

NACSO Annual Events Updates



Keeping in check through the annual Audits- January-February 2018

NACSO's two 2017 Conservation Leadership Programme interns visited eight conservancies in southern Kunene region to perform the annual conservancy audits. They were part of a team that included representatives from the MET, WWF, and NNF.

The annual audits are crucial to the existence of the Namibian CBNRM programme to check how the conservancy runs and manages itself. The audits comprise of two parts, the event book audit through the natural resource management questionnaire as well as the governance and institutional audit using a separate questionnaire. The Event Book section involves adding up all the data collected and recorded by the game guards in their event books over the past year into a monthly monitoring chart book. The governance and institutional audit is done using a questionnaire with questions relating to conservancy governance, usually answered by the conservancy management committee.

The audits are a vantage point for all stakeholders involved in this programme for crucial decision-making, reflection, and long-term planning. Overall, the audits went very well and the CLP interns found the experience valuable and engaging.



Keep Calm and Let Africa Take the Lead Conference (Brussels, 06 March 2018)

NACSO director Ms. Maxi Louis was presented with the opportunity to speak as a panelist at the conference “Keep Calm and Let Africa Take the Lead. The EU-Africa Dialogue: Supporting communities in wildlife conservation” at the European Parliament in Brussels. The conference was an opportunity for Southern African countries to explain why the EU must trust Africa to make the best decisions for the management and conservation of Africa’s wildlife. The panelists explained the successes that their countries have already achieved, including sustainable trophy hunting. Ms. Maxi Louis pointed out that, despite the challenges Namibia faces, Namibia has had many success stories and has made real progress in creating large connected landscapes, practicing proper governance, and sharing benefits. One of the issues discussed during the conference was hunting, as the EU has attempted to ban trophy imports in the past. Overall, the message of the speakers was that the EU should support Southern Africa conservation efforts through sustainable use methods, including hunting.

2018 CLP Interns- 3rd April 2018

On the 3rd of April, the NACSO team welcomed two new interns, Victoria Amon and Justina Nangolo, as part of the Donal Hamer Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP). The interns are both from the University of Namibia (UNAM) with honours degree in Geography and Environmental studies and Geographic Information Science (GIS) respectively.

After 4 months of working at NACSO, Justina got another exciting opportunity to go further her studies full time. Rauha Iiyambo, also from UNAM, with a background in GIS then joined the CLP crew and now works with the GIS manager, Katharina Diekers under the Natural Resources Working Group, while Victoria works under the NACSO/WWF communications.



Getting conservancy governance back on track- SIDA Inception meeting-23 April 2018

The issue of governance and equitable benefit sharing are at the heart of the CBNRM programme. Addressing these two elements with renewed energy will have a huge positive impact on natural resource management, and the combined effort by all stakeholders in ensuring sustainable natural resource utilisation. Particularly, good governance is the principle foundation upon which the CBNRM programme was established, and if it is not strengthened – and soon, the conservancy programme will just be a story.

This was the tough message from Chris Weaver, Director of WWF in Namibia, at a workshop held on governance on 23 May, spearheaded by NACSO's Institutional Development Working Group.

The workshop was attended by NACSO partners, including WWF Norway and WWF Sweden. The international presence underpinned the importance of the issue. The aim of the workshop was to discuss and agree on the combined overall project framework for the three collaborating partners: WWF Sweden, SIDA (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency), and the MET with GIZ (German Technical Assistance).

The three projects, which have overlapping objectives, are the BAND project, the Leading the Change Programme, and the MET/GIZ project. Their focal point is to strengthen governance in conservancies, and to ensure that benefits from natural resources are equitably shared among conservancy members. This will be done by raising awareness of conservancy members about their rights and responsibilities. Provision was made to address this crucial element by supporting the trainings of trainers, which will ensure that activities are carried out efficiently at the local level.

A follow up meeting was convened on the 3rd of May 2018 to finalise the work plan, and the terms of reference for the working group coordinator.

Sharing the CBNRM experience- May-October 2018

Since 1996, when the Nature Conservation Act was amended from what used to be the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1974, the Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) has been flourishing and has now become a success story recognised worldwide due to its ability to promote biodiversity conservation while improving rural livelihood.

The programme also contributes to the country's developmental goals which are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and other international developmental programmes that Namibia is signatory to.



Communities in Namibia, with the support of NACSO and partner organisations have nurtured a programme that has now become an international brand that other countries come to learn about. Components of the CBNRM programme such as the event book have now been adopted by organizations and countries such as Cambodia.

This year, NACSO and WWF received a group of representatives from various countries and organizations who all came to share experiences and learn about the best practices about the CBNRM programme- community based tourism in Namibia

The countries and organisations that came this year are: Mozambique-World Bank in May and Gorongosa National Park; Uganda in July and lastly Tanzania in October

Apart from just learning from NACSO and WWF, the delegates also gets a chance to meet with other key CBNRM stakeholder organizations such as Namibia Tourism Board, HAN, TASA and FENATA as well as do field visits in conservancies e.g Zambezi where they meet with communities to get a firsthand sense of conservation in Namibia.



Tourism Expo-Homegrown June 2018

'Small Things Matter' was the theme of the 20th Namibian Tourism Expo. This theme focused on how well the tourism industry was performing, and making people mindful of the fact we still need to nurture the industry.

Community conservation was represented at the Expo, and in line with Small Things Matter, we developed our theme of HOMEGROWN, Namibia's conservancies: our people, products and stories. This was a message that visitors wanted to hear. Four conservancy representatives: Hileni Kanyemba – chairperson of the management committee of Tulongeni craft shop and Leena Namgombe – craft producer from King Nehale Conservancy, David Eiseb – Manager of Sorris Sorris Conservancy and Lameck Limbo – Enterprise Officer of Wuparo Conservancy, enthusiastically and vibrantly engaged with visitors, informing them about wildlife and conservation in their conservancies.

The communal conservancy stand was awarded one of nine gold certificates that were conferred at Expo, and the editors choice award.



Small things build up to big things, which make a difference.

HAN Congress - June 2018

In June the Hospitality Association of Namibia (HAN) held a meeting, popularly known as the HAN congress. The congress was held to identify existing opportunities within the tourism industry in Namibia and how to improve on these.

The event took place at Swakopmund Hotel & Entertainment Centre where it kicked off with a Gala dinner on the 22nd of June with the theme “The Circus”.

NACSO/WWF staff Ginger Mauney, Usiel Ndjavera and NACSO Director Maxi Louis also attended the meeting to represent the tourism ventures in the conservancies and tell a story about the conservancies and what they have to offer to tourism in Namibia. The WWF/NACSO theme “Meeting of Minds to discover Hidden Gems of Namibia” aptly fit the aim of the congress and aimed to unlock new opportunities in conservancies.

They also presented about new ideas on NamibiaCommunityTourism website which used to be WildlifeSafariNamibia and now in the process of getting revamped in terms of the approach and focus. The website is envisaged to be launched in March 2019.

Counting the game- June 2018

This year the game counts kicked off in the South in June, carried on to the Northwest from mid-June, then Northcentral and North east in August, before heading to Zambezi in September, where it also covered Southern Angola.

The annual game counts are one of the key activities in conservancies and wildlife concession areas carried out by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) to monitor and manage wildlife, with support from NACSO’s Natural Resources Working Group.

The counts are an essential tool to help wildlife managers to make informed decisions during hunting quota allocations for those people living with wildlife, and to monitor wildlife populations.



EIF Workshop- Empowering communities to adapt to climate change- July 2018

NACSO and partner organisations got invited by the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia to attend a series of regional training workshops that started in early July to sensitise members of conservancies and community forests about climate change adaptation and mitigation and to prepare them to write up project proposals to access the grant funds offered by the EIF.

With the theme “Empower to Adapt: Creating Climate Change Resilient Livelihoods through CBNRM in Namibia”, the five year project seeks to build climate change resilience of more than 76,000 people living in rural areas and improve management of 7,200,000 hectares of communal areas in Namibia by working directly with the envisaged beneficiaries, especially farmers and CBOs.

A total of 33 grants will be given from a lump sum of US\$8,601,469.99 to conservancies and community forests to come up with projects within the areas of climate resilient agriculture, climate proof infrastructure and ecosystem based adaptation. Projects are expected to run from a minimum period of 6 months to a maximum of 3 years.

The workshop ended in Otjiwarongo where it covered for the central regions, while the first call for proposals for the projects was officially launched on 30 July by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, the Honourable Pohamba Shifeta, at the Ministry head office in Windhoek.

CBD Executive Secretary Visit- 5 August 2018

The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) visited Namibia from the 5 to 7 August 2018 with the aim of raising the profile of biodiversity in the mining, health, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing sectors, in accordance with decision X11113 on the mainstreaming of biodiversity, which are all within the context of the Executive Secretary’s regional mission to Namibia, Botswana, South Africa and Rwanda.

The Executive Secretary met with the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia to discuss current and future ways in which Namibia has considered mainstreaming biodiversity in its productive sectors.

The Executive Secretary also met with local communities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector in order to gather



information about lessons learned and examples which showcase a commitment to mainstreaming biodiversity and advancing the work of the Convention.

Networking Luncheon for Women Conservation Leaders -11 September 2018

After visiting a number of conservancies to get a sense of conservation in Namibian conservancies, the ambassador of the United States of America, Lisa Jonhson was very impressed with the involvement of women in conservation in Namibia.

She then decided to host a Networking Luncheon for Women Conservation Leaders, which was held the US embassy house on September 11th, 2018. The luncheon was attended by women Leaders from various conservation NGOs such as NAPHA, HAN, NASCO, WWF, NDT, TOSCO, NNF

Journalist from local media outlets such as 99fm and the republikein. The MET and EIF, and MRCC-UNAM were also part of the meeting.



Hunting contracts reviewed (18-20 September 2018)

Hunting contracts were on the agenda from the 18th-20th September 2018, when conservancy representatives, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) officials, and conservation organisations came together for a workshop in Windhoek, at the Safari Court and Conference centre. Issues covered were the head contract between conservancies and the MET, and a template for hunting between conservancies and professional hunters, which together serve as a guide for conservation hunting in Namibia. The aim was to strengthen contracts and promote biodiversity through sustainable utilisation of natural resources.

The workshop was mainly facilitated by Uatirohange Tjiuro, MET Chief Warden of Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM), who laid out the meeting objectives: “to understand conservation hunting in conservancies, to review the quota setting system, review the existing hunting contract template, develop a head hunting contract between the MET and conservancies, capacitate MET and NGOs regional support staff on conservation hunting and hunting contracts, and improve conservancy governance.”



Apart from hunting, the workshop also dealt with other burning issues, such as governance, overharvesting, and wildlife crime among others which continue to hinder conservation efforts.

Some of the recommendations made from the meeting were that a policy to regulate the minimum elephant tusk sizes and weight should be developed and implemented, and wildlife harvesting quotas should be reviewed and adjusted each year.

The World Rhino day- 22 September 2018

World Rhino day took place on the 22nd of September. The day was first celebrated by WWF South Africa in 2010. Since then the world has followed suit to spread awareness to help save the five species of rhino.

The deputy environment minister, Bernadette Jagger, marked the day in Khorixas at a large gathering of youth groups. Her message was to call for conservation NGOs, including Save the Rhino Trust, to continue their good work to help conserve one of the world's most iconic species. She said: "Communities and traditional authorities have a big role to play to make sure that people are aware and help to combat wildlife crime."

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Namibia Nature Foundation were the main sponsors of the event, which was mainly organised to create awareness amongst communities and inspire them to understand that they play a vital and positive role in the protection and survival of our rhinos, which are currently under threat because of poaching for rhino horn.

The theme for this year, "keep the five alive" refers to the existing five rhino species around the world, which are the Greater One-horned Rhino, Javan, Sumatran and the White and Black Rhino found in Southern Africa. The event was specifically targeted at youth through various activities. Learners from two local schools engaged in a thought-provoking debate for and against the burning of confiscated rhino horns. Other activities took place, including cultural dances, music performances from local artists, and a soccer match to entertain the crowds and to make sure that this was a memorable day with good lessons to take away.



Meeting with Erongo Conservancies to discuss engagement with AfriTin Meeting in Uis - 21 September 2018

The meeting was organised by the Erongo Conservancy Association to facilitate the Afritin Mine in Uis for the benefit of the rural community members in Erongo region.



IWCC meeting in Washington - 26 - 27 September 2018

The International Wildlife Conservation Council (IWCC) and the Fish and Wildlife Services (FWS) invited the NACSO Secretariat Director to attend a meeting in Washington, to share Namibia's experience with wildlife management and conservation.



New skills for Regional Association- 08 October 2018

On the 8th of October 2018, staff members at the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) gave a warm welcome to the Otjozondupa Conservancy and Community Forest Regional Association (OCCFRA) representatives at the centre for a three day workshop. The meeting was organised by NACSO, with the aim of strengthening the association's governance.

This was one of a series of workshops that started last year to enhance conservancy and community forest governance. Advocacy and lobbying are some of the skills that were introduced to the regional association representatives. These are crucial to sharpen their organisational skills, to be able to communicate collectively and effectively to relevant institutions at all levels. In order to develop a plan of action, a SWOT analysis was carried out to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by conservancies and community forests. The facilitator Sima Luipert, consultant to the Namibia Development Trust (NDT), helped the representatives to draw up a historical timeline of activities and events that took place since the inception of their conservancies and community forests. She suggested this would help them to reflect on their conservancy and community forests' status and that of the association.

The Associations are now better equipped to represent their communities. Similar workshops with the same mission took place earlier this year in Kunene South and Erongo on the 9-11 February for the Erongo and Southern Kunene Communal Conservancies, while another one was held on 13-16 February for the Kunene Regional Community Conservancy Association (KRCCA).

16th African Wildlife Consultative Forum 11 – 16 November 2018 in Uganda

The NACSO Secretariat attended a workshop on hunting in Uganda, and Namibia shared their experiences.

Earth for Life - Project Finance for Permanence (PFP) (02-07 December 2018)

A group from the WWF US visited WWF in Namibia from the 02-07 December and held a lunch seminar on the 03rd where they presented about the Earth for Life (EFL) Initiative which aims to scale up an approach that addresses the gap on ecosystem services through the Project Finance for Permanence (PFP).

The PFP approach brings together key stakeholders – often including



government, donors, civil society, and communities – around an ambitious, unified, and compelling long-term conservation vision that is agreed by all parties. The stakeholders work together to identify the needs for specific conservation areas over a multiyear horizon. Donors then mobilize the required resources, and in-country governments and/or partner organizations commit to future actions that will ensure long-term, durable management of those areas.

Given this, Earth for life wish to encourage initiatives in several countries including Namibia where about 42 of the land is under conservation, by demonstrating how PFPs can effectively address the funding gap for conservation areas with the ultimate aim of achieving the ecological, social, political, organizational and financial sustainability of a specific program.

Conservation at a glance

- 86 Registered Conservancies;
- 2 Community Fishery reserves in place
- 40 Community Forests
- Over 189,230 people;
- Total number of jobs (full time and seasonal) - close to 5,147
- Total income generated - NAD111Million;
- 166,045 square KM;
- Over 48 JV Lodges;
- Many Concessions Awarded
- Elephant population growth from 7,500 in 1995 to 23,000

Some of the challenges continually being faced by conservancies are:

- Increasing threat from illegal poaching and trafficking of rhino and elephant parts;
- To counter international pressure on legal consumptive use of wildlife;
- Climate Change / drought
- Growing financial mismanagement in conservancies;

*For more information on these exciting events please visit the NACSO website where recent news and information is updated on a weekly basis.
