



NAMIBIAN ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE SOCIETY

NEWS

NAMIBIAN
ENVIRONMENT & WILDLIFE
SOCIETY

... because we all need a healthy environment.

NEWS-letter

Volume 3, Issue 1, July 2009



Most Big Things start small

Sometime in 2007, not so long after the name change of the Wildlife Society to NEWS, I was pondering tools to improve information sharing, thinking about 'spreading the NEWS'... How is news distributed? Via the classic news stand! (The one you see on street corners in American films, with an undercover cop hiding behind it...). An idea was born. I was excited—an environmental information outlet on every street corner... now that *would* make a difference. When I discussed it with the NEWS Committee, I realised that the idea was a little abstract to some... But I knew this could be changed without too much trouble. Once the first stand was up, everyone would see its potential. The big challenge was going to be how to fund the production and get the first few stands out there. I decided to go and see Thomas Pade at The Wood Connection, who produces some of the best wood work in Namibia. I thought of just getting a quote to be able to budget and convince the Committee. But it soon turned out that The Wood Connection was going to be my great

ally—Thomas immediately understood my vision and saw the opportunities for both NEWS and The Wood Connection in this initiative. Instead of just having a quote at hand for the next Committee meeting, I had a sample of an engraved NEWS logo on a beautiful piece of wood to help inspire the Committee. And when advance funding of the by now rather complex stand turned out to be a stumbling block, I received the offer of having the first stand produced as a prototype free of charge—without me asking for it. That offer facilitated the realisation of an idea, which would otherwise have been shelved soon after. It's this kind of vision, saying 'yeah, I see the potential in this, I'm willing to take a risk for a good cause...' that allows us to take bigger strides. You might think that talking about visions is going a bit far in this case—but I don't think it is. Most Big Things start small... The NEWS-stand has great potential for duplication around the country, and huge potential for making a real difference—by reaching the people. All it takes is a few more businesses willing to invest time, space or finances in a vision... The NEWS-stand needs sales outlets around the country willing to house it; it needs companies utilising the advertising opportunities it presents—and it needs our environmental Partners to embrace the project and supply us with interesting information to distribute. The NEWS is out...

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This Issue of our NEWS-letter is dedicated to the launch of the first NEWS-stand, because it epitomises so much of what NEWS is all about.

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Realization of Project through our professional team

For better Quality there are Limited Options
The Wood Connection CC

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Getting into Green Business

While some of the world's highest-profile companies are taking the lead in improving environmental standards and reducing global CO2 emissions, 'going green' is still an afterthought in Namibia...



Thomas and Silke Pade of The Wood Connection receiving their Corporate Membership certificate

NEWS Corporate Membership—currently at 47 members—is steadily increasing. A shift is starting to happen. We now have good representation from some of Namibia's biggest business sectors such as mining, tourism and financial institutions, as well as a growing number of manufacturers and service providers. There are still glaring gaps, though, such as representation from the agricultural and fishing industries, both of which make their money directly from our natural resources. And, importantly, being a member can, and should, be about much more than silent financial

support. NEWS offers an opportunity to become more directly involved in improving our environmental predicament—be it through simple things such as recycling, through sharing information by utilising our various forums, through implementing cleaner production mechanisms, or through working together at addressing issues. The business community carries a lot of responsibility—to reduce CO2 emissions, to reduce energy and water consumption, to reduce waste, to mitigate or avoid impacts... But the business community also has huge potential to achieve changes—through its funding

capabilities and its expertise. All that is needed is a change of approach and every now and then a leap of faith. While we had actually hoped to draw more Corporate Membership representation by combining our traditional Corporate Membership function with the launch of the first NEWS-stand and the NaDEET activity book 'It's time to change' the evening saw the lowest turn out of Corporate Members we have ever experienced. But it was nonetheless a very successful evening, and we even managed to recruit a new Corporate Member—the first in our long-vacant Kudu category!

So what does your organisation do, anyway?

The public remains confused about who is who and who does what in the environmental sector:WWF, NNF, DRFN, NaDEET, NARREC, SAIEA, IRDNC, HRDC, BOTSOC, EHRA, CETN, CCF, CITW, NWG, NEG, REEEL..

What do all those acronyms stand for? And who is NEWS, anyway? Everyone tends to know each other within the environmental sector—we hang out together, are getting a little better at sharing information and are good at patting each other on the back about our achievements—but we forget to share those achievements (and a wealth of other information) with the Namibian and international public. Communication is mostly an afterthought for the environmental sector. Through NEWS's emphasis on awareness creation and environmental integration, and in the case of the environmental sector, through our NEWS-&partners initiative, we hope to facilitate improvements. NEWS offers a range of fo-

rum for sharing information and facilitating collaboration. These include circulating information via our network, our environmental magazine Roan News, our NEWS-talks—and now, as a great opportunity for the environmental sector to distribute information to the public—the first NEWS-stand. I was recently asked by a stern critic of environmental education why the public should know what is being done by NGOs in the conservation sector? I was surprised by the question, so surprised that it took me a moment to gather my thoughts... What difference does it make if no one knows what is being achieved, as long as the work is getting done? Well, the bottom line is this: The work will not truly be done until environmental integration has

been achieved, until the environment is no longer an afterthought, but is the central consideration in all our activities and planning—and THAT can only happen through much greater public awareness, understanding and informed action. It is individuals everywhere, at all levels, that are making the decisions, good or bad... it is not systems or organisations that are at fault—individual people are making individual decisions, sometimes informed, sometimes not; sometimes for individual short-term gain, sometimes for the greater good, but always as people. The better the public is informed about what is going on, the more difficult it becomes to make the wrong decisions. So don't miss the NEWS... available at your nearest NEWS-stand.



It's time to change

More and more of us are waking up to the fact that there is an urgent need to change—and NaDEET's new activity book gives our children (and us) great pointers for changes towards a sustainable way of life.

At eight years of age, the youngest member of NEWS already knows that people are destroying the environment and that something needs to be done. And she is adamant and outspoken about it: 'Do you know how I would do it? I would have a farm with a lot of wildlife on it where I would teach people how to do things right! And I would get them to think about all the things they have done wrong and help them to fix them.' Several visits to NaDEET and working through the simpler sections of the activity book have played a significant role in this passionate interest and concern. The 'sustainability index' at the end of the book really got her

thinking: 'Are there people who score zero? And are there also people who score full marks?' To find out that one is scoring rather average can be a great motivator to change. The activity book is generally a great motivator—it is easy to use, with plenty of food for thought and simple solutions that we can actually implement; and it is attractively illustrated, drawing the reader in to learn from Sustainable Sara an Addy, the horned adder. The main topics are relevant to all of us, every day: Energy and water use, recycling and waste management, and the effects that negative actions will have on us and our environment. And the title tells us the most im-

portant part: 'It's time for change—learning and living FOR nature'. The change is up to us. Our children will surely judge us for the environmental mess we are creating for them, especially because we can no longer claim that we didn't know better. Thank you to Viktoria Keding and NaDEET (and to Michelle Gaugler for the great illustrations)—you are not only teaching us how live sustainably, you are also fostering a whole new generation of environmental educators—and that may just be the change that'll make the greatest difference.

[It's time to change is available at the NEWS-stand at the Namibia Craft Centre]



Location is everything

Where do you go to get the NEWS? Where can you find information on environmental NGOs? At your local NEWS-stand at the NCC in Windhoek, and at convenient locations all over Namibia...

At least that's the vision: That in the not-too-distant future, there will be a NEWS-stand in Swakopmund, in Oshakati, in Katima Mulilo, in Keetmanshoop... in every larger regional centre around Namibia. It is a vision that is starting small—with one NEWS-stand—at an ideal location. With a great mix of local and visitor clientele, the Namibia Craft Centre offers one of the greatest venues for information distribution in Namibia. Because it is also one of the greatest venues for selling local art, crafts and a variety of other produce, it's very hard to 'get a foot in the door', especially when coming along with an unknown entity such as the NEWS-stand. We are very grateful to have

been accommodated in as prominent a space as the Omba Arts Trust stand right next to the Craft Café—what better spot could there be for a NEWS-stand? It was a long process of negotiating and searching for a space, but Karin le Roux and her team realised the potential of the idea and made space for it. Now we need to find more such locations around the country so that we can really start spreading the NEWS. Ideal locations are those that have both Namibian and tourist traffic, because we would like to reach the broadest audience possible. The stands need to be housed in an existing sales outlet, as they need to be managed on a 'shop-within-a-shop' basis. The

stands distribute information leaflets of a large percentage of NEWS' 24 Partner Organisations, a variety of environmental magazines and books (including Roan News and the NaDEET 'Bush Telegraph' new activity book 'It's time to change'), as well as attractive postcards and greeting cards for sale. Each stand also offers advertising space (including leaflet distribution) for five companies. The stand will add value to existing enterprises by increasing the diversity of products on offer and will start drawing people searching specifically for environmental information. Should you know of a good venue, please let us know.

The first NEWS-stand at the Namibia Craft Centre





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NEWS-letter

Volume 3, Issue 1, June 2009

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

Chris Weaver, WWF in Namibia; Dr John Mfune, NEWS; Helge Denker NEWS; Viktoria Keding, NaDEET (l.t.r, front).

The Launch

A great venue, a long-awaited occasion, great food prepared by the Craft Cafe and sponsored by Solar Age, drinks sponsored by Namibia Breweries and Maerua Super Spar, and lot of people with a keen interest in our environment—the recipe for a successful evening. The theme of the event, 'healthy partnerships 4 a healthy environ-

ment' could not have been more fitting—the stand is the result of strong partnerships, it is there to promote information sharing, collaboration and partnerships, and its success depends on partnerships. the NEWS-NaDEET partnership certainly continues to be a positive and productive one, and so combining the NEWS-stand launch with the launch of

the new NaDEET activity book was logical for all. Karin le Roux, representing the Namibia Craft Centre (NCC) and the Omba Arts Trust, welcomed NEWS and all our guests to the NCC and commented on the positive contribution an environmental information outlet will make to the diversity of the Centre. Dr John Mfune, Chairperson of



NEWS, provided introductory remarks and thanked the sponsors of the evening—Solar Age, Namibia Breweries and Maerua Super Spar. Viktoria Keding, Director of NaDEET and author of the NaDEET activity book 'It's time to change' introduced the book, outlined its purpose and thanked the individuals and organisations who made its

production possible: ??? Helge Denker of NEWS talked about Corporate Membership, thanked all Members for their ongoing support and presented membership certificates. Chris Weaver, Managing Director of WWF in Namibia, highlighted the importance of partnerships in conservation successes in Namibia, congratulated NEWS

and The Wood Connection on the beautiful stand and officially declared it open. This allowed all to enjoy food and drink and talk about our environment, partnerships and the weather. And the person behind the scenes who makes sure it all runs smoothly was, as always, our Talks and Events Coordinator Manuela Schmid. THANKS to all!





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:

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NETWORK OF
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PARTNERS
WHO SHARE
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AND COLLABORATE
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AND ACHIEVE TRULY
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

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

NamibRand Nature Reserve
www.namibrand.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 in Namibia
www.panda.org

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

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

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ROLL OF HONOUR: Corporate Membership List

ROAN

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

SABLE

Bank Windhoek
Namdeb Diamond Corporation
(PTY) LTD

KUDU

Namibian Engineering Corporation
(PTY) LTD

ORYX

City of Windhoek
Namibia Breweries LTD
Sense of Africa
SWA Safaris (PTY) LTD
Valencia Uranium Limited

SPRINGBOK

Damarana Safaris
Langer Heinrich Uranium LTD
NamibRand Nature Reserve
Pumping Solutions
Sossusvlei Mountain Lodge
Springbok Atlas
Standard Bank

STEENBOK

African Wanderer Tours & Safaris
Blue Sky Namibia Tours
Camp Syncro
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
Safaris Unlimited
The Wood Connection
Unlimited Travel & Car Hire:
Tok Tokkie Trails
Westair Wings Charters (PTY) LTD
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:
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creating understanding for sustainable development and passion for a healthy environment



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OUR MISSION:

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

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Well it's about time—right?

Some things at NEWS have been a long time coming... the NEWSstand, this NEWS-letter... but now they're here. We do manage to keep moving in the right direction, even though it is sometimes at a slower pace than we might like. And when our expectations get too far ahead of our achievements, we need to remind ourselves that NEWS is managed by a tiny staff contingent and highly motivated and dedicated committee members producing great output on a *voluntary basis*.

NEWS offers the only national forum with a broad environmental focus that is accessible to individuals, educational institutions, the business community, the environmental sector, community-based organisations, government, development agencies, the media... actually everybody interested in our environment. The main aim of this forum is to share information and facilitate collaboration to enable environmental integration at all levels of human activity (by 'environmental integration' we mean that environmental considerations are integrated into all our planning and activities rather than being treated as—at best—an afterthought. The sooner this forum is embraced by all the different sectors, the sooner we will be able to truly consolidate our structures and work at the pace that the environmental issues of today demand.

... because we all need a healthy environment.

Best regards,
Helge Denker

This NEWS-letter was compiled by Helge Denker