

CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS

to combat
wildlife crime

in **NAMIBIA**

Demonstrating the benefits of strong conservation partnerships

There is always somebody somewhere ...

There is always somebody somewhere willing to poach;
there is always some animal in some place vulnerable;
if there is a market*, someone will try to supply it
(*a market being an opportunity to make money).

Criminals adapt when things get difficult.

An increasing range of species is targeted;
new areas are constantly sought;

intricate criminal syndicates operate across borders and the globe.

Combatting wildlife crime is extremely difficult and complex.

Wildlife crime is an economic crime.

No cure-all solutions exist.

When government, NGOs, the private sector and civil society
work together at local, regional and global levels to enforce the law,
wildlife crime becomes risky to the point of dissuading criminals
and impacts can be reduced to levels that no longer threaten species.

Partnerships are at the forefront of combatting wildlife crime

SIX KEY INGREDIENTS TO COMBAT WILDLIFE CRIME IN NAMIBIA

- Strong partnership networks
- Strategic planning and innovative action
- Use of all available technologies & tools
- Active sharing of information and other resources
- Fast and flexible funding
- Ongoing adaptation to changing threats and needs

ORGANISATIONS COLLABORATING IN NAMIBIA:

Namibian government

Anti-Corruption Commission – ACC
Financial Intelligence Centre – FIC
Ministry of Defence – MD
Namibian Defence Force – NDF
Namibian Army
Ministry of Environment & Tourism – MET
Wildlife Protection Services Unit – WPSU
Intelligence & Investigations Unit – IIU
Game Products Trust Fund – GPTF
Ministry of Finance – MF
Directorate Customs & Excise
Ministry of Home Affairs & Immigration – MHA
Ministry of Justice – MJ
Ministry of Safety & Security – MSS
Namibian Police Force – Nampol
Protected Resources Division – PRD
Serious Crime Unit – SCU
Special Field Force – SFF
Office of the Attorney-General – AG
Office of the Prosecutor-General – PG

International linkages

Governments of Angola, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia & Zimbabwe
International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime – ICCWC
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora – CITES
Interpol
United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime – UNODC
World Bank Group – WBG
World Customs Organisation – WCO

Rural communities

Communal conservancies
Communal farmers
Freehold conservancies
Freehold farmers
Rhino custodians

Non-Government Organisations

Integrated Rural Development & Nature Conservation – IRDNC
Intelligence Support Against Poaching – ISAP
Legal Assistance Centre – LAC
Namibia Nature Foundation – NNF
Rooikat Trust
Save the Rhino Trust – SRT
WWF In Namibia

Umbrella organisations

Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations – NACSO
Namibian Chamber of Environment – NCE

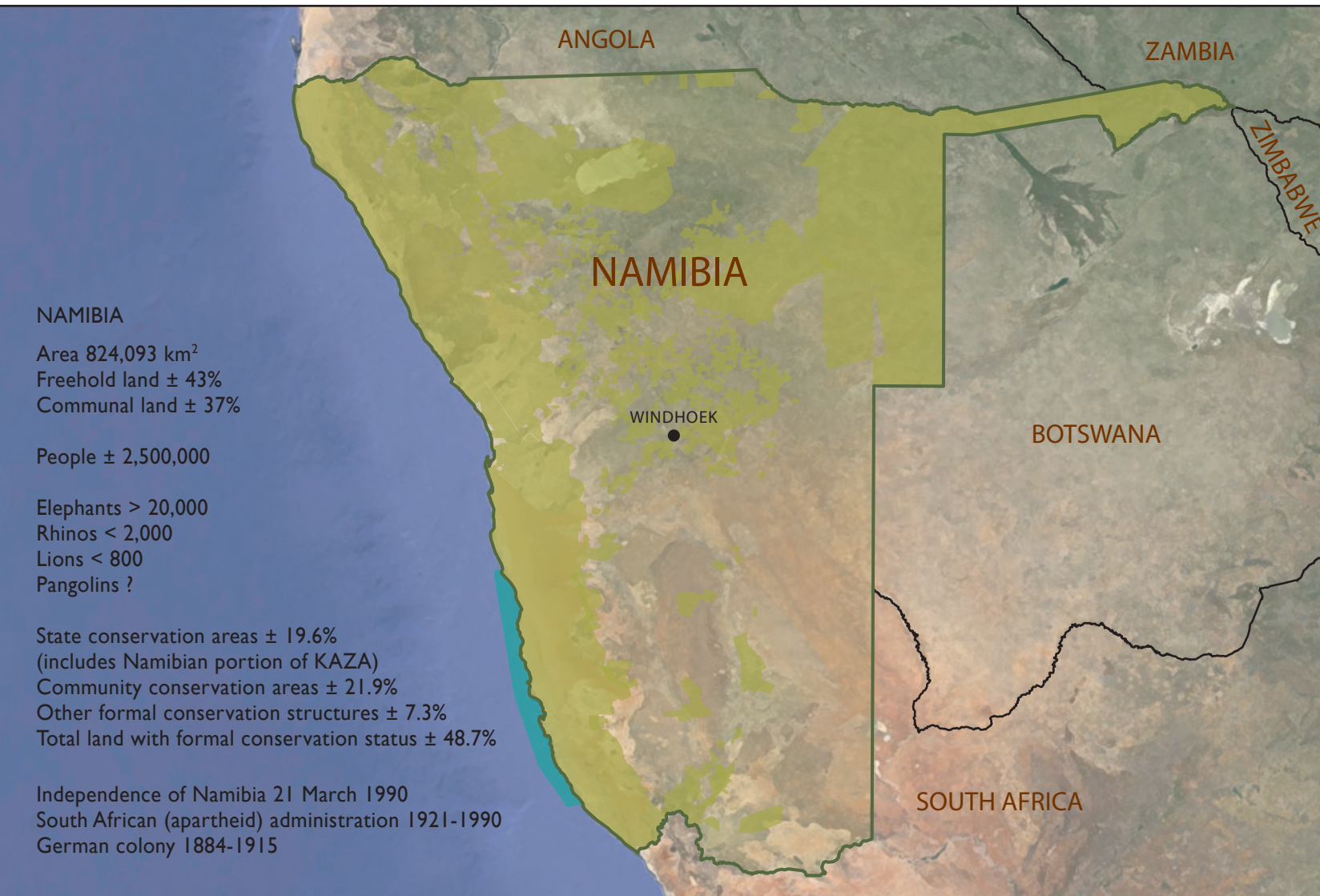
Industry

Business community
Mining industry
Tourism & conservation-hunting industries

International funding agencies

Bureau of International Narcotics & Law Enforcement Affairs, USA – INL
Global Environment Facility – GEF
Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau – KfW
United States Agency for International Development – USAID
Wildcat Foundation
WWF

Namibia country brief



A history of restoration – countering a legacy of decimation

Since independence, Namibia has actively nurtured a culture of collaboration, especially in the conservation sector. This has enabled environmental restoration and wide scale wildlife recoveries – countering a colonial legacy of decimation. The systems are not perfect. Conservation efforts can still be strengthened and law enforcement improved. Some natural resource sectors still require urgent attention (e.g. forestry, fisheries).

Pre-Independence

- Decimation of large wildlife in 1700s & 1800s
- White rhino locally extinct in Namibia before 1900 (reduced to < 50 animals in South Africa by 1895)
- Black rhino reduced to remote, isolated populations
- Elephant reduced to remote, isolated populations
- Large predators reduced to remote, isolated populations
- Apartheid isolated Namibia & South Africa from the international community
 - Homeland policies isolated communities
 - Very limited economic development in homelands
 - No access to or benefits from wildlife
 - No incentives to conserve natural resources
 - No input into conservation decisions
- Growth of government conservation structures & expansion of protected areas from 1950s, leading to recovery of rare species in parks
- Rights over wildlife for freehold farmers in 1960s, leading to recovery of wildlife on freehold land
- Rampant poaching for ivory & rhino horn in 1970s & '80s (with South African apartheid military involvement)
- Start of community game guard system to combat poaching in 1980s

Post-Independence

- Biodiversity conservation & sustainable use entrenched in constitution of Namibia
- Inclusive conservation legislation in mid-1990s
- Rights over wildlife for communal farmers through formation of communal conservancies in mid-1990s, leading to recovery of wildlife on communal land
- Targeted rebuilding of wildlife populations through government–NGO–community partnerships
- Reintroduction of white rhino to state parks & freehold land (private ownership possible)
- Growth & range expansion of black rhino through Rhino Custodianship Scheme (government retains ownership)
- Natural growth & range expansion of elephant (± 7,000 in 1995 to > 20,000 today)
- Natural growth & range expansion of lion
- Rebuilding of populations of most historically occurring species in national parks, on freehold & communal land
- Viable populations of almost all historically occurring large mammals

The widespread conservation successes since independence were enabled through strong partnerships between government, international funding agencies, local NGOs, tourism & conservation-hunting industries & rural communities.

The poaching explosion of the new millennium – in Namibia

Namibia has been increasingly targeted by organised poaching syndicates since 2012, leading to a rapid escalation of rhino and elephant poaching and increasing poaching and trafficking of other species

An ancient practice with a modern edge

The trade in ivory, rhino horn and other wildlife products is an ancient practice, with a modern criminal edge. Wildlife products are not new commodities (although new uses are being promoted, especially in food and medicine). Through international treaties and national legislation, a clear distinction has been made between legal wildlife use and wildlife crime. Combatting wildlife crime is a fight against ancient markets and entrenched supply chains – now with huge illicit profits.

Rhino and elephant poaching in Africa ...

- Rhino poaching rampant across Africa from 1970s
- Reduction of black rhino population from $\pm 100,000$ in 1960 to $\pm 2,500$ in 1995
- Angola, Botswana & Zambia rhinos reduced to remnant populations, Zimbabwe rhino severely impacted
- South Africa & Namibia initially little affected, enabling significant rebuilding of populations in these countries over past three decades
- South Africa targeted from 2007
- Namibia targeted from 2012
- Elephant poaching rampant across Africa in 1970s & 80s
- Some population recoveries in 1990s
- Renewed poaching onslaught since 2005
- Continental population estimates prior to 1990 patchy, but show rapid decline
- Southern African populations healthy & increasing in recent decades
- Continental population estimated to have decreased by up to 30% in last decade

Southern Africa and Namibia have clearly become targets since poaching in other areas has become less profitable

... and poaching in Namibia

- Rampant poaching of elephant & black rhino in 1970s & '80s with South African (apartheid) military involvement
- Start of community conservation programme in 1980s
- Active rebuilding of most wildlife populations over past three decades, including elephant, rhinos, lion, leopard, cheetah, hyaenas, giraffe, antelopes, crocodile
- Commercial poaching reduced to negligible levels after independence
- Namibia increasingly targeted by poaching syndicates from 2012
- Rapid escalation of rhino & elephant poaching
- Increasing poaching/trafficking of other species
- Namibian pangolin poaching recognized as major problem from 2014 (pangolin believed to be most trafficked wild animal in the world); current status of Namibian pangolin population uncertain
- Lion, leopard & cheetah targeted (regular confiscation of skins)
- Reptiles, esp. crocodile, snakes & tortoises targeted
- Birds & bird's eggs targeted (e.g. carmine bee-eaters at colonies)
- Indigenous/endemic plants targeted for both live trade & timber

Namibia's response to the crisis



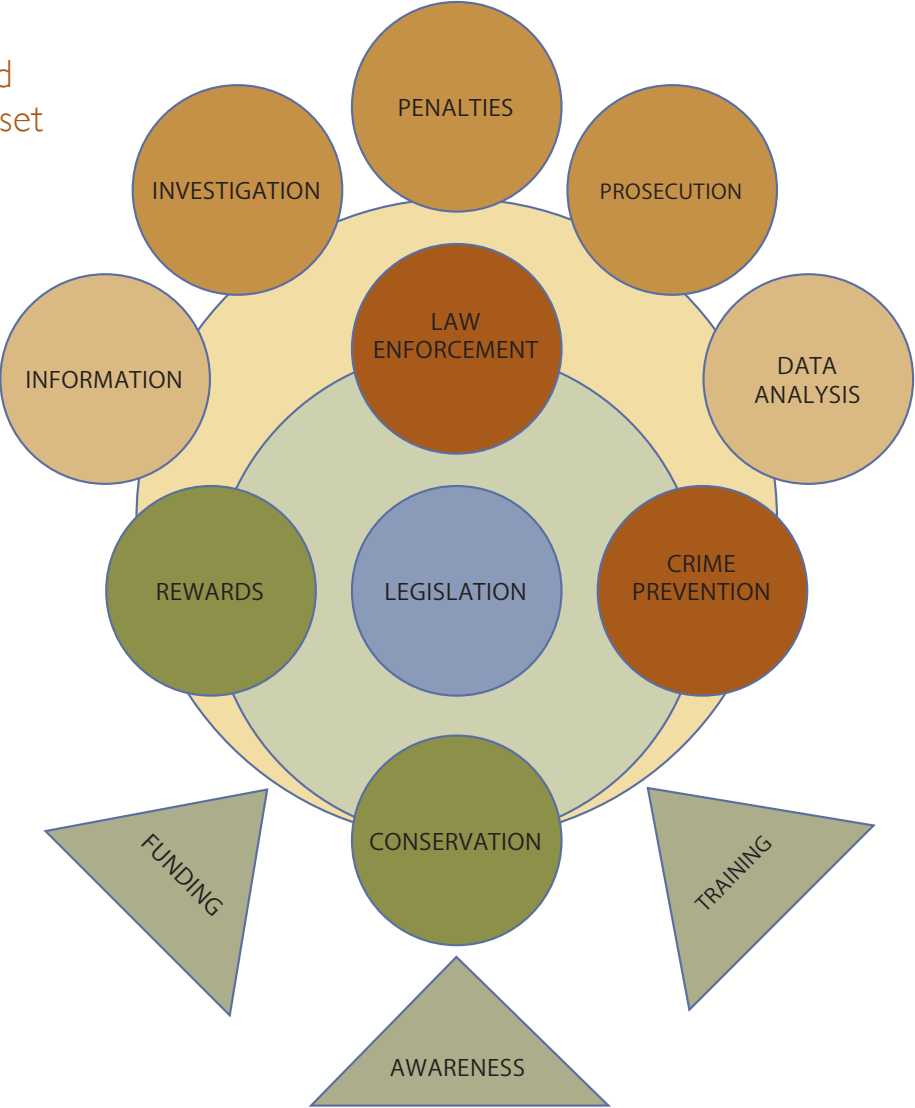
Ready for crisis? Not immediately ...
But since clear roles and strategies have been defined,
Namibia has created effective systems with impressive results.

A timeline of mobilisation

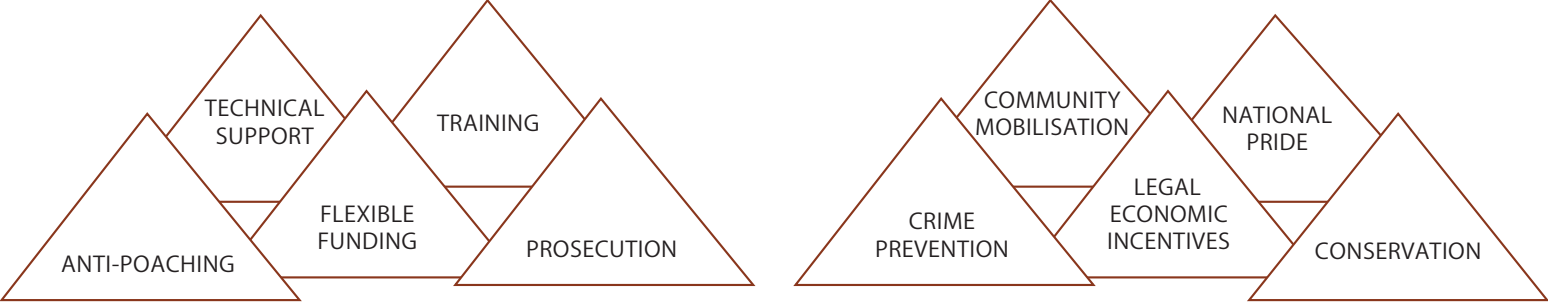
2010	First rhino poaching awareness meetings in response to poaching increase in South Africa	2016	NGOSS established & specialist staff employed
2011	Rhino Ranger Incentive Programme to appoint & train local rhino rangers initiated in Erongo–Kunene by SRT, IRDNC, NNF & Minnesota Zoo	2016	National needs assessment undertaken, resulting in INL funding (2 yrs) to support government & NGO activities to combat wildlife crime
2012	First rhino & elephant poaching cases in Namibia; initial disjointed efforts by private sector, NGOs & government	2016	MET helicopter purchased through private funding
2012-18	Various civil society initiatives including ISAP, some with limited stakeholder engagement & mixed results	2016	Cellebrite digital forensics technology secured
2013-15	Exploration of technical measures, information networks & innovative actions to counter wildlife crime by MET & NGOs with Google funding	2016	Kunene Rhino Pride Campaign initiated in Erongo–Kunene by SRT, IRDNC & Minnesota Zoo to engage with rural communities
2014-17	Waterberg Law Enforcement & Training Centre established & various technical support provided through MET's GEF funded PASS project	2016-17	MET Wildlife Protection Services Unit & Intelligence & Investigations Unit created & staffed
2015	Discovery of high number of rhino carcasses in Etosha, some dating back a year or more	2017	USAID Combatting Wildlife Crime Project initiated, focussing on KAZA & Namibia (5 yrs)
2015	MET urges NGOs & civil society to collaborate to coordinate anti-poaching efforts	2017	WWF, NNF & LAC partner to support investigations & prosecutions with INL-2 funding
2015-18	Numerous public demonstrations & awareness campaigns to highlight plight of rhinos	2017	NCE initiates pangolin reward scheme
2016	Deployment of Nampol SFF & NDF in Etosha & northeastern parks to support rare species protection	2017	Change in national wildlife laws to significantly increase penalties for serious wildlife crimes
2016	Development of MET law enforcement strategy in consultation with NGOs	2017	Rooikat Trust established to support investigations & prosecutions with funding from Wildcat Foundation
2016	Cabinet creates National Wildlife Security Committee (9 ministries represented)	2018	Operation Blue Rhino initiated, formalising collaboration between Nampol PRD & SCU & MET IIU, endorsed by Nampol Inspector General, with dedicated staff seconded to operations, with support from NDF & FIC
2016	WWF secures funding (3 yrs) to support various rhino conservation & security activities & create NGO Support Structure (NGOSS) to serve MET & conservation NGOs	2018	NNF & SRT, WWF & Rooikat support anti-poaching, investigations & prosecutions with INL-3 funding
		2018	Rooikat Trust supports dedicated state prosecutors for wildlife crime cases with funding from Wildcat Foundation
		2018	Patrol effort of Erongo–Kunene Rhino Rangers & partners increased to 1,200% of 2012 levels, when poaching began (no cases recorded in area in 2018)

A complex juggling act of collaboration

Conservation of rare and valuable species, such as pangolin, rhino and elephant, is a juggling act, easily upset by the impacts of wildlife crime. These species are already affected by habitat fragmentation, indiscriminate killing (pangolin), human–wildlife conflict (elephant) and international pressures inhibiting their conservation value (rhinos and elephant). Reduced conservation rewards increase the difficulties of anti-poaching efforts. By ensuring broad awareness of the complexity of conservation and law enforcement, linkages and partnerships are strengthened and the juggling act can be turned into a stable structure that ensures healthy wildlife populations – and healthy livelihoods.



The sharp teeth of strategic interventions



Building the foundations

- Decades of community-based conservation result in significant community benefits, pride & trust
- Decades of strengthening conservation partnerships, result in sound conservation systems
- Sustainable use strengthens the value of wildlife
- Active rebuilding of wildlife populations results in healthy populations of historically occurring species

Countering the crisis

- Full government commitment with NGO, CBO, private sector & civil society support
- Evaluation of threats & needs
- Creation of linkages & partnerships
- Rapid increase in targeted law-enforcement efforts
- Short-term funding solutions through collaboration between government, NGOs, private sector & international funding agencies
- Awareness creation amongst judiciary of seriousness & impacts of wildlife crime
- Awareness creation amongst rural communities of livelihood impacts of wildlife crime
- Use of all available technologies
- Flexible funding immediately available for interventions

Consolidating partnerships and systems

- Strengthening of partnerships between government, NGOs, CBOs, private sector & rural communities
- Active collaboration between all relevant agencies within government
- Long-term partnerships with funding agencies
- Active collaboration between field staff & rural communities
- Strong support from rural communities (information)
- Active collaboration between law enforcement & judiciary (strong prosecution cases)
- Broad public support (awareness, public pressure, funding)
- Identification & addressing of clear funding targets, training & equipment needs & gaps
- Increasingly effective investigations, law enforcement & prosecutions resulting in appropriate penalties
- Parallel conservation & law enforcement efforts

Expanding international linkages

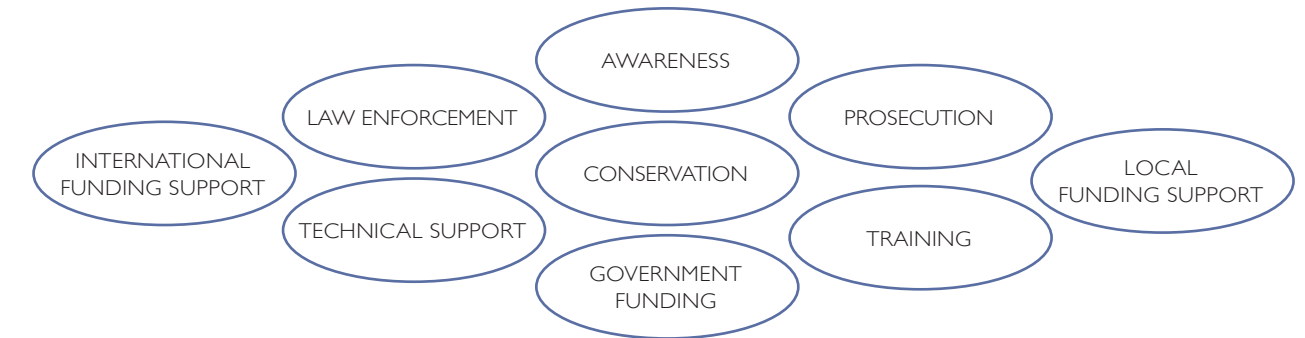
- Increasing law-enforcement collaboration with neighbouring countries
- Strengthening of all international conservation & law enforcement linkages

Partnerships from the field to the courtroom to the global arena ...



Photo: Namibian Partnerships Against Crime

Namibia's many-tiered collaboration for cross-cutting results



INTERNATIONAL CONSORTIUM ON COMBATTING WILDLIFE CRIME		
INTERNATIONAL FUNDING AGENCIES	INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION AGENCIES	
NAMIBIAN NATIONAL WILDLIFE SECURITY COMMITTEE		
WILDLIFE CRIME STEERING COMMITTEE	NGO SUPPORT STRUCTURE	
MINISTRY OF FINANCE DIRECTORATE CUSTOMS & EXCISE	MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS & IMMIGRATION	
MINISTRY OF JUSTICE	PROSECUTOR GENERAL	
ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMISSION	FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE CENTRE	
MINISTRY OF SAFETY & SECURITY NAMIBIAN POLICE FORCE PRD CID	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE PARKS & WILDLIFE WPSU IIU	MINISTRY OF DEFENCE NAMIBIAN DEFENCE FORCE
LOCAL CONSERVATION NGOs	PRIVATE SECTOR	
NAMIBIAN PUBLIC	INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY	
PARK STAFF	COMMUNAL CONSERVANCIES	RHINO CUSTODIANS

A group of people, possibly rangers or conservationists, are walking through a forest at sunset. One person in the foreground is carrying a rifle on their shoulder. The scene is bathed in the warm, golden light of the setting sun, with long shadows and a hazy atmosphere. The trees are silhouetted against the bright sky.

Partnerships across all sectors are making a clear difference ...

Namibian partnerships keys

SIX KEYS TO UNLOCKING PARTNERSHIPS IN NAMIBIA

- Comprehensive government engagement
- Full acknowledgement of the contribution of all stakeholders
- Cascading personal trust from funding agency directors to field personnel
- Clear roles and responsibilities at all levels
- Active sharing of information and other resources
- Flexible funding and minimal red tape

PARTNERSHIPS ARE ABOUT RECOGNITION, FLEXIBILITY AND TRUST

Recognising the individual

- Clear delegation of personal responsibility
- Respect for the role of each person
- Acknowledgement of the value of each contribution
- Due rewards for effort & risk

Clear, acknowledged roles of all stakeholders

- Recognition of defined roles at both individual & organisational levels
- Recognition of importance of transboundary collaboration
- Recognition of importance of international linkages
- Acknowledgement of the value of each contribution

Formalised collaboration

- Full support to the mandate of government to act as the primary law enforcement entity
- Acknowledged collaboration between all conservation & law enforcement entities
- Formalised regional collaboration
- Formalised international collaboration

Flexible funding

- Minimal restrictions on use of funds
- Immediate mobilisation of funds for action or reward, directly to field operation level
- Healthy mix of funding between government, international & local funds
- Clear overall funding structure that coordinates funding sources & targets & identifies gaps

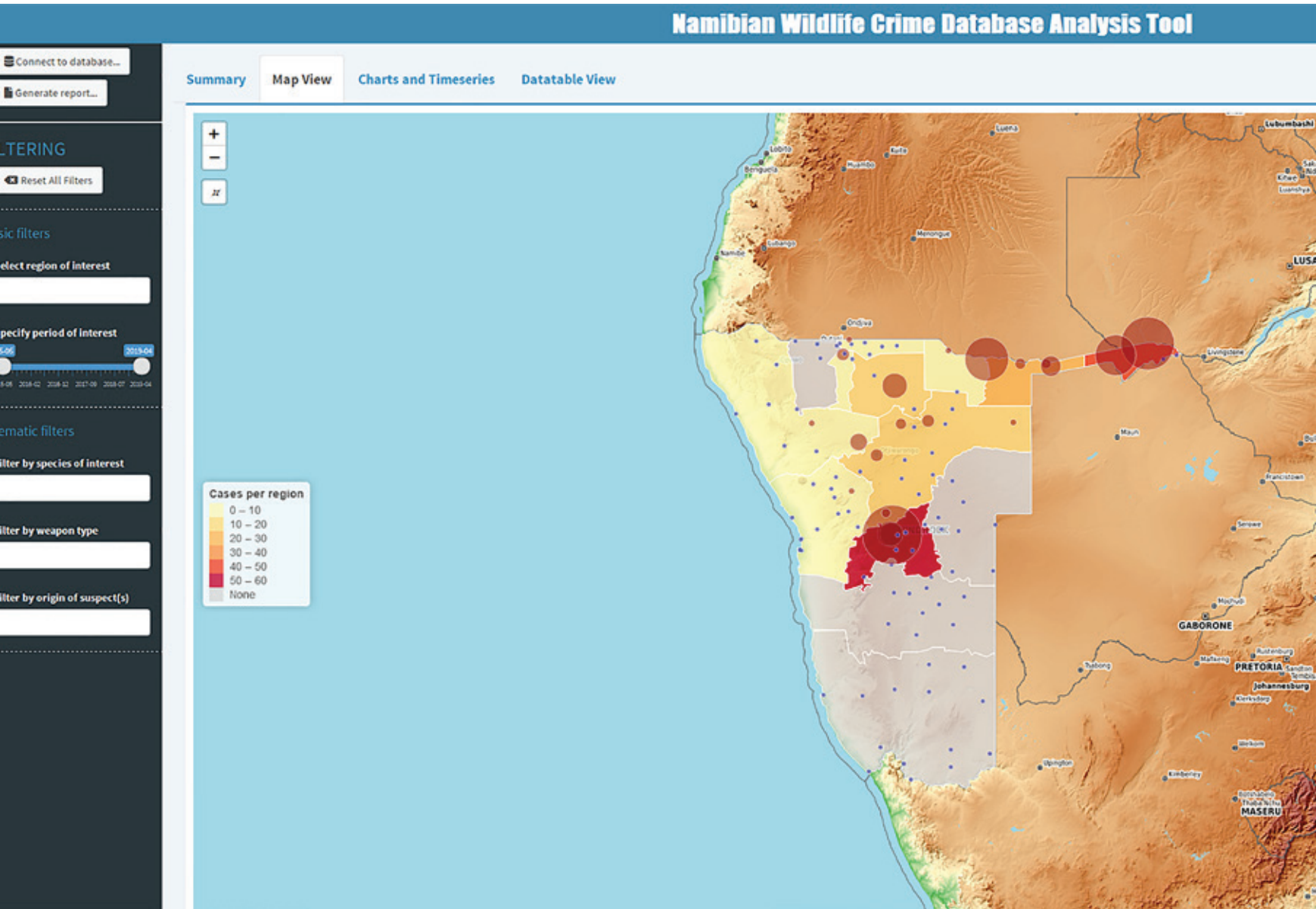
Awareness, training and technical support

- Pride in both conservation & collaboration
- Clear understanding of aims
- Clear understanding of capacity & funding needs
- Timeous addressing of capacity or funding gaps

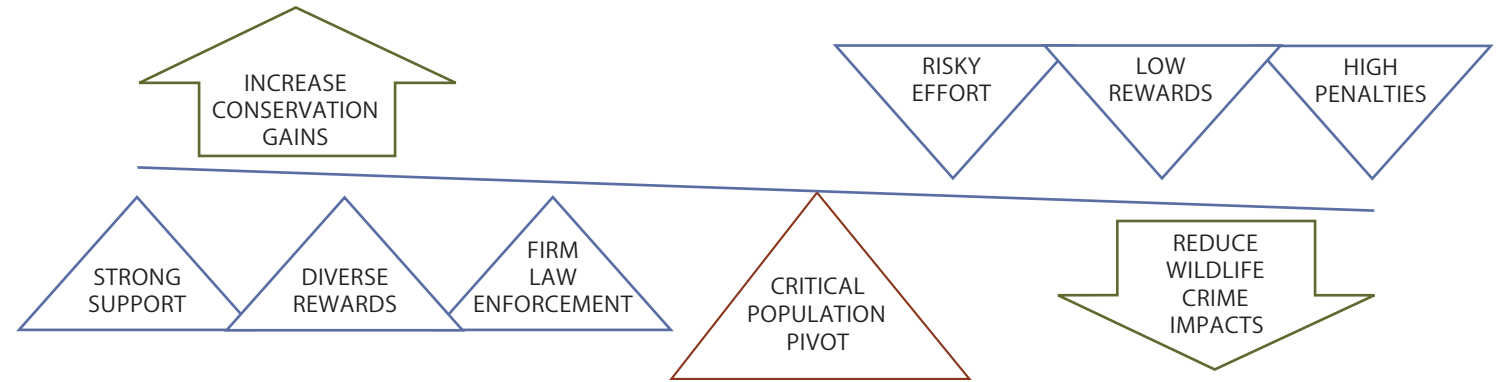
TRUST

- Trust in the integrity & competence of the individual
- Trust in the integrity & competence of each institution
- Trust in the suitability of strategies & actions
- Trust in the strength of partnerships

Technologies & tools ...



... and how they are being used in Namibia



The overall objective is to ensure healthy wildlife populations through effective conservation and law enforcement

Field information

- Monitoring & surveillance
- Anonymous community reporting
- Investigation information

Forensics

- Crime scene analysis
- DNA analysis
- Digital intelligence
- Financial intelligence

Monitoring, analysis and planning tools

- UNODC Wildlife & Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit
- Namibian Wildlife Crime Database Analysis Tool (interactive mapping, identification of patterns, hotspots)
- Crime prediction & response

Strategic and flexible funding

- Funding Control & Management Tool
- Wildlife Crimes Budget Manager
- Direct field funding mechanisms

Reduced crime rewards and appropriate penalties

- Appropriate fines & prison sentences
- Refusal of bail whenever possible
- Blocking of local markets & international routes

Conservation incentives

- Conducive legislation to motivate conservation
- Market incentives for wildlife management
- Technical support structures

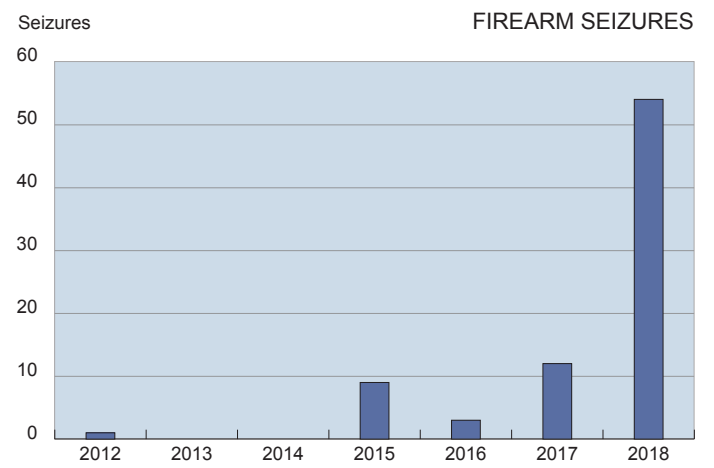
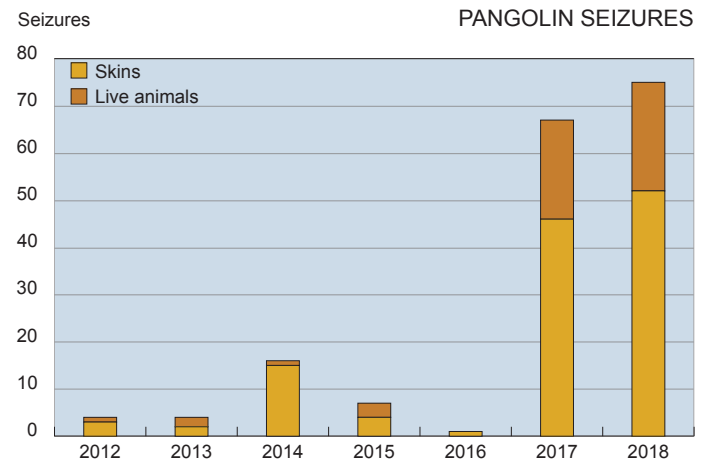
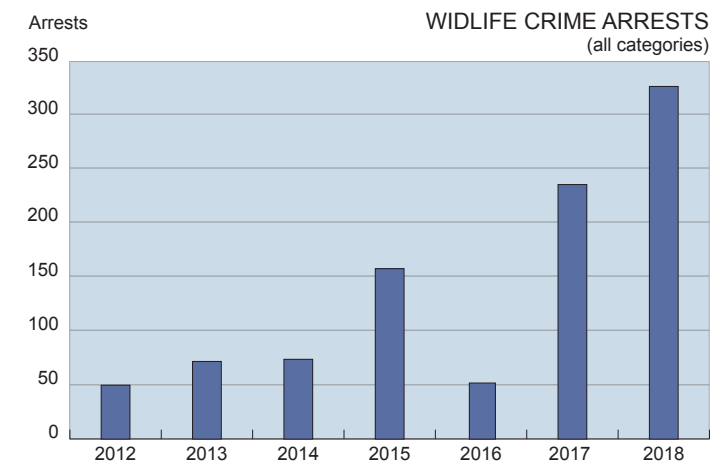
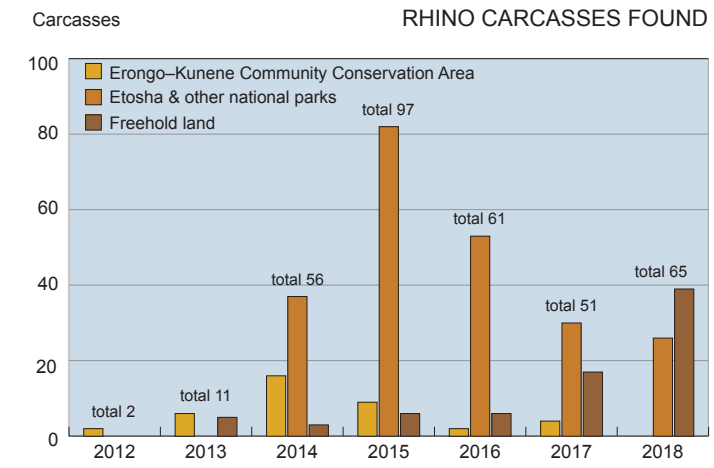
Targeted training

- Waterberg Law Enforcement & Training Centre
- Field training & national workshops
- International training & exchange

General awareness creation

- Conservation & law enforcement awareness of threats
- Rural community pride & involvement
- Awareness of the distinction between wildlife crime and legal wildlife use
- General public awareness & support

Some Namibian statistics ...



... and what they show

RHINO POACHING

- Once poaching began, rapid escalation occurred, indicating initially easy targets
- Establishment of strong partnerships & systems enabled increasingly effective responses
- Coordinated effort clearly reduced impacts, first in Erongo-Kunene, then Etosha (Etosha has the highest number of rhinos in Namibia & will always be a target)
- Impacts have shifted to easier targets elsewhere
- Impacts on freehold land are now showing a rapid increase & need immediate attention
- Overall impacts have remained high at 50 or more animals over the last five years

PANGOLIN TRAFFICKING

- Increased pangolin trafficking (live & skins) was recognised from 2014, but initially difficult to counter
- A targeted awareness campaign & reward scheme for information leading to arrests shows impressive results from its inception in 2017
- A system of monitoring & releasing recovered live pangolins is in place
- Other wildlife products (especially predator skins) are often being seized during pangolin operations, indicating an increasing threat to other species

ARRESTS

- The 2015 increase in arrests is related to the discovery of rampant rhino poaching in Etosha
- The establishment of dedicated operations units & coordinated law enforcement efforts clearly show results from 2017 onwards
- Arrest often include the seizure of illicit items, especially ivory, rhino horn & weapons; it is not always easy to confirm the origin of these, making the analysis of ivory & rhino horn data very complex

FIREARM SEIZURES

- The establishment of Operation Blue Rhino & increased law enforcement efforts clearly show results
- Other weapons, vehicles, tools & other items (knives, machetes, hacksaws etc.) are also being seized

Notes

Statistics of poaching impacts are particularly difficult to represent, as not all cases are recorded, or there may be a significant time lag between a poaching event and its discovery (sometimes of years). Arrests and seizures can indicate an increase in law enforcement, an increase in criminal activity, or a combination of both.

The future ... ?



Some identified needs, opportunities and threats

History shows a grim picture of leapfrogging decimation, intervention and rebuilding of populations – followed by renewed decimation in ever-diminishing cycles. Conservation, law enforcement and crime prevention need to become much more innovative, effective and deeply entrenched to ensure the safeguarding of biodiversity in a rapidly changing world.

Understand evolving crime

- Crime methods are continually & rapidly evolving
- Crime focus always shifts to areas of least resistance
- While many markets are culturally entrenched, new markets are also being established
- Wildlife crime must be recognised as an economic crime

Motivate conservation efforts

- Balance the high cost & risk of conservation with more diverse rewards, especially outside parks
- Maximise the economic, social & cultural values of wildlife
- Highlight the distinction between legal and illegal wildlife use
- Strengthen national sense of pride & environmental identity

Improve crime prevention

- Improve pre-emptive action that intercepts criminals before losses occur
- Expand & integrate the use of all available technologies
- Improve data collection & analysis & share information more actively to enable more proactive interventions

Expand collaboration to other sectors

- Improve private sector protection of valuable species through increased collaboration
- Expand law enforcement effectiveness across all Namibian environmental sectors (e.g. forestry, fisheries) to safeguard habitats & improve overall environmental health
- Target local linkages with other crime sectors (drugs, money laundering etc.)

Increase international collaboration

- Increase impacts higher up the crime chain (traffic routes, end markets) through international collaboration
- Target international linkages with other crime sectors (drugs, money laundering etc.)
- Use the legislation of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act more effectively
- Ensure that conservation & law enforcement partnerships reach from wildlife in its environment to the destination countries & end markets

We need to reduce the funds & effort spent on combatting wildlife crime and free these for conservation and human development.

Why do we need partnerships against crime?



... and what options are there for additional action and support?

WE NEED PARTNERSHIPS BECAUSE ...

Criminals have an edge

- They can act without rules & regulations
- They strike quickly when it suits them (at night, on public holidays etc.)
- They get direct, individual rewards for their efforts
- They can operate beyond all boundaries
- They can get rich quickly

Authorities can be cumbersome

- They need to adhere to rules & regulations
- They often have inflexible structures & systems
- Individuals are often not recognised, salaries are often too low & rewards are indirect
- Working across boundaries is challenging

Partnerships remove the edge by ...

- Significantly increasing the risk for criminals, especially when faced with a vigilant civil society
- Sharing the workload & costs of conservation & law enforcement
- Sharing information & other resources
- Facilitating improved collaboration within organisations
- Enabling joint action between agencies & across boundaries
- Greatly increasing flexibility & reducing reaction time
- Enabling a consolidated conservation & law enforcement effort
- Improving conservation outcomes while reducing wildlife crime

... WE CAN ALL MAKE A CONTRIBUTION

What individuals can do

- Publicly condemn all *illegal* activities
- Never buy dubious or illegal animal or plant products
- Report any suspicious activities
- Support all *legal* activities that strengthen conservation (tourism, conservation hunting, indigenous plant products)

What conservation organisations can do

- Work together to strengthen conservation results
- Create strong linkages with international organisations
- Ensure enough funding reaches field operations
- Ensure full support of government mandates
- Reinforce the distinction between legal and illegal wildlife use
- Share information as widely as possible

What funding agencies can do

- Work together to ensure funding needs are met
- Provide targeted funding to fill gaps
- Ensure that reporting requirements don't inhibit efficiency
- Provide support at local, regional & global levels

What governments can do

- Make conservation of biodiversity a national priority
- Treat wildlife crime as an economic crime
- Improve inter-ministerial collaboration & information sharing
- Promote partnerships between all sectors
- Share information as widely as possible
- Curb corruption

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Namibian Partnerships Against Crime is a broad collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, private sector, rural communities, international funding agencies and the public. All constructive input and collaboration are welcomed.

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