



the state of
community conservation
in Namibia

A summary of the annual report

2017

The full report may be downloaded at www.nacso.org.na
and is available at the NACSO office in Windhoek.

Living with wildlife

Community Conservation in Namibia

... means striving for balanced land use and a healthy environment. Wildlife — and all natural resources — can be utilized sustainably and integrated with other rural livelihood activities for the benefit of the people and the land...

Community conservation is about managing natural resources sustainably to generate returns for rural people. Conservancies, community forests and other community conservation initiatives create the necessary legal framework for this. By choosing to live with wildlife, rural communities are broadening their livelihood options as well as enabling a healthier environment. Through wise and sustainable management and use, natural resources are conserved for future generations while providing significant returns today.



Community conservation in Namibia

At the end of 2017 there were...

- 83 registered communal conservancies
- 1 community conservation association in a national park (Kyaramacan Association – managed like a conservancy)
- 19 concessions in national parks or on other state land held by 23 conservancies (some conservancies share concessions)
- 32 registered community forests
- and 2 community fish reserves
in Namibia

What's being achieved?

Community conservation...

- covers 166,267 km², which is about 53.2% of all communal land with an estimated 212,092 residents (another approximately 6,170 members of the Kyaramacan Association live in Bwabwata National Park)
- of this area, conservancies manage 163,151 km², which is 19.8% of Namibia
- community forests cover 30,828 km², 89.9% of which overlaps with conservancies
- from the beginning of 1990 to the end of 2017, community conservation contributed an estimated N\$ 7.11 billion to Namibia's net national income
- during 2017, community conservation generated over N\$ 132 million in returns for local communities
- community conservation facilitated 5,350 jobs in 2017

CBNRM

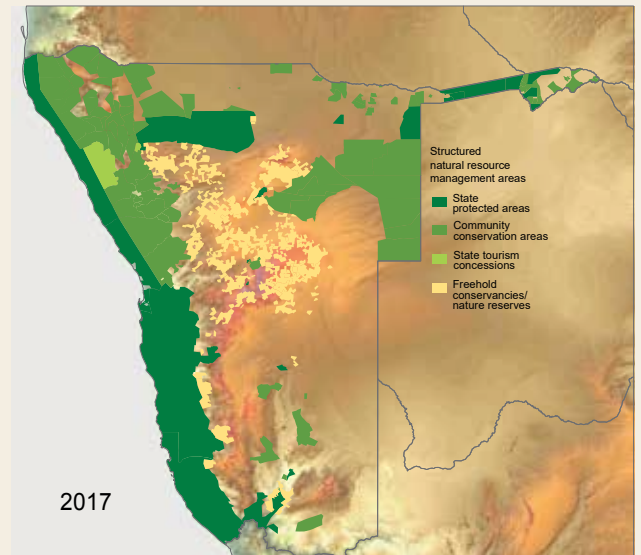
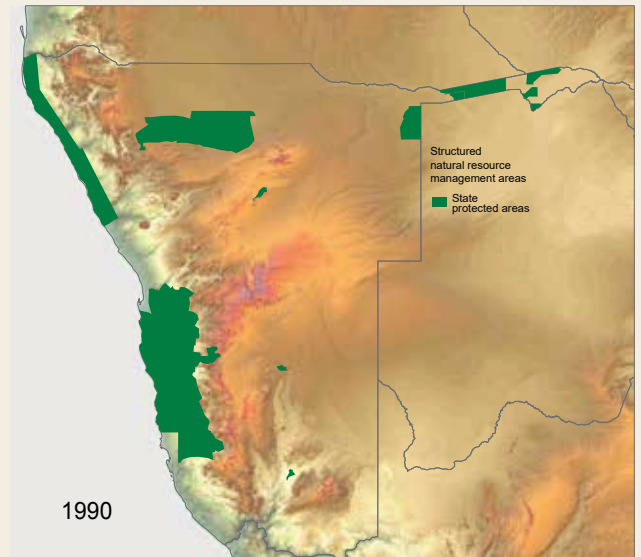
Community Based Natural Resource Management

The earliest community-based conservation initiatives in Namibia, which have today developed into a national CBNRM programme, started before independence when the first community game guards were appointed by local headmen in an attempt to reverse wildlife declines. At the time, wild animals were seen as little more than a threat to crops, livestock and infrastructure, and to community safety. Furthermore, people living in communal areas had been denied their traditional rights to utilize wildlife.

Ground-breaking legislation passed in the mid-nineties laid the foundation for a new approach to natural resource use. By forming legally-recognized community conservation organizations such as conservancies and community forests, people in communal areas can now actively manage natural resources and generate returns from them. This continues to encourage wildlife recoveries and environmental restoration.

The first conservancies were registered in 1998 and the first community forests in 2006. The Kyaramacan Association was founded in 2006 within Bwabwata National Park and is treated as a conservancy by NACSO. While community conservation organizations are resource management units and businesses, they are also defined by social ties uniting groups of people with the common goal of conservation.

Photo opposite: Will Burrard-Lucas

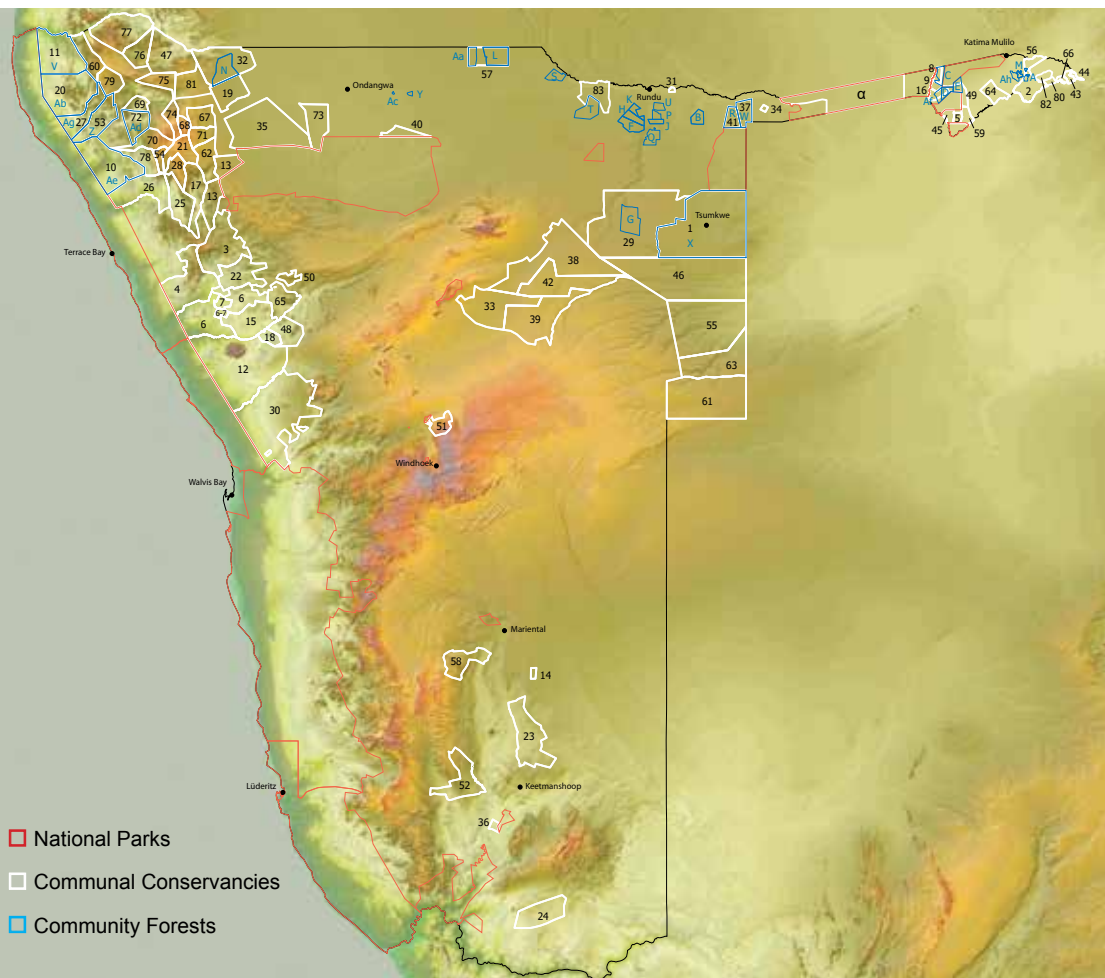


The expansion of structured natural resource management across Namibia

At independence in 1990, there were no registered community conservation areas, freehold conservancies did not exist, and a mere 14% of land was under recognized conservation management. At the end of 2017, land under structured natural resource management covered 43.87% of Namibia.

The distribution of conservancies and community forests across Namibia

At the end of 2017, there were 83 registered communal conservancies and 32 registered community forests in Namibia and one community association in a national park, covering 166,267 km². [The lists below follow the chronological sequence of registration]



Conservancies

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Nyae Nyae | 48 Ohungu |
| 2 Salambala | 49 Sobbe |
| 3 #Khoadi-//Hóas | 50 //Audi |
| 4 Torra | 51 Ovitoto |
| 5 Wuparo | 52 !Han /Awab |
| 6 Doro !nawas | 53 Okondjombo |
| 7 Uibasen-
Twyfelfontein | 54 Otjambangu |
| 8 Kwandu | 55 Eiseb |
| 9 Mayuni | 56 Sikunga |
| 10 Puros | 57 Okongo |
| 11 Marienfluss | 58 Huibes |
| 12 Tsiseb | 59 Dzoti |
| 13 Ehi-Rovipuka | 60 Otjitanda |
| 14 Oskop | 61 Otjombinde |
| 15 Sorris Sorris | 62 Orupupa |
| 16 Mashi | 63 Omuramba ua
Mbinda |
| 17 Omatendeka | 64 Bamunu |
| 18 Otjimboyo | 65 !Khoró !goreb |
| 19 Uukwaluudhi | 66 Kabulabula |
| 20 Orupembe | 67 Okongoro |
| 21 Okangundumba | 68 Otjombande |
| 22 //Huab | 69 Ongongo |
| 23 !Khoró !naub | 70 Ombujokanguindi |
| 24 //Gamaseb | 71 Otuzemba |
| 25 Anabeb | 72 Otjiu-West |
| 26 Sesfontein | 73 !ipumbu ya
Tshilongo |
| 27 Sanitatas | 74 Okatjandja
Kozomenje |
| 28 Ozondundu | 75 Ombazu |
| 29 N#a Jaqna | 76 Okanguati |
| 30 #Gaingu | 77 Epupa |
| 31 Joseph
Mbambangandu | 78 Otjikondavirongo |
| 32 Uukolonkadhi | 79 Etanga |
| 33 Ozonahi | 80 Nakabolelwa |
| 34 Shamungwa | 81 Ombombo |
| 35 Sheya Shuushona | 82 Lusese |
| 36 !Gawachab | 83 Maurus Nekaro |
| 37 Muduva Nyangana | |
| 38 Otjituuo | α Kyaramacan
Association |
| 39 African Wild Dog
King Nehale | |
| 40 King Nehale | |
| 41 George Mukoya | 6-7 Doro !nawas/
Uibasen-
Twyfelfontein
Joint
Management
Area |
| 42 Okamatapati | |
| 43 Kasika | |
| 44 Impalila | |
| 45 Balyerwa | |
| 46 Ondjou | |
| 47 Kunene River | |

Community Forests

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|--------------|
| A Bukalo | G Mkata | N Uukolonkadhi | U Likwaterera | Z Okondjombo | Af Sachona |
| B Hans Kanyinga | H Ncamagoro | P Cuma | V Marienfluss | Aa Omufitu Wekuta | Ag Sanitatas |
| C Kwandu | J Ncaute | Q Gcwatjinga | W Muduva | Ab Orupembe | Ah Zilitene |
| D Lubuta | K Ncumcara | R George Mukoya | Nyangana | Ac Oshaampula | |
| E Masida | L Okongo | S Kahenge | X Nyae Nyae | Ad Otjiu-West | |
| F Mbeyo | M Sikanjabuka | T Katope | Y Ohepi | Ae Puros | |



The Ministry of Environment and Tourism facilitates the registration of conservancies and is responsible for compliance monitoring. NACSO supports the MET in conservancy governance and assists in the annual game counts

NACSO MEMBERS



Provides technical support to conservancies including training in natural resources management; community capacity building; institutional and economic development; financial and logistical assistance



Supports sustainable livelihoods through the development, sales and marketing of quality crafts



Implements rhino conservation and management, and responsible rhino tourism ventures

Associate member



Links the tourism industry to local people, conservation organizations and research.



Supports San communities in conservancies



Researches into the social effectiveness of CBNRM and conservancies in Namibia



Advises communal and commercial farmers on cheetah conservation

Associate member



Works to conserve Namibia's natural environment, to promote appropriate protection, wise use of natural resources and sustainable development



Provides legal advice to conservancies on constitutions, contracts, legal conflicts, conflict resolution, and advocacy on CBNRM issues

Provides technical support nationally to implementers in the fields of natural resource management, business and enterprise development, and institutional development

Associate member



Associate members

Three Regional Conservancy Associations - Kavango, Kunene and Otjozondjupa. These are independent organisations comprised of registered and emerging conservancies in their respective regions acting as representative umbrella bodies

Three pillars of community conservation in Namibia

Natural resource management

Innovative resource management enables biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of wildlife and plant resources



Institutional development

Good governance creates the basis for resource management and the equitable distribution of returns

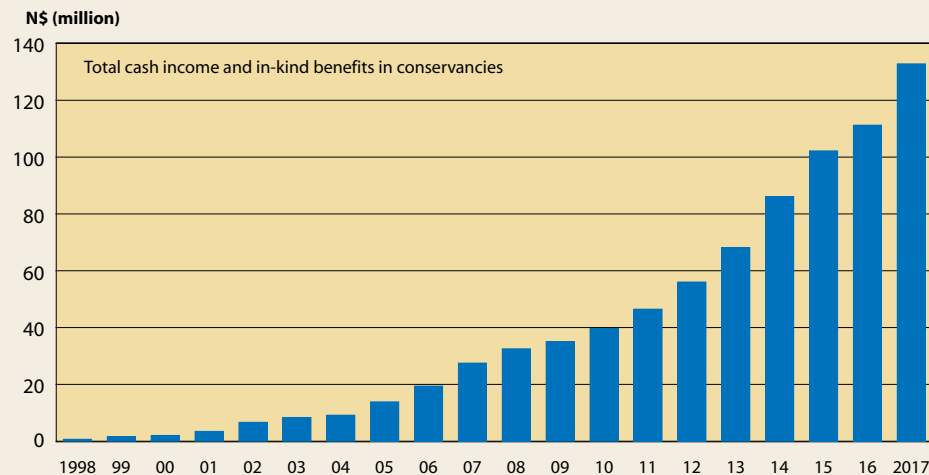


Business, enterprises and livelihoods

Incentive-based conservation approaches enable an expanding range of rural livelihood options



Photo: Gareth Bentley



Total returns to conservancies and members

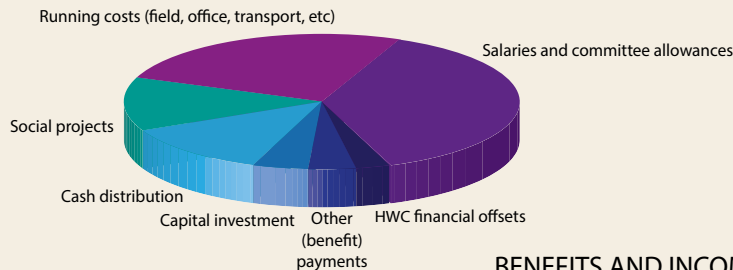
The total cash income and in-kind benefits generated in conservancies (including the Kyaramacan Association) grew from less than N\$ 1 million in 1998 to more than N\$ 132 million in 2017. This includes all directly measurable income and in-kind benefits being generated, and can be divided into cash income to conservancies (mostly through partnerships with private sector operators), cash income to residents from enterprises (mostly through employment and the sale of products), and as in-kind benefits to residents (mostly the distribution of harvested game meat).

The benefits of community conservation

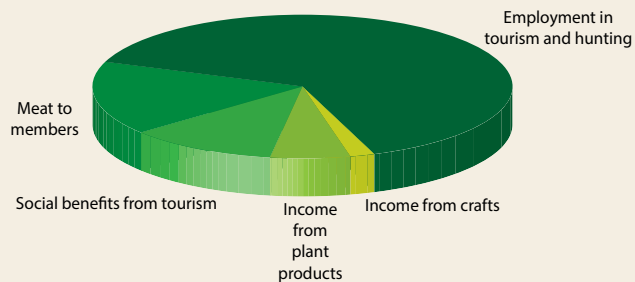
Community conservation has shown that it can improve rural lives while contributing to biodiversity conservation, and is recognized as a national development strategy. Many conservancies are showing that conservation can generate a broad range of community and individual returns (see graph) while covering their operational costs from their own income.

Community conservation can become fully sustainable and largely self-financing in the foreseeable future, provided that appropriate resources continue to be invested to entrench governance foundations, optimize returns, and mitigate threats and barriers to development.

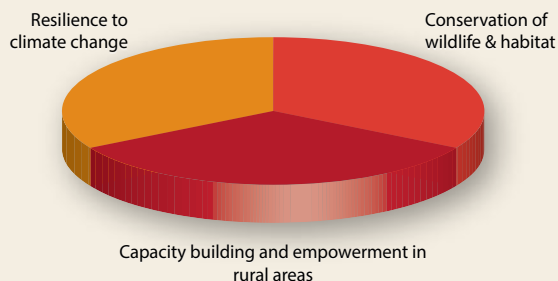
CONSERVANCY EXPENDITURES



BENEFITS AND INCOME FROM ENTERPRISES DIRECT TO COMMUNITIES



INTANGIBLE BENEFITS FROM CONSERVANCIES



Conservancy expenditure and benefits

Income to conservancies is spent on salaries, office and other operating costs, and benefits to members (top circle).

Conservancies generate additional income, which goes directly to residents, especially from employment in tourism and hunting, and from harvesting plant products and selling crafts (green circle).

Intangible benefits encompass the empowerment of rural communities, including women, resilience to climate change through the diversification of income, and fostering a collective community voice on development issues.

*The top two circles represent financial information for 2017. The lower circle is not quantified

Managing Resources

... means ensuring that they are used wisely so that maximum returns are generated while the natural environment remains productive and healthy ...

Wildlife numbers

Namibia's game counts are scientifically based, and are designed to include conservancy members, NGO workers and MET rangers in a joint effort that generates both data and strengthens partnerships. The counts provide an indication of where game occurs, an approximate estimate of how many animals there are, but most importantly, they track changes and trends in population numbers over time. The figures on the following pages, showing long-term trends, are used as a key indicator of success or failure in conservation.

In large open areas where animals are free to roam, determining trends is challenging because animals can move into or out of the areas being monitored. In addition, in certain regions, and in particular in desert conditions, animal numbers are driven to a large extent by good and poor rainfall seasons resulting in 'boom

and bust' cycles in wildlife populations. These two factors make the analysis of trend data extremely challenging, particularly over the short-term, and therefore a long-term view must be taken.

It is evident that in the north-west conservancies, wildlife numbers have declined significantly in recent years. This is largely a result of the extended drought cycle leading to increased mortalities and reduced breeding rates. But this is not the only reason: serious destocking through harvesting was necessary in the early years of the drought cycle to reduce mass mortalities.

The return of patchy rainfall to the Erongo and Kunene regions in 2016 led to a short-term increase of species of plains game, particularly springbok, which have the ability to respond quickly to good rainfall. However, many game species will need several years of good rains, coupled with low take-off rates, to fully recover.

Human wildlife conflict

Recorded incidents of human-wildlife conflict have grown due to the increase in wildlife populations and shifting movement patterns of humans and wildlife in response to drought. However, the average number of incidents per conservancy remains generally stable. Crop protection from raiders, especially elephants, remains a major problem in the north-east.

A Human-wildlife Conflict Policy was established by the MET in 2009 to provide national guidelines for conflict

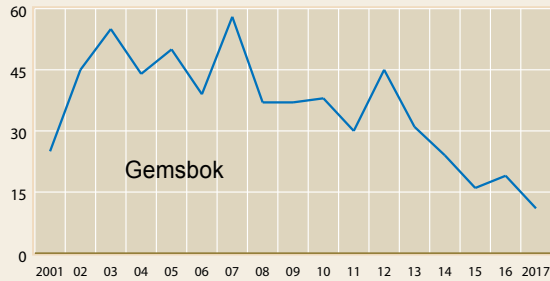
mitigation. The policy sets out a framework for managing wildlife conflicts, where possible at local community level.

Two key strategies seek to mitigate the costs of living with wildlife. The first is prevention – practical steps for keeping wildlife away from crops and livestock. The second is the Human-Wildlife Self Reliance Scheme, which involves payments to those who have suffered losses. The MET has provided finance for this from the Game Products Trust Fund, and conservancies with sufficient income are encouraged to match this funding.



Photo: Will Burrard-Lucas

Number of animals per 100km driven

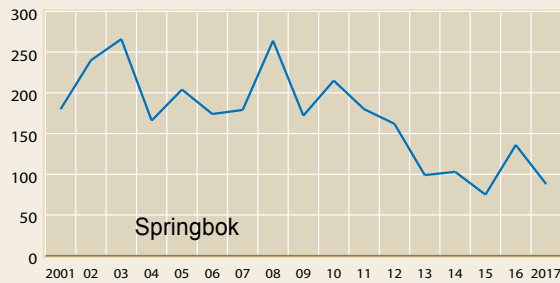


North-West population estimates

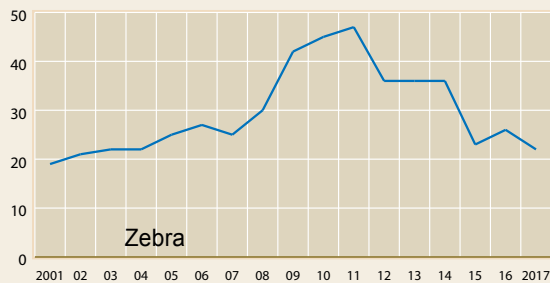
The graphs on the left show total estimated populations of 3 indicator species: gemsbok, springbok and zebra, from aerial censuses prior to the year 2000.

The annual North-West Game Count, shown on the right for the same species, counts the number of animals seen per 100 kilometres driven. This graph shows population trends over time and does not show total population estimates.

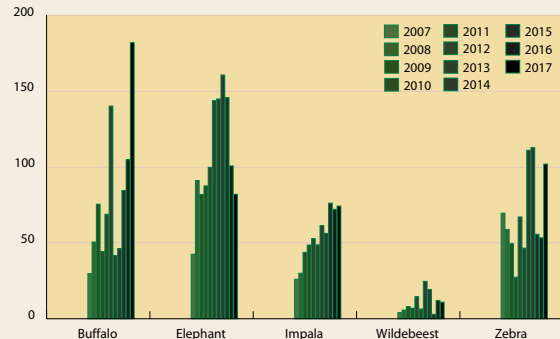
Number of animals per 100km driven



Number of animals per 100km driven



Number of animals seen per 100 km



The North-East game count

Significant wildlife recoveries have also occurred in the Zambezi Region. These have been due largely to breeding, reduced poaching, wildlife introductions, and a removal of the hostile environment for wildlife. Although poaching had declined substantially over the last 15 years, there has been a sharp increase in ivory poaching, which is of great concern. Five selected species are shown in this graph, which includes national parks adjacent to conservancies. Wildlife moves freely between park and conservancies in the region. 2017 has seen a marked reduction in the species indicated in the figure.

At the end of 2016 there were...

- 84 conservancies using the Event Book monitoring tool (figures include 3 unregistered, emerging conservancies & the Kyaramacan Association)
- 51 conservancies conducting an annual game count
- 5 national parks undertaking collaborative monitoring with conservancies
- 71 conservancies holding quota setting feedback meetings
- 71 conservancies with own-use harvesting quotas
- 56 conservancies with conservation hunting concessions
- 19 conservancies with shoot & sell harvesting contracts
- 46 conservancies with a wildlife management plan
- 45 conservancies with a zonation plan
- 616 game guards and resource monitors working in conservancies

Biggest challenges

- Keeping offtake quotas low, despite conservancy expectations of meat as a significant benefit of conservation hunting
- The possibility of wildlife crime increasing as syndicates move from other African countries into Namibia
- Land allocation and land invasions threatening areas reserved for wildlife



Photo: Will Burrard-Lucas

Community Conservation Governance

.. means creating structures that enable wise and effective governance which empower rural people to control their affairs and resources for a common, sustainable good...

Auditing is crucial

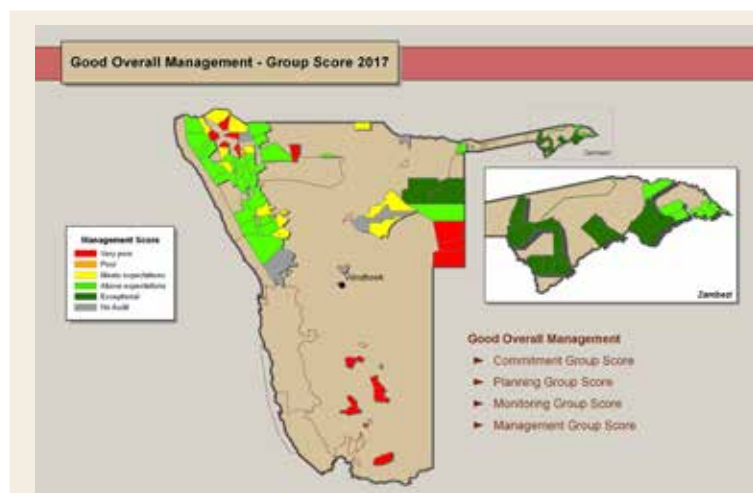
Conservancies are self-governing bodies, which elect boards and operate in accordance with their constitutions. They should be accountable to their members through annual general meetings. The MET has laid down Standard Operating Procedures, which set out the essential elements of good governance. The MET and NACSO conduct integrated annual audits in all conservancies to assess whether wildlife and financial monitoring is taking place.

With 83 conservancies to cover, these audits cannot carry out financial book-keeping, which requires professional expertise. Conservancy financial mismanagement has been a growing concern, which loomed large in 2017. It is important to note that mismanagement is different from theft or fraud. Although there were cases of misappropriation of cash, some of which are being

investigated by the police, most financial mismanagement is the result of poor record keeping and a lack of supported receipts.

These issues were picked up in Zambezi conservancies, some of which have employed an external accountant to audit their books. As a result, the MET held a workshop on the issue with conservancies in the region. A similar exercise has yet to be undertaken in Kunene and other conservancies.

Organizing meetings in rural areas, where transport is often a large problem, can be difficult. Nevertheless, the annual integrated audits show that most conservancy governance structures are working. The number of AGMs held in 2017 was 57: up from 52 the previous year. However, the number of management plans in place fell from 52 to 46. Clearly, conservancies need to follow the Ministry's Standard Operating Procedures better.



Natural resource management performance ratings

Institutional development data is collected annually during integrated performance audits. Conservancies are rated for their commitment, planning, monitoring and management. Conservancies use the information to evaluate and improve their governance, while support organisations are able to provide targeted assistance.

Community conservation governance AT A GLANCE

At the end of 2016 there were...

- 46 management plans in place
- 24 sustainable business and financial plans in place
- 57 annual financial reports that had been presented
- 55 annual general meetings that had been held
- 15% female chairpersons
- 44% female treasurers/financial managers
- 34% female management committee members
- 26% female staff members
- in communal conservancies in Namibia

The biggest challenges

- Financial mismanagement
- Conservancy elites failing to engage with members
- Following MET Standard Operating Procedures

The Conservancy Chairpersons' Forum has been a valuable way for the MET to engage with all of Namibia's conservancies. In 2017 a new approach was adopted, holding regional fora.

Institutional development in conservancies in 2017

Order	Category	Status	Number of conservancies reporting	Percentage of category
1	Registered conservancies (incl. Kyaramacan assoc.)	84	84	100
2	Conservancies generating returns	69	84	82
3	covering operational costs from own income	39	54	56
4	distributing cash or in-kind benefits to members, or investing in community projects	44	54	81
5	Conservancy management committee members	846	71	100
6	female management committee members	285	71	34
7	female chairpersons	11	71	15
8	female treasurers/financial managers	31	71	44
9	Conservancy staff members	831	71	100
10	female staff members	215	71	26
11	Conservancies management plans	46	71	63
12	sustainable business and financial plans	24	71	34
13	Conservancy AGMs held	57	71	80
14	financial reports presented at AGM	52	71	73
15	financial reports approved at AGM	48	71	68
16	budgets approved at AGM	44	71	62

A comparison with previous years shows that conservancy management capacities fluctuate, influenced by staff and committee changes, as well as the degree of external support. Many conservancies have strong and growing female participation, and a substantial number of conservancies that used to be dependent on grant aid are now covering operational costs from their own income, with many also distributing benefits to members or investing in community projects. Figures include the Kyaramacan Association, which operates as a de facto conservancy within Bwabwata National Park.

Improving Lives

... means empowering people to diversify incomes from farming to include new economic opportunities based on tourism and wildlife ...

Income sources ...

Returns from wildlife and other natural resources generated through community conservation have proven to be substantial, including direct income to conservancies from tourism and conservation hunting, jobs created, and benefits including the distribution of game meat. New opportunities for rural job creation have arisen, especially in tourism where people are employed in a range of activities.

... and diversification

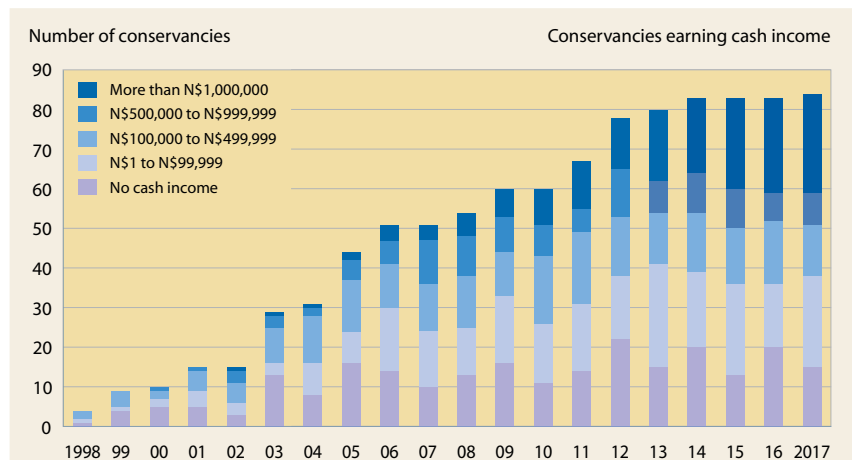
Diversification of income is a significant contribution to peoples' livelihoods and contributes to community resilience against episodic events such as drought and floods. The ability to cope with such events is increasingly necessary for rural communities confronted with the harsh reality of climate change.



Housekeeper Lensi Uatokuya earns a living at Okahirongo Lodge in Puros Conservancy

The earning power of conservancies

Significant differences exist between conservancies. There are vast differences in size (the biggest conservancies are more than 200 times as large as the smallest), as well as in the number of residents (ranging from several hundred to more than 30,000). Topography, rainfall and natural habitat influence the quantity and quality of natural resources available in a given area. The skills and experience of conservancy management also affect earning power. Joint-venture tourism and conservation hunting make the greatest financial contributions to conservation, e.g. game guard salaries, and to livelihoods. Meat from hunting is an important in-kind benefit to conservancy members



The earning power of conservancies

The graph shows the number of conservancies earning cash, divided into incremental categories (including the Kyaramacan Association). There are great differences in the potential of conservancies to generate cash income.

Improving livelihoods AT A GLANCE

At the end of 2017 there were...

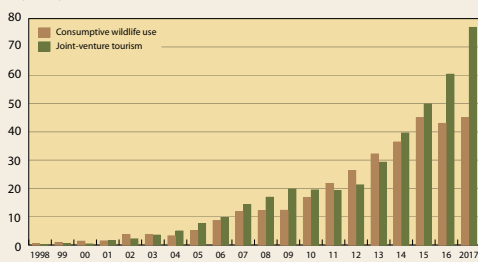
- 38 conservancies directly involved with tourism activities
- 54 joint-venture tourism agreements with enterprises employing 935 full time and 110 part time staff
- 56 conservation hunting concessions with 152 full time and 167 part time employees
- 17 small/medium enterprises with 78 full time and 42 part time employees
- 831 conservancy employees
- 846 conservancy representatives receiving allowances
- 1,704 indigenous plant product harvesters
- 445 craft producers
- in communal conservancies in Namibia (part time employment includes seasonal labour)

What's being achieved?

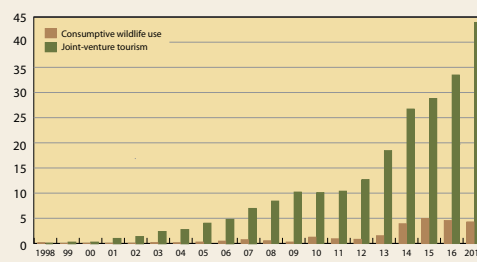
by community conservation...

- Conservancies and private sector partners generated N\$ 132,824,233 in returns and benefits during 2017
- of this, tourism generated N\$ 80,117,640; conservation hunting N\$ 32,503,047 including meat distributed to conservancy residents valued at 12,566,280; indigenous natural products N\$ 5,191,002; and miscellaneous income (including items such as interest) N\$ 2,446,264
- Conservancy residents earned a total cash income of N\$ 65,828,264, from enterprise wages, of which N\$ 42,081,247 was from joint-venture tourism, N\$ 18,861,815 from conservancies, N\$ 3,558,788 from conservation hunting and N\$ 1,326,414 from SMEs
- Conservancy residents earned cash income of N\$ 4,632,261 from indigenous plants and N\$1,429,933 from crafts
- N\$ 16,159,501 was distributed to residents and used to support community projects by conservancies

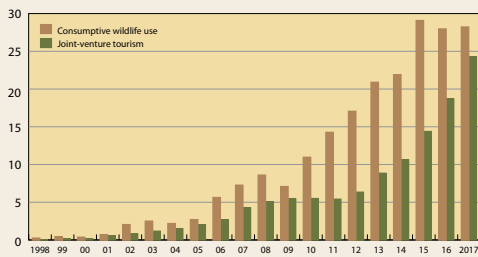
Overall returns from tourism and sustainable wildlife use



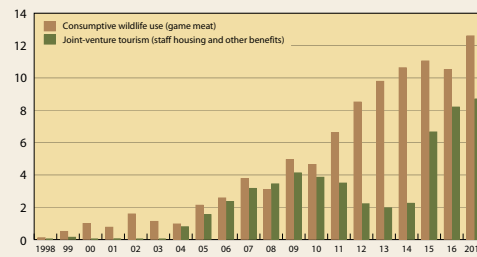
Cash income to households



Cash income to conservancies



In-kind benefits to households



The complementary roles of sustainable consumptive wildlife use and joint-venture tourism

While overall returns from the two sectors are similar, consumptive wildlife enterprises, specifically conservation hunting, generates much higher fees to conservancies, which can be used to cover operational costs and development projects. On the other hand tourism provides significantly higher cash income to households in the form of wages.

In respect to in-kind benefits to households, conservation hunting remains the main contributor in the form of game meat. This fell in 2016 due to the quota reduction.

Income from the harvesting of indigenous plant products grew by three times from 2016 to 2017. The harvesting of organically certified devil's claw and commiphora were responsible for most of this income in the north-east and north-west respectively. Although this income is very welcome, it could also diminish quickly if demands for these products were to fall in Europe. Indeed, for several years the perfume industry did not buy commiphora, leading to a loss of income to many harvesters.

Iuu/ui, a San woman in Nyae Nyae conservancy cutting Devil's Claw for drying.



National economic growth and CBNRM

Community conservation has an impact on the broader economy of the country significantly exceeding direct returns to rural communities, and contributes to nation building by contributing to national economic growth. This national impact can be assessed by taking into account all income streams flowing to communities, government and the private sector through related value chains as a consequence of community conservation.

Additional income is derived from:

- airlines, hotels and car rental companies;
- private sector tourism and hunting operations related to conservancies;
- sales of crafts, fuel and food;
- interest, taxes and rentals;
- further spending generated by the additional income above.



A Common Vision

NACSO Director Maxi Louis says:

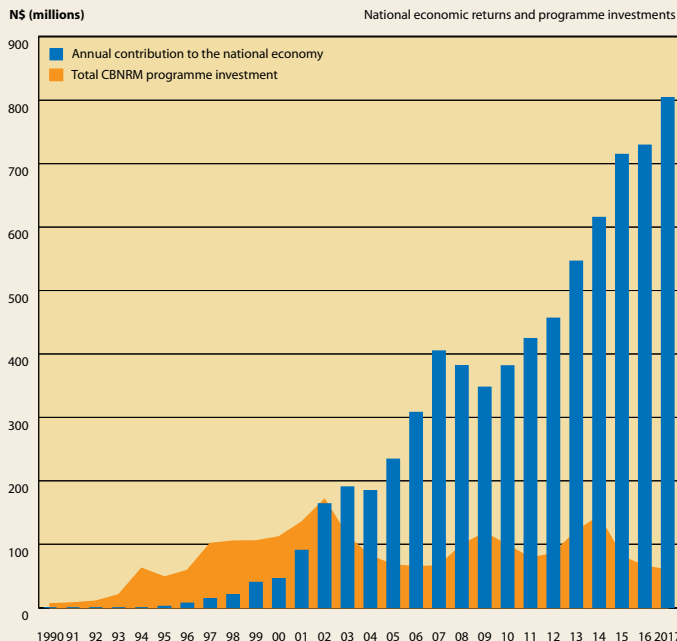
NACSO's relationship with the MET is superb. We look at the key issues together, and decide whether an issue would be better addressed by the MET, or by NACSO or one of its members – and then take action. As a result we can arrive at common positions on issues such as human wildlife conflict – where the Ministry is developing new policy guidelines – on poaching and wildlife crime, on business opportunities in conservancies, as well as on international issues.

Regional conservancy associations and their development is very important for NACSO and, I believe, the MET. Their key role is advocacy. The associations can relay critical information to central government and to regional councils. Some of the associations are doing this very well in areas where NACSO support organizations lack capacity to cover large distances and to hold regular meetings. The Kunene associations have been very active in discussing human-wildlife conflict, and advocating for better practices by farmers to minimize losses.

All in all, I believe that we are doing well, but that we are overstretched. Our commitment to working hand-in-hand with the MET and, of course, with conservancies and their members, will help us through challenging times.



NACSO Director Maxi Louis



Estimates of the national economic returns from CBNRM compared to economic investment costs

In 2017, the net national income (NNI) contribution made by CBNRM was about N\$ 804 million. Between 1990 and 2017, the cumulative value of the NNI contributions amounted to an estimated N\$ 7.11 billion.*

The graph also shows the investment in the CBNRM programme each year, which cumulatively adds up to about N\$ 2.3 billion between 1990 and 2017. Donors supplied most of the funds, while the MET and NGOs also provided inputs, mainly as 'in-kind' contributions such as staff, vehicles and other kinds of support.

**Figures have been adjusted for inflation to be equivalent to the value of Namibia dollars in 2017. This means they are not directly comparable with those used in the 2016 Community Conservation Report, which used figures equivalent to the value of Namibian dollars in 2016.*



Community conservation

grew out of the recognition that wildlife and other natural resources were of value in communal areas, and that those resources could be unlocked if local communities were empowered to manage and utilize resources themselves.



More information at
www.met.gov.na
www.nacso.org.na

