



USAID Support to the Community-Based Natural Resource Management Program in Namibia: LIFE Program Review



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USAID Support to the Community-Based Natural Resource Management Program in Namibia: LIFE Program Review

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ACRONYMS

ADMADE	Administrative Management Design Programme for Game Management Areas
CAMPFIRE	Communal Areas Management Program For Indigenous Resources
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
CCG	Community Game Guards
EGAT	USAID Bureau for Economic Growth, Agriculture and Trade
FENATA	Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations
ICEMA	Integrated Community-based Ecosystem Management
IRDNC	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation
KAZA TFCA	Kavango-Zambezi Trans-Frontier Conservation Area
LIFE	Living in a Finite Environment
MCC	Millennium Challenge Corporation
MET	Ministry of Environment and Tourism
NACSO	Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations
NACOBTA	Namibia Community-Based Tourism Assistance Trust
NAPHA	Namibia Professional Hunting Association
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRMP	Natural Resources Management Project
NTB	Namibia Tourism Board
NWT	Namibia Wildlife Trust
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
SARP	Southern Africa Regional Program
SPAN	Strengthening the Protected Area Network
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 1992 USAID has contributed to the support of Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program through the Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) program. This report reviews USAID's investment, major accomplishments and results, captures and disseminates lessons learned, and makes recommendations for the LIFE program and the CBNRM program in Namibia after USAID funding ends.

Located in southwestern Africa, Namibia — larger than Texas and Louisiana combined — has a land area of 842,000 km² and is divided into 13 administrative regions. Namibia gained its independence from South Africa in 1990 and, according to the constitution, ownership of land, water, and other natural resources is vested in the State unless otherwise "lawfully owned." Namibia is a dry country, with annual rainfall that varies from less than 20 mm in the west along the Atlantic Ocean to 600 mm in the northeast, with approximately 85 percent of the country regarded as arid or semi-arid; it has no interior perennial water sources. Despite these dry conditions, Namibia has diverse flora and fauna, which, in turn, have created a rapidly growing environment-centric tourism sector.

Namibia accounts for 3 percent of the land area of Africa, but only hosts 0.2 percent of the population (2007 estimate at 2,055,080 persons). After Mongolia, Namibia is the least densely populated country in the world (2.5 persons per km²). Most of the rural population lives on communal land formally owned by the government; and although residents of communal land have users rights over the land, they do not own it. Conservancies in Namibia established under the Nature Conservation Amendment Act of 1996 constitute a structure through which ownership and use of game is given to communal area residents who apply for conservancy status and have: 1) an elected representative committee, 2) a legal constitution, 3) an equitable benefit distribution plan, and 4) clearly defined communal boundaries. At present, there are 50 registered conservancies in Namibia and another 25 in process. The formation of conservancies has become a social movement, as well as an accepted and holistic approach to rural development.

In 1993 USAID awarded the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) a cooperative agreement to implement the LIFE program in Namibia in cooperation with the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). USAID initially designed the activity as a five-year program, but because of the positive results, it continued support to the LIFE program through three consecutive agreements now named LIFE 1, LIFE 2 and LIFE Plus, for a total of 15 years. USAID invested approximately US\$40 million in the Namibia CBNRM program from 1992 until June 2008, which was matched by a similar amount through government of Namibia and partner contributions.

In broad terms, LIFE 1 fostered the creation of an enabling environment for CBNRM through a facilitative and supportive role in policy development and the strengthening of institutional capacity of CBNRM support organizations. It also enhanced the involvement of historically disadvantaged Namibians by fostering awareness of emerging CBNRM development opportunities — which helped change their attitudes toward wildlife and conservation. The LIFE

2 phase continued to build the institutional capacity of project partners to provide CBNRM services to conservancies, institutionalized the CBNRM program at the formal tertiary educational level, and increased Namibian support of national-level CBNRM coordination, planning, and decision-making. In the LIFE Plus phase, the project strengthened partnerships with the private sector, provided intensified support to the development and management of conservancy natural resources (through participatory land use planning, development, and extension of community natural resources monitoring systems), supported the strategic introduction of wildlife in conservancies with low game densities, and diversified income generation opportunities to increase non-financial benefits and new income to households and conservancies.

The success of the LIFE program, and that of the entire CBNRM program in Namibia, is due to the work of multiple partners, and the result of multiple, reinforcing factors. While it is difficult to disaggregate the contributions of LIFE from the greater whole, there are several major program elements that contributed to the successful growth of CBNRM in Namibia. The six elements summarized below and discussed more extensively in the main body of the report, represent a distillation of the major themes underlying the success of the program in Namibia, and hold valuable lessons for others undertaking CBNRM initiatives in Southern Africa and throughout the world.

Longevity and continuity of support are critical – Long-term support by USAID has stabilized the sector, allowed CBNRM supporters to have the legitimacy of an international backer, and provided the funding to implement, test, and incubate innovative ideas.

Getting the policy and institutional framework right is prerequisite – Although a project may help a community to better manage natural resources, without empowering legislation benefits from sustainable management are insecure.

Success requires a heavy investment in the creation, expansion, and facilitation of partnerships – By engaging a diversity of partners (governmental, non-governmental, private sector, and community), over an extended period of time, LIFE was able to facilitate a CBNRM movement at both the national and grassroots levels.

Sound natural resource management institutions can provide a mechanism for addressing broader development needs – Although the conservancy movement started with natural resource management goals and legislation, conservancies have become a tool for broad-based equitable rural development at the local, regional, and national level, and MET's contribution to livelihoods, development, and conservation in Namibia.

Strong leadership and systems of accountability at all levels are critical – Recognizing their importance to long-term success, the LIFE program has helped its partners to emphasize their capacity for creating strong leadership and systems of accountability.

A reliable and useful monitoring and evaluation system that responds to both the needs of the community at the grassroots level, as well as feeding into the national-level planning frameworks, is critical for sustainable management of natural resources – The program

created, refined, and used a community-based monitoring and evaluation system where the communities chose what components to monitor to obtain information to meet their needs. This community-level system does not operate in isolation but feeds into a national-level database where it contributes to forming a picture of the status of CBNRM overall.

As the USAID funding for LIFE Plus comes to a close in 2008, the CBNRM program in Namibia will enter a new phase without the support of one of its major donors. The seven points for further action summarized below represent a distillation of the major challenges and opportunities. How they are handled will determine the next chapter in the story of CBNRM in Namibia.

Further support is needed to implement a CBNRM sustainability plan – Recognizing that heavy reliance on donor funds makes the CBNRM program vulnerable, this report discusses those services that the CBNRM community identifies as requiring continued external support in at least the short term to ensure program sustainability.

The discontinuation of USAID funding for the Namibia CBNRM program presents a challenge in meeting current and future needs – The discontinuation of U.S. funding for LIFE Plus presents a challenge for the sector. Efforts are underway to seek funding through other sources and mechanisms.

Continued evolution in conservancy-related policies have the potential to either facilitate or inhibit success in conservancies – Taken together, legislation for conservancies and community forests give most communities good options to benefit from their natural resources, but legislation may be insufficient for some communities and may not respond to the natural resource assets at their disposal.

With the diversifying nature of the CBNRM program, there is a current and growing need for skill development – Capacity building has been a strength for LIFE, but as the CBNRM program in Namibia continues to expand and evolve, so does the need for learning new skills.

Efforts need to be shifted to support leadership development – Although leadership development has been facilitated by LIFE, there has not been a concerted focus on this goal. As conservancies become more numerous and the issues more complex, the need for leadership strengthening in conservancies, ministries, and support organizations is increasingly important.

Partnerships and support packages need to continue to evolve to address changing and broadening needs of conservancies – Because conservancies are heterogeneous, partnerships and support packages need to be developed for a broad but compartmentalized spectrum of conservancy profiles to capture the major needs of conservancies, while exploiting commonalities of clusters of conservancies for a more efficient use of support resources.

A sustainable vision for CBNRM in Namibia must examine future opportunities – Further exploring opportunities — management of conservancies as business entities, developing a branding plan for conservancy tourism, and the use of climate change, carbon, biodiversity, and

payment for environmental services mechanisms — offer potential long-term support for CBNRM activities in Namibia.

The 15-year investment of USAID in the CBNRM program has contributed to impressive results and pushed Namibia to the forefront of the CBNRM practice worldwide. This success was largely due to the vision of the government of Namibia and the efforts of WWF and partners, through a cooperative agreement with USAID, international partners, the private sector, support organizations, and Namibian communities and leaders who pushed for poverty reduction in rural areas.

Continued success and sustainability will require continued partnerships of a diversity of groups, working at different levels, to consolidate gains and expand the impact of the program.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Through the Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) program, USAID has since 1992 contributed to the support of Namibia's Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) program. This report reviews USAID's investment and major accomplishments and results, captures and disseminates lessons learned, and makes recommendations for the LIFE and the CBNRM programs in Namibia, post-USAID funding.

Section I provides the background and context for understanding the CBNRM movement in Namibia. Section II shows an overview of USAID investments, the evolution of the LIFE program, and achievements and impact of the program. Section III highlights LIFE's lessons learned and key elements of success. Section IV provides a synthesis of opportunities and challenges facing CBNRM in the coming years. Finally, Section V briefly summarizes major conclusions.

Namibia's Physical and Natural Environment

Namibia is located between the latitudes 17° 30" south and 29° south, and longitudes 12° and 25° east, in southwestern Africa. Namibia is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the west, South Africa to the south, Botswana to the east, and Angola to the north, as well as Zambia and Zimbabwe to the northeast. The land area of Namibia is 842,000 km² (divided into 13 administrative regions), which is larger than the states of Texas and Louisiana combined.

Namibia gained its independence from South Africa on March 21, 1990 with the first election conducted in 1989 under the supervision and control of the United Nations.¹ This led to the emergence of Namibia as a multiracial, multiparty democratic state. Elections are held every five years for the presidency, the national assembly, and the regional and local municipal administration. The head of state and government is the president of the country. According to the Namibia constitution, ownership of land, water, and natural resources is vested in the State unless otherwise "lawfully owned."

Namibia has contrasting and beautiful landscapes, determined by influences of topography, geological processes, precipitation, and drainage. The geology of Namibia consists of rock formations in the west, and Kalahari sands covering most rocks in the east creating a uniform and less variant landscape. Three different desert systems are found in Namibia: The Namib Desert in the west is characterized by sand dunes and gravel; the Kalahari to the east is covered by deep sands and no surface water; and the Karoo to the south is typified by low rainfall and low growing vegetation, often succulents and shrubs. Annual rainfall varies from less than 20 mm in the west along the Atlantic Ocean to 600 mm in the northeast. Most of the rainfall is in the summer for the Southern Hemisphere from November to April. Overall, 69 percent of the country is regarded as semi-arid, and 16 percent as arid.²

¹ See the World Factbook (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/wa.html>) for a more comprehensive treatment of the political background of Namibia.

² Barnard P., 1998.

Perennial rivers are found only on the borders: Orange River in the south, Kunene and Kavango rivers in the north, and the Zambezi and Kwando-Linyanti-Chobe river system in the northeast.

These environmental conditions have created diverse flora and fauna within the country. The varied wildlife habitats as well as the contrasting landscape have created a rapidly growing environment-centric tourism sector. Ecotourism and small-scale tourism have emerged in communal land to significantly benefit rural people. Namibia has 21 parks and reserves controlled by the government. These parks, of which the most known and largest is the Etosha National Park, make up 13.8 percent of the land area. Communal lands often border these parks.

Namibia's population and housing census of 2001 determined the population to be 1.8 million. (2007 estimate 2,055,080). The population growth rate of the country is estimated to be 2.6 percent. After Mongolia, Namibia is the least densely populated country in the world (2.5 persons per km²). Namibia covers 3 percent of the land area of Africa but only hosts 0.2 percent of the population. The low population density is due to Namibia's large expanse of land that is too arid for human settlement. Other physical limitations that make Namibia unable to support more people are the erratic and localized rainfall, infertile soils, and large areas of saline ground water. Most people live in the north and northeast; and 67 percent of the population lives in rural areas while only 33 percent live in urban areas.

Most of the rural population lives on communal land formally owned by the government, accounting for approximately 41 percent of Namibia's land total. The residents of communal land have users rights over the land but do not own it. Communal residents share access to common property resources such as grazing, water, and other natural resources. Most are subsistence farmers with a mix of crops and livestock. In the north and northeastern parts of the country, higher rainfall favors crop farming; in areas with lower rainfall, livestock is favored. Although the State nominally controls communal land, its revocable use allocation is vested in traditional authorities. Different forms of traditional authorities exist within the communal lands and play important roles in terms of the resolution of conflicts and the preservation of culture and traditions. Traditional authorities are also involved in the allocation of land and grazing to members of the community.³

Vision 2030: Wildlife and Tourism

In 2004 Namibia developed a national development strategy known as *Vision 2030*. It defines where Namibia is today, where Namibia wants to be by 2030, and how it intends to get there. The primary goal is to improve the quality of life of Namibians to the level of their counterparts in the developed world. It is a broad unifying vision to guide the country's five-year development plans from the National Development Plan (NDP) 2 to NDP 7. It guides stakeholders, creates policy synergies, and links short-term planning to long-term planning. The cornerstone of Vision 2030 is sustainable development, defined as development that meets the needs of the present without limiting the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. Vision 2030 views partnership as a prerequisite for achieving dynamic, efficient, and sustainable development. Among the partnerships it views as essential: those between government and civil society, between the branches of government, and between private sector,

³ Mendelsohn et.al, 2002

non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, and the international community. Because wildlife and tourism are viewed as critical to Namibia's development, the Vision stresses the importance of maintaining the integrity of the natural habitat and wildlife populations. It focuses on sustainable, low impact, consumptive and non-consumptive tourism. The framework recognizes the increasing presence of wildlife outside of national parks, increasing human-wildlife conflict, and the significant potential that community-based tourism has for economic development in rural areas.

Conservancies in Namibia

The "community conservation" approach is a response to the "fortress conservation" approach common in southern Africa in earlier decades, and can be defined as an approach that emphasizes the role of local residents in decision-making about natural resources.⁴ This movement stands in contrast to the fortress conservation approach, which reserves separate spaces for humans and for the "natural world." Once considered opposing conservation strategies, they are today recognized as parallel and complementary, each appropriate for particular purposes, and with the potential for melding.

CBNRM in Namibia depends on a legal and policy base that creates a situation conducive to conservation. This legal framework was established in the Nature Conservation Amendment Act No. 5 of 1996. This Act constitutes a structure through which control, ownership, and use of plant and animal wildlife is given to communal area residents. People residing within the communal area organize themselves and then apply for their land area to be declared a conservancy. They must have in place: 1) an elected representative committee and provide the names of members; 2) a legal constitution that provides for sustainable management and use of wildlife; 3) an equitable benefit distribution plan for members; and, 4) the conservancy must have clearly defined boundaries that are not in dispute with neighbors. Once the community meets these conditions and a note advertising their claim is published in a government gazette, the conservancy committee, on behalf of the entire community, receives conditional and limited rights and duties. The goal is to enable members of such a community to derive benefits from the consumptive and non-consumptive use and sustainable management of wildlife in the area.⁵

Conservancies have taken different forms across the country because of the flexibility of the policy in defining what constitutes a community. Annex D, Conservancy Details provides a listing of registered conservancies, surface area, and membership numbers. Social, political, cultural, geographic, and other factors play a role in shaping the size of the land area and the population within conservancies. At present, there are 50 registered conservancies in Namibia. The formation of conservancies has become a social movement and an integrated and holistic approach to rural development. The core pillars of CBNRM are 1) sustainable natural resources management, which requires conservancies to manage and protect wildlife for the recovery of species; 2) community institutional capacity development, which requires legally constituted, representative, and capable community-based institutions; and 3) enterprise development and equitable distribution of benefits from wildlife and other natural resources.⁶

⁴ Adams and Hulme, 2001; Jones and Murphree, 2001

⁵ Long and Jones, 2004; NACSO, 2004

⁶ Hagen et al, 1998

SECTION II. HISTORY, IMPACTS, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

LIFE has been a highly successful USAID project, with notable impacts along the entire continuum of the program. This section will provide an overview of USAID programming in the region, which inspired the idea of LIFE in Namibia. It details the progression of LIFE and describes some of the project's major achievements. A more comprehensive review of the results of each component of the program can be found in the project's final reports.⁷

USAID and CBNRM in Southern Africa

USAID began funding CBNRM in Southern Africa in the early 1980s under the Southern Africa Regional Program (SARP) in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Namibia CBNRM program, "Living in a Finite Environment" (LIFE), was authorized in September 1992 as an amendment to the SARP Natural Resources Management Project (NRMP) funding. The LIFE program in Namibia benefited from the lessons and experiences of the CBNRM programs in Zambia and Zimbabwe. Zambia's 1979 Administrative Management Design Program for Game Management Areas (ADMADe) enlisted local communities to reduce rampant poaching and address problems of elephant management and protection. Zimbabwe's review of its policies started in the early 1980s, and in 1986, the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management created the Communal Areas Management Program For Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) Program.⁸

The basic hypothesis within the southern Africa CBNRM program was "for a community to manage its natural resource base sustainably it must receive direct benefits arising from its use. These benefits must exceed the perceived costs of managing the resources."⁹ This hypothesis has three conceptual foundations: 1) economic value, giving a resource such as wildlife a focused value that can be realized by the community or land owner; 2) devolution, emphasizing the need to devolve management decisions from the government to the community or local land users to create positive conditions for sustainable wildlife management; and 3) collective proprietorship, whereby a group of people are jointly given users rights over resources, which they are then able to manage according to their own rules and strategies. Although CBNRM in southern Africa was based on these common conceptual foundations, programmatic development in each country has been shaped by differing socio-political, economic, and institutional factors.¹⁰

Pre-LIFE CBNRM in Namibia

The foundation for CBNRM in Namibia was laid before the USAID LIFE funding began. In Namibia, the Nature Conservation Ordinance of 1967 gave freehold land owners rights to use and manage wildlife on their own farms, although communal land residents did not have similar rights. Due to that decision, the number and diversity of wildlife on freehold land increased. With independence, the government initiated the legislative process to give communal residents the same rights over wildlife as freehold land holders.

⁷ See Annex A – References for citations of these reports

⁸ Steiner and Rihoy, 1995

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Jones and Murphree, 2001

In communal areas, in the early 1980s, there was a decline in wildlife numbers, in particular of desert-dwelling elephants and the black rhino. In response, an NGO, Namibia Wildlife Trust (NWT), together with local traditional leaders, began to work on anti-poaching. To address the problem, local community members were appointed as Community Game Guards (CGGs). This was the basis for the current CBNRM program.

Socio-ecological surveys conducted by the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) in the early 1990s showed communities in communal areas wanted wildlife to be conserved for future generations, and also wanted to have the same rights over wildlife as the freehold landowners. These findings laid the foundation for policy reform to address past inequalities and respond to the needs of the communal area residents. The legislative reforms benefited from the experiences of local pilot projects.¹¹

USAID Gives LIFE to the CBNRM Program

In 1993, USAID awarded the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) a cooperative agreement to implement the LIFE program in Namibia in cooperation with the MET. USAID initially designed the activity as a five-year program, but because of the positive results it continued support to the LIFE Program through three consecutive agreements, now named LIFE I, LIFE II and LIFE Plus, for a total of 15 years. USAID invested approximately \$40 million in the Namibia CBNRM program from 1992 until June 2008, which was matched by a similar amount from contributions by partners and the government of Namibia.

The LIFE program benefitted from a flexible design that allowed the program to adapt management choices to changing conditions, windows of opportunity, and setbacks. The program benefited from strong communication and accountability between partners. Continuity of key staff ensured minimal disruption during implementation of the three projects. The sub-grant-making mechanism was central to building Namibian capacity to support the program, increasing the autonomy of organizations and increasing Namibian participation. LIFE I facilitated legislative reform, which, in turn, created an enabling policy environment for CBNRM and the conservancy movement. The Namibia CBNRM policy went further than any other country in southern Africa in giving rights over wildlife and tourism directly to local communities.¹²

Institutional Capacity Development

The LIFE program strengthened the capacity of partner CBNRM support institutions to manage themselves in a transparent and accountable manner and to contribute toward the development of a national CBNRM framework through the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations — NACSO. Figure 1 depicts the position of NACSO in the national CBNRM program, as well as the strategies and entry points for supporting the actors in the sector.

¹¹ Long and Jones, 2004

¹² Hagen et al., 1998



Figure 1. NACSO Organizational Relationship in the National CBNRM Program

The project, jointly with other similar projects supported by other development partners, further facilitated, to date, the registration of 50 conservancies while another 20 to 30 are at various stages of development for registration. Conservancies have become a social movement and vehicles for achieving broad-based sustainable and equitable rural development in areas now demanding rights to manage natural resources beyond wildlife. Figure 2 below provides a map of Namibia detailing the size and location of all current conservancies in Namibia with their official date of registration.

In addition to growing numbers, there has been considerable organizational development within established conservancies with many registered now routinely exercising their devolved rights over wildlife and tourism. Furthermore, conservancy committees are now managing funds on behalf of their members and instituting transparent management systems to ensure fiscal accountability. Some of the early conservancies have become financially self-dependent (such as Salambala) and, with recovery of wildlife populations and introduction of locally extinct species, many others are headed in that direction.

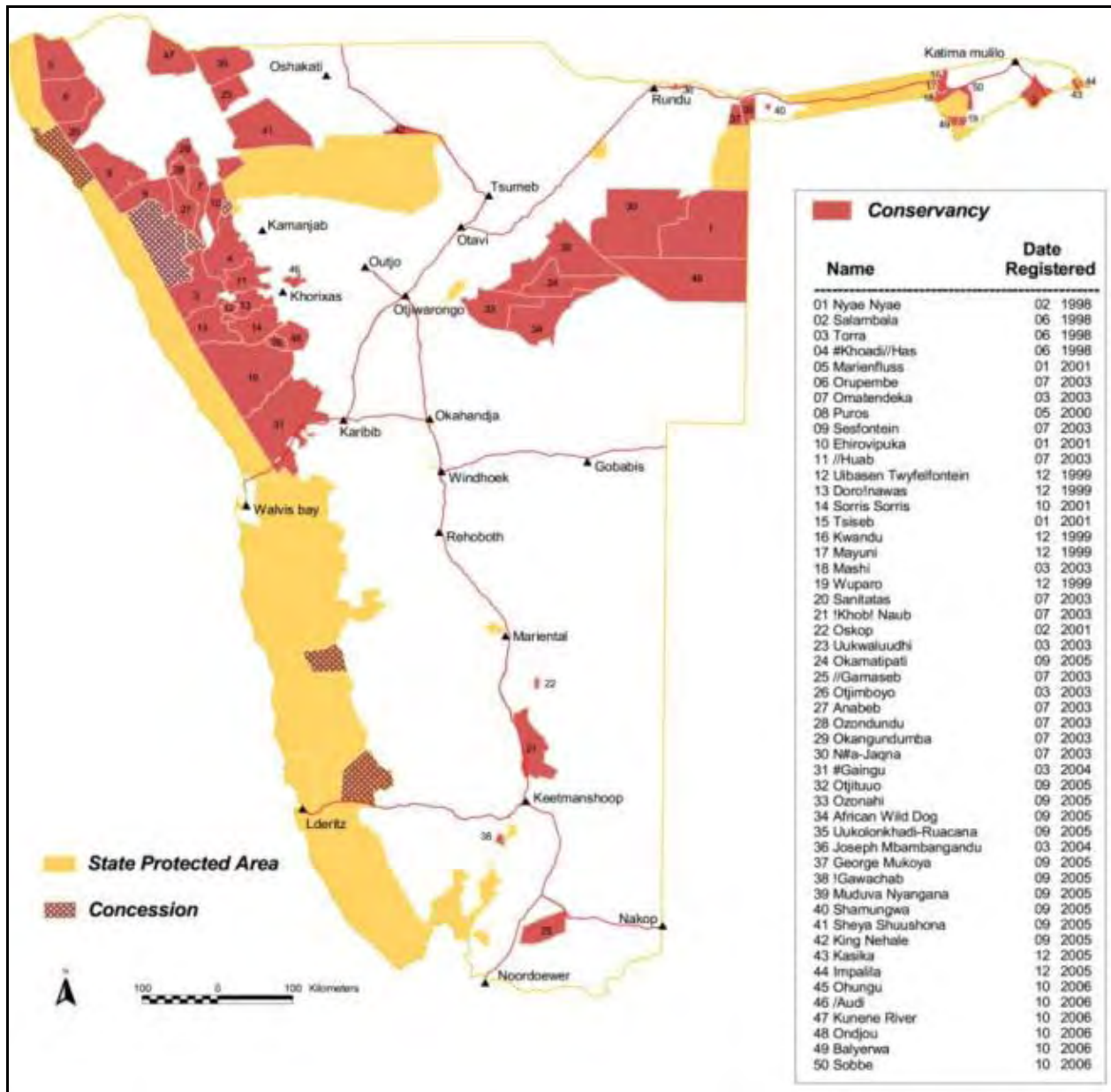


Figure 2. Map of Registered Conservancies in Namibia

Sustainable Natural Resources

The program has improved attitudes about wildlife in conservancies and led to a remarkable recovery of wildlife populations in communal areas. The recovery of wildlife populations has enhanced the biodiversity value of conservancies and created a more substantial natural resource base for financial viability in conservancies. Figure 3 below displays wildlife population levels for four species in Northwest Namibia from 1983-2007. The graphs show data collected through aerial surveys (1983-2000) and road counts (2001-2007), and illustrate the recovery and growth of selected species in the region.

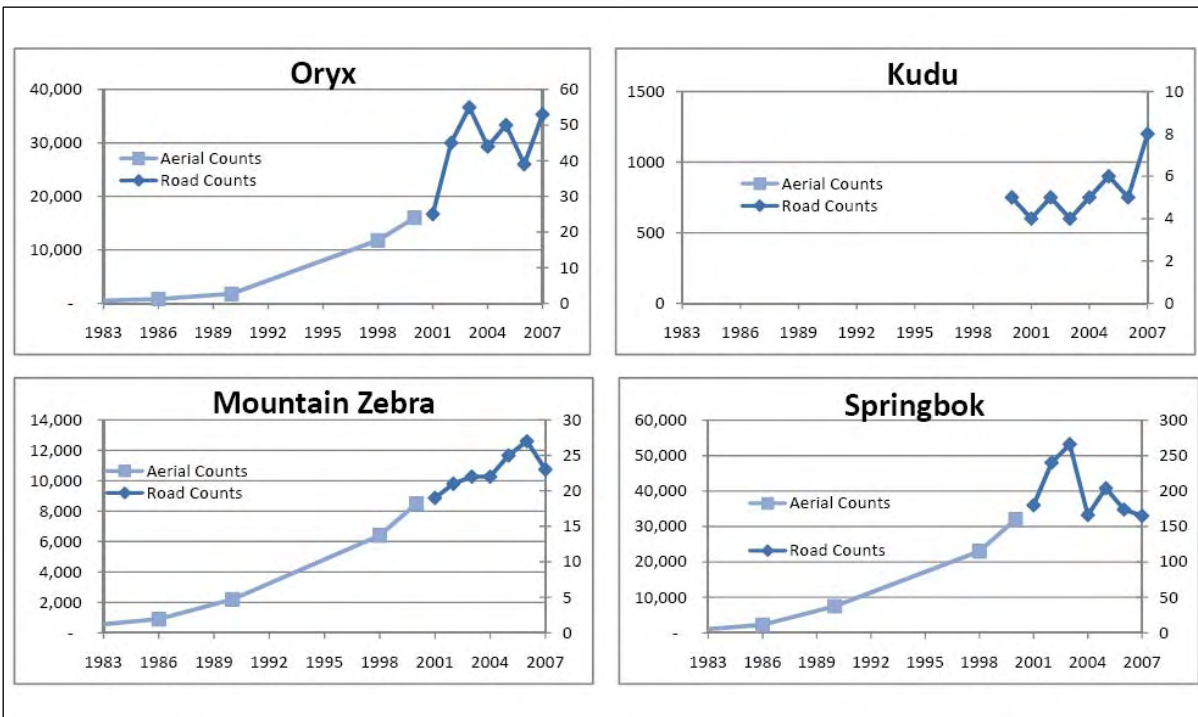


Figure 3. Wildlife Population Numbers for Four Species in Northwest Namibia

It should be noted that road counts focus on the flatter areas of the Northwest (where there are roads), and the variability of population numbers in recent years may be accounted for by changes in the local climatic conditions. The recent seasons (2003 to present) have been drier and game has moved into the adjacent hilly areas where they have greater access to high-quality nutrition (grasses and other plants) and less competition for food (due to fewer domestic animals). These areas are inaccessible by cars and therefore are not covered in the road counts.

This expanded migration presents a monitoring challenge since it becomes more difficult to make population estimates with an increased wildlife area (from approximately 6,000 to 10,000 km² in this case). Nevertheless, changes in migration may be attributed to the eastward growth of conservancies in the region, which has had the effect of opening up important migratory areas that can be used during particularly arid periods. In the past, this movement would have been hampered by intolerance and poaching by local people, creating a virtual boundary. With changes in attitudes engendered by the conservancy movement, wildlife is now increasingly able to repopulate areas of their former range.

Generation of Benefits

Over time the program has diversified income generation opportunities while increasing total income and benefits to conservancies and their individual members. As can be seen below, the program benefits to conservancies has been increasing exponentially since 1998 and benefits have been derived from a diverse set of enterprises. Figure 4 shows the total benefits from the CBNRM program for the period of 1994-2007, broken down into: conservancy/enterprise

committee income, natural resource-based household/wage income, and non-financial benefits (primarily meat distributions).

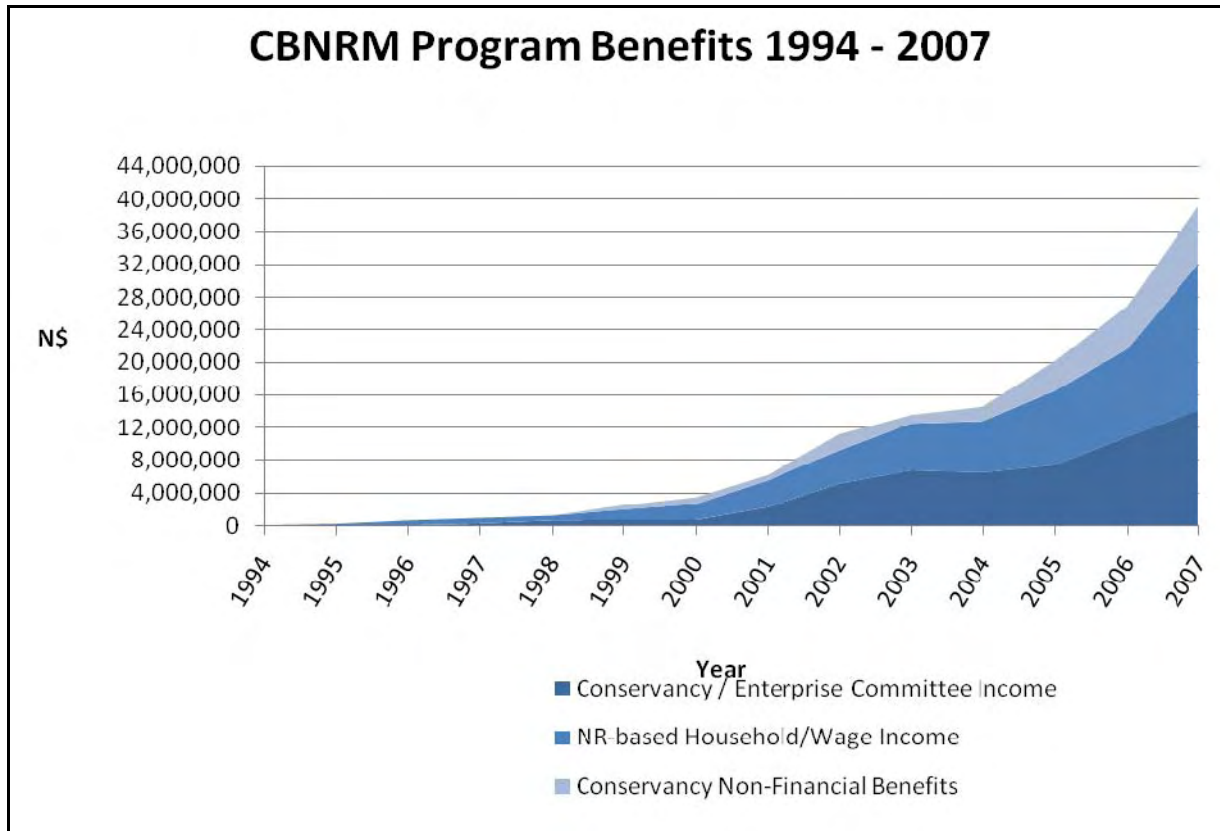


Figure 4. Total Estimated CBNRM Benefits From 1994-2007

Figure 5 on the following page depicts the total and the associated breakdown of benefits by years corresponding to the close of the phases of the LIFE program — with 2007 representing the LIFE Plus ending in 2008. As seen in the charts, not only has the income grown from N\$2,439,824 in 1999 to N\$39,127,982 in 2007 (an over 16 fold increase), the figure shows the change in the sources of income, especially the growing importance of joint venture tourism as the principal economic activity for the conservancies. The sizes of the charts are approximate to represent the relative size of the total benefits from the CBNRM program.

CBNRM Programs - Source of Benefits

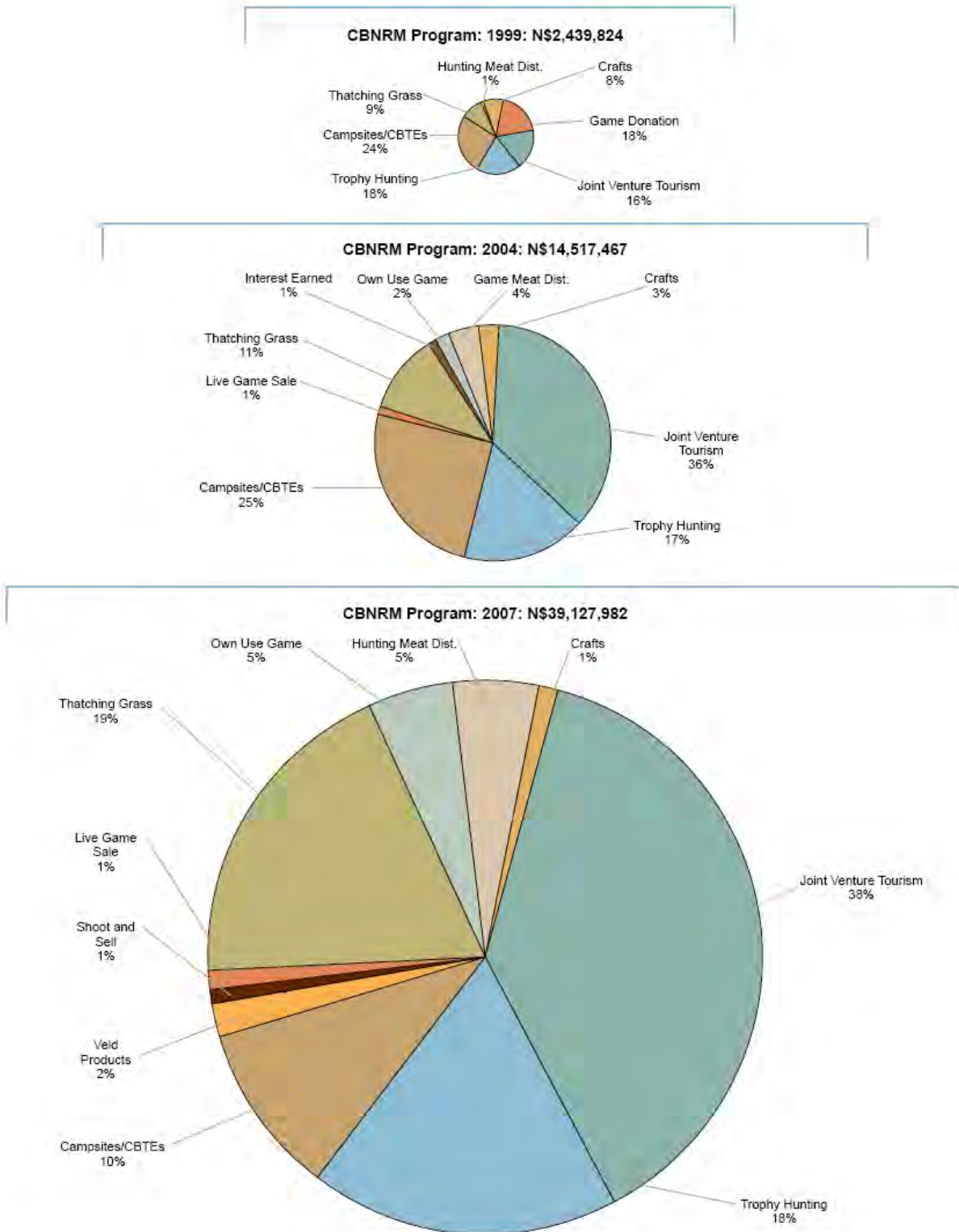


Figure 5. Total and Source of CBNRM Program Benefits in Relation to the End Periods of the Phases of the LIFE Project

The Phases of the LIFE Program

The USAID-supported LIFE program spanned three phases throughout 15 years. This section describes the funding, timing, objectives, and results of the phases, and shows the evolution of the program as a response to the evolving needs of the CBNRM program in Namibia.

LIFE I Phase of CBNRM in Namibia

Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE I) started in May 1993 and was implemented as a seven-year initiative (1993-1999) to support the development and implementation of CBNRM in Namibia. The LIFE I project budget was \$16,845,827 of which \$13,780,506 was provided by USAID and the difference by WWF and MET. LIFE I was implemented under a USAID Namibia Mission Strategic Objective to “increase benefits received by historically disadvantaged Namibians from sustainable local management of natural resources in communal areas.” The purpose of LIFE I was to enable communities to derive increased benefits in an equitable manner by gaining control over and sustainably managing natural resources in the target areas of Caprivi, eastern Tsumkwe (Nyae Nyae), and Uukwaluudhi, as well as providing support to a number of national institutions. During this phase, the project operated as a pilot CBNRM initiative and was designed to assess and test CBNRM approaches in Namibia. This phase could also be regarded as the foundation-building period for the national implementation of CBNRM.

LIFE I fostered the building of institutional capacity and the creation of an enabling environment for the CBNRM activities. The project played a facilitative and supportive role in policy development that resulted in legislative reform. Additionally, it strengthened partner CBNRM support organizations, which paved the way for a structured national program. LIFE I also enhanced the involvement of historically disadvantaged Namibians in CBNRM and, in the process, created awareness of emerging CBNRM development opportunities, and changed attitudes toward wildlife and conservation. The project developed community-based support services that resulted in tourism becoming the most important source of revenue for conservancies. Communities organized themselves into conservancies and started to generate income. By the end of the project, 10 conservancies were registered and 20 were under development.

LIFE II Phase of CBNRM in Namibia

LIFE II was implemented during 1999-2004, with USAID funding of \$15,118,535, and additional cash and in kind contributions from WWF and MET. The implementation approach remained the same as in LIFE I, but expanded the target regions beyond Caprivi, Otjozondjupa and Uukwaluudhi, to include the Southern Kunene and Erongo regions. The goal and purpose of LIFE I and LIFE II remained consistent although the focus and emphasis changed.

LIFE II built on the lessons of LIFE I and went further to: 1) focus on the need to assist conservancies to become more effective and self-sustaining managers of their natural resources, 2) recognize that conservancies must become self-financing to cover own operational costs, 3) expand the number of CBNRM support organizations, and 4) support the establishment of a more effective operational and legal framework for the CBNRM program. A cross-cutting theme for the above focus was program sustainability.

USAID leveraged close to an additional 100 percent of funding from other donors during LIFE II. The project built the institutional capacity of partners to provide CBNRM services to conservancies and emerging community-based tourism enterprises, which increased the number of support organizations and introduced new skills. It also institutionalized the CBNRM program at the formal tertiary education level to provide a systematic CBNRM training approach. Additionally, LIFE II created a stronger national CBNRM support framework, which resulted in increased Namibian support of national CBNRM coordination, planning, and decision-making.

The project provided intensified support to the development and management of conservancy natural resources through participatory land use planning, human development, and extension of community natural resources monitoring systems — locally called event book/incident system. It supported the strategic introduction of wildlife in conservancies with low game densities, but high potential. It diversified income generation opportunities mainly from wildlife-oriented enterprises and increased non-financial benefits, wage income to households, and conservancy income. Partnership with private business was strengthened during LIFE II and contributed to diversification and increased income to communities.

LIFE Plus Phase of CBNRM in Namibia

LIFE Plus was designed as a five-year project beginning in 2004 with USAID funding of \$11,100 000, and matching cash and in kind contributions from WWF and MET. During Year 3, funding and implementation time were reduced to four years due to a strategic realignment of USAID funding and the closing of the economic growth objective in Namibia. This decision was unrelated to the performance of the LIFE program. The USAID Namibia Mission Strategic Objective that underpins this phase is “Improved rural livelihoods through sustainable integrated natural resource management.” The intent was 1) to expand its scope to support the broader national CBNRM program to strengthen conservancies as rural, democratic institutions, 2) enhance livelihood of conservancy members, and 3) expand the range of natural resources that conservancies may manage in an integrated fashion. The results reflect synergetic efforts from three major donor investments, i.e., LIFE Plus, ICEMA, and WWF-UK/IRDNC.

The project mobilized grassroots communities into representative, democratic and skilled management committees that can advocate for the communities' needs. During Life Plus, a conservancy management framework was introduced to more than 44 conservancies and the “Event Book”¹³ system was spread to 64 conservancies (all 50 registered plus 14 emerging). The introduction of active conservancy management systems, as well as the change in attitude toward wildlife, has contributed to a remarkable recovery of wildlife populations in communal areas. This further enhanced the biodiversity value in conservancies, simultaneously making conservancies more financially viable. Benefits to communities have increased exponentially, to more than \$N39 million in 2007. In addition, full-time and part-time jobs are supported by the enterprises. The benefits generated created stronger incentives for community members to conserve and manage their wildlife and tourism resources, increased rural livelihoods, and contributed toward a vibrant rural economy. Both registered and emerging conservancies are now practicing integrated natural resources management approaches.

¹³ Common name in Namibia for management-oriented monitoring system (referred to as MOMS in other parts of Southern Africa where it has been introduced).

SECTION III. ELEMENTS OF SUCCESS

The success of LIFE and the entire CBNRM program in Namibia is the work of multiple partners, and the result of multiple, reinforcing factors. While it is difficult to disaggregate the contributions of LIFE from the greater whole, there are major elements of the program that contributed to the successful growth of CBNRM in Namibia. These elements were repeatedly mentioned in multiple interviews with the implementers and beneficiaries of the CBNRM program and were confirmed in a workshop in February 2008 at Windhoek.

The six elements detailed below represent a distillation of major themes underlying the success of the program and hold valuable lessons for others undertaking CBNRM initiatives in Southern Africa and throughout the world.

Longevity and continuity of investment are critical.

Since 1993 USAID has provided consistent support for CBNRM in Namibia through the LIFE project. This support has created stability for those in the sector, and allowed CBNRM supporters to enjoy the legitimacy of an international backer and the funding to implement innovative ideas. This support, however, was not planned as a long-term investment, but was the result of a purposefully self-reflective and performance-based process. External evaluations were conducted at the end of LIFE and LIFE II, which informed the decisions to continue funding of the program and direction of the next phase.

One benefit of the long-term support was that the program could experiment, allowed people to make mistakes, and, through the incorporation of lessons learned, adapted the program as it evolved. A long-term support mechanism allows organizations to find out what works, what doesn't, and develop solutions applicable to the local context. This is especially powerful in combination with a significant sub-grants program, as was the case with LIFE, where new organizations have the chance to form and receive long-term support from the grantor. A related strength was that this was a cooperative agreement with WWF, and as such, WWF leveraged other significant sources of funding.

This support enabled pilots and demonstrations to be well understood before they were replicated. With the time to invest heavily in early initiatives, LIFE participants gained experience from support of the Nyae Nyae and Caprivi conservancies, and then used results to gain support and momentum for CBNRM. With a shorter time frame, momentum from early successes might not have had the chance to develop. Without the stability provided by the long-term backing of the LIFE program, it is possible that the early successes might have sputtered out just when they were on the verge of spreading throughout Namibia.

Getting the policy and institutional framework right is a prerequisite.

Predating the LIFE program, there was a movement in Namibia in support of CBNRM, but there was no legislation to codify how it would work. LIFE worked with partners from the beginning to facilitate the furtherance of a policy and institutional framework to support CBNRM. The

success of the CBNRM program is directly related to the strong policy and institutional framework. Empowering legislation provided secure rights to natural resources and the ability to derive benefits from them. In addition, new national institutions were established to provide the capacity and support to manage these resources.

Early on, LIFE and USAID were criticized by MET leadership for intervening in issues more appropriate for Namibians. In response, the program shifted its focus to emphasize a facilitation role in support of a participatory and Namibian-driven policy change process. LIFE brought institutions together to create the space for policy discussion, and to raise awareness and understanding of CBNRM issues. With the passing of the Nature Conservation Amendment Act in 1996, communities that formed as conservancies had rights of ownership over wildlife and tourism revenues and, thereby, had an incentive to join the CBNRM movement and participate in the direction of its evolution.

Another key to the success of the program was the mainstreaming of CBNRM in the national government dialogue, where it is now an element of Namibia's Vision 2030, the MET's strategy, and the National Development Plan 3. Although this mainstreaming was facilitated by LIFE and other actors in the sector, it is important to note that this could not have happened without the Namibian political will to improve the livelihoods of rural and historically disadvantaged populations, and to see CBNRM as a legitimate end to this means and not only a "conservation" tool.

Although the policies for CBNRM in Namibia are far from perfect, their flexibility makes them powerful and allows for substantial discretion at the Conservancy level. Under the legislation, communities can — and indeed must — define their own boundaries, members, management committee election procedures, and distribution of benefits. This level of autonomy in applying the legislation allows the framework to adapt to local needs, which are more sustainable and beneficial to communities. The devolution of control over the benefits stands in contrast to many other CBNRM programs throughout the world. Level of autonomy may well be the critical factor which has made the CBNRM program a burgeoning "social movement" in Namibia.

Success was largely due to a heavy investment in the creation, expansion, and facilitation of partnerships.

By all accounts, one of the most critical areas of support that LIFE provided the CBNRM program was the heavy investment in partnerships. This support took place at many levels, and encompassed actors from a broad spectrum of institutions including the government, the donor community, international and local NGOs, the private sector, and community conservancies and associations. By engaging such a diversity of partners, over an extended period of time, LIFE was able to facilitate the national consensus to recognize the contribution of CBNRM to national goals.

Support by the program took many forms, from the facilitation of meetings, which brought individuals and organizations together, to the creation of new organizations to fill gaps in the CBNRM support structure. By providing a forum for groups to meet, LIFE effectively lowered the cost of investment by any individual organization to reach out and form partnerships. With "neutral ground" to meet and discuss common issues, organizations and individuals skeptical of

the CBNRM program, or on the necessity of partnerships, could meet to just see what others had to say, determine synergies and better accomplish institutional goals.

More than just bringing people together, LIFE assisted to build the capacity of the parties to represent their constituencies, develop common goals, and implement common plans. In some cases, this required the creation of new organizations such as Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO) and Namibia Community-Based Tourism Association (NACOBTA). In the NACSO instance, there was a need for an umbrella organization based in Windhoek to represent the support organizations, whereas NACOBTA was needed as an umbrella organization for community-based tourism enterprises. In other cases, this required educating community conservancies of their rights, providing reasonable returns on partnerships, and helping to instill a sense of empowerment when dealing with the private sector to negotiate a lease for a lodge or a concession for a professional hunter. Simply bringing parties together would have been insufficient as negotiations were likely to be biased by imperfect information and historical power relationships that did not favor communities.

The key tool used to support partnerships was the grant mechanism, which allowed LIFE to provide the operating capital for organizations to take off, expand, or undertake new initiatives. Grants allowed organizations to gain critical experience in the writing of proposals and the management of donor funds. Furthermore, grants figured as key to maintaining the sustainability of the program by strengthening the capacity of independent organizations which could continue after USAID support, and allowing organizations to take on new and innovative activities.

Finally, LIFE promoted regional partnerships and “south-south” knowledge sharing. Early on, this involved learning lessons from Southern African CBNRM programs in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Botswana, and supporting the initial planning stages for the Kavango-Zambezi (KAZA) regional trans-frontier conservation area.¹⁴ After gaining their own experience, Namibia shared its lessons in turn, and exported technologies including the “event book” for use in neighboring countries and as far away as South East Asia. At the community level, the CBNRM program facilitated local knowledge-sharing. With legislation requiring an agreement on conservancy boundaries with neighbors, there was *de facto* communication with any initiating conservancy and its neighbors from the beginning. As conservancies began to generate revenues and return benefits to the community, those neighbors saw the value of setting up a conservancy and often began organizing their own.

A case where the conservancy movement spread from community to community can be seen in the Caprivi region where currently 263,700 hectares of the land is under management by nine conservancies with plans for eight more conservancies that would cover an additional 300,000 hectares (all of the Caprivi region is either part of a national park or communal land). The first two phases of LIFE assisted the CBNRM support organization, IRDNC, to introduce the conservancy concept in Caprivi through grant funds and technical support.

¹⁴ The Kavango-Zambezi Trans Frontier Conservation Area is an ambitious peace parks initiative involving Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The proposed target area includes a major part of the Upper Zambezi basin and the Okavango basin and Delta. Key elements include collaborative management planning between the five countries, adjusting and harmonizing the policy and legal frameworks, and support for sustainable tourism development.

Sound natural resource management institutions can provide a mechanism for addressing broader development needs.

Although the conservancy movement started with natural resource management (NRM) goals and legislation, the conservancies have become a tool for broad-based equitable rural development at the local, regional, and national level, and became MET's contribution to livelihoods, development, and conservation in Namibia. Although the core mission of conservancies is sustainable NRM, they act as facilitators for other community needs, and as they succeed, take on expanding roles.

As strong community organizations, conservancies help to address issues critical to the community such as gender, education, HIV/AIDS, and other health services. They help integrate other sectors into planning such as agriculture and livestock, and assist communities in engaging with regional- and national-level policies and visions. Driven by the communities, this expansion of roles has been a key to establishing national support for the CBNRM movement, and to providing communities with critical services. In one case, the Nyae Nyae Conservancy used their revenues to build a school and pay for the salary of school teachers, and upon hearing of the school, the government added its support by taking up the salary payments for the teachers. This example illustrates how conservancies can directly support broad development goals, as well as acting as an indirect conduit for the flow of government services.

Addressing broader development goals, however, has the potential to strain the capabilities of conservancies and their support institutions. For example, MET, whose mandate and expertise is wildlife and tourism, is responsible for governmental support to conservancies. As conservancies develop business plans and initiate community development projects, such as building schools or roads, MET's capacity may be limited to provide technical support.

While new and old support organizations, including government agencies, have stepped in to fill the need, there is a risk that the focus of the conservancies could move away from NRM and that gains could be lost. The support organizations may not be the proper ones to fill other needs as, for example, wildlife experts and social scientists find themselves in roles better suited to small enterprise development professionals, and the tools they bring to conservancies may not be the most appropriate for evolving community needs.

The opportunity to address broader development needs such as developing a stronger political voice, better claims to land tenure, and access to enterprise development revenues has led to new and emerging conservancies with limited wildlife and tourism potential. Addressing this issue presents an opportunity to increase the scope of the CBRNM program in Namibia beyond its already impressive size, a challenge to maintain focus on NRM and consolidate results, and an opportunity for rural empowerment and improved livelihoods.

Strong leadership and systems of accountability at all levels are critical.

Recognizing partnerships' importance to long-term program success, the LIFE program has helped them to emphasize the importance of strong leadership and systems of accountability, and their capacity for building them. These elements, however, do not only apply to the conservancies and nascent support organizations. Rather, leadership and accountability must be

present at all levels and in all directions — upward, downward, and laterally. This accountability must flow from the government to historically disadvantaged communities, from conservancies to MET, and from the conservancy board to community members.

In practice, accountability and leadership have become focal points for action within several conservancies. In one example, a conservancy changed the responsibility for the operations and financing of a crafts center after questions arose about the mismanagement of funds; since then, the center has seen its revenues steadily increase, and by more than 75 percent in 2007. In another case, when financial growth surpassed the capacity of a conservancy to manage its funds and meet its obligation to share revenues with conservancy members, a trust for the income was established in partnership with a CBNRM support organization to ensure that benefits were reaching the community. Having established the trust, the conservancy continued training to develop sound financial management and budgeting, so that it could continue to run the conservancy, manage community development projects, and distribute revenue. Additionally, private sector associations such as Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations (FENATA) and Namibia Professional Hunting Association (NAPHA), help to provide accountability by mediating disputes between their members and communities, forcing parties to account for their actions.

Strong leaders have been champions within institutions and have driven change benefiting the CBNRM program. Within the government, NGOs, and communities, these leaders have been supported by LIFE and its partners, providing them with platforms for sharing their ideas, the legitimacy of national and international institutional backing, and in some cases, financing for implementing their visions. While there is still work to be done in clarifying the difference between successful managers and leaders, and emphasizing the consequences of unaccountable actions — for example “side deals” for concessions — LIFE support for leadership and accountability has helped to legitimize CBNRM throughout communities and at the national level.

A reliable and useful monitoring and evaluation system that responds to the needs of the grassroots community and feeds into national planning frameworks is critical to sustainable management of natural resources.

One of the most innovative aspects of the LIFE program has been to work with partners in the creation, refinement, and use of a community-based monitoring and evaluation system. This system is now based on the use of “event books” by community game guards and resource monitors. As communities establish goals for the conservancy, they select data they will monitor to meet self-determined needs. Data is recorded using simple visual formats shared with other stakeholders. Typical data points gathered by communities include instances of wildlife conflict, wildlife mortality, levels of rainfall, and meeting frequency and attendance. Using this system, the bottleneck of information synthesis and aggregation typical of many large-scale and externally imposed M&E systems was eliminated as communities design, implement, and see the relevance of their own systems. In addition, gathering the information gave local people valuable skills and provided the basis for national aggregation and reporting.

The community-focused event book system allowed people to clearly understand the link between their actions, resources, and benefits, and created a robust data collection system for use

at the national level. Extensive national data facilitated program evolution and expansion by increasing the CBNRM program's ability to quantify results and produce high-quality reports to capture the attention of national and international organizations. Beginning in 2004, the annual “State of the Conservancies” reports has helped to raise public awareness and support for CBNRM in Namibia, and allowed potential partners to understand the scope of activities and support activities.

Reliable data facilitated a rational allocation of resources and better management planning for community, as well as LIFE and partner organization staff supporting the conservancies. This process is constantly evolving with communities adding modules as they discovered new areas important to them (or dropping what they realized was less so), creating regional reports to meet the need of a particular forum, and adapting event books for use in national parks and other countries. Although the community authority in the selection of elements to monitor presents difficulties of coverage for national reporting, the sustainability and accuracy of the data presents enormous advantages and lessons that can be applied beyond the scope of CBNRM.

SECTION IV. THE PATH FORWARD: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

As the USAID funding for LIFE — LIFE Plus in the current form — comes to a close in 2008, the CBNRM program in Namibia will be entering a new phase without the support of one of its major donors. With CBNRM elevated to the level of a national discussion, increasing land areas and populations in conservancies, an increasing emphasis on economic and social returns, and pressure to expand the functional scope of conservancies into other areas, Namibia's CBNRM program is at a crossroads. New challenges and opportunities will present themselves and demand to be addressed.

The seven points for action below represent a distillation of the major challenges and opportunities for CBNRM. How they are handled will determine the next chapter in the story of CBNRM in Namibia.

Further support is needed to implement a CBNRM sustainability plan.

During 24-25 July, 2007 a broad spectrum of representatives from the CBNRM community met in Windhoek to develop a long-term CBNRM sustainability vision and strategy. This workshop recognized that heavy reliance on donor funds made the program vulnerable. By the end of the workshop, participants produced a vision statement and prioritized critical services in four key sectors — natural resource management, business enterprise and livelihoods, institutional strengthening and governance, and national support — which need to be ensured for program sustainability. The workshop findings were reinforced by the interviews and research that went into the preparation of this report,¹⁵ and continued support for this process is critical to the future of the CBNRM program.

A Valued Rural Development Option

A Namibian CBNRM Programme which empowers present and future generations to manage integrated wildlife and other natural resources as a recognized and valued rural development option.

*– CBNRM Sustainability
Workshop Vision Statement*

This document, however, represented a beginning in the process, and continued support is needed to implement a sustainability plan for CBNRM in Namibia. Preeminent among sustainability needs is CBNRM financing. One issue is the appropriate level of government, NGO, and private sector support for conservancies that lack sufficient wildlife and tourism resources to produce viable returns. Finally, there is a need for tailored sustainability plans for each of the different types of stakeholders. For example, training in business development and marketing is a priority for conservancies, while grant and business plan writing is critical for NGOs and support organizations. This tailored sustainability plan must be further refined and implemented.

¹⁵ Ministry of Environment and Tourism. 2007, Namibia CBNRM Sustainability and Sector Vision Workshop Proceedings. 24-25 July 2007.

The discontinuation of USAID funding for the Namibia CBNRM program presents a challenge in meeting current and future needs.

With the closing of the USAID economic growth program in 2008, the discontinuation of U.S. bilateral funding for LIFE presents a challenge for CBNRM in Namibia. It is important to note that the decision for the discontinuation of support was unrelated to performance, but instead was the result of a shift in strategic realignment of programming within USAID.

Nevertheless, there are other potential sources of U.S. government funding from which the CBNRM program could potentially benefit. Firstly there is the funding of the community-based tourism, indigenous natural products, and livestock sectors in the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) compact with the government of Namibia with negotiations underway. The MCC presents a tremendous opportunity for CBNRM in Namibia with a large influx of funds to key sectors, especially community-based tourism. These funds, however, have the potential to overwhelm human and absorptive capacity for tourism so it is critical for the CBNRM community to actively engage in the compact development process, as it is in negotiations between two governments committed to public participation. While the MCC can more than fill the funding gap for several LIFE grantees, the timeframe for compact implementation is unfortunately uncertain and programmatic reliance on the completion of the complicated negotiation and due diligence phases could be risky.

Other potential U.S.-government funding sources include the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and USAID support through the Southern Africa Regional Mission. With the closing of other aspects of the USAID Mission to Namibia, PEPFAR funding will continue to help combat HIV/AIDS. Although there is no direct connection to the NRM goals of conservancies, many conservancies recognize HIV/AIDS as a major issue and are undertaking initiatives to meet the challenges. To this end, PEPFAR funds could support conservancies, and, thereby, free up conservancy resources to fund initiatives in other social sectors.

Diversification of funding will decrease reliance on single donors or countries. To this end, it is worthwhile to conduct a further exploration of the WWF network, which has always supported the program, through cost-share and programmatic buy-ins. Opportunities and linkages with the Strengthening the Protected Area Network (SPAN) and ICEMA programs can also provide critical funding.

Finally, it is unlikely that the CBNRM program will ever pay for itself in its entirety through CBNRM revenues, and so there always will be a need for reliable and sustainable long-term conservation finance. This conservation finance can take the form of trusts, government budgetary support, user fees or payment for services, or other potential options. Indeed, there are already trust funds in place, for example, the Game Products Trust Fund that partially meet this need. Nevertheless, there are gaps in the systems, goals, transparency, and accountability for these funds that must be addressed before they can fulfill their potential.

Continued evolution in conservancy-related policies has the potential to either facilitate or inhibit growth and success in conservancies.

The conservancy legislation gives the rights of management and ownership over wildlife and tourism, but not other resources. The community forestry legislation gives rights over forests and trees but sets up a parallel system of community structures. Taken together, they give communities good options to manage and benefit from their natural resources. These options, however, may be insufficient for communities and may not respond to the resources that communities have at their disposal, including water, grazing areas, or minerals. The policy framework should be re-examined to establish policies appropriate to address these issues.

There is a need for the harmonization of policy and departmental mandates that currently support communities. MET has wildlife and tourism experts to assist communities, but as conservancies begin to broaden focus to include other development goals, and manage a wider variety of resources, support from other ministries may become critical. Additionally, policies for conservancies and community forests should be examined to see if they can be streamlined and harmonized to save conservancies from having to establish parallel systems of management. Another area where policy harmonization is necessary involves the Ministry of Lands and continued community participation in land boards to address tenure and land use issues. Lease fees to the land boards, and zoning without the consent or collaboration of registered communities, are a potential risk to conservancy viability.

Overall, the policy framework has been favorable enough to spark and sustain the conservancy movement. To move forward, efforts could be made to increase management responsibilities of the conservancies, provide support to the particular needs of the conservancies, and harmonize legislation to clarify and streamline registration and management requirements.

With the diversifying nature of the CBNRM program, there is a current and growing need for skill development.

Capacity building has been a strength of the LIFE program, but as CBNRM continues to expand and evolve, so does the need for capacity building. Furthermore, technical support and human resource capacity building needs may actually surpass funding needs. Given the current level of support for capacity building, opportunities should be explored to improve efficient delivery of services and support, such as through the clustering of training.

Support needs to be tailored to the needs of the actors in the CBNRM arena — from conservancy members to ministries. Illustrations of needs of various institutional clusters are described below:

Support organizations: To reduce reliance on current donor funding through diversification of resources, and to reduce reliance on donor funding in general, CBNRM support organizations need skills in writing grant proposals and business plans. There is a general need for increased qualified staff in the support organizations, and general organizational skills such as management, communications, and facilitation, as well as technical skills specific to their missions.

Conservancies: With the new and emerging conservancies, the continued movement of conservancies across the development spectrum, and the general lower education levels in rural areas, capacity building will remain a major need for conservancies. A major gap in capacity is business management, where conservancies need to learn business planning, management, and contract negotiations. There is the need for tourism training to help conservancies deliver the quality, standards, and reliability that private sector tourism operators need for successful partnerships. FENATA provides tourism mentors, but there is a need to make the connections and create the mentorship opportunity for the conservancies. There is also a need for improved transparency and accountability in conservancy operations.

Government ministries: Ministries need support to improve capacity to mainstream CBNRM into other development priorities and programming. The proposed reorganization within MET provides an opportunity for engagement with CBNRM community, but any scaling up in staff or scope of the organization will require capacity building to ensure high-quality partnerships and service delivery. This is especially important in “complementary skills” such as business management, where MET does not traditionally have those skills or where other ministries do not have a history of working with community groups.

Expanded skills, scopes, and new partners: As the CBNRM Program evolves and expands, strategic expansion of support roles will be needed. This raises important questions: Should organizations enter new sectors or new geographic areas? Should conservancies contract with the private sector to access services? Should new organizations be formed to fill the required roles? Whether new partners or expanded skills will be required will depend on the situation of the conservancy supported, but it is important to acknowledge that current structures may be inadequate to meet future needs.

Efforts need to be shifted to support leadership development.

Efforts should be made to promote leadership development of CBNRM actors. Although this was facilitated by LIFE in the past, there has not been a concerted focus on this goal. As conservancies grow in number and the issues more complex, the need for leadership strengthening — boards and managers, ministries and support organizations — is increasingly important.

The federation of conservancies should continue to be strengthened at the regional and national level so that conservancies have an increased voice in dialogue that will shape future policies and direction for CBNRM. Without strong leadership, the ability to create a common vision and unite behind plans to address common needs may be impossible. Similarly, leadership development within MET should be strengthened so that the future direction of the ministry is clear. This is a need at the level of the Directorate of Tourism where direction of a national tourism strategy and support for actors in the tourism sector has been noticeably lacking. Given that resources and skills to support conservancy needs are limited, the MET restructuring process offers an opportunity for examination and reflection. Leadership development should be undertaken soon.

At the community level, there is a need to help conservancies understand the difference between managers and leaders. Experience has shown that conservancies tend to choose young community members with education and financial skills for leadership positions. While it is clear

that the best educated should be on the management committee and make valuable contributions to the conservancies, true leadership requires a different skill set. In this regard, helping conservancies understand that leaders need to have a vision, and the ability to gather people behind that vision is critical. Often natural candidates with such skills are passed over for those with more education than community standing. The future of conservancies, however, rests with the youth, so efforts should be made to take promising youth and teach them leadership skills to complement areas of financial, managerial, and other education. In this effort, new resources and partners who specialize in leadership development and skills will be needed in consensus building and community organizing.

Partnerships and support packages need to continue to evolve to address changing and broadening needs of conservancies.

Because conservancies are heterogeneous, partnerships and support packages need to be tailored to their needs. This is not to say that each conservancy needs a special package of tools and training developed for their exact needs, which would require tremendous effort and offer no economies of scale; rather, support packages need to be developed for a broad but compartmentalized spectrum of conservancy profiles to capture the major needs of individual conservancies while exploiting the commonalities of clusters of conservancies for more efficient use of resources. The three major factors affecting selection of partners and support are: 1) the place of the conservancy on the development continuum, for example: *emerging > newly formed > low-performing > high-performing > self sufficient*), 2) the suite of natural resources available to the conservancy, and 3) the potential for markets and partners.

Most conservancies would benefit from additional support for better linking to the private sector to take advantage of business opportunities. However, many of the partnerships would be dependent on the resources available — Is there sufficient wildlife for hunting? Are there high-value natural products that could be marketed? Are there cultural draws for tourism? Appropriate support is critical to expand the value and range of products from which the conservancy can benefit. Even if a conservancy has extremely valuable resources, if it is emerging or newly formed, it will require support organizations that can help it to organize, establish management systems, and understand the options. It may only be appropriate to engage in a joint venture tourism lodge, for example, after a conservancy is well established and has experience managing a campsite.

It is important to note that every organization has its own goals, and may be pulled in many directions by its members and clients. Although continued support from a partner focused on one technical area may still be appreciated, it may no longer represent the principal need for the conservancy. For this reason it is critical for LIFE and CBNRM actors to ensure that conservancies receive support and partnerships appropriate to the needs of the conservancies, and tailored packages can help partners to maintain focus on the CBNRM program. Furthermore, communication between partners needs to continue to be supported to ensure that partners are coordinating efforts, expressing their needs, and keeping an open dialogue on the direction of the CBNRM program.

A sustainable vision for CBNRM in Namibia must examine future opportunities.

The opportunities below are under discussion but have yet to be mainstreamed into the CBNRM program. These opportunities may or may not, in the end, be significant vectors of growth for the program, but merit further examination.

A major issue under debate is the role of conservancies as business entities and whether this is appropriate. On the one hand, by acting as business entities, the full economic potential of conservancies could be unleashed and multiply revenues generated. In this model, individual entrepreneurs within the conservancies would be promoted to engage in opportunities with the motivation of private profits and presumably with a percentage returned to the conservancy. Furthermore, conservancies could act more in the role of “owners,” as opposed to managers, of the wildlife and other assets, and hire out experts from the private sector to form and manage profitable enterprises with profits returned to the conservancies. Were the private sector in charge of tourism and hunting in wildlife-rich conservancies, it could generate many times more revenue for the conservancies even after taking their own profits.

These options, however, have some troubling corollaries that challenge basic goals and ideals of some of the CBNRM community. For example, were conservancies and individuals to act as free market enterprises some would – and should – fail. Would this be acceptable to those who aimed to improve the livelihoods of all rural populations in conservancies? Furthermore, by contracting out the management of resources and operations, conservancies may be exchanging capacity building for greater economic returns. In any case, the economic arguments are compelling and more private sector-focused models may be appropriate depending on the circumstances of the conservancies and the goals of the members and CBNRM organizations.

Another opportunity is the projected growth in tourism revenues offered by the conservancies. Firstly, conservancies have products in the growth area of tourism, with open (unfenced) and “wild” spaces, opportunities for cultural tourism (traditional villages, dances, food gathering), and offer a more “authentic African” experience than tourism offered by lodges on freehold farms. Traditional Namibian tourism on freehold lands may be saturated and growth would naturally favor untapped conservancies. Despite attractive options offered by tourism in conservancies, the product will not sell itself and a broad business development optic is needed to brand the Namibian product and form a long-term tourism development strategy.

Finally, opportunities exist to use climate change mitigation, carbon, biodiversity, and payment for environmental services mechanisms to support CBNRM activities in Namibia. Conservancies offer key advantages over other places for such mechanisms, and the sector should explore these options. With strong monitoring and evaluation systems in place at the community level, conservancies can meet stringent monitoring and compliance requirements (trees planted, trees felled, acres under conservation). As community-based organizations, conservancies can tell a story that a company looking for an offset might want to share. This “niche offset” could demand a market premium over, for example, tree plantations or land managed under government control. Whether from the Global Environment Facility for combating land degradation and desertification, biodiversity offsets through a mechanism like Business and Biodiversity Offset Program, or carbon markets developed under the Kyoto protocol, Namibian conservancies’ open spaces, community organization, and monitoring protocols are well positioned to benefit.

SECTION V. CONCLUSIONS

The 15-year investment of USAID in the CBNRM program has contributed to impressive results and pushed Namibia to the forefront of CBNRM worldwide. CBNRM policies have created an enabling environment and mainstreamed CBNRM into national development planning. Partnerships have been created and strengthened with a robust network of organizations now supporting the sector. CBNRM has become a social movement in Namibia with communities lining up to be registered because they recognize the value of wildlife, both intrinsic and economic, and the increased voice that a conservancy can provide.

This success was largely due to the vision and leadership of the government of Namibia, the efforts of WWF and its implementing partners through a cooperative agreement with USAID, other international partners, the private sector, support organizations, and communities in Namibia who pushed for change and poverty reduction in rural areas. All of these groups have made major contributions to the LIFE project and the CBNRM program, and are integral to consolidating gains and expanding the impact of the program for long-term success and sustainability.

With the completion of USAID bilateral funding, the recent high-profile role that CBNRM has gained in Namibia, and proposed policies and reorganizations within the Namibian government, the program is at a critical point. Given the impressive gains that have thus far been achieved, the natural and human resources in Namibia, and the network of partners dedicated to the sector, CBNRM has the potential to build on key conservation and development results to play an increasingly important role in the future of Namibia and its people.

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ANNEX B. WEB SITES OF INTEREST

Ministry of Environment and Tourism Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA)

<http://www.met.gov.na/dea/>

[Caprivi Region](#): Data compiled by the Environmental Profiles Projects on the Caprivi Region

[Atlas of Namibia](#): Information, maps and data compiled by the Atlas of Namibia Project are downloadable here.

[FRAME country page for Namibia](#)

[Namibia Nature Foundation](#)

[Ministry of Environment and Tourism](#)

[Namibia Association of CBNRM Support Organizations \(NACSO\)](#)

[CBNRM Net: The Community-Based Natural Resource Management Network](#)

ANNEX C. PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Name	Organization
Pierre Du Plessis	Centre for Research Information Action in Africa (CRIAA)
Brian Jones	Consultant (Former MET, LIFE, USAID)
Jacqueline Asheeke	Federation of Namibian Tourism Associations (FENATA)
Jo Tagg	Integrated Community-Based Ecosystem Management Project (ICEMA)
Richard Diggle	Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE)
Ruben Masati	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)
John Kamwi	Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC)
Bumhill Campsite Managers	Kwandu Conservancy
Committee and Staff	Kyaramacan Association
Beauty Jiji	Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE)
Greg Stuart-Hill	Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE)
Chris Weaver	Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE)
Andee Davidson	Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE)
Committee and Staff	Mashi Conservancy
Community Rangers	Mashi Conservancy
Staff	Mashi Crafts Market
Tsukhoe //Garoes	Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET)
Olga Katjuongua	Namibia Community-based Tourism Assistance Trust (NACOBTA)
Usiel Ndjavera	Namibia Community-based Tourism Assistance Trust (NACOBTA)
Ronnie Dempers	Namibia Development Trust (NDT)
Anna Davis	Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)
Chris Brown	Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)
Rachel Malone	Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF)
Almut Kronsbein	Namibia Prof Hunters Association (NAPHA)
Velia Kurz	Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO)
Maxi Louis	Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations (NACSO)
Committee and Staff	Nyae Nyae Conservancy
Lara Diez	Nyae Nyae Development Foundation of Namibia
Len Le Roux	Rossing Foundation
Midori Paxton	Strengthening Protected Area Network Project (SPAN)

ANNEX D. CONSERVANCY DETAILS

Name	Area (Km ²)	Date Registered	Population
Nyae Nyae	9,003	Feb-98	2,300
≠ Khoadi - //Hôas	3,366	Jun-98	3,200
Salambala	930	Jun-98	7,700
Torra	3,522	Jun-98	1,200
Doro !Nawas	4,073	Dec-99	1,500
Kwandu	190	Dec-99	4,300
Mayuni	151	Dec-99	2,400
Twyfelfontein-Uibasen	286	Dec-99	230
Wuparo	148	Dec-99	2,100
Puros	3,568	May-00	260
Ehrovipuka	1,975	Jan-01	2,500
Marienfluss	3,034	Jan-01	300
Tsiseb	8,083	Jan-01	2,000
Oskop	95	Feb-01	120
Sorri-Sorris	2,290	Oct-01	1,300
Mashi	297	Mar-03	3,900
Omatendeka	1,619	Mar-03	2,500
Otjimboyo	448	Mar-03	1,000
Uukwaluudhi	1,437	Mar-03	25,000
!Khub !Naub(kalk Plateau)	2,747	Jul-03	5,000
//Gamaseb	1,748	Jul-03	5,000
//Huab	1,817	Jul-03	5,000
Anabeb	1,570	Jul-03	2,000
N#a -Jaqna	9,120	Jul-03	7,000
Okangundumba	1,131	Jul-03	2,500
Orupembe	3,565	Jul-03	400
Ozondundu	745	Jul-03	2,000
Sanitatas	1,446	Jul-03	250
Sesfontein	2,591	Jul-03	2,500
≠Gaingu	7,677	Mar-04	2,800
Joseph Mbambangandu	36	Mar-04	1,000
!Gawachab	132	Sep-05	500
African Wild Dog	3,824	Sep-05	5,500
George Mukoya	486	Sep-05	2,000
King Nehale	508	Sep-05	20,000
Muduva Nyangana	615	Sep-05	2,000
Okomatapati	3,096	Sep-05	3,000
Otjituuo	6,133	Sep-05	9,000
Ozonahi	3,204	Sep-05	5,500
Shamungwa	53	Sep-05	1,000
Sheya Shuushona	5,066	Sep-05	35,360
Uukolonkadhi/Ruacana	2,993	Sep-05	25,000
Impalila	147	Dec-05	1,500

Name	Area (Km ²)	Date Registered	Population
Kasika	73	Dec-05	1,500
Sobbe	404	Oct	2,000
Kunene River	2,764	Oct	2,000
//Audi	335	Oct	1,000
Ohungu	1,211	Oct	1,000
Ondjou	8,729	Oct	2,000
Balyerwa	223	Oct	1,500
	118,704		220,620

Total Population and Area by Year 1998-2007

