



Chief Executive Officer's Report to 4th AGM

9th December 2020

Background

The fourth year of existence of the Namibian Chamber of Environment (NCE) was an unusual and challenging one for the whole planet. Many people and organisations used COVID-19 as an excuse to do less. For the NCE, it was business as usual, just more, and different. From great adversity comes great opportunities. With our small team of one full-time Office Manager (Henriette Kröhne-Frey), and two part-time professional staff (Chris Brown – CEO and Dr Beat Weber – Socio-economic Development & Livelihoods), huge progress was made in a number of areas, particularly in the urban environment.

The NCE continues to keep 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 consisted of the following eight members:

Charles Loots (Chairperson), Otjikoto Trust & private sector
Maxi Louis, NACSO
John Pallett, NEWS
Malan Lindeque, private Conservation Scientist
Steve Galloway, private sector
Morgan Hauptfleisch, NUST
Stephan Bezuidenhout, ECC
Chris Brown, SST

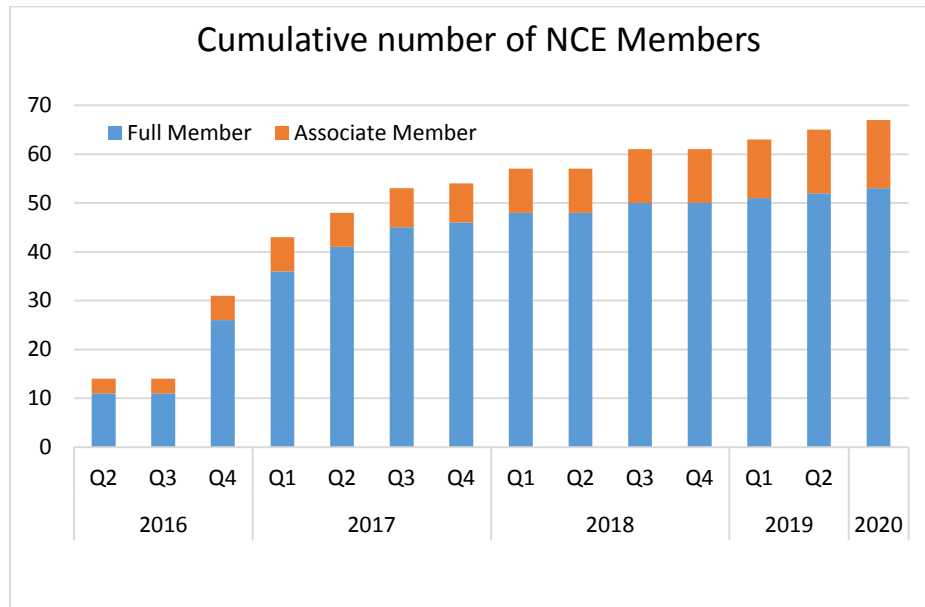
Since the 3rd AGM, ExCo has met twice. Exco members were kept up-to-date with developments and activities via e-mail, and there was regular communication (usually at least weekly) with the Chairperson.

Strategic Programme Areas

The NCE implements its mandate and objectives by a programme of work that focuses on eight strategic programme areas, as follows:

1. Membership Support

- Membership currently stands at 67 (65 at the last AGM), comprising 53 Full Members and 14 Associate Members. There are few environmental NGOs in Namibia that are not members.



- The NCE board room and facilities are used regularly by members and partners 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. Please use the aircraft – the booking system is on the NCE website.
- A similar scheme is currently being set up for 4x4 vehicles. The NCE has been donated three used Toyota Hilux 4x4 double cab bakkies by B2Gold Namibia. These vehicles are available for the use of NCE members on short to medium term loan. The NCE covers all registration, insurance and maintenance costs. NCE members pay for fuel. A booking system will be set up on the NCE website, similar to the aircraft booking system.
- We renewed our registration with the NCRST for 2020 on behalf of all Members.
- We circulate all EIA notices published in the media to all our members and partners.

2. National Facilitation

- The Best Practice Guide on environmental management in the mining sector has been completed and is available in both electronic (on the NCE and Chamber of Mines websites) and in hard copy.
- The reward scheme for information on capture, trade and trafficking in pangolins and their parts continues and has led to the arrest of a further 104 people and confiscation of 31 live pangolins in the year under review. A new pangolin reward poster was developed to remove any doubt about rewards being for info on trafficking, not for bringing in pangolins.

- The NCE was instrumental in setting up a national Pangolin Working Group (NPWG) comprising MEFT and relevant NGOs, supported by a small secretariat. The Working Group advises MEFT on pangolin issues, is linked to the IUCN Pangolin Specialist Group and the African Pangolin Working Group and has developed a number of strategic documents, including a draft pangolin management plan, flowchart on the process for handling confiscated live pangolins, and research priorities. Funds have been raised for some of the priority research.
- The NCE assisted the Namibia Water Partnership (NWP - part of the Global Water Partnership based in Stockholm) to establish a new Constitution and re-establish itself. The NCE currently serves as the “Host Organisation” for the NWP.
- The NCE has been working with NamDeb – DebMarine Foundation and SANCCOB to explore the establishment of “NAMCOB”, a seabird rehabilitation and research centre at Lüderitz.
- All species accounts for the Red Data Book on carnivores have now been completed, and the book is at a final stage of production.
- One of the worst recent droughts in Namibia came to a head in 2019 with virtually the whole country impacted, particularly the north-west. Fortunately, the rains at the end of 2019 and into 2020 brought some relief, but not to much of the north-west. With funding from B2Gold Namibia, the NCE identified a number of areas that were particularly badly impacted (using rangeland condition monitoring data) and invited NCE members in those areas to submit short proposals to provide cash-for-work projects that had societal benefits. A number of projects were identified, and N\$1 million was disbursed. Over 90% of the funds went directly in payments to community members, with the remainder being used for logistic support. Detailed reports and independent assessments showed the success of this initiative. A parallel assessment was carried out on all the government social grant mechanisms currently in existence, which revealed the extend of overlap, inefficiency and duplication. An alternative approach was recommended. These and other project reports are available on the NCE website.
- The NCE served on two Advisory bodies to MET – the Solid Waste Advisory Panel and the Nature Conservation Board. My term of office on the Sustainable Development Advisory Council (SDAC) ended of 2018 and the NCE nominated Dr Peter Tarr of SAIEA as a Council Member, which was accepted by the Minister. Please liaise directly with Peter on issues relevant to the SADC.

3. Advocacy

- The NCE played an important role in getting the Directorate of Forestry moved to the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism. Proper integration is now required - Community Forests with Conservancies and law enforcement. Time will tell what difference this will make to a moribund Directorate.
- Three years ago, the NCE was instrumental in the proclamation of a three-year moratorium on pilchard and sardine quotas. At the time of the proclamation, I informed the then minister of Fisheries & Marine Resources that three years was unlikely to be sufficient to see a significant recovery of a resource that had been plundered to perhaps

1% of its historic population. This is indeed the case. We are now in correspondence with the new minister to extend the moratorium for a further three years.

- At the end of 2019, the NCE arranged a media workshop to explore how we, as a conservation community, could be more effective, particularly in social media. We are bombarded by anti-hunting and anti-sustainable use messaging because (a) we are not filling the social media space with positive messages from Namibia, and because we have been weak in our response. A media strategy was agreed and is being implemented. One of the cornerstones of the strategy was the establishment of a new Conservation Namibia website (<http://conservationnamibia.com/>) in partnership with Venture Media and Felines Communication and Conservation. More details are provided under Environmental Information.
- The past two sets of elections (national & presidential in 2019 and regional & local in 2020) saw significant losses to the ruling SWAPO party. These losses are, in my analysis, largely due to the lack of government services to the rural and urban poor, including lack of jobs. The causes are mainly poor priority setting on national resource allocated (stupid wasteful vanity projects) and largescale corruption that is seen to be, if not sanctioned, then at least tacitly accepted at the highest levels, coupled with arrogance and a disconnect with the poor majority. And the root cause of this is a lack of transparent governance. I believe that if SWAPO is to survive, particularly given the large increase in young voters each four years, then it needs to implement radical reform. I further believe that this situation offers a window of engagement for NCE and its members. We are currently exploring work in the marine and fisheries sector to critically review the stock assessment, quota setting, quota allocation and institutional procedures and arrangements, and make recommendations for reform. We are also looking at an engagement mechanism to work with State House to review the issue of transparency and governance particularly in the natural resources sector. In adversity comes great opportunity – we will do our best to drive that opportunity.

4. Environmental Policy Research

- Our policy research initiative on the urban environment has shown significant results. The NCE – Development Workshop Namibia partnership, through the efforts of Beat Weber and his team, is now working in 22 towns and local authorities. In six town the programme is providing affordable partly-services urban land for housing. In six additional towns, MoUs with the local authorities for land delivery are underway. Covid-19 linked sanitation via “tippy taps” is being provided in 20 towns and settlements – some 60,000 to date. Each tippy tap is GPSed and the distribution can be viewed here: <https://arcg.is/1DDaz4> - zoom in to see details. Sanitation in the form of pit latrines are being rolled out to 9 towns. This urban programme is expanding month by month.










DWN Hubs	Regions	Towns with DWN projects (active or planned)		Land MoU signed	Land MoU in prep.	Covid-19	Sanitation	ECD
South	Karas	1	Keetmanshoop					
		2	Oranjemund					
		3	Lüderitz					

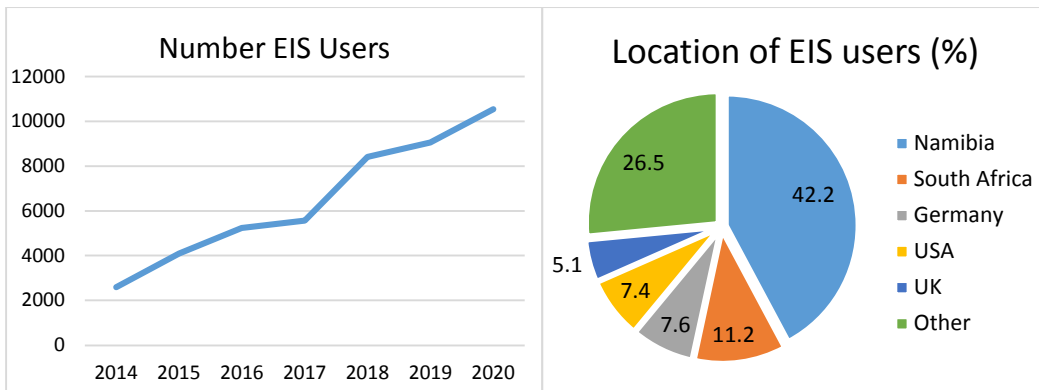
Centre	Khomas	4	Windhoek					
	Otjozondjupa	5	Otjiwarongo					
		6	Otavi					
		7	Okakarara					
		8	Kalkfeld					
Coast	Erongo	9	Swakopmund					
		10	Walvis Bay					
		11	Karibib					
North	Cunene	12	Opuwo					
		13	Fransfontein					
		14	Kamanjab					
	Omusati	15	Okahao					
	Oshana	16	Oshakati					
	Oshikoto	17	Tsumeb					
		18	Oniipa					
North-east	Kavango West	19	Nkurenkuru					
	Kavango East	20	Rundu					
	Zambezi	21	Katima Mulilo					
		22	Bukalo					
Total				6	6	20	9	1

5. Environmental Information

- The role of the Environmental Information Service (EIS), in terms of number of users and content, continues to grow. In the past year, a Wildlife Crime and EIA sections were added to the e-Library, and an Archaeology project was added to Atlasing.

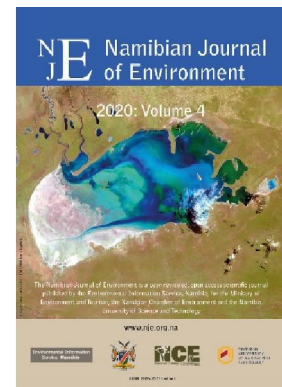
Environmental Information Service *Namibia*

 <p>eLibrary A free, online information resource for Namibia</p>	 <p>Atlasing in Namibia Citizen science projects recording biodiversity and cultural heritage</p>	 <p>Namibian Journal of Environment A peer-reviewed, free, open access scientific journal</p>	 <p>Photo library A public-participation citizen science photo repository</p>	 <p>Birds & Powerlines tool A tool to assess which sensitive bird species occur in any area</p>	 <p>Bird Information System A collation of data collected on birds in Namibia</p>
<p>EIS Namibia is supported and funded by Namibian Chamber of Environment.</p> 	<p>EIS Namibia is sponsored and powered by Paratus Africa.</p> 	<p>EIS Namibia is developed and maintained by JARO Consultancy.</p> 			

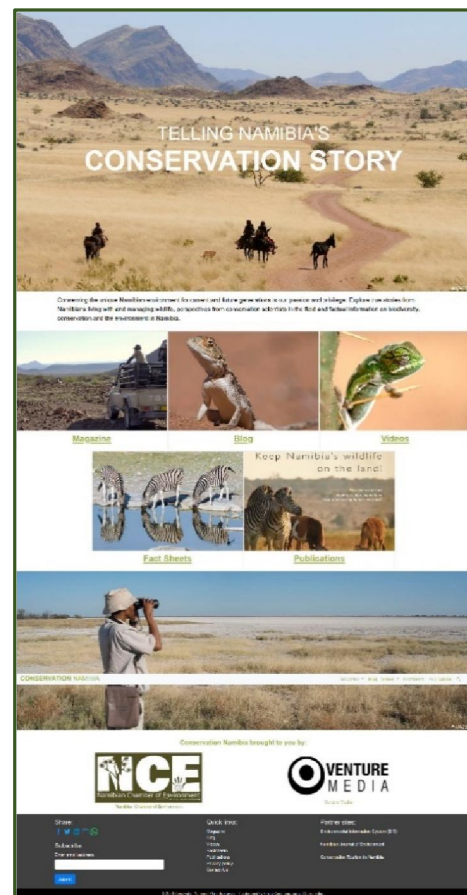


- The Namibian Journal of Environment is in its fourth year, with Dr John Irish as our very dedicated Hon Editor.

Year	Volume	No. peer-reviewed Research articles (pgs)	No. editor-reviewed Research reports (pgs)
2020	4	7 (70)	4 (25)
2019	3	5 (65)	1 (13)
2018	2	5 (146)	2 (11)
2017	1	9 (91)	4 (31)
Total		26 (372)	11 (80)



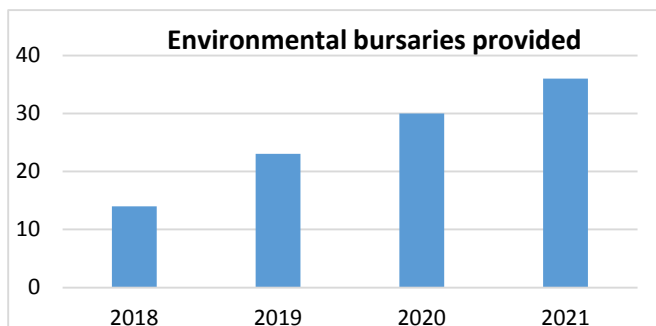
- An NCE “annual” report – covering the first three years of the NCE – has been printed and is on our website.
- The 2020 “Conservation and the Environment” magazine is done – thanks to an excellent partnership with Venture Media, Felines Communication and Conservation Consultants (Gail Potgieter now Thomson) and all the NCE Members who contributed articles. We are now planning the 2021 edition. Please submit your articles – they should be news-type articles, not NGO profiles. Articles should be about 1,200 to 2,000 words with 4-6 photos (high resolution!) or maps attached separately from the text document.
- The Conservation Namibia website <http://conservationnamibia.com/> resulting from the Media Workshop has been a resounding success. It carries the articles from the 2019 and 2020 magazine (18 articles per year), a Blog section (20 Blog articles to date), a video section (30 to date) and a Factsheet section on important aspects of conservation in Namibia (9 so far). There is also a section on key publications, such



as the State of Conservancy reports. The magazine and Blog articles are also highlighted on the NCE Facebook, and a number of articles have been picked up and published in Africa Geographic and the Daily Maverick, giving excellent exposure to conservation work in Namibia.

12 Young Namibian Training and Mentorship

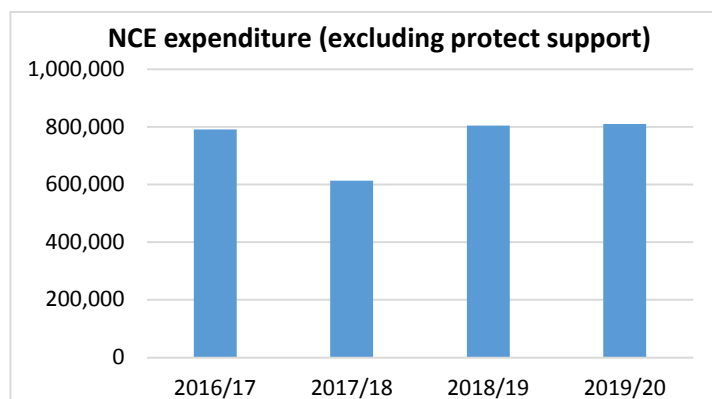
- Over the past three years we have provided 67 environmental bursaries to academically



gifted students in need, mostly at the MSc level. About a third study at UNAM, a third at NUST and a third at universities in South Africa. For 2021 we are on track to provide about 36 bursaries, bringing the total over the four-year period to 102.

13 Fund raising

- The core running costs of the NCE are covered by B2Gold Namibia to the amount of N\$1 million per year. The annual office expenditure of the NCE is kept to a minimum (see graph below).



- The catalytic nature of NCE funding helps leverage significant additional funding from corporates, bilateral and multi-lateral donors which do not necessarily come through the NCE but go directly to our members. We estimate that an additional amount of some N\$18 million were leveraged in this way in the past financial year.

14 Grants Making

- Most projects do not run within the NCE financial year, and typically run over two or three years or more. To date some 42 projects have been supported, many still ongoing. Most of these (90+%) are grants to NCE Members, to a total value of about N\$9.5.

Conclusion

Holding virtual meetings is somewhat limiting, in that dynamic engagement is limited. That is why we are not holding our usual mini workshop today. Rather, we would like to arrange an event

next year, when the circumstances have returned to normal, to take stock and do a strategic five-year plan for the NCE.

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. Beat leads a hugely dynamic socio-economic and livelihoods component in a partnership between NCE and Development Workshop Namibia. What has been achieved by him and his team is nothing short of spectacular. Henriette is at the heart of the NCE and involved with all components. Without her we would not be able to achieve a fraction of what we do.

Too all our sponsors – particularly our anchor sponsor, B2Gold Namibia, and Mark Dawe and Charles Loots, for their enthusiasm, vision and no-strings-attached commitment to the NCE; to Barloworld who came on big this year, and to all our other sponsors – we really appreciate and value your support – it makes a real difference.

And to all our Members – this has been a difficult year to meet up and work together, but things will start to improve soon. Thank you for your support. We are making progress and addressing some of the key challenges of the day with some success. It is a team effort. And we are pleased to do our bit as the NCE Secretariat to support you and the sector. We are always open for feedback and ideas.

Have a relaxing and safe holiday season and all best wishes for 2021.

Thank you.

Dr Chris Brown

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