebra Park was completed. The Robby Blake dam in the park was cleaned and repaired and a weir was built in the Naukluft River. Four hundred trout, arriving by air from Cape Town, were put into water in the park.

ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS

The Accommodation Establishments and Tourism Advisory Board (Tourism Board) began functioning on 25 February 1969. On 2 December 1969 all establishments had to be registered. One hotel only out of the 106 establishments was not registered and this at the request of the owner. The registration fees of the other 105 amounted to R7,875.

The following star gradings were granted during 1969:

- One star..... three hostels
- Two stars one hotel
- Three stars One safari company

Up to 31 December five applications for loans amounting to R726, 500 were recommended by the Tourism Board and granted by the Executive Committee for the building of new establishments and improvements to existing ones. Of this amount R286, 500 was taken up in full; the rest will be paid out gradually as the work progresses.

Officials of the Branch advised managers of establishments, development and management matters.

One of the main problems of the hotel industry is the shortage of staff. Because of these two bursaries of R360 each were awarded to persons wishing to obtain the National Diploma in Hotel Management at the Witwatersrand Technical college. Applications have already been received for the training course for non-whites.

Research

The publication of the first issue of the research periodical Madoqua was an important milestone for this section. This publication was distributed to nearly 500 scientists and scientific bodies in Southern Africa, other Africa states, North and South America, Europe, Australia, and Asia.

Several projects were initiated, amongst others one on the ecology of the mountain zebra. The purpose of the project is to solve the problems these animals create for farmers and at the same time ensure their survival in certain areas. An aerial survey from the Kunene to the Orange River has been completed to determine their numbers and distribution. In the meantime, several studies on these animals were begun.

A complete aerial census is also being taken on the game in the Kaokoveld and the western part of the Etosha National Park to determine their numbers, distribution, and migratory habits.

The research on Anthrax in the Etosha National Park is continuing. Although fewer cases occurred in 1969 than in the previous year, this disease still constitutes a menace for animals. (During the year 214 positive cases and 48 suspected cases were encountered; only seven cases of rabies were recorded).

The distributions, concentrations and migratory habits of sea birds are studied because of the economic value of these birds, especially as far as guano and the fish population along the west coast are concerned.

A smaller project was begun on the ecology and taxonomy of the black faced impala, in the first place to ensure its survival, and to endeavour to ascertain whether it is a different species from the ordinary Transvaal impala.

The take-over of the administration of the Namib Desert Research station in the Namib Desert Park was approved in principle by the Executive Committee. Professional matters will still resort under the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. It is hoped that the matter will be finalised early in 1970.

HEAD OFFICE AND GENERAL

The activities of two committees of inquiry were ended. The recommendations of the committee that investigated the control and long-term development of the west coast for visitor, were approved in principle by the Executive Committee. The Committee investigating problems regarding nature conservation and Tourism in Bantu Homeland areas, visited these areas concerned in July. Its first report was submitted to the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development and the Administration-in-Executive Committee of Southwest Africa.

In the field of legislation, the nature conservation Ordinance of 1967 was amended to make it more effective. Matters in question were specifically the catching of game by farmers, the export of game to the Republic, the donating of game and venison and the selling of game, venison, and hides.

New regulations were promulgated on the proclamation of private game and nature reserves, the duties and powers of nature conservators and honorary nature conservators and access to ascertain government areas. Twenty private game and nature reserves were proclaimed, which brings the total to 73, embracing 90 farms and 16 portions of farms. The private reserves now extend to 574, 961 hectares. The honorary nature conservators are now spread more evenly over the country after the appointment of 45 new ones.

The Cape Cross Seal Reserve was proclaimed a game park and the boundaries of the Ai-Ais Hot Springs were extended to include the Fish River Canyon.

In the field of publicity, information, and education the Administration extended its activities. Altogether 48 lectures and talks, accompanied by film and slide shows, were given throughout the territory. The display with which the Administration took part in the Windhoek and Keetmanshoop shows, won a first prize at Keetmanshoop.

The land service camps were extended to include the rest camp Halali in Etosha. During the school holidays lectures and shows were given to the youth groups and the tourists in all three rest camps.

Assistance was rendered and information supplied to visiting film units, amongst others those of Jamie Uys, Anglia Television, Nippon Television Network (of Japan) the News Film Service of the S. A. B. C.

Picture stories were written for Die Huisgenoot, Die Landbouweekblad, South African Panorama, South African Digest, the Southwest Africa yearbook, and the German periodical Journal Für Ornithologie.

A new brochure on the Daan Viljoen Game Park was published and a tourist map with descriptions of Southwest and its tourist attractions was prepared for printing. A start was also made with the writing and lay-out of a new brochure and road map with descriptions on the Etosha National Park.

From August to October the Director went on a study tour of North and South America, Britain, and Europe. He attended a course on the management of national parks and gave lectures. In addition he visited hotel schools, studied tourism matters and visited the various South African tourist offices abroad.

Permits

During the year, 2 374 permits were issued to farmers for the shooting of game to protect their grazing, as against 1, 687 in the previous year. Permits for the hunting of 761 game animals were issued to overseas trophy hunters.

The magistrate offices issued 374 hunting licences, which netted R 187 for the Administration and approximately R 10, 000 for the owners of the game.

The 717 permits issued to farmers to catch game for their farms were 147 per cent more than the previous year's 290. For the export of animals and birds to zoos, game parks and scientific establishments. 1, 589 permits were issued. Levies on the export of animals and hides amounted to R 600.

Permits were also issued for the keeping of 788 game animals and 6, 637 pairs of birds. Altogether 4, 938 permits were issued to farmers to sell animals and carcasses.