



# Chief Executive Officer's Report to 2<sup>nd</sup> AGM

10<sup>th</sup> August 2018

## Background

At the end of June 2018, the Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE) had existed as a functioning organisation for two years. It has two staff members (excluding a part-time cleaner and gardener), some modest office equipment but no vehicles. The NCE keeps its overheads to a bare minimum so that funds can be released to support strategic projects and the work of its members. For this reason, the NCE does not implement any field-based initiatives, nor any project areas which fall under the mandate of any of its member organisations.

## Governance

The ultimate authority of the NCE resides in the Council – the members. Outside of Council meetings such as the AGM, an Executive Committee (ExCo) is responsible for providing strategic guidance and oversight to the NCE. The ExCo consists of the following eight members:

Charles Loots (Chairperson), Otjikoto Trust & private sector

Maxi Louis, NACSO

Frauke Kreitz, NEWS

Malan Lindeque, MET (retired from MET end July 2018 – Conservation Scientist)

Steve Galloway, private sector

Morgan Hauptfleisch, NUST

Stephan Bezuidenhout, ECC

Chris Brown, SST

Since the 1<sup>st</sup> AGM, ExCo met five times to manage the business of the NCE, with an overall attendance of 82.5%.

## Strategic Programme Areas

The NCE Constitution lists seven Main Objectives, seven Further Objectives and one Ancillary Objective. For practical purposes, these have been arranged into four *Aspirational Objectives* – those that we strive to achieve through our Members as a collective group, and five *Operational Objectives* – those which we design our services around in support of our Members. We address these Objectives through eight strategic programme areas, as follows:

### 1. *Membership Support*

- A Membership policy, revised after the 1<sup>st</sup> AGM, is on the NCE website.

- Membership currently stands at 58 (44 at the last AGM), comprising 47 Full Members and 11 Associate Members. There are few environmental NGOs in Namibia who are not members.
- The NCE board room and facilities are used regularly by members for meetings and events – there is an open invitation to all members to use the NCE facilities also as a working base when in Windhoek.
- The Westair – NCE partnership to make available a Cessna 182 to its Members is working well – see table below. Please use the aircraft – the booking system is on the NCE website.

<b>ORGANIZATIONS</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>CONSERVATION PURPOSE</b>	<b>LOCATION</b>
NCE, Wilderness & MET	Dec/Jan 2016	Anti-poaching surveillance in western Etosha	Western Etosha
AfriCat Foundation & IZW	Sep 2017	Treat and move Cheetah from Hoanib River	Hoanib, Doro Nawas, Okonjima
NACSO, conservancies & MET	Nov 2017	Aerial wildlife survey of Wetlands in NE Namibia	Kavango & Zambezi Region
SRT, NamPol & MET	Dec/Jan 2018	Black Rhino monitoring & anti-poaching surveillance	Kunene & west Etosha
SRT, MET & conservancies	Mar 2018	Spotter support - Black Rhino translocation & dehorning	Kunene
NNF, Crane Working Gp & MET	Aug 2018	Annual dry-season crane census	Etosha NP & Lake Oponono
NACSO, conservancies & MET	Sep 2018	Aerial wildlife survey of NE Wetlands	Kavango & Zambezi Region

- Work with the NCRST has clarified the situation and improved access to research permits. Our Office Manager has a good working relationship with NCRST and their response is relatively quick, given that permit applications are channelled to MET for their input.

## **2. National Facilitation**

- In June 2017, a workshop was held for the Environmental Departments of all mines in Namibia to develop a 3-year environmental strategy and action plan for the mining sector (see [http://www.the-eis.com/searchresults.php?action=mining\\_symposium](http://www.the-eis.com/searchresults.php?action=mining_symposium)). The strategy was approved by the Chamber of Mines’ Council. Perhaps the three most pertinent aspects are (a) the development of a Best Practice Environmental Guide for the mining sector, (b) the establishment of a permanent environmental committee in the Chamber of Mines, and (c) the establishment of an “Offsets Fund” by the mining sector, with all companies contributing to the one fund.
- Best practice guides are a very strategic way of having an impact at the sector level. We are currently working with NAPHA, MET and other NCE members to develop a best practice guide for the hunting sector and we are trying to open doors to the marine fishing sector.
- An increase in trade in pangolins led to NCE, NACSO and MET setting up a reward system for information and arrests. To date 41 cases have been opened, 79 individuals charged and 25 live pangolins confiscated. A lack of expertise on how to deal with sick, damaged

and dehydrated pangolins led to the preparation and distribution of a first responders manual by NARREC.

- In November 2017 a workshop was held in support of LCMAN on the Red Data status of carnivores in Namibia. The results from this are currently being written up and edited to produce a Red Data book on the carnivores of Namibia.
- The NCE facilitated the review of two large pieces of legislation, the Protected areas and wildlife management Bill and a revision of the Environmental Management Act and Regulations. As a sector, we submit one consolidated document per piece of legislation, containing all our comments and suggested.

### **3. Advocacy**

- The issue of pilchard quotas being issued when the population is at perhaps 1% of its historic size led to the NCE engaging with the Minister of Fisheries & Marine Resources, and then with the Office of the Prime Minister and State House. This contributed to the three-year moratorium on pilchard currently in place.
- NCE has been actively involved on the issue of plastics. We have worked constructively with MET and are encouraged by the recently launched Solid Waste Management Strategy and the establishment of an Advisory Panel on which we serve. Legislation is now under development, and one-off plastics (carrier bags, straws, drinks bottles) are a primary target.
- We remain concerned about the forestry sector in Namibia and aim to focus more in this area in the months ahead.

### **4. Environmental Policy Research**

- The NCE focus has been on the huge issue of the urban environment. We assisted with the establishment of Development Workshop Namibia, the only NGO working at a strategic level in this area. Our small catalytic grant of N\$80,000 plus funds to hire interns has facilitated DW-N attracting matching funds of over N\$3 million to date, including from GIZ, UNDP small grants programme, B2 Gold, FNB/RMB Foundation and the Chamber of Mines Offset Fund. The initiative on access to affordable land has support of State House, Ministry of Rural & Urban Development and a growing number of corporate and bilateral donors. The second phase now addresses energy and particularly sanitation.

### **5. Environmental Information**

- Continuing support is provided to the Environmental Information Service (EIS) at [www.the-eis.com](http://www.the-eis.com), as a service to all members and the wider community. The EIS comprises a searchable e-library with over 15,000 down-loadable publications, reports, data sets, maps, legislation, theses, presentations, etc; and a citizen science atlasing platform with over 220,000 records of mammals, snakes, frogs and invasive alien plants. A butterfly atlas is now being tested. A cell phone App has been developed, tested, refined and can be downloaded from the App Store. Full details are on the EIS. Please get the App and atlas – it is great fun, and we are building up a set of very good biodiversity information. And most recently, a scientific on-line e-journal, Namibian Journal of

Environment (NJE) is up and running. At the end of 2017 the first edition of the journal was launched with nine peer-reviewed papers and four open papers reviewed by the editor. This year we look to have a similar number of papers. Barbara Curtis is our honorary editor, but she has unfortunately decided to stand down at the end of this year. We are looking for a new editor. I would also like to encourage all our members to publish in the journal – it is the only journal in the country dedicated to environmental issues.

#### **6. Young Namibian Training and Mentorship**

- This year we set up an environmental bursary fund, linked to an internship and mentoring programme. The fund supports motivated post-graduate students, at mainly honours and masters levels. The on-line application process and forms are on the NCE website. An amount of N\$250,000 was allocated by the NCE, and external funding of N\$398,000 was raised to provide 13 bursaries and nine internships. We would like to grow this to 20 bursaries per year. It is difficult to find people to serve as mentors – people with the necessary professional experience and track record and with the time. If you have projects that need interns – and you are prepared to give serious amounts of support and guidance, please get in contact.

#### **7. Fund raising**

- The core running costs of the NCE are currently being covered by B2Gold Namibia to the amount of N\$1 million per year. In the 2016/17 financial year the cost of running the NCE, excluding salaries, was N\$790,462. In the 2017/18 financial year the costs were down to N\$613,329. Both the savings from core costs and all donations from other donors go directly into the project account of the NCE.
- Project funding raised in 2016/17 was N\$2.7 million, in 2017/18 was N\$4.0 million and the amount committed to date for this 2018/19 financial year is N\$5.2 million. Of this, N\$3.6 million is set aside for grant applications by NCE members. In addition to responding to funding needs of NCE members, we are proactive in soliciting applications in priority areas, such as on carnivores and human-wildlife conflict during times of drought.
- B2Gold Namibia continues to provide valuable assistance with fund raising amongst corporates. This is proving to be very effective, and we anticipate that corporate support for the sector could grow to about N\$8 million per year in the next two years.
- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) is the largest environmental fund in the world. Currently in Namibia, only the Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) is accredited, and there is limited access to NGOs. The NCE provided some seed funding to the NNF to prepare for accreditation with the GCF, on behalf of the whole NCE Membership. A small amount of funding is also allocated to bring the sector together to plan appropriate project concepts for submission to the GCF. The process has been slow, but approval has now been obtained by the national focal point in MET for the NNF to proceed with the very complex application process.

#### **8. Grants Making**

- An on-line grants application system was set up on the NCE website. While there is some fine-tuning needed, it is working well.

- We have attempted to bring various grants-making organisations closer together, to streamline the sector, to reduce overlap, to co-fund larger projects, and to optimise local capacity. We have thus been talking to the EIF, Go Green and FNB/RMB Foundation. We are not there yet, but to facilitate collaboration, we have set up an NCE grants review committee comprising the CEO of the EIF (Benedict Libanda), the implementing agency of the Go Green Fund (NNF CEO Angus Middleton), the environmental person on the FNB/RMB Foundation (Pauline Lindeque), a MET rep (head of research in MET, Kenneth /Uiseb) and a NUST rep (natural resources faculty, Morgan Hauptfleisch).
- To date some 20 projects have been supported via at least 17 different organisations, over 70% being NCE members.
- Completed project reports and summary reports are loaded to the NCE website and, over time, these will build up a large portfolio of successful work.

## Conclusion

This past financial year has been both busy and constructive for the NCE, consolidating its growth and laying down a track record. However, its primary purpose is to (a) support its members and (b) to tackle priority and strategic aspects on behalf of the broader membership that are not being addressed by members. It is for these reasons that the NCE undertakes mini-workshops at its AGMs to get guidance from members on what should be the priorities in the year ahead. Now that the main aspects of the NCE have been established and are running fairly smoothly, I feel that the time is right to do some longer-term planning. The NCE needs a five-year strategic plan to guide its development. I suggest that this should be one of the priorities for this current financial year, to be reviewed by the members and adopted at the next AGM.

One of our ExCo members, Frauke Kreitz of NEWS, has decided not to stand for a second term. She has been involved with the NCE from its earliest conception, and we would like to extend our thanks to her for her work and support in bringing the NCE to where it is today.

I wish to thank all our very supportive ExCo members for the time they invest in ensuring that our governance meets the highest standards, in providing guidance and ideas, and creating contacts and linking us to their networks. Charles Loots is with us every week, sometimes more, to bounce ideas and discuss strategies. Henriette is my right- and left-hand person. She is at the heart of the NCE and involved with all components. Without her we would be but a shadow of our current form. And finally, to all our sponsors – particularly our founder and core sponsor B2Gold Namibia, and Mark Dawe and Charles Loots, for their enthusiasm, vision and no-strings-attached commitment to the NCE. This space, working with NGOs, private sector and government, is a really constructive, productive and rewarding space to be in and every day is exciting.

Thank you.

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