



NAMIBIAN ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE SOCIETY

NEWS
NAMIBIAN
ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE
SOCIETY

Creating understanding for sustainable development and passion for a healthy environment



Year-End NEWS

The end of the year is suddenly upon us—a full and successful year for NEWS, that's seen very positive growth in our individual membership base, ever-increasing support from the business community, good media coverage and partnerships with most environmental organisations in Namibia.

We have consolidated our new structure and now have a well-established office with sound administration and planning and good communication with stakeholders.

We've held 8 public talks in Windhoek, as well as our first one in Swakopmund, facilitated by our Regional Representatives there.

Two special editions of Roan News have been published, the NEWS-&-partners edition being the thickest Roan News ever.

We've been involved in a variety of issues, including the Ramatex environmental legacy, conservation plans for the coast, elephant hunting in the North West, seal harvesting and the billboards bane.

Through NaDEET, we have run another successful NEWS-NaDEET

essay contest (funded by Langer Heinrich Uranium and Rossing Uranium as part of the NEWS-4-the-future programme) and have laid the groundwork for our first NEWS -4-leaders outing early next year.

We've facilitated the recycling initiative that has seen recycling points at several shopping centres around Windhoek, which will hopefully be expanded considerably next year.

Our first NEWS-stand has been produced through the generous support of The Wood Connection, and will be officially launched at the Namibia Craft Centre early next year.

We've designed an attractive, user-friendly new website—also to be launched early in 2009...

As you can see, we've run out of time this year with some of our initiatives, but the groundwork has been laid for a great year ahead and we look forward to collaborating with our network of Members and Partners to achieve much more.

NEWS-letter

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NEWS Office Staff:

Director:

Helge Denker [Tel 061 306450]
[Director@NEWS-Namibia.org]

Office Co-ordinator:

Birgit Noczil [Tel 061 306450]
[Information@NEWS-Namibia.org]

NEWS Committee:

Chairperson:

Dr John Mfune [061 2063743]

Vice Chairperson/Staff Liaison:

Wolfgang Schenck [061253542]

Treasurer:

Werner Sell [081 124 6002]

Editor - Roan News:

Carole Roberts [061 237707]
[Roan.News@NEWS-Namibia.org]

Talks Co-ordinator:

Manuela Schmid [061 224294]
[Public.Talks@NEWS-Namibia.org]

Educational Membership Liaison:

Benson Muramba [061 276809]

Programme Co-ordinator:

Kenneth /Uiseb [0812231707]

Member:

Joe Walter [061 234610]

NEWS Regional Representatives:

Central Coast:

Nadine Moroff-Kohlstaedt [064 4101147]

Heidi Skrypzeck [064 4101144]

Southern Coast:

Birgit Dempsey [081 1276923]

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BEST WISHES FOR THE FESTIVE SEASON

The NEWS Committee and staff would like to wish all our Members, Partners, Associated Projects, Supporters and Friends a joyful Christmas and all the very best for the New Year.

PUBLIC TALK REPORT: Kenneth /Uiseb—Black Rhino

Kenneth /Uiseb: 'Attitudes & Perceptions of the Local Community towards the Re-introduced Black Rhino in the ≠Khoadi//Hôas Conservancy in Northwest Namibia'; 30.07.2008; Namibia Scientific Society

Kenneth /Uiseb's presentation was based on a master study. Increasing black rhino populations in Namibia are allowing re-introductions into historical ranges. Two black rhinos were reintroduced into the ≠Khoadi //Hôas Conservancy and an assessment of attitudes

was done prior to their arrival. Rhinos are donated by government from surplus animals in Etosha NP. Many of the people interviewed know of rhinos, but few have seen one. About 50% were happy to have rhinos in the area, as they attract tourists. Others

don't want rhinos, as they consider them aggressive. General attitudes are positive, although knowledge of rhino behaviour is limited. Recommendations included awareness-raising, human-wildlife conflict mitigation and equal distribution of benefits.

PUBLIC TALK REPORT: Lothar Krienitz—Lesser Flamingos

Lothar Krienitz, Leibnitz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology & Inland Fisheries, Neuglobsow, Germany: 'Algae as food resource of Lesser Flamingos and consequences of changing food quality to flamingo migration'; 23.10.2008; Namibia Scientific Society

Lothar Krienitz and several colleagues have studied influences of cyanobacteria on mass mortalities of lesser flamingos, observed for decades at alkaline-saline Kenyan Rift Valley lakes. The phytoplankton biomass is very high in the lakes, with communities domi-

nated by cyanobacteria. High amounts of cyanotoxins found in flamingo feed and livers imply toxins ingested with food can contribute to mass mortalities. Previous studies also indicated pesticides and traces of heavy metals as possible contributing causes.

As flamingo populations move between various lakes, they're subjected to cumulative influences. Findings show how wildlife can be decimated by changes in the primary food source, and how over-use of water bodies and their catchment endangers ecosystems.

PUBLIC TALK REPORT: Peter Casper—Lake Sediments

Peter Casper, Leibnitz-Institute of Freshwater Ecology & Inland Fisheries, Neuglobsow, Germany: 'Sediments as archives of lake history'; 25.11.2008; Namibia Scientific Society

By storing a wide range of indicators in their deposits, lake sediments acts as archives of the history of lakes and their surroundings. Peter Casper provided a brief overview of lake origins before going into details of sediment formation and

methods of collecting samples. Sediment layers provide a chronological record of deposited materials. Variations in the presence of particular substances in the sediments can be linked to environmental events in the area, such as volcano eruptions,

nuclear tests or pollution. Such links to known events can then serve as time markers of sediment layers. Lakes collect most materials in their catchment area, and thus provide interesting records of both artificial and natural environmental influences.

PUBLIC TALK REPORT: Jennifer Ruesink & Alan Trimble—Bivalves

Jennifer Ruesink & Alan Trimble, Marine Ecologists, Polytechnic of Namibia/University of Washington: 'Survival and growth of Namibia's bivalves (mussels, clams, oysters) in a productive and sometimes toxic ocean'; 26.11.2008; National Marine Information & Research Centre, Swakopmund

Ruesink and Trimble showed that high nutrient availability in a marine system is a double edged sword, benefitting a productive food chain but leading to periods of harmfully low oxygen levels. An overview of the Namibian system showed highly produc-

tive phytoplankton as the base of the food web. However, related periodic hydrogen sulphide eruptions deplete oxygen, leading to mortalities of many marine organisms. The focus on bivalves gave an overview of clam, mussel and oyster spe-

cies. Surprising findings showed native species well-adapted to local conditions—clams survive during low-oxygen events when imported oysters die. Phoronids, drilling snails and a shell-boring worm also affect bivalve survival and thus aquaculture.

PROJECT REPORT: Take a closer look poster

The Namibia Animal Rehabilitation, Research & Education Centre (NARREC) regularly produces a variety of educational material to improve our understanding of wildlife and conservation. With the assistance of the Namibia Bird Club and NEWS, NARREC has produced the 'Take a closer look' poster. The poster has been designed to create and improve public awareness of ringed birds and will hopefully significantly increase

reported sightings. This will assist in the valuable gathering of data on the movement and survival of birds. Birds are important indicators of the state of environments. Monitoring of bird populations is useful for many sectors, including agriculture, fisheries and conservation authorities, and can provide information on pollution, deforestation, outbreaks of pests such as rodents or locusts, the potential of disease epidemics and the

effects of climate change. Laminated A4 versions of the poster can be carried in the vehicles of tour guides and other enthusiasts who spend time in the field and who can assist in reporting the sightings of ringed birds. Originals of the poster are available at NARREC and the NEWS office. So, next time you see a bird, take a closer look and help us to conserve our avifauna.



PROJECT REPORT: NEWS-NaDEET Essay Contest

To achieve environmental integration, a society needs to be aware of, and interested in, environmental issues. And to achieve this awareness and interest, we need to reach the youth and make the environment a central part of children's lives. As part of our NEWS-4-the-future youth programme, the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET) and NEWS organise an annual essay contest for schools. Children are made aware of a particular issue through the contest, they begin to understand some of the

aspects involved by researching and writing about the issue and the best scholar and her or his class then go on to learn about sustainable living by winning a free trip to NaDEET—making the essay contest a holistic package that will hopefully make significant positive impressions on children's lives and help turn them into more environmentally responsible adults. This year's contest on 'The Impact of Mining in the Erongo Region' ties in with our special edition of Roan News on Uranium mining. The two currently active ura-

nium mines in Namibia, Rössing Uranium and Langer Heinrich Uranium, have set a clear sign of their social and environmental responsibility by co-funding the contest. The winner was Ivan Blazic from Dolphin Secondary School in Walvis Bay. From 22 to 26 September, he and his class participated in the environmental education programme at NaDEET Centre. The group of 20 learners enjoyed a memorable learning experience in the heart of the Namib Desert accompanied by two of their teachers.

Ivan Blazic with teacher and NaDEET staff



PROJECT REPORT: Recycling Drop-Off Points in Windhoek

The three Rs—reduce, reuse, recycle—are vital principles of waste management and sustainable living that are still embraced far too little in Namibia. The recent initiative to install recycling drop-off points at shopping centres in Windhoek is an important step in the right direction. While the initiative was facilitated by NEWS (through calling meetings of the main stakeholders and facilitating the launch of the project) it has really been driven by the manufacturing and recycling

industry, most especially Rent-a-Drum Group of Companies and the Namibia Manufacturing Association. And it has already received the support of several shopping centres. Importantly, though, the success of recycling household waste depends on the participation and commitment of the community. People need to use the stations, and the concept can only be financially viable—and therefore sustainable—if people use the drop off points correctly. At the moment there is still far too

much rubbish ending up in the wrong containers—which requires expensive resorting and makes the initiative ineffective. As always, it is a matter of education. People need to understand the initial need for recycling to use the stations, they need to understand the importance of waste separation into the different containers, and they need to integrate the practice of recycling into their daily lives—all of which is really easy with just a small shift of mindset.

EVENT REPORT: NEWS-&partners Inaugural Convention

NEWS AIMS TO CREATE A COUNTRY-WIDE NETWORK OF MEMBERS AND PARTNERS WHO SHARE INFORMATION AND COLLABORATE TO CONSERVE OUR ENVIRONMENT AND ACHIEVE TRULY SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Over the course of the last two years, NEWS has created links to most non-government environmental organisations in Namibia. We have signed MOUs with 24 organisations and share information with a number of additional projects. The inaugural NEWS-&partners Convention was held in September. It is envisaged to make this an annual, or even biannual event, depending on the need to address joint issues. The main aims of the meeting were to formally introduce NEWS and our network of Partner Organisations, present the range of

services that NEWS offers to Partners and establish priorities of collaboration. Amongst the priorities identified was the sharing of information and resources and improved networking; joint events; combined public awareness creation, education and upliftment; increased strength and public presence as a network of organisations; the identification of national needs and improved linkages to government and international organisations. NEWS will now set a framework of defined objectives and priorities to optimise collaboration. All attending

organisations indicated their support of the NEWS-&partners Convention on an annual, and if needed even biannual basis. A date for a follow-up meeting has tentatively been set for early 2009. Through the commitment and ongoing support of the Partners involved, a great platform can be created to jointly address many of the environmental issues needing urgent attention in Namibia.

Representatives of numerous Partner Organisations were present to provide input on how to improve collaboration.



Individual discussions over snacks are always a good way to elaborate on ideas. Chris Weaver, WWF-Life, and Helge Denker, NEWS (l.t.r, top); Dr Oliver Ruppel, Unam HRDC, and Dr John Mfune, NEWS (l.t.r, bottom) .



WORKSHOP REPORT: NEWS-SAIEA Coastal Zoning

A NEWS-SAIEA Workshop on Coastal Zoning, with a focus on Sensitive Areas, was held on Wednesday the 6th of August at the Namibia Scientific Society. The aim of the workshop was to allow NEWS Members and Partners to provide qualified input into the zoning process. Dr Peter Tarr, Director of the Southern African Institute for Environmental Assessment (SAIEA)—the organisation facilitating the zoning process—gave a presentation on the current conservation status of the coast, as well as the proclamation and zoning plans for the future. Na-

mibia is in the unique situation of having more than 95% of our coastal area within parks or planned parks. Most of the Namib, from the Orange River and the Sperrgebiet National Park via the Namib-Naukluft Park and West Coast Tourist Recreation Area to the Skeleton Coast Park and the Kunene River may soon be encompassed in one mega-park. The zoning process includes addressing such issues as quad-biking in the dunes between Swakopmund and Walvis Bay. The real aim is to achieve sustainable development and management of the protected

areas along our coast. One of the outcomes will be appropriate and effectively implemented management plans for these areas. These should be user-friendly plans that are understandable for relatively inexperienced park rangers. The zoning, proclamation and planning serves as an opportunity for redefining the status and rules of conservation along our coast. Workshop participants were able to gather more information, provide specific input on areas of conservation priority or point out general concerns.

NEWS ANNUAL PLANNING MEETING:

The NEWS Committee and staff held their annual planning meeting in October, deliberating on a draft workplan and budget for 2009. The things that have taken so much of our time (and money) this year—purchasing computer equipment, getting our office functioning smoothly, designing and producing the NEWS-stand, designing a new website, creating strong linkages to Partner Organisations and the media, increasing our

membership base, formulating policies and designing programmes etc.—have created the sound foundation the Society needs. The groundwork has been laid for us to return our focus to all the things we should be doing, such as being more actively involved in hands-on conservation, supporting and implementing projects, addressing issues and facilitating environmental integration. Importantly, though, we still are—and should al-

ways remain—a membership organisation. And a membership organisation not only provides membership benefits, but also comes with responsibilities for members—to be informed and involved, to point out issues, to serve on the Committee for a year or two, and to continuously strengthen this network of people who care about our environment and the future of our children.



NEWS-&-partners

Creating closer links to Partner Organisations is an ongoing process for NEWS. We aim to create links to all organisations in Namibia which have conservation of the natural environment, environmental research and/or environmental education as their main aim. To date, we have signed agreements with the following Partner Organisations:

NEWS AIMS
TO CREATE A
COUNTRY-WIDE
NETWORK OF
MEMBERS AND
PARTNERS
WHO SHARE
INFORMATION
AND COLLABORATE
TO CONSERVE
OUR ENVIRONMENT
AND ACHIEVE TRULY
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

PLEASE NOTE:
ORGANISATIONS AND
PROJECTS DENOTED
WITH AN ASTERISK (*)
HAVE A REGULAR
NEWSLETTER
AVAILABLE ON THEIR
WEBSITE

Africat Foundation
www.africat.org

Botanical Society of Namibia (BOTSOC) *
www.nbri.org.na

Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) *
www.cheetah.org

Children in the Wilderness
www.childreninthewilderness.com

Coastal Environmental Trust of Namibia
(CETN)
www.nnf.org.na/CETN/index.htm

Desert Research Foundation of Namibia
(DRFN)
www.drfn.org.na

Earthlife Namibia
www.earthlife.org.na

Eco-Awards Namibia
www.ecoawards-namibia.org

EduVentures
www.eduventures-africa.org

Elephant-Human Relations Aid
www.desertelephant.org

Gobabeb Training & Research Centre
www.gobabeb.org

Greenspace

Human Rights & Documentation Centre, UNAM
www.unam.na/centres/hrdc/hrdc_index.html

Integrated Rural Development & Nature
Conservation (IRDNC)
www.irdnc.org.na

Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust
(NaDEET) *
www.nadeet.org

Namibia Animal Rehabilitation, Research &
Education Centre (NARREC)

Namibia Bird Club

Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) *
www.nnf.org.na

Namibia Scientific Society
www.kuiseb-verlag.com

Namibian Elephant & Giraffe Trust
www.namibianelephant.org

Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Institute
Polytechnic of Namibia *
www.polytechnic.edu.na/
www.teamnamibia.com/amusha

Scientific Society Swakopmund
www.swakopmund-museum.org.na

Southern African Institute
for Environmental Assessment (SAIEA)
www.saiea.com

WWF-Life
www.panda.org

Associated Projects

Numerous environmental projects and working groups of varying size and duration are active in Namibia. While it is not feasible for NEWS to sign MOUs with all projects currently active, we do aim to share information and collaborate where possible. We currently share information with the following projects:

Brown Hyena Research Project *
www.strandwolf.org.za

Giant Sable Conservation Project (Angola)

Namibia Coast Conservation & Management
(NACOMA) Project (MET)
www.nacoma.org.na

Namibia Coastal/Marine Bird Working Group *
www.nacoma.org.na

Namibia Crane Working Group *
www.nnf.org.na/CRANES/index.htm

Raptors Namibia *
www.nnf.org.na/RAPTORS/index.htm

Strengthening the Protected Area Network
(SPAN) Project (MET)

Succulent Karoo Ecosystem Programme
www.skep.org

PLEASE NOTE:
ORGANISATIONS AND
PROJECTS DENOTED
WITH AN ASTERISK (*)
HAVE A REGULAR
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WEBSITE

ROLL OF HONOUR: Corporate Membership List

ROAN

First National Bank
John Meinert Printing (PTY) LTD
Rössing Uranium LTD

SABLE

Bank Windhoek
DeBeers Marine Namibia (PTY) LTD
Namdeb Diamond Corporation
(PTY) LTD

KUDU

ORYX

City of Windhoek
Namibia Breweries LTD
Sense of Africa
Valencia Uranium Limited

SPRINGBOK

Langer Heinrich Uranium LTD
NamibRand Nature Reserve
Sossusvlei Mountain Lodge
Springbok Atlas
Standard Bank

STEENBOK

African Wanderer Tours & Safaris
Camp Syncro
Damarana Safaris
Goheganas Nature Reserve

& Wellness Village

Municipality of Walvis Bay

Nature Investments:

Gondwana Kalahari Park

Gondwana Canon Park

Gondwana Namib Park

Neo Paints Factory (PTY) LTD

Retirement Fund Solutions Namibia
(PTY) LTD

The Wood Connection

Voigts, Dieter

Wilderness Safaris:

Anderson's Camp

Damaraland Camp

Doro !Nawas Camp

Kulala Desert Lodge

Kulala Wilderness Camp

Little Kulala

Little Ongava

Ongava Lodge

Ongava Tented Camp

Palmwag Lodge

Palmwag Rhino Camp

Serra Cafema Camp

Skeleton Coast Camp

Sossusvlei Wilderness Camp

Wilderness Safaris

Guide Training Division

WE GRATEFULLY
ACKNOWLEDGE THE
SUPPORT OF OUR
CORPORATE
MEMBERS, WHICH
ALLOWS US TO
PURSUE OUR MISSION
TO CONSERVE
THE NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT OF
NAMIBIA AND
TO PROMOTE
APPROPRIATE
PROTECTION, WISE
AND SUSTAINABLE
USE OF NATURAL
RESOURCES AND
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

For more information on Corporate Membership of NEWS, please contact the NEWS Office:
Tel 061 306450, Information@NEWS-Namibia.org

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NAMIBIAN ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE SOCIETY

[Postal Address: PO Box 3508, Windhoek, Namibia]
[Physical Address: 76/78 Frans Indongo St, Windhoek]
[Tel: + 264 61 306450][Tel/Fax (answering machine): + 264 61 306290] [Mobile: 081 128 0310]
[Information@NEWS-Namibia.org][www.NEWS-Namibia.org]

[NEWS]
[Standard Bank Namibia]
[Account Number: 04 271 7191]
[Branch Code: 082 772][Swift Code: SBNMNX]

OUR MISSION:

*To conserve the natural environment of Namibia and to promote appropriate protection,
wise and sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable development*

Tel: + 264 (0)61 306450
Information@NEWS-Namibia.org
www.NEWS-Namibia.org

Back-Page NEWS:

WHO READS BACK-PAGE NEWS ANYWAY?

Well, it seems more and more people are becoming interested in environmental information and issues—and the Namibian Environment & Wildlife Society—and perhaps do read the small print and the back page and the article on page 52 of Roan News... We are receiving more and more requests for information and queries on how to deal with issues ranging from dassies in the backyard to elephants and lions on the farm. Members drop by the office to get information on topics of interest and people phone us to alert us to particular issues.

And this is a really important part of NEWS: To provide an accessible forum for environmental dialogue. To facilitate the sharing of environmental information amongst our Members, Partner Organisations, Associated Projects, the media and the public. Because information is the starting point for sustainable action. Our expanding membership network is creating an excellent basis for this.

So: we look forward to hearing from you, as always.

Best regards,
Helge Denker

Lost Jacket—or lost tourist?
Photo of unknown origin sent in by NEWS Member Birgit Roesener



This NEWS-letter was compiled by Helge Denker