

# National Policy on Community Based Natural Resource Management

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Republic of Namibia  
Ministry of Environment and Tourism

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## FOREWORD

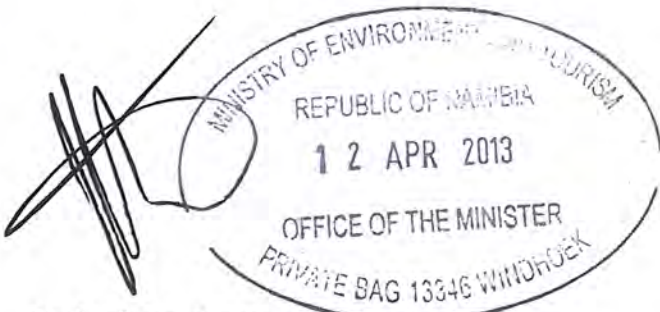
Since the country's independence in 1990, Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) has proven again and again to be an important instrument for the Government of Namibia to meet its goals with respect to conservation and sustainable development.

CBNRM is based on the understanding that if natural resources have sufficient value to rural communities, and allow for rights to use, benefit and manage, then appropriate incentives for people to use natural resources in a sustainable way will be created. CBNRM can contribute considerably to meeting Government conservation and development goals, particularly if applied alongside other complementary strategies and approaches. CBNRM is not meant to replace existing land uses or livelihood activities in communal areas, it is meant to provide additional economic opportunities, and local communities can decide the extent to which they integrate wildlife, forestry, tourism, fisheries, water and other natural resources into their livelihood activities provided they guided by policy directives of the government, and hence the need to have a sustainable CBNRM programme.

Many lessons have been learnt about implementing the CBNRM programme and providing support to community based organisations. One of the key lessons is that developing and operating a community based organisation requires a wide range of skills to address natural resource management, good governance and mapping enterprises or joint venture contracts. Community committees and their membership require considerable training and capacity building in these areas to be able to manage their CBOs effectively and to generate benefits for members. The CBNRM programme therefore needs to be in a position to provide a wide range of support and assistance to conservancies in these different areas, hence this Policy.

CBNRM programme should be developed as a sustainable conservation and tourism development programme from which our rural communities can derive equitable social and economic benefits. Our emphasis should be to create long term sustainability, good governance and proper management for our CBNRM programme, for the benefits of our people.

This policy will provide a framework that promotes the wise and sustainable use of natural resources on State land outside protected areas as well as the promotion of integrated natural resource planning and management.



**Uahekua Herunga, MP**  
**MINISTER**

## PREFACE

Namibia has gained a worldwide reputation for its innovative approaches of linking conservation to poverty alleviation through its CBNRM programme and pro-poor tourism initiatives. The CBNRM programme has grown from a small pilot project to one of the country's major development programmes.

This reputation needs to be strengthened through dynamic policy adjustments that devolve rights to use natural resources by rural communities. This will provide communities with unprecedented incentives to manage and conserve their areas and natural resources to unlocked enormous tourism development opportunities.

The scale and urgency of the matter require government to develop an integrated, flexible and comprehensive policy towards dealing with a CBNRM program that recognizes the rights and development needs of local communities, recognises the need to promote biodiversity conservation and empowers present and future generations to manage and benefit from natural resources.

This document sets out the government policy on CBNRM. The strategies to implement the policy provide the content for this document and include land tenure and rights to use, access, control and benefit from natural resources; community management of natural resources; compliance monitoring, accountability and good governance; benefits, community partnerships and joint ventures; research, education and knowledge management; sustainability of CBNRM; capacity building and skills development; and support structures for community management of natural resources.

This policy has been developed through consultations with a broad range of stakeholders that include government officials in various Ministries, communities through conservancies and community forests, institutions of higher learning, NGOs and the private sector. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism would like to thank all its partners and stakeholders who participated in developing this policy.

  
**Simeon N. Negumbo**  
Permanent Secretary



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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AGM	Annual General Meeting
CBNRM	Community Based Natural Resource Management
CBO	Community Based Organisation
MAWF	Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
MLR	Ministry of Lands and Resettlement
MWCT	Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
LWUA	Local Water User Association
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
WPC	Water Point Committee
WPUC	Water Point User Association

## 1. Introduction

Namibia's initiative on Community Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) is built on the basis that espouses sound environmental management and promotes the sustainable use of natural resources, in a manner that empowers local communities who should share the responsibilities and benefits of such management. In essence, it is a management approach that generates economic benefits through conservation and promotes the development or strengthening of local institutions, supported by national ones to promote rural development. Since independence and in keeping with Namibia's Constitution, which has a strong provision on environmental management, the CBNRM Programme which has been operating since 1992, has contributed considerably to meeting National conservation and development goals.

The CBNRM sector in Namibia is growing in scope and complexity. In addition to conservancies and community forests, there is also a network of water point committees established throughout the country to manage the provision and use of water at local levels, and important progress is being made in the community management of inland fisheries. Increased integration of all the components of communal area land use, including the various aspects of agriculture, tourism, wildlife and natural plant product use, through proactive collaboration and effective zoning, will greatly enhance the ability of rural communities to improve their socio-economic status.

To appreciate the solid foundations of CBNRM in Namibia, there is a need to look at the policies and legislation that the Government developed since 1990, and particularly those that have devolved rights over resources to Namibians living in communal areas. These policies and legislation have in effect, enabled communities to manage the natural resources in their areas and use them for community benefits and improvement of individual livelihoods.

Natural resources for community based management include wildlife, tourist attractions, fish, water, forest resources and vegetation for grazing.

The Nature Conservation Amendment Act, 1996 (Act 5 of 1996), provides the mechanisms for implementing the Conservancy Programme. It amends the Nature Conservation Ordinance, 1975 (Number 4 of 1975), by providing conditional rights to communities to manage game animals and to benefit from this management. It sets the formation of a conservancy as the condition upon which ownership over wild game and use rights over other game species will be given to communal area residents.

Under the Forest Act, 2001 (Number 12 of 2001), community groups have the rights to proclaim Community Forests on their communal lands. Procedurally, the Minister may, with the consent of the Chief or Traditional Authority for an area which is part of communal land or such other authority which is authorised to grant rights over that communal land, enter into a written agreement with any body which the Minister reasonably believes represents the interests of the persons who have rights over that communal land and is willing to and able to manage that communal land as community forest.

The Communal Land Reform Act, 2002 (Number 5 of 2002) has important implications for the Government's CBNRM Programme. The Act provides for the establishment of Communal Land Boards, places communal land under the administration of the CLBs and their Traditional Authorities and defines the rights and duties of the Land Boards, their composition and functions.

The Water Act, 2004 (Number 24 of 2004) provides for the establishment of Water Point User Associations comprising all rural community members or households using a particular water point on a permanent basis. Each Association will be represented by a Water Point Committee of between five and ten members elected by members of the Association. The WPC carries out the daily management of water points including maintenance and management of finances. The Act also provides for the establishment of a Local Water User Association constituted by any number of WPUA's sharing a single rural water supply

scheme. The WPUA and LWUA are established for the purpose of managing communal area water supplies on a cost recovery basis in order to foster a sense of ownership among the users, to promote economic development and to ensure sustainability of such services. They can register with the Minister as a body corporate subject to having a satisfactory constitution.

The Inland Fisheries Resources Act, 2003 (Number 1 of 2003) provides for the conservation and protection of aquatic ecosystems and the sustainable development of inland fisheries resources, and provide for the control and regulation of inland fishing and related matters.

The Traditional Authority Act, 2000 (Number 25 of 2000) provides that traditional authorities shall ensure that the members of their traditional community use the natural resources at their disposal on a sustainable basis and in a manner that conserves the environment and maintains the ecosystems, for the benefit of all persons in Namibia.

The National Policy on Tourism for Namibia aims to provide a framework for the mobilisation of tourism resources to realize long term national goals defined in Vision 2030 and the more specific targets of the National Development Plans, namely, sustained economic growth, employment creation, reduced inequalities in income, gender as well as between the various regions, reduced poverty and the promotion of economic empowerment.

Some activities of CBNRM may require to have an approved Environmental Management Plan, in accordance with the Environmental Management Act, 2007 (Number 7 of 2007). This is to promote the sustainable management of the environment and the use of natural resources by establishing principles for decision making on matters affecting the environment.

## **2. Policy Framework**

As stated in the preceding section, the policy framework for CBNRM stems from Namibia's constitution, Article 95 which stipulates that the State is required to ensure "the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity and the utilisation of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future".

The Government of the Republic of Namibia's Policy on CBNRM is therefore to have a CBNRM programme that recognises the rights and development needs of local communities, recognises the need to promote biodiversity conservation and empowers present and future generations to manage and benefit from wildlife, forestry, fisheries and other natural resources, in an integrated manner, that is also fully and recognized as a rural development option. These rights include rights to access, use, control and benefit.

### **2.1 Aims**

The main aim of the policy is to provide a framework that promotes the wise and sustainable use of natural resources on State land outside Protected Areas as well as the promotion of integrated land and natural resource planning and decision making that considers the most appropriate land uses based on land capability, optimum economic return, environmental and human needs.

#### **The specific aims are:**

- 2.1.1 To synergise rural development with biodiversity conservation efforts.
- 2.1.2 To empower rural populations to be actively engaged in and benefit from the management of natural resources without compromising on biodiversity conservation.
- 2.1.3 To increase the yields of benefits derived from natural resources on communal land through



research, adaptive management and application of sound technology.

- 2.1.4 To create conditions for the investment in conservation related businesses as an incentive to protect the environment and manage its biodiversity.
- 2.1.5 To integrate and strengthen community institutions and structures.
- 2.1.6 To enable communities to collectively engage in environmental and natural resource monitoring, and in mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

## **2.2 Objectives**

- 2.2.1 To conserve biodiversity on State land outside protected areas based on sound environmental principles, traditional knowledge and application of the best practices.
- 2.2.2 To develop and implement a policy and legal framework that provides rural communities with the appropriate incentives and economic benefits to manage natural resources sustainably.
- 2.2.3 To specify land tenure and natural resource user rights, which may be devolved to communities.
- 2.2.4 To develop and implement appropriate monitoring and compliance measures to ensure natural resources are not over exploited.
- 2.2.5 To protect intellectual property rights of communities with regard to the management, use and commercialisation of their natural resources.
- 2.2.6 To provide appropriate and effective support to rural communities so that they can develop natural resource management institutions and can manage their natural resources sustainably.
- 2.2.7 To promote inter-sector collaboration to manage landscapes with conservation and natural resource management as recognized approach.
- 2.2.8 To promote public and political awareness of CBNRM and its positive effects on environment, natural resources and local institutions.
- 2.2.9 To promote win win situation in natural resource management and utilisation based on sound environmental and socio economic principles.
- 2.2.10 To promote value addition to natural resources and innovation.
- 2.2.11 To provide CBNRM entities (committees) and service agencies.

## **3. Principles**

The Policy on CBNRM is based on a number of fundamental principles:

- 3.1 CBNRM fully subscribes to the concept of *sustainable use* as a cardinal principle in the sound management of natural resources, and hence the main basis for CBNRM.
- 3.2 The management of the resources must be based on sound environmental principles to achieve sustainability through renewal, recovery and enhancement of the 'biological capital' in natural systems.

- 3.3 People who live closest to wild areas, natural spaces and their resources often absorb the highest costs associated with their conservation (opportunity costs of conservation), and as such, should have the right to be considered in the share of benefits derived from protection, conservation and sustainable use of such spaces and resources.
- 3.4 Participatory management as an approach is a critical element in promoting the constructive and substantive engagement of stakeholders, particularly community groups to manage and benefit from natural resources.
- 3.5 Devolution of rights to access, use and even own resources has to go with responsibilities that are both in the managers and public interest.
- 3.6 Security of tenure is a necessary condition for communities and individuals to invest in the long term to manage and benefit from natural resources.
- 3.7 Compliance monitoring is a fundamental role and responsibility of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, and relevant Government Ministries has the legal powers to monitor and intervene in CBNRM activities to instill adherence to the policy.
- 3.8 The needs of people, aims of biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of ecological services must be balanced.
- 3.9 CBNRM is an incentive-based approach aimed at promoting sustainable natural resource management. It is based on the premise that if a resource is valuable and landholders have the rights to use, benefit from and manage the resource, and if the values derived from this resource are competitive with and/or exceed that of land uses, then sustainable use of this resource is likely to ensue. The benefits from management must exceed the perceived costs of management and must be secure over time.
- 3.10 Communities need to earn benefits from resource management, benefits should not be provided as hand-outs by the government, donors and others.
- 3.11 The participation of communities and other stakeholders requires a dynamic system of incentives which responds to socio-economic, political and environmental changes but respects sustainability principles.
- 3.12 Equitable benefit sharing and distribution, and good governance are critical elements of CBNRM especially as more Community Based Organisations becomes financially self sustainable.

## **4. Strategies**

CBNRM is one of the main approaches of the Government of the Republic of Namibia for meeting its obligations towards contributing to national development goals such as economic growth and poverty reduction. As a conservation tool and as a rural development approach, CBNRM needs to be applied in the appropriate circumstances. A number of different strategies are required to address the following key issues:

- The use, access, control, benefit, interpretation and application will be in line with Namibia's constitutional provision on environment, natural resource policies and legislation and any multilateral environmental agreements that Namibia may accede to.

- In Community Based Organisations, communities will be given access to and sustainable use of resources provided that management operations are based on approved community level and scientifically sound management plans.
- In the case of areas where wildlife management is dominant, the government will support the recovery of populations of specific species through translocation or by allowing free movements from protected areas into community based conservancies or community forests.
- The rights offered or conferred upon specific communities will be exercised within the confines of the policies and laws of the land.
- In the initial stages of Community Based Organisations development, the costs of managing natural spaces and their resources should be supported, and CBNRM must be sustainable.
- The government and its collaborative partners will support the development, and nurturing of local management structures which should competently interact with local and central government agencies, private investors and other service providers.
- Where the allocation of user rights may potentially result in conflict between users, mediation will be sought as per the regulations guiding the legislation relevant to specific Community Based Organisation.

In order to address these key issues, the following strategies have been developed:

#### **4.1 Land tenure and rights to use, access, control and benefit from natural resources**

Tenure rights include all renewable natural resources on the land, subject to sustainable utilisation and the details of sectoral policy and legislation. These resources include wildlife, tourist attractions, fish, water, forest resources and vegetation for grazing.

Provision is made for various forms of land rights: customary land rights, leasehold, freehold, licences, certificates or permits, and State ownership.

##### **Specific objective**

- To extend and specify land tenure and natural resources user rights, which may be devolved to communities.
- To ensure that CBNRM's devolved user rights are registered in the names of the beneficiaries.
- To ensure that CBNRM is built into integrated land use planning and the planning and implementation of other regional and national development agendas.

##### **Strategic Approach**

In support of community based management and conservation of natural resources and in line with the relevant provisions in the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996, the Forest Act of 2001 and their applicable regulations, the government will provide tenure rights over the natural resources on communal land that has been agreed upon by recognized communities and legally gazetted as a conservancy or a community forest.

Communities may receive benefits from the use of natural resources in the declared area such as

conservancies or community forest. They may also sub-lease or transfer any commercial natural resource user rights to third parties with prior written permission of the Land Authority and the durations of such leases shall comply with the relevant Acts and their regulations.

For communities to enjoy user rights and benefit from the natural resources in their designated areas, they will need to:

- Establish a legal entity that may be called a community based organization which will act through a Management Committee, whose representation, constitution rights and accountability will be defined within relevant laws.
- Comply with all the requirements to develop and implement various plans and strategies to ensure the sustainable management of land and its natural resources.

The Management Committee will manage the land and natural resources within a designated and defined geographical area, manage the use and beneficiation of any natural resources and the benefits derived from such use as defined by relevant laws.

When allocating user rights, particularly in a sub-lease arrangement, the needs of subsistence users residing in a designated geographical area must be recognised and provided for within the natural limits of whatever resources they use.

Despite the utilisation rights and associate legislation, the Government remains the custodian of the land and its resources and shall retain the ultimate authority to protect the natural environment, monitor the management thereof and regulate its use.

## **4.2 Community management of natural resources**

Communities need to have sufficient authority to take decisions about using natural resources if they are to invest time and effort in management. Communities should have decision making and management authority to resource use at a local level. Management authority means the land holders can take certain decisions themselves with government monitoring how land holders use their authority.

Many of the areas in Namibia having the most important and most valuable forest resources, and the most important and valuable wildlife resources overlap geographically. Increasingly, those communities interested in managing and benefiting from their forest resources, and those interested in managing and benefiting from their wildlife resources, are the same communities within the same areas.

### **Specific objectives**

- To establish a framework that provides incentives for communities to manage natural resources in a sustainable manner.
- To create opportunities and skills for community participation in natural resources management.
- To promote integrated conservation and CBNRM strategies based on sound scientific principles and practices.

### **Strategic Approach**

A Community Based Organisation (CBO) that has been awarded rights through relevant legislation over an area for purposes of management will be supported by the government and the civil society, private sectors, etc. to prepare management plans and to implement it, using approved procedures and practices and promote management strategies and practices which are based on sound scientific principles and practices.

The role of government will in this regard be to provide technical guidance to designate, map and draw up management plans for each area and oversee the whole process. Community members or their designated managers will be responsible for the protection and management of the designated area according to an approved management plan.

Management authority shall be devolved to the communities themselves by the government, including the right to decide how natural resources are used, when and how much, and who may use it and the right to benefit fully from use and management.

Management authority and the right to benefit should be secure over time. The extent of and limits to management authority should therefore be defined in legislation and not be provided by administrative decision making that can easily be reversed.

Government shall be actively involved and monitor the use of management authority by communities through established structures and units and retain the right to withdraw management authority if it is abused.

In order to apply appropriate economic incentives and to devolve sufficient management authority to communities, a management system shall be created where a defined group of people take joint management decisions within a defined area of land. In creating this management system, the following will be considered:

- The management committee needs to be self defining and consist of people who choose to cooperate and work together.
- The management committee needs to be recognized by government and be provided with sufficient authority to take management decisions within the defined area.
- The management committee must be able to manage the resource according to its own strategies but within the overall national legal framework and government directives.
- The management committee must have its own arrangements, rules and procedures for decision making and internal accountability i.e. it must decide how management decisions will be taken and by whom, how management decisions will be enforced, and how decision makers will be accountable to the broader group, but within the overall national legal framework and government directives.
- The management committee should be as small as practicable, smaller social groups are better at managing themselves and taking decisions than large anonymous institutions.
- However, such small management units of decision making over resources need to combine to take decisions over scarce resources that are shared (e.g. elephants in north western Namibia that roam over large areas).

Costs and barriers to sustainable management should be reduced. This means reducing the administrative requirements and bureaucracy involved in using natural resources while ensuring that sufficient safeguards are in place.

The government will not register an overlapping conservancy or community forest, or any other CBO, where either a registered conservancy or a registered community forest or such CBO already exists, unless the communities that constitute the conservancy and the community forest agree that all the outputs such as the agreed management plans, agreed management plan review/revision process and agreed implementation roles and responsibilities have been achieved.

If both conservancy and community forests, or any other CBO, have been registered in the same area with separate constitutions and management plans, then the respective management bodies should work in partnership and seek agreements on annual management priorities and activities related to specific

resources and/or management zones. Such agreements should be considered in developing annual work plans for each body. If one area is a sub-unit of another (e.g. if a community forest is a smaller geographical area within a larger conservancy area), and if it so wishes, that sub unit will be empowered by the larger unit to manage its respective resource and retain its benefits for its area members, through mutually agreed arrangement (e.g. constitution). Equally, if the sub unit wishes greater integration with the larger unit, that too will likewise be enabled. As necessary, constitutions will reflect institutional arrangement, powers, rights, roles and responsibilities.

There may be differences in approaches to management plans for different resources, or differences in the development stages of institutions, their capacity, understanding and their natural resources. Therefore management plans should be allowed to evolve and improve over time using the five principle steps in adaptive management planning, which are setting management objectives, managing according to objectives, monitoring, evaluating and adjusting management if and as necessary.

### **4.3 Compliance monitoring, accountability and good governance**

It is the responsibility of the Government to ensure that CBOs, once registered, comply with the policy and legislation. The government has a mandate to protect natural resources on behalf of the nation and to ensure that those institutions with devolved rights over natural resources are accountable to the nation.

Developing accountability and good governance in CBOs is one of the most important aspects of the CBNRM programme. In order for a CBO to serve the interests of local residents, the management committee needs to be accountable to those residents. Accountability means that the committee cannot take whatever decisions it wants to. It must ensure that its decisions have the support of the majority of residents. If the committee consistently takes decisions that are not in the interest of residents, the residents must be able to take appropriate action against the committee. Such action could include the removal of the committee and its replacement by a new committee.

Good governance means that the decisions taken by the committee are open and transparent, the finances are well managed, there is no corruption, and conflicts of interest in decision making, sharing and the distribution of benefits are avoided.

#### **Specific objective**

- To enable communities through their legal bodies to comply with the applicable requirements for CBNRM.
- To encourage communities to participate meaningfully in the monitoring and implementation of CBNRM activities.
- To ensure that community legal bodies are operated and managed in a transparent, accountable, democratic, participatory and non discriminatory manner.

#### **Strategic Approach**

Communities through their management structures are expected to actively participate in the monitoring of the natural resources, environmental goods services and habitats and related ecosystems. Government will set resource harvesting guidelines and specific quotas, which will be consistent with the principles of sustainability. With regard to resource monitoring and the application of data in making management decisions, this policy recognises the participatory monitoring system; the 'Event Book System' which was pioneered, tested and further developed in Namibia.

The government by virtue of its legal mandates will ensure compliance with the principles and practices reflected or prescribed in approved management plans. This will involve registered communities, community committees and their designated management agencies or partners.

The government will assist CBOs to develop accountable and transparent decision making processes including the participatory development of constitutions by local residents, community approval of budgets, spending on benefits and financial statements of Annual General Meetings (AGM), and good communication and information to rural communities.

The government will monitor and ensure compliance of CBOs with policy and legislation related to CBNRM through established structures and units. There shall be ongoing monitoring of a system of checks and balances and the implementation of a system to ensure compliance by the CBO with its legal and regulatory obligations.

When a community wants to become a CBO, it must meet all the requirements of the application process as defined in relevant legislation. However, while some of the requirements for qualification may be satisfied by a "one time" submission in the application process, other conditions or requirements must be continually or repeatedly satisfied, in order for the CBO to maintain their qualification. Holding an AGM would be an example of such a repeating obligation, as well as the provision of financial accountability report, annual chairman's report, management committee meeting minutes and AGM report.

#### **4.4 Benefits, community partnerships and joint ventures**

The government is committed, in compliance with its own laws on access and benefit sharing and global policies and conventions, to protect the intellectual property rights of communities with regard to natural resources and the management of such natural resources, and to have a fair and equitable distribution of benefits derived from the use of natural resources.

##### **Specific objective**

- To protect the intellectual property rights of communities with regard to natural resources and the management of such natural resources.
- To create sufficient economic and other benefits from the use of natural resources so that rural communities will view natural resources as an asset rather than a liability.
- To have a fair and equitable distribution of benefits derived from the use of natural resources.

##### **Strategic Approach**

The Government in collaboration with partners will act as honest brokers between communities and prospective entrepreneurs or investors (hunting concessions, safari operators, camps, lodges etc). It will also continue to provide the necessary physical and institutional infrastructure as well as marketing support to aid the development of the tourism industry.

Government encourages communities and their organisations to understand government policies, available technical and financial support in order to participate and own sustainable tourism businesses and nature based enterprises, based on aesthetic values of landscape, Namibia's cultural diversity and the direct and indirect values of biodiversity. In this regard, the policy supports community based tourism.

In order for a community to participate in a tourism business and nature based enterprises, there needs to be a legal entity with the right to enter into contracts on behalf of a defined community.

The government will ensure that tourism businesses and nature based enterprises that are awarded to local communities or where local communities are involved, including joint ventures, provide a full range of benefits that includes income, employment, the opportunity to provide "spin off" services and the opportunity to be an owner of the tourism business and nature based enterprises. In some cases, the

capital and skills may be available locally for the community to develop and run certain activities or to

provide certain services. The government's first preference is that communities should own and manage tourism businesses and nature based enterprises awarded to them and any business enterprise derived from that, and government is committed to assist communities to achieve this objective to the greatest extent possible. The government shall create a specialised organisational unit for this purpose and where government's resource are insufficient, consideration will be given to alternative mechanisms of facilitating support to community based enterprise development.

Where communities do not have the capital and capacity, and/or unable to raise funding from recognized financial institutions on their own, they will need to enter into a partnership with another entity(s) to jointly co-operate in the development, management and operation of the enterprise. In such cases, there is a need to ensure that any agreement with the private sector or individual companies or people do not exploit the community, and to ensure that appropriate benefits accrue to the community.

The government and identified support organisations will assist communities in negotiating joint venture agreements or any other form of partnership with the private sector, individual companies or people. In doing so, the government will:

- Ensure that the business plan for the enterprise activity is developed in a transparent way, is realistic and clearly shows the level of investment and projected levels of income and profit over time.
- Assist the community to set its benefit and empowerment objectives, including the extent to which the community wishes to become involved in management of the activity and ownership of the business.
- Assist the community to negotiate a realistic target for income from the private sector based on the business plan/proposal for the enterprise.
- Assist the community to understand the offers being made by the private sector.
- Assist the community to develop principles for assessing the private sector offer.
- Check and certify financial offers from the private sector before they are agreed to by communities.
- Assist the community to monitor private sector performance and compliance with the contract once it has been signed.
- Provide advice to communities on legal and policy issues pertaining to tourism business.

The government will ensure that joint venture agreements or any other form of partnership between communities and the private sector, individual company or people covers specific elements and sets targets and deadlines for the performance regarding these elements.

The government will provide information and awareness to CBOs about the tourism and nature based industry, the requirements of overseas tourists and the business opportunities within the industry, facilitate CBOs to gain access to expertise on business planning and management, and on the operation of tourism enterprises such as campsites, and cultural villages and facilitate access to support for marketing.

#### **4.5 Research, education and knowledge management**

In order to have an efficient CBNRM programme, it is crucial to have adequate data that is available in a usable form for key decision makers. There is a need for more comprehensive data that enables the government and other stakeholders to understand the CBNRM programme better, to monitor the success and challenges of the programme. Data gathering needs to be standardised in the different sectors of the CBNRM programme, so that results can be compared nationally across cases from area to area and over time.



## Specific objective

- To foster a spirit of active learning and adaptations to changing situations and circumstances within communities.
- To promote environmental education for sustainable development and ensure that sustainable resource utilisation and environmental management enhances peoples' livelihoods.
- To ensure that benefits received from sustainable use of natural resources and sound conservation practices are acknowledged and understood by communities.
- To promote climate change adaptation knowledge and formidable skills.

## Strategic Approach

Deriving from the principle that the sustainable management of natural resources must be based on sound scientific principles and practices, the government will ensure that the management of natural resources within and outside formally protected areas, such as conservancies and community forests benefit from the latest research and new technologies which support resource monitoring, enhanced management and governance, sustainable off-takes and rehabilitation.

The current natural resource monitoring system, the 'Event Book System' will be promoted and refined as necessary but without losing its participatory approach as an awareness and adaptive management tool. As an operating principle, decision making based on data and information will be a key to the management of natural resources.

Applied research will be supported by the government and as much as possible, institutions of higher learning will be encouraged to conduct applied and participatory research in conservancies and community forests, as a way of improving management, creating awareness and improving participation in management.

Recognising the increasing threat of climate change, Community Based Organisations, since they bring several villages together to manage natural resources, will be used to monitor the effects of climate change, discuss adaptation and mitigation options and to transfer new skills and technologies.

The government will promote environmental education and education for sustainable development in general, in both teacher training institutions, public schools, colleges and tertiary institutions.

The government will provide technical advice and support for assessing natural resource utilization options, developing management and utilisation plans, and drafting and reviewing the constitutions.

Socio-economic analysis for determining the viability of utilization options and of individual CBO, will be supported by the government. Economic data will also support the CBNRM monitoring and evaluation programme particularly with analysis of the overall contribution of CBNRM to the national economy and to poverty alleviation.

The government will develop and maintain a national CBNRM monitoring system, compliance measures and data base for all the different sectors in the CBNRM programme, and that where necessary information is shared with the communities.

### 4.6 Sustainability of CBNRM

The increasing number of Community Based Organisations is stressing the ability of support agencies to provide support services at the levels required to ensure that the CBNRM programme becomes technically and financially viable. Additionally, there is an increasingly urgent need for the CBNRM programme to

plan for the long term finance of CBNRM support services as it is not realistic to be permanently reliant on conventional funding sources that are already declining.

### **Specific objective**

- To establish an institutional support framework for the implementation of CBNRM.
- To create long term sustainability strategies for CBNRM in Namibia.
- To ensure the long term political willingness for CBNRM within all sectors.
- To ensure that Community Based Organizations balance operating costs with the development needs and return of benefits to members.

### **Strategic Approach**

A permanent CBNRM service agency and extension approach will be established within the Government, where key services will permanently be provided to conservancies and community forests.

Integration of CBNRM service provision will be promoted where communities utilize and manage their natural resources such as forestry products, grazing, water, fish and wildlife, in a holistic fashion.

The growing number of Community Based Organisations makes it essential that a more systematic and cost-effective approach to training be developed. The government and its partners will improve efficiency and cost effectiveness of CBNRM training efforts.

The government will ensure that CBOs increase their income streams through the development and operation of new enterprises such as joint venture lodges, hunting concessions, forestry concessions, natural plant product harvesting schemes, and various other enterprises; ensure that conservancies and community forest balance operating costs with the developmental needs and return of benefits to members; and ensure that conservancies and community forest live within the realities of their expenditure needs and income generation ability.

Three broad funding areas have been identified for further exploration and development in this regard, and include:

- **Community income:** Sustainability of CBOs requires them to be financially independent which means that they need to increase their revenues. Increased revenues, if translated into increased benefits for members, should increase support for CBOs, which should in turn contribute to institutional sustainability and resilience. It is therefore a high priority for the programme to further explore and promote how CBOs can maximize income streams to cover conservation and service costs, while contributing towards their members' development goals.
- **Government funding:** Continued support by the government is crucial for the sustainability of community based organizations. The government is responsible for implementing the legislation, enforcing compliance of the legislation by the community, and ensuring that all CBOs receive a basic minimum support package. Given the critical role that the government plays in supporting CBOs, and the developmental impacts that the CBNRM programme has, efforts to secure increased government related financing should be supported. For long term financing, CBNRM should also be financed by the Environmental Investment Fund and the Game Product Trust Fund.
- **External funding:** Although donor funding for direct support is declining, there are still opportunities to pursue a coherent and effective fundraising strategy, particularly if more innovative mechanisms for funding are developed. For example, the exploration of a range of innovative cooperative partnerships, including development banks that would consider

the provision of competitive finance or security for investment into community venture partnership.

While the sustainability objective can be realized in several ways, creating a stable community based support services within and from outside government agencies which will mainly comprise of natural resource management services, institutional support, and business, enterprise and livelihood services, is vital.

#### **4.7 Capacity building and skills development**

There is a current and growing need for skills development in the CBNRM programme. Responsibilities, levels of income generated, number of business and tourism joint venture, increase linkages and relationships with other institutions presents capacity gaps and new challenges to community based organisations. Given the current level of support for capacity building available, the sector is looking for ways to become more efficient through the clustering of training and the harmonization of support tools.

##### **Specific objective**

- To facilitate capacity building and skills development within communities to engage in natural resources based management and tourism.

##### **Strategic Approach**

The government in partnership with communities, investors and service providers will build the necessary systemic, institutional and individual capacities necessary for CBNRM programme implementation in Namibia.

The government will assist community based organizations to access other support services and capacity building and skills development from other government agencies, NGOs and the private sector.

The provision of capacity building and skills development by different stakeholders and partners to communities will be done in a coordinated manner under the leadership of the government, with line Ministries leading their respective sectors.

The government will support training of communities and their committees to strengthen management systems and governance.

#### **4.8 Support structures for community management of natural resources**

The government recognizes the huge task involved in creating management structures and systems for the management of natural resources and actually implementing programmes in the field.

CBNRM is a complex and multi-faceted programme which requires a variety of competencies and expertise for its successful implementation. However, the government is the lead structure for the CBNRM programme in Namibia.

##### **Specific objectives**

- To clarify the involvement of different support structures for community management of natural resources and the CBNRM programme.
- To enable support organisations to comply with the applicable requirements for CBNRM and support to communities.

## **Strategic Approach**

The government will promote the involvement of technical co-operating partners which can be bilateral aid agencies, local and international non-governmental organisations, academic institutions and others.

In order to ensure the provision of services and proper coordination, the government will enter into partnerships with these technical co-operating partners and sign Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in order to formalize some areas of cooperation.

The government will monitor and ensure compliance of support organizations with policy and legislation related to CBNRM. There shall be ongoing monitoring of a system of checks and balances and the implementation of a system to ensure compliance by the support organizations.

All natural resources shall be recognized as having intrinsic value and worth in economic, environmental and social terms and communities will be assisted to identify and promote those values and make appropriate decisions to promote and protect them, including uses and non-use options.

The government will as necessary identify areas or populations of flora and fauna that warrant special management attention or special protection status and work with communities to offer appropriate measures.

As already stated, the government and its collaborating partners will specifically support the development, strengthening and functioning of local management structures to provide long-term management and oversight services in a designated geographical area.

Since the concept of sustainable use, is based on the philosophy that natural resources gain value through use, beneficiation and commercialization, the government will assist communities to realise the optimal potential from the use of natural resources. Extension services and non-government service providers will provide the necessary management support including access to research, technology development and marketing.

In recognition of Namibia's philosophy to promote conservation friendly practices around park borders, this policy supports linkages between Protected Areas and neighbouring lands and between CBOs themselves. To this extent, the government will promote the involvement of local communities in the conservation and sustainable development of protected areas, also promote conservation related infrastructure and investment to create jobs in such areas.

## **5. Institutional Framework**

The government is committed to develop or use existing regulatory structures which recognize and support community management of natural resources and will improve or develop a framework to protect and promote the rights of communities to benefit from natural resources and ensure the equitable distribution of such benefits.

The government will create or strengthen support units in the responsible government agencies to promote CBOs. The importance of local government and traditional authorities is recognized and valued particularly in the implementation of field programmes.

Non-governmental organisations are recognised by this policy as key partners in supporting CBNRM processes, especially in helping to create or strengthen community based structures and building management capacities and linking communities to funding sources. The government will continue to collaborate with NGOs to deliver services to communities and where appropriate, and support

the formation of local NGOs and outsource certain functions to them. In order to ensure that services are provided by NGOs to communities, and in a coordinated manner, the government will enter into partnerships with NGOs, the private sector and other organizations and sign MoUs in order to formalise some areas of cooperation. The government will develop specific partnerships with NGOs where there are tasks or activities that the government is unable to carry out in a particular field of activity or geographical area.

The government will work with the private sector and NGOs to ensure support on business development and that appropriate tourism related training is provided to communities.

The government is the responsible body for overall coordination of the CBNRM programme including the establishment of regional coordination forums, liaison and networking with partners such as NGOs, institutions of higher learning, private sector, Regional Councils and donors, associations and provision of programme information, procedures and manuals.

The government will establish, through the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, a CBNRM Coordination and Advisory Forum that will meet at least twice a year and will comprise members from line Ministries, Civil Society, associations and the private sector, and shall have clear Terms of Reference with the main functions as follows:

- To ensure effective and efficient coordination of CBNRM activities to support communities.
- To identify support and training needs of communities.
- To plan and implement specific government CBNRM support activities.
- To support the coordination and integration of CBNRM activities among different line Ministries and institutions.
- To review progress, achievements and challenges facing CBNRM and recommend interventions.
- To develop long term vision and implementation strategy for CBNRM within the broader framework on NDPs and Vision 2030.

The government is responsible for raising awareness about CBNRM and providing information such as what a conservancy is, how people can benefit, application procedure, etc.

A permanent CBNRM service agency and extension unit will be established within the Government, where key services will permanently be provided to CBOs.

## **6. Administration and Management**

Communities and the organisations that they form, such as CBOs, will be required under this policy to develop and implement appropriate administrative and financial management systems and procedures to safeguard the benefits, finances and assets derived from the use of natural resources. This will be reflected in their constitutions and benefit distribution plans to which all members will subscribe.

The government reserves the right to intervene in accordance with sector based legislation and policies to protect public interests, where a community or CBO is found to be involved in illegal or improper activities in the management and use of the benefits that accrue from natural resource management.

## **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The impact of the implementation of this policy and progress, and constraints regarding its implementation will be periodically assessed by the government, and where necessary in consultation with other stakeholders.

The engagement with resident communities and neighbours, tourism businesses awarded, Event Book System and other activities of the communities and relevant stakeholders will be used for monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Once in a year, the government will consult stakeholders in the CBNRM Programme to review the successes and challenges faced by the CBNRM programme.

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## GLOSSARY

For the purposes of this policy, the words or phrases set out below have the following meanings:

Benefits	Refers to both financial and non financial benefits.
Community	Means a group of rural area residents on State land, that have formed a legal entity, which has a defined membership, defined boundaries, and an elected body which represents the interests of the members.
Community Forest	A delimited wooded area identified by a specific community and recognised under the Forest Act (No. 12 of 2001).
Conservancy	Communal area conservancy Gazetted in terms of the Nature Conservation Amendment Act (No.5 of 1996).
Human-Wildlife Conflict	Any event in which wild animals harm, destroy or damage human life or property (including damage to or destruction of crops), or in which wild animals are injured, captured or destroyed as a result of a perceived threat to humans or their property.
Government	Government of the Republic of Namibia.
Natural Resources	For the purposes of this Policy, natural resources refers to wildlife, tourist attractions, fish, water, forest resources and vegetation for grazing.
Neighbours	Occupiers of communal land or freehold farms immediately adjacent to protected areas or a CBO.
Protected Area	Formal protected area proclaimed in the Government Gazette according to legislation.
Payment for Ecosystem Services	Voluntary payment by a buyer to a provider to buy an Environmental Service (or a piece of land use likely to secure that service) if, and only if, the provider secures the environmental service.
Resident Community	People who are residing in a protected area and not the employees of the Ministry, line Ministries, Parastatals, Private companies and NGOs or any such person working on a temporally basis in a protected area. Resident people also include any persons who may be allowed to reside within a protected area in terms of any collaborative management agreement between the MET and the residents of that protected area.
Reduced emission from deforestation and forest degradation:	Refers to mechanisms currently being negotiated under the UNFCCC process to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. REDD may refer to a broad set of approaches and actions that will achieve this, but the core idea is to create performance based mechanisms that reward projects or countries that produce emission reductions.
Rural Area Residents	People who are residing on State land and not the employees of the Government, Parastatals, Private companies and NGOs or any such person working on a temporally basis in that specific area. Rural Area Residents also include any persons who may be allowed to reside on State land in terms of



any applicable laws and policies of the government.

Stakeholder	Any individual, group of individuals, organization or Government department or agency that is affected by the management and existence of protected areas.
Sustainability of CBNRM	Refers to the creation of long term maintenance of CBNRM programme support services that ensures the viability of natural resources oriented CBOs.
Tenure user rights	Refers to a right to use a piece of land for a specific purpose (business or farming) but whereas it does not fully belong to you.
Tenure right registration	This is the right to register user rights of the land for known purpose you have acquired or granted the said land.
Voluntary Carbon Markets	Carbon markets based on certification schemes not regulated under the Kyoto Protocol.

