

**COMMUNITY-BASED NATURAL RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT (CBNRM) IN KUNENE**
- A five-year proposal: 1 July 2002 – 30 June 2007

<u>Implementing NGO:</u>	Integrated Rural Development & Nature Conservation – IRDNC
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<u>Project location:</u>	Kunene Region, north-west Namibia ¹
<u>Project period:</u>	1 July 2002 – 30 June 2007
<u>Total funding:</u>	GBP1 698 419 plus GOS salary- See separate DRAFT budget
<u>Already secured:</u>	
<u>Development goal:</u>	To contribute to an enhanced quality of life and alleviation of poverty of rural Namibians through improved natural resource management
<u>Purpose:</u>	To <i>link</i> democracy and sustainable social and economic development to conservation and management of natural resources in Kunene Region.
<u>Objectives:</u>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To build the skills and capacity of <i>fast track conservancies</i> to sustainably manage their wildlife and other natural resources; to develop as effective democratic rural institutions; and to engage in income generating activities so as to achieve economic viability within five years.2. To build the skills and capacity of <i>medium track conservancies</i> to sustainably manage their wildlife and other natural resources; to develop as effective democratic rural institutions; and to engage in income generating activities so as to have started earning significant income by the end of the five year period.

¹ The programme is directly involved in conservancy development in about 60% of Kunene Region, in the north and northwest. It is indirectly involved in the other 40% of the region, to the south, where communities are also forming conservancies.

3. To build the skills and capacity of ***long track conservancies*** to sustainably manage their wildlife and other natural resources; to develop as effective democratic rural institutions; and to engage in income generating activities so as to have linked wise management of natural resources to rural development, and planning and implementing developments accordingly.

4. To provide and monitor interim ***financial support*** for conservancies, and provide and/or access training in book-keeping, financial management and accountability for conservancy staff and treasurers.

5. To ***advocate CBNRM*** nationally and internationally by building up the capacity and skills of IRDNC's staff, with special emphasis on workers from remote rural areas and women; to mentor and exchange knowledge and skills with partners in Namibia; to foster trans-boundary links, including skills and knowledge exchange in the southern African region.

6. To provide ***core costs*** to IRDNC'S technical team; to achieve effective and efficient project management, monitoring and evaluation and to document and disseminate data and lessons learned.

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List of acronyms

APU	<i>Anti-poaching unit</i>
CBNRM	<i>Community Based Natural Resource Management</i>
CBTE	<i>Community Based Tourism Enterprise</i>
CBO	<i>Community-based Organization</i>
CGG	<i>Community/Conservancy Game Guard</i>
CRM	<i>Conservancy Resource Monitor</i>
DEA	<i>Directorate of Environmental Affairs</i>
EAO	<i>Environmental Awareness & Outreach (unit)</i>
GIS	<i>Geographic Information Systems</i>
GPS	<i>Global Positioning System</i>
IRDNC	<i>Integrated Rural Development & Nature Conservation</i>
LAC	<i>Legal Assistance Centre</i>
LIFE	<i>Living in a Finite Environment</i>
MET	<i>Ministry of Environment & Tourism</i>
NACOBTA	<i>Namibia Community Based Tourism Association</i>
NACSO	<i>Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations</i>
NANGOF	<i>Namibian NGO Forum</i>
NDT	<i>Namibian Development Trust</i>
NNF	<i>Namibia Nature Foundation</i>
NGO	<i>Non-governmental Organisation</i>
NRM	<i>Natural Resource Management</i>
PAC	<i>Problem Animal Control</i>
PAM	<i>Problem Animal Management</i>
RISE	<i>Rural Institute for Social Empowerment</i>
RF	<i>Rossing Foundation</i>
SADC	<i>Southern Africa Development Countries</i>
SARPO	<i>Southern African Regional programme office (WWF)</i>
SRT	<i>Save the Rhino Trust</i>
TBNRM	<i>Trans-boundary Natural Resource Management</i>
WWF	<i>World Wild Fund for Nature Fund</i>

1. Introduction

“ . . . conservation in Africa does not need another ‘privileged solution’: it requires a policy process that is more effective for meeting contemporary and future challenges. The achievement of the counter narrative (to fortress conservation) is not that it proves that community conservation ‘works’: it is that it has created the space for a set of community conservation experiments that take many forms and are achieving very different results. These demand intensive monitoring and study so that the knowledge they create can be fed back into policy and action. The pressing contemporary issue is how to relate and mix strategies that incorporate elements of fortress conservation and community conservation, not to prove that one is always better than the other.” - Adams and Hulme (2002:22) in African Wildlife and Livelihoods – the promise and performance of community conservation. Edited by David Hulme and Marshall Murphree. James Curry Ltd.

Namibia’s national community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) programme, of which the Kunene programme is the pioneer, aims to *link* democracy and social and economic development to the conservation and management of natural resources.

As such the Kunene programme provides a holistic approach to achieving long-term bio-diversity conservation by integrating sustainable natural resource management into the social and economic development of residents of this remote region in north-west Namibia.

CBNRM does not exclude or oppose other approaches to conservation, including national parks and other types of reserves, but maintains that:

- ❑ Local users are manifestly the best managers of their natural resources.
- ❑ Unless local users of natural resources have real rights and responsibilities over their resources, and have been assisted to develop democratic, representative and effective *local* social structures to exercise such rights and responsibilities, it is unrealistic and unfair to expect the rural poor in particular – and developing states such as Namibia in general - to prioritize nature conservation.

The Kunene programme’s focus on both democracy-building and participatory development promotes the economic upliftment of the majority of residents, and seeks to avoid the usual skewed pattern of a minority elite capturing rights over and benefits from common property resources in Africa – a situation which demonstrably provides no conservation incentives for the majority, and involves no accountability on the part of those exploiting the resources.

In effect, the CBNRM philosophy attempts to weave together best practices from free enterprise and common property management to support long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability of rural Namibia.

2. History

The Kunene programme started in the early 1980s as a small anti-poaching effort. It differed from other such projects in Africa at that time in that it worked *in partnership* with local traditional leadership who appointed their own community game guards.

Although this network of local men proved effective and within a year the massive illegal hunting of all species, including elephant and black rhino, had been brought under control, the then South West African Government refused to tolerate the community empowerment implicit in the project's approach. The game guards were not informants or spies for nature conservation but were a mechanism for local people and their leaders to become directly involved in wildlife conservation.

In early 1986 in an unsupportive political environment, the project was closed down by government and the support organization – the Endangered Wildlife Trust – was ordered to stop funding the project executive and his staff. He remained in the area, however, and continued low-key work in spite of security police harassment.

In late 1987 he and a small team, the founders of what was soon to become IRDNC, a Namibian NGO, pioneered a bed-night levy from a series of Endangered Wildlife Trust tour groups to the Puros community. The levy was paid to a committee of Puros residents as caretakers of their wildlife on which the tourism activities were based. A small craft development project was also started at Puros. At this time the Endangered Wildlife Trust re-instated its support.

In spite of severe criticism by the SWA government and conservation establishment of the levy, members of the Puros community proved able to handle and equitably distribute the money, and the link between rural development and conservation was entrenched.

In 1990 the government of newly independent Namibia endorsed the community-based approach to conservation, promising legislation changes in due course. IRDNC, now with full government support, entered into its long-term partnership with WWF and the community-based natural resource management programme was launched in both Kunene and Caprivi, the country's two most remote regions.

Programme staff assisted the new government in a consultative process during which rural people living with wildlife were given the opportunity to state their problems, needs and aspirations. Based on this, the conservation ordinance was amended in 1996 to allow communal area residents the same conditional rights and responsibilities over wildlife – and over tourism – that commercial farmers had enjoyed for more than a decade. The legal mechanism provided to exercise such rights and responsibilities was the *conservancy*. This is not a game reserve but common property management area zoned by its own residents for different uses, including core wildlife conservation, mixed wildlife and farming, eco-tourism, hunting, emergency grazing etc.

The programme's focus thus changed from project implementation to providing technical support to those communities that wished to fulfill the relatively stringent conditions for conservancy registration. In 1997 five Kunene communities were

attempting to develop conservancies. By January 2002, six months before the end of this programme cycle, four of these communities had registered their conservancies and more than 20 other northern Kunene communities were at different stages of conservancy formation.

The first Kunene conservancy, Torra, was earning sufficient income to meet its own management costs and to make a profit for its members. Nine other registered or emerging conservancies similarly have the potential to become economically viable within three to five years, thereby ending their need for donor funding; another 10 should be earning significant income so that start-up donor funding can be reduced and the others will be positive towards wildlife conservation as a land-use and have improved management of other natural resources due to the local linkage of wise NRM to social and economic development.

The conservancy is not seen as the panacea to conservation and development in rural development. It merely provides a mechanism for a democratic, representative and transparent *social* structure through which common property natural resources can be jointly managed and linked to development. Through capacity-building and training conservancy staff, committee members and ordinary members are proving themselves better equipped to meet the challenges of seeking to achieve sustainable development in a modern world.

In the past five years CBNRM and the conservancy process has become a national movement, involving more than 45 communities in six regions, representing more than 100 000 people, most of whom are remote rural residents, and covering an area in excess of 8 million ha. Ten Namibian NGOs and government are involved, having formed NACSO, the National CBNRM Association for Support Organizations, to ensure co-ordination and co-operation. NACSO operates through a series of multi-NGO and government working groups, including Natural Resource Management, Institutional Development, Income Generation, Legal Support, Training, Research and others.

NACSO partners are also engaged in providing technical support to the 15 registered and 30-plus emerging conservancies across Namibia to form an umbrella organization to facilitate the movement's collective capacity to bring members' needs, views and issues to central government. This is a major step for democracy building in young Namibia, as for logistic and other reasons, people living in remote areas have little access to and input into central government policy.

3. Status of natural resource base and socio-economy

Situation of Kunene Region: North-west corner of Namibia, bordered by the Kunene River, Namibia's boundary with Angola in the north, opposite Angola's Iona National Park, with Etosha National Park along part of its eastern boundary and the Skeleton Coast Park and Atlantic Ocean in the west.

Physical characteristics: Pro-namib plains and mountainous regions broadly comprising the northern Namib Desert (100 to 600 metres a.s.l.) and interior

highlands (1000 to 2000 metres a.s.l.) divided by a rugged escarpment. Riparian woodland occurs along parts of Kunene River and other large season rivers.

Size: Approximately 70 000 square kilometres.

Vegetation: *Mopane/Terminalia* dominated woodland and savannah in the interior; *Commiphora/Euphorbia* dominated steppe in the west.

Climate: Semi-arid to hyper-arid (350 mm rainfall to less than 50 mm rainfall).

Political status: Kunene is one of 13 regions in Namibia, with a Governor and elected Regional Councilors. It is state administered communal land, with no conservation status. In the project area (central and northern Kunene), four conservancies have been registered by resident communities with a further 20-plus in formation. Three to four registered or developing conservancies exist in southern Kunene.

Human population in Kunene Region: About 100 000 people, comprising Herero (about 50%), Himba (15%), Damara (30%), Riemvasmaker and Nama groups. In the north and northwestern target area there are a higher proportion of Herero and Himba semi-nomadic pastoralists.

Socio-economy: Successful semi-nomadic pastoralism and marginal sedentary livestock farming (cattle, goats and sheep) with some small-scale dryland and irrigated agriculture. Eco-tourism, government and NGO employment is the main income generator.

Local units of management: North – autonomous patrilineages under traditional headmen (Himba and Herero). South – elected headmanship, farmers unions. Seven registered and 20-plus emerging conservancies (so far) in which traditional authorities and local people elect a committee.

Wildlife: A wide variety of arid savannah and desert-adapted species including elephant, black rhino, giraffe, plains (Burchell's) and mountain (Hartmann's) zebra, greater kudu, oryx (gemsbok), impala, springbok, duiker, steenbok, klipspringer, dikdik and warthog. Predators include lion, leopard, cheetah and spotted and brown hyena. Cape hunting dogs have been extinct for about 25 years.

Summaries of 1982 - 2001 Kunene wildlife censuses

Note Kunene Region is NOT a game reserve and the programme target area is home to about 100 000 people. Massive commercial poaching was underway in the early 1980s when the project started as a small community game guard pilot project. Illegal hunting, plus the worst drought in living memory between 1979-82, contributed to the extensive die-off of virtually all game species. *All censuses except the 2001 vehicle route count were aerial.*

Table 1: Wildlife numbers for Kunene

Species	1982	1986	1990	1995	2001
Elephant	250	*	*	384	561
Black rhino	65	93	*	114	**
Giraffe	220		300	*	1 075
Zebra	450	900	2 200	*	12 593
Oryx	400	800	1 800	*	15 364
Springbok	650	2 000	7 500	*	74 575
Kudu	*	*	*	*	3 050
Ostrich	*	*	*	*	6 060

* Data not available

** Due to the increase in rhino numbers, we have a national policy that this data is no longer made public without special permission from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. There has been no known rhino (or elephant) poaching in the project area in the past 5 years, and insignificant poaching of other species. In the majority of such cases, convictions have been obtained due to joint efforts of community or conservancy game guards and Ministry of Environment and Tourism field staff.

Rhino are monitored by the SRT, working closely with conservancy staff, MET and IRDNC. An elephant monitoring project has also been initiated, with conservancy staff receiving training.

Lion, famous for their habit of periodically moving to the Skeleton Coast Park along Kunene's western boundary, and preying on seals were thought to have been shot out more than a decade ago. However, recent MET research and community stock losses indicate that lions have rebounded and a number of prides are thriving. Collars have been fitted to individual animals from each pride for tracking and work with conservancies is underway to minimize stock and predator losses. Other predators are also holding their own.

Sources for information in Table 1:

2001: A joint Ministry of Environment and Tourism, NGO and Kunene conservancies census, done by vehicle routes. *Note this method differs from the others, which were aerial surveys.*

1995: ELESMAAP aerial census of elephants, Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Windhoek

1982, 86, 90 – aerial counts by MET and project staff/ IRDNC reports and records

Other: IRDNC reports, proposals (1997, 2001) and evaluations (1997, 2000)

4. Achievements to date

Five years ago when the penultimate phase of this program started, the following end of project situation was envisaged in the proposal document. What has been achieved is listed below each point.

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

1. The natural resource base is being managed by communities with technical input provided by government, and the natural resource base is sound and growing. Ecological degradation has been decreased and ecosystem function is being maintained.

ACHIEVED by January 2002 – six months before end of this project phase

- ✓ A network of 56 conservancy game guards are being managed by conservancy committees and traditional authorities, with technical input by government and NGOs, and game numbers have steadily increased over the past five years. No known elephant² or rhino poaching has occurred and illegal hunting of other species has been insignificant, with convictions usually obtained through conservancy/community game guard and Ministry of Environment and Tourism co-operation.
- ✓ A successful wildlife census took place across Kunene in June 2001 with full community participation and support. Dramatic increases of all species were recorded, as shown on page 8 under Status of Natural Resource Base and Socio-economy.
- ✓ Wildlife management plans have been completed or are in progress in four conservancies, with registered conservancies monitoring their rhino and elephant populations in partnership with NGOs and MET.
- ✓ Significantly, problem animal *control* activities are evolving into problem animal *management*, with conservancies playing a key role.
- ✓ Communities are now focused on their natural resource base as the foundation for rural development, and conservancy visions include moving beyond just wildlife to better management of resources such as grazing, water and riparian woodlands.

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

2. The subsistence economy has diversified to the extent that natural resources in the project area are an integral part of the economy, complementing the more orthodox sources of income (e.g. livestock and crops/gardens)

² One elephant carcass was found in 2001 containing a bullet, but with ivory and meat intact

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ The traditional subsistence economy is integrated with tourism and wildlife management in conservancies, and local socio-economies are thus diversifying to include a range of complementary enterprises. These include lucrative joint tourism ventures, trophy hunting, small-scale community game harvests, craft sales, trails guiding, car-tyre repair shops, a bakery, cultural and traditional villages for tourists, community-run campsites.
- ✓ Five conservancies have produced PRA resource, social and institutional maps as a basis for land-use mapping, tourism planning and integrated resource maps.
- ✓ A north-west tourism plan commissioned by central government has been completed, with staff and conservancy input. Phase two, focusing in more detail on individual conservancies, has started. Regional Government has endorsed the integrated plan.

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

3. At least three conservancies are in place, with responsibility and authority to manage wildlife and other natural resources thus devolved to the conservancy management committee. At least two other communities are in the process of developing conservancies.

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ Four conservancies are registered, with a further 20-plus in process of formation in target area.
- ✓ Management plans are in place for four conservancies and all emerging conservancies have appointed conservancy game guards, a number of them as voluntary workers.
- ✓ A further one to two conservancies are likely to be registered in the target area before the end of the current project in June 2002.

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

4. Benefits are being generated from natural resources, with at least two joint ventures between communities and the private sector and three community-run enterprises functioning. Other forms of income – live game sale, small scale game harvesting, sport/trophy hunting and bed night levies from established tourism operators to neighboring communities – have been facilitated.

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ One conservancy, Torra, is earning sufficient income to no longer need donor funding to meet the costs of employing a staff of seven, running an office and a vehicle.
- ✓ So far two lucrative joint ventures are operational in Torra Conservancy – a tourism JV and a small trophy hunting JV. The former has earned a total

dividend of N\$655 408 for Torra since 1997, plus more than N\$816 258 in wages. The trophy hunting contract has brought in more than N\$120 000 per year for the past three years.

- ✓ A further two joint ventures are being negotiated elsewhere.
- ✓ Four community-run enterprises have been facilitated by the project, with several more initiated by communities themselves.
- ✓ Three private sector bed-night levies are being paid to communities with a further three being negotiated.
- ✓ Game harvesting has taken place in two conservancies.
- ✓ One small game sale has taken place – the first time a Namibian community has ever been able to sell its wildlife commercially.
- ✓ One trophy hunting concession was issued by a conservancy and negotiations for two more elsewhere are in progress.
- ✓ A range of crafts are being developed and marketed, providing cash income opportunities some of the area's most marginalized people, including women, the illiterate and the elderly.

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

5. Benefits going to communities are being equitably distributed. Management responsibility of committees etc. is rotated regularly and gender and age equity are supported in the process of decision-making.

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ Benefit distribution has proved to be a difficult step for community-based organizations as the demands of the democratic process have delayed consensus among members and as a result, Torra's profits, for example, so far remain largely unspent. However, a 5-year strategic vision survey among members facilitated in November 2001 has given a newly elected committee a mandate to move forward on how to use profits.
- ✓ Gender equity has improved considerably, with project focus not on improving quotas in conservancy committees but on building up the capacity of women to play a role in CBNRM.
- ✓ Annual or even two yearly elections of full committees has proved problematic when newly built skills and capacity are lost as inexperienced committee members assume office. This has been addressed in some conservancies by amending the constitution to allow for staggered elections so that not all committee members are replaced at once. Another solution, in the case of conservancies with high income potential, is the creation of a conservancy manager post.
- ✓ A working manual on the 5-year visioning process modeled in Torra has been produced and will be used as the basis for surveys in all registering conservancies. The manual is shared with NACSO partners.

- ✓ **The difficult issue of balancing an individual farmer's losses to problem animals with conservancy benefits, rights and responsibilities has been highlighted and strategies developed, including an innovative compensation plus insurance scheme which is due to be trialed in three Kunene (and four Caprivi) conservancies in 2002.**

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

6. Community wealth and well-being within conservancies has improved. Conservancies are actively involved in managing healthy ecosystems, members are deriving social and economic benefits from it, and they are thus directly contributing to their own development needs.

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ More than 100 jobs have been created across Kunene within the various community-based tourism enterprises and by conservancies, over and above the 120-plus jobs in existing private enterprise tourism operations which are doing well because of increasing wildlife.
- ✓ Social benefits include communities' increased sense of empowerment as a result of the devolution of rights over wildlife and tourism, as per conservancy legislation.
- ✓ At quarterly planning and evaluation forums facilitated by the project, conservancy representatives have demonstrated heightened sense of their democratic rights, and are holding both government and NGO staff accountable, instead of passively accepting all inputs.
- ✓ Conservancies are also starting to co-ordinate development inputs and are manifesting improved organizational, planning and implementing skills, as well as the ability to make inputs into national policies.
- ✓ **A steering committee to launch the country's first communal area conservancy umbrella body has been formed, a draft constitution has been developed and circulated.**
- ✓ **A conflict resolution committee formed by senior representatives of a number of Kunene conservancies attending IRDNC's quarterly planning workshops, has taken the initiative to mediate in conflicts between communities, including in the problematic Sesfontein area. The committee has achieved a number of successes and has been given a mandate by the Deputy Minister of MET to continue its efforts at resolving disputes. It has requested the MET field staff to use its services.**

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

7. Community attitudes have changed, recognizing the importance of the environment and its value in economic and social terms. Constraints, opportunities and need for action in land use and natural resource management can be identified and appropriate actions taken.

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ New vision which links wise natural resource management to development, poverty alleviation and democratic rights has been generated in the region by the CBNRM programme. An indicator is the upsurge in the number of communities engaging in CBNRM activities, including voluntary game guards and conservancy development. The result has been that the number of communities wishing to form conservancies in the target area has risen from five in 1997 to 26 to date.
- ✓ Conservancies are providing a forum for their members to identify constraints and opportunities, and the organization skills fostered by the programme have enabled remote rural area dwellers to collectively lobby central government on a number of issues. As discussed, this represents a major step forward for Namibia's democracy-building process, as well as progress towards more sustainable livelihoods in such areas.
- ✓ The lucrative Torra Conservancy joint ventures, various exchange visits for communities and other capacity building activities have clearly changed attitudes of target communities who now see their communal land, wildlife and other natural resources as valuable and as the foundation for sustainable development. Indicators include the number of Himba conservancies which, on their own initiative, have appointed tree monitors and the fact that conservancies are no longer uncritically accepting all or any tourism investment offers, and are seeking legal and NACSO input.
- ✓ A number of conservancies have taken legal action against individuals who have illegally occupied prime sites such as natural springs for their own tourism business without entering into some sort of agreement with the conservancy.

ENVISAGED in 1997 to be achieved by June 2002

8. The rights of communities to have access to and the responsibility for management of their natural resources are recognized by the national and international community, and the importance of community-based natural resource management in this process is acknowledged.

ACHIEVED by January 2002

- ✓ Across Namibia a total of 15 communal area conservancies have been gazetted, and another 35 to 40 communities are in various stages of conservancy formation in six regions. Government is firmly committed to this CBNRM movement, with the first conservancies having being launched at a national event by the President. The CBNRM policy has been enshrined in law. The new offices of two Kunene conservancies were recently opened by the Deputy Minister of Environment and Tourism.
- ✓ MET has formed a CBNRM unit which should greatly assist in ironing out inconsistencies in interpretation and application of the young legislation.

- ✓ **Gaps in policy and the need to integrate community-based approaches to management of water, grazing and woodlands have been identified and strategies to address these issues are being developed by the increasingly strong national team that has evolved.**
- ✓ Ten Namibian NGOs, some of them development organizations, are now engaged in CBNRM support in different parts of the country and the previous divide between conservation and development has reduced.
- ✓ The Kunene Governor and Regional Council are strong supporters of CBNRM and conservancies. Similarly, elsewhere in Namibia such as Caprivi, Regional Councils have endorsed the CBNRM movement.
- ✓ The programme's quarterly planning and evaluation workshops, attended by representatives of all target conservancies, have become an important information-sharing forum, attended by the Governor, MET, NACSO partners and various researchers.
- ✓ Virtually all researchers, including those engaged in elephant, black rhino and giraffe research, now work with and through conservancy committees and members, ensuring that research is more relevant and useful locally, and that local knowledge and experience enriches research findings.

Additional progress/developments not envisaged:

- ✓ The network of trained community staff created by this programme are serving as an effective conduit for HIV/AIDS awareness, and a number of different organizations are making use of this network. Conservancy committees are being encouraged by programme staff to make AIDS educational material and condoms freely available to members e.g. in conservancy offices.
- ✓ In 1997 IRDNC was almost alone as the main field implementer of CBNRM. Today, government field staff in Kunene is strongly behind the movement and increasingly, strong national technical support is being provided by a team of NGOs, thereby vastly increasing the sustainability of CBNRM. Ten NGOs and government have formed NACSO – the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organizations - to co-ordinate the evolving vision and technical support. MET has just set up a CBNRM unit.
- ✓ A number of strong teams have developed, capitalizing on NACSO members diverse skills, to provide technical input as required by registered and emerging conservancies in different regions of Namibia. For example, MET, LIFE and IRDNC have formed an effective NRM technical team assisting conservancies to develop suitable tools for monitoring and managing wildlife.
- ✓ Similarly, tourism issues, including the new ground of joint ventures between CBOs and private enterprise, are being tackled by a NACOBTA-led team acting as 'honest brokers', thereby maximizing opportunity for a fair deal for both parties. The institutional development team is assisting the sharing of lessons learnt and resources among NGOs.

5. Project strategy

5.1 Development goal: *To contribute to an enhanced quality of life and alleviation of poverty of rural Namibians through improved natural resource management.*

This over-arching goal is a realistic assessment of what the project should have achieved in its target area by the end of 2007, and indeed, a difference has already been made in people's lives: creation of local jobs, more income and above all, a new vision for the future.

In this vision, rural people see themselves as having or acquiring the skills and capacity to steer their own development. The conservancy is providing an organizational forum to coordinate and integrate development and natural resource management activities.

Wildlife, formerly regarded as a nuisance or irrelevant to modern development, is now widely viewed – and increasingly experienced - as a major resource to be sustainably managed for *social* as well as economic benefits.

Strong emphasis is placed on the need to enhance the quality of life and increase livelihood security of Namibians living far from areas of high economic opportunity such as the capital and large towns. All of Kunene falls within arid or semi-arid zones, and much of the terrain is marginal not only for agriculture, but also for intensive livestock farming. The greatest potential to diversify this rural economy lies in the region's wildlife and tourism resources.

The next five years – the final phase – are probably the most important of this long-term programme. During this period the vision that has been generated in the Kunene must be brought to full fruition. Accordingly, three years of intensified technical, logistic and financial support in Natural Resource Management training, Community Capacity Building and Income Generation/Enterprise Development are planned, with a further two years in which support will be phased out so as to facilitate sustainability of CBNRM in the region.

5.2 Project Purpose

The purpose for the five-year life of this project is:

To *link* democracy and sustainable social and economic development to conservation and management of natural resources in Kunene.

The concept of *democracy* as well as social and economic development being linked to conservation and management of natural resources has been explicitly added for this final phase in response to lessons learned from the way in which CBNRM has evolved in Namibia and elsewhere in the previous five years.

While human rights and democracy are implicit in the philosophy of CBNRM, it has become apparent that devolution of rights over natural resources and tourism to

community-based organizations – conservancies – is a radical social transformation in post-colonial southern Africa.

Responses to moving such rights - and directly linking them to responsibility - from a centralized locus or, in some cases, out of the hands of a small local elite to a democratic, locally representative body have varied from relatively straight forward in some areas to conflicting and extremely problematic in others.

Boundary disputes between emerging conservancies characterized the first years after the 1996 enabling legislation. Many of these have been resolved and while boundaries are still an important issue in a few emerging conservancies, the conflicts have lessened due to enhanced local understanding of and support for CBNRM.

Currently, one of the most important areas of conflict is around tourism rights, including the rights of individual entrepreneurs vs. those of the collective membership of a conservancy. Conservancies do not prohibit individually owned tourism businesses but require the owner to enter into some form of legal agreement with the conservancy as the body responsible for the management and conservation of the common property natural resources on which such tourism business are based. A small levy from profits may be required.

The existing (mostly white) tourism industry has been slow to accept this principle, with some notable exceptions. But even more problematic has been the refusal of some local (black) entrepreneurs to take conservancy structures and communal rights into account. A perception is that the independence of Namibia means a free-for-all – that individuals have the right to enrich themselves on communal resources in the name of affirmative action.

The Namibian Government has attempted to deal with this in the long term by undertaking a North West Tourism Plan, which explicitly acknowledges conservancies and Phase 2 of this planning process is to assist conservancies to identify their best options for tourism development. The project has been able to contribute to Phase 1 and is part of the Phase 2 team. Using the data provided by the plan, each conservancy will develop its own tourism plan, coordinating with neighboring conservancies and fitting into the overall NW tourism plan, as well as the regional development plan.

However, in the short-term proactive steps are required to deal with the various conflicts around campsites, and a strong national team involving government, NACOBTA, IRDNC, LAC, LIFE and other NGOs is engaged in assisting in conflict resolution.

The new opportunities and rights created by the 1996 enabling legislation have thrown into sharp relief existing fissures within some communities: disputes over traditional leadership, land, power and patronage, with party politics playing an incisive and often divisive role.

- A notable development during 2001 was the emergency of a Dispute Resolution Committee, initiated and made up of senior representatives from six Kunene conservancies. This local forum developed out of the Kunene

project's quarterly planning meetings where conservancy representatives list and discuss the previous three-month's progress and problems, plus present their conservancies plans for the next quarter. In its short existence the committee has taken the long-standing and acrimonious Sesfontein conflict to a new, more positive position, and has notched up several other mediation successes. It has requested the MET to use it as a forum to address community conflicts, and received the endorsement of the Deputy Minister of MET. This group has requested logistic and technical support, and IRDNC has suggested that NACSO provide this, rather than IRDNC so that the team can retain some independence from the Kunene programme.

Basic principles of CBNRM – that local users are the best managers of their natural resources and that all stakeholders need be involved for the process to succeed - have had to be rigorously applied in the implementation of the new communal area conservancy legislation. Government and NGOs have had much to learn in this regard, and shortcomings and gaps in the policy and legislation itself, as well as inconsistencies in the way in which it has been applied in different developing conservancies have become evident.

A positive outcome of this difficult phase has been the forging of a strong national CBNRM team including government and 10 NGOs, plus a nascent conservancy umbrella body. The boundaries between so-called environmental NGOs and those NGOs directly involved in human rights issues, rural development etc. have blurred and there is a strong common vision of CBNRM's potential to empower rural Namibians and actualize sustainable social and economic development through improved and integrated natural resource management.

Apart from specific lessons relating to particular issues, an overall reminder arising from the Namibian situation is that natural resource management – conservation – cannot be separated from social, political and economic spheres.

5.3 Indicators for development goal and purpose

- Standard quality of life measures such as household income increases.
- Number of new local jobs created.
- Increased percent of conservancy members receiving social and economic benefits from managing their natural resources.
- Benefits to local and national communities from natural resource use - consumptive and non-consumptive - recorded in local and national accounting systems.
- Communal area conservancies organized into one or more regional umbrella bodies to represent their interests at national forums.
- Umbrella body functioning and addressing constraints, concerns and opportunities of remote area dwellers.
- Umbrella body accountable to its members and providing feedback.
- Conservancy management structures being driven by members and providing feedback to members.
- Wildlife populations continue to increase (number, diversity and distribution).

- Rights of conservancies and members upheld by government and if necessary, the courts.
- Integration of natural resource management – wildlife, water, grazing, riparian woodlands and economically valuable plants – is initiated, with conservancy committees or other appropriate structures – coordinating inputs from both government and NGOs.
- At least 10 conservancies using their income to meet their own management costs.
- Another 10 conservancies earning some income.
- Natural resource management staff, e.g. community game guards, integrated into conservancy management structure.

5.4 Means of verification

National statistics

Project M and E documentation/reports and case studies.

Conservancy reports and case studies

Conservancy umbrella body constitution and reports

Project reports tracking feedback and issues addressed by umbrella body

M and E documentation tracking conservancy committee feedback and accountability to members, including conservancy management profiles, repeated at two to three year intervals (See Appendix 3)

Wildlife censuses

NACSO reports

Number of conservancies no longer requiring donor funding to meet management costs

Number of community game guards no longer supported by the project

Conservancy and project reports

5.5 External Factors/Assumptions necessary to sustain the goal and purpose include:

The Namibian economy, including the tourism industry, remains healthy and/or resilient

Government policies and legislation remain supportive of CBNRM and conservancies

Political stability is maintained

Public and private structures allow for participation

National interest in the environment remains high

NACSO partners continue to receive adequate support

Political climate remains supportive of grassroots democracy

Government support for legislation amendments as needed

Government continues to support devolution of rights to natural resource users

Natural resource benefits accrue to resource managers at different levels

Market for wildlife products in place and accessible

Tourism maintained or increased in region

No wildlife-decimating diseases or prolonged drought in the region

Community-based systems of natural resource management as a form of land-use retain competitive advantage over other forms of land-use in the region

Namibia continues and strengthens its HIV/AIDS awareness and education campaign

5.6 Objectives and Outputs

Five objectives, each having a number of major outputs, have been identified for this phase of the programme. A strength of this programme is that its long-term vision has remained relatively constant, and step-by-step it has moved towards it. The overall objectives for the last five-year phase are not significantly different from those cited in the 1997 programme proposal, merely more detailed as a result of insights gained from CBNRM implementation.

The first four objectives encompass what needs to be achieved on the ground in the project area.

The fifth objective focuses on the needs of the technical support structure itself – the project staff responsible for the deliverables - at both project and national levels, the latter in support of field activities. Objective 5 thus includes capacity building and training of IRDNC's technical staff, but also mentoring other NGOs and government where appropriate within the national team of CBNRM support organizations. This approach is seen as the most productive way to share and transfer IRDNC's skills and experience, to draw on skills of other NGOs so as to avoid re-inventing the wheel, to build on the emerging NACSO team spirit and to promote long-term sustainability of Namibian CBNRM.

The sixth objective aims to facilitate a supportive environment nationally and internationally for CBNRM and to foster trans-boundary and national resource management links, ensuring that community-based principles are not lost in the polemics of this new and necessary, but partially donor-driven (trans-boundary) priority sphere.

It also seeks to contribute to the newly emerging regional southern African forum of CBNRM specialists with the intention of skills and knowledge exchanges, plus middle management (project facilitators and senior facilitators) capacity building. (WWF's SARPO may be able to play a co-ordinating role here, and in fact, in time this may become a significant route forward for this beleaguered Zimbabwe-based organization.)

Objective 7 is designed to address the management and some core financial requirements to ensure that this large, dispersed project is effectively and efficiently delivered, and that structures are in place to record the data needed to monitor and evaluate both activities and results. Such data and lessons learned need to be disseminated to conservancies, nationally, regionally and internationally. Although various short-term researchers have documented aspects of the project, IRDNC believes that the staff itself, with their unique field perspective, should be directly involved in co-authoring such material.

Existing and proposed new activities to produce the outputs that will achieve these objectives are shown in the Programme log-frame in Appendix 1.

OBJECTIVE 1: To build the skills and capacity of at least 26 Kunene conservancies to enable members to sustainably manage their wildlife, and to improve management of other natural resources including water and grazing.

Output 1.1) Wildlife in all 26 conservancies, covering an area of more than 50 000 square kilometers, is conserved and sustainably managed, with conservancy staff trained to monitor their elephant and black rhino populations in partnership with MET, and NGOs.

Output 1.2) The management of other key natural resources including water, grazing, riparian woodlands and economically valuable plants is being addressed and improved in these conservancies.

Output 1.3) Technical, logistic support and training to meet the government's conservancy registration criteria, has been provided, as needed, to developing conservancies and at least 20 have been either gazetted or applications for registration have been submitted to government.

OBJECTIVE 2: To assist the conservancies to develop as democratic, effective rural institutions, with the capacity and skills to both manage their conservancies, to co-ordinate services from government and NGOs, and to facilitate representation of the views and needs of remote NW residents in national forums.

Output 2.1) Conservancy management structures are democratic, accountable to their members, and effective.

Output 2.2) Technical support has been provided, locally and through NACSO, to the emerging umbrella body of conservancies in the region and nationally.

OBJECTIVE 3: To provide and access technical support and training to enable conservancies and their members to engage in income generating activities so that at least 10 conservancies achieve economic viability within five years, another 10 are earning significant income and the others are positive towards wildlife conservation as a land-use; have linked wise management of their natural resources to rural development and planning and implementing developments accordingly.

Output 3.1) At least 10 conservancies are earning sufficient income to meet their own management and staff costs, as well as to make a profit for members; another 10 are earning income and have a business plan in place aimed at self sufficiency.

Output 3.2) The 10 fast-track conservancies will have developed and implemented management, business, tourism and equitable benefit distribution plans.

OBJECTIVE 4: To provide and monitor interim financial support for at least 26 conservancies, and to provide and access training in book-keeping and accountability for conservancy staff and treasurers.

Output 4.1) At least 10 conservancies have received sufficient core funding to register and operationalise; another 16 receive appropriate levels of start-up funding to assist them to organize themselves.

Output 4.2) Financial management and reporting skills, plus principles of accountability and transparency have been entrenched within conservancy management structures.

OBJECTIVE 5 To build up the skills and capacity of IRDNC's Kunene staff, with special emphasis on workers from remote areas, plus women, and to mentor and exchange knowledge and skills with partners in Namibia with the aim of helping to build up a strong, cohesive and sustainable national technical support team.

Output 5.1) A strong, skilled and motivated project team is maintained and such skills are shared with partners as required.

Output 5.2) Skills and technical input not available within IRDNC outsourced from partners or consultants.

Output 5.3) New skills needed to meet changing needs within conservancies developed.

Output 5.4) A powerful and diverse national CBNRM support team developed.

Output 5.5) Capacity building of remote rural staff, women and formerly disadvantaged Namibians received special emphasis.

OBJECTIVE 6. To advocate CBNRM nationally and internationally and to foster trans-boundary links, including skills and knowledge exchange, in the southern African region.

Output 6.1) CBNRM advocated nationally and internationally.

Output 6.2) Appropriate CBNRM and NRM/rural development consultancies undertaken to promote and operationalise the linkages between natural resource management, rural development and democracy.

Output 6.3) Trans-boundary links, including skills and knowledge exchange, forged where appropriate, with CBNRM as a key approach to such initiatives.

OBJECTIVE 7: To provide core costs to IRDNC's technical team, to achieve effective and efficient project management, monitoring and evaluation and to document and disseminate data and lessons learned from the Kunene project.

Output 7.1) Effective and efficient project management is maintained.

Output 7.2) Effective monitoring and evaluation in place so that data and lessons learned can be distilled into accessible reports, articles and case studies.

6. Implementation Strategy

IRDNC, a Namibian NGO and registered Trust, with a Board of Trustees of prominent Namibians, has developed considerable field experience in providing technical support to communities engaged in conservation, development and democracy building over the past decade.

IRDNC is a field based organisation with only two Kunene staff based in the Namibian capital, Windhoek, to provide administrative and national and international co-ordination support. Nevertheless, both of these staff spend considerable field time in Kunene.

The rest of the IRDNC Kunene programme staff operate from the Wereldsend camp in the Kunene region situated just outside the Torra Conservancy area. A second small satellite station is being set up in the extreme NW corner of the region, at Onyuva, some 600 km away from Wereldsend, in order reduce extreme travelling necessary by IRDNC staff and conservancy members from that region.

In 2001 two 5-year CBNRM visioning workshops were held for IRDNC staff in the Kunene Region and in the Caprivi Region in NE Namibia where a similar programme is being run. Using a combination of methods, including appreciative inquiry and SWAT analysis, field staff were asked to identify key challenges facing the two programmes, regionally and nationally, and to develop strategies to overcome challenges.

Both projects independently identified the same six key challenges to CBNRM, as well as other local issues, and these have shaped and adapted both the objectives and the implementation strategy of the Kunene programme for its final five years.

The priority challenges centered on natural resource management, institutional development, capacity building, income generation and sustainability, as follows.

1. The development and implementation of an effective problem animal management strategy – seen as essential as wildlife increases due to conservancy conservation support, and needed to address the critical issue of the rights of the individual farmer versus the conservancy.
2. Closing the gap that tends to emerge between committees and their members through community and not just committee capacity-building. Staff emphasized the need to find ways to better involve members including women, traditional authorities and other stake-holders in CBNRM activities.
3. Inconsistency and lack of process in government implementation of CBNRM and gaps in legislation.
4. How to assist conservancy committees to improve their management capacity, their transparency, communication and accountability to their members.
5. Facilitating/fast-tracking the conservancies towards economic viability and independence.
6. Capacity of support organizations, including IRDNC, to adequately address the training, institutional development, enterprise development and natural resource management training needs of registered or developing conservancies, as well as cope with newly emerging conservancies.

Programme strategies to address these challenges include the following:

1. Problem animal management is a major focus of the NACSO and Kunene NRM working group and wherever possible water supplies are being protected and alternative game waters are being provided. Solar powered electric fencing is also in use.

The critical issue of the rights of the individual farmer versus the conservancy is being addressed by an innovative compensation/insurance/trust fund scheme, which will be tested in three Kunene and four Caprivi conservancies, with programme staff engaged in helping to set up the scheme in the conservancies, a task that promises to be challenging and time-consuming.

Possible only because of the existence of conservancies as legal entities with registered members, the scheme has three components:

- a) Wildlife-caused death and disability cover for conservancy members (elephant, rhino, lion, leopard, hyena, buffalo, hippo and crocodile). A subsidized annual premium per member will be payable by the conservancy.
- b) Public liability coverage in the event of a lawsuit against the conservancy by a third party injured or killed by wildlife where conservancy negligence can be proved.
- c) The last and most complex component involves payouts for domestic stock (goats, sheep, cattle, horses, donkeys) killed by certain defined species as above, as well as compensation for crop losses to elephant, buffalo or hippo. Conservancy committees and their staff will play a key role in managing and investigating claims by members, with the programme and MET monitoring the process. Interest from a trust fund will be used to pay these small claims, with umbrella insurance protecting the capital. The conservancy will be required to pay 20% upfront of each claim so as to minimize frivolous or fraudulent claims, as well as show that certain pre-agreed conditions were met by the claimant. These conditions are still being negotiated.

While the viability of the scheme requires a uniform policy for all conservancies, individual conservancies will be able to choose for themselves whether, for example, the conservancy pays its members' annual life premium from its income, or whether this is paid by members themselves. Similarly, one conservancy may decide to meet the 20% upfront payment on small claims; another may require an individual member to pay it her/himself when s/he makes a claim.

2. Closing the gap between committees and their members will be addressed by the planned 5-year strategic vision exercise in each registered conservancy, one of which has already been done. Additionally, the quarterly planning and evaluation workshops will be split into two or even three meetings, at least one held within a conservancy,

so as to allow increased attendance by conservancy members and enable more attention to be spent on each conservancy.

A third action will be the appointment of an experienced communications facilitator who will be working directly with each conservancy to develop a conservancy communication strategy both locally and nationally, as per recommendations of Torra Conservancy members in their vision survey, and in IRDNC Caprivi and Kunene staff CBNRM vision workshops.

3. Inconsistency in government implementation, lack of process and gaps in the legislation involved a number of strategies including using NACSO as a national forum to take up issues; strong support for and co-ordination with the new MET CBNRM unit; promoting and capacity building the conservancy umbrella body/ies and the Kunene conservancy conflict resolution committee.
4. Building the capacity of committees in terms of management skills, accountability, transparency, effectiveness etc is being tackled via the NACSO working institutional development and training working groups, by conservancy management profile surveys as tools for committee self evaluation and improved performance, on-going field training, following up formal training events, plus exchange visits.
5. Facilitating/fast-tracking the conservancies towards economic viability and independence will be a major focus, as per the outputs of objective 3. Strategies include helping conservancies to develop a common vision of how tourism should be planned and developed via support to the government's NW Tourism Plan phase 2, strong participation and sharing of skills within the NACSO enterprise development and joint venture working groups, focus beyond tourism enterprises and test the development of other NR-based enterprises in conservancies.
6. Increasing the capacity of partners, including IRDNC, to meet the technical support needs of the escalating number of conservancies includes clarifying criteria for both new and old conservancies for different types of support; on-going internal evaluation of how IRDNC resources are being deployed, to continue testing different support models, playing an active role in the NACSO's new training working group, pro-active capacity- building of and resource-sharing with partners, outsourcing training where necessary and prioritizing co-ordination and co-operation with partners.

6.1 Plan for IRDNC support to Conservancy Development in the Kunene region.

The Namibian Government's identification of the North West Kunene region of Namibia as a principle area for development of tourism and wildlife management has come largely as a result of the community-based natural resource management programme and the subsequent development of the communal area conservancy programme. Few other countries in Africa have seen communities themselves chose to integrate wildlife management into their socio-economies at the scale that is currently happening in Kunene and across Namibia.

The more than 29 conservancies registered or emerging across the entire Kunene Region, many of them contiguous, provide the basis for long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability of this magnificent, remote corner of Namibia. Without conservancies, which generate grassroots community support for wise stewardship of natural resources as the basis for sustainable development, other natural resource management initiatives such as Biosphere Parks are unlikely to be viable. Several conservancies neighbor Namibia's famous Etosha National Park to the north-east, the Skeleton Coast Park to the west, and the most north-western conservancy, the Marienfluss, is opposite Angola's Iona National Park. The future viability of these parks, within developing nation states, vastly increases with such newly supportive neighbors.

It is thus important that the benefits and implication of the development of conservancies is seen not only in the light of the individual conservancies under development but also in the overall contribution to the vast region's development as a primary destination for wilderness, wildlife and cultural tourism. The role and contribution of the conservancies to the success of this regional plan in attracting increased tourist revenue to the country will consequently impact on the overall development of the Namibian economy and society.

From the establishment of the Community Game Guards programme in 1982 up to the promulgation of the enabling legislation for Communal Area Conservancies in 1996, there were always certain potential conservancies whose early development was assured. These included Torra, Puros, Ehirovipuka, Omatendeka, Marienfluss and Sesfontein/WarmQuelle.

Four of these have already been assisted to register, with the long-term traditional leadership disputes in Sesfontein delaying both Omatendeka emerging conservancy and those in Sesfontein-WarmQuelle

As the first conservancy to be registered in 1998, Torra was generating sufficient income by July 2000 through a joint venture luxury tented camp agreement and a small trophy hunting concession to operate without donor funding, and to make a profit for its members. Torra pays the salaries of seven Conservancy Game Guards, a field officer and a community activator, vehicle running costs, office-running costs etc. Previously these costs were provided through IRDNC financial support. Also by this time Torra Conservancy has accrued a considerable sum of money in an account for the benefit of the community.

It is believed that nine other target conservancies will be able to achieve the same financial independence within the next three to five years. The currently ending phase of the programme provided for the support and development of seven of the ten priority or fast-track conservancies. These were:

- ⇒ Torra
- ⇒ Puros (Omburro)
- ⇒ Marienfluss
- ⇒ Sesfontein
- ⇒ Warmquelle

- ⇒ Ehirovipuka
- ⇒ Omantendeka

Two of the other three – Onyuva and Sanitatas - have received minor financial and some technical support in the past year. The third, Epupa, has been visited and has sent a delegation to the programme base camp to request technical support for conservancy formation.

By January 2002 the success of the early programme has led to many more potential conservancies wishing to pursue their own development. Most of these conservancies have common boundaries with other conservancies and therefore in wildlife and other natural resource management, it is important to consider them in their regional role and strategic position.

Currently there are a total of 26 registered, developing or potential conservancies in the target area of Kunene region (with another three having developed south of the programme area). Of these, the potential for long-term financial independence varies considerably according various factors including:

- ⇒ Available wildlife resources
- ⇒ Other natural resource availability
- ⇒ Potential for tourist development
- ⇒ Access for tourists

In this light, it has been necessary for IRDNC to assess and adjust the level of support that can be offered to emerging conservancies.

- **In some cases, while a community realizes that the potential for rapid financial benefits from managing their natural resources may be limited in the short term, their desire to improve the management of their own natural resources and benefit from an increased community capacity to do this still leads them to want to pursue conservancy development. In regional natural resource terms there are clear benefits from as many communities as possible sharing the same accepted responsibility for the management of their own natural resources, and accordingly such communities will receive support, albeit at a lower level than that being given to high potential conservancies. CBNRM is, after all primarily about improved natural resource management, not merely income generation.**
- **One of the key sources of technical support that has emerged in the past year, has been merely assisting representatives from emerging conservancies to attend and participate in IRDNC's quarterly planning and evaluation workshops (at their own request). Such groups receive peer support, criticism and advice from the more experienced conservancies at the three-day workshops, and this is serving to accelerate capacity- and knowledge-building.**

There appear to be three distinct groups of developing conservancies at present upon which plans for their development and support over the next five years can be projected by IRDNC:

Primary (fast-track) Conservancies:

Wildlife numbers are good and tourist developments or their potential exist already. These conservancies have the potential to establish joint venture developments for tourist facilities and/or hunting concessions in the immediate future that will generate significant income thus allowing projected early financial sustainability. It would be expected that these conservancies could be financially independent within 2 –3 years after registration and require decreasing technical support from IRDNC within the next 5 years

The ten conservancies that have been identified in this category include those that have already been supported during the current phase of the programme, as listed above. (See Appendix 2.)

Medium-track Conservancies:

While clear potential for long-term financial viability of the conservancy exists, factors are present that may delay early returns from income generating schemes. This may include, as yet, no identified joint venture potentials or sites, limited size of the proposed conservancy, difficulty of access, limited game species etc. These emerging conservancies will receive smaller financial input and lower level technical support and will move towards but are not expected to achieve financial independence 2 –3 years after registration. They are however, expected to be earning significant income by the end of the new programme phase (June 2007) and will by then require less technical support.

The conservancies identified within this category are Ombombo, Ozondundu, Ruacana, Orupupa, Enyandi, Otuzemba, Okangundumbe, Swartbooisdrift, Omutati and Otjitanda. (See Appendix 2.)

Long-track Conservancies:

The potential for long-term financial sustainability is *at present* considered unlikely. However, accepting this, the benefits of improved natural resource management as well as community capacity and empowerment have been acknowledged by the conservancy development committees involved. In all cases, there are at least limited wildlife resources and potential tourist development available. It should be noted that the development of just one successful joint venture tourist camp or lodge could automatically make such a conservancy fully economically sustainable.

A total of six conservancies within this category are currently attending the programme quarterly planning meetings, at their own request, without receiving any financial support at present. (See Appendix 2.) They are Okongoro, Okorusave, Ombepea, Onganga, Otjikandaverongo, and Etanga.

During the period of the next proposed phase of the programme the above 26 developing conservancies will receive different levels of support as per their potential, as discussed. It is possible that changes in circumstances may cause one or more of these to change its status with respect to the fast, medium and long-track categories or even not continue to reach full development.

7. Sustainability

A Namibian proverb advises one to *“Start your farming with people – not with cattle”*.

At the centre of what is today a complex national conservation and development movement, is focus on *local* social organization; on facilitating and building up the capacity of local structures and local people to manage local resources. Prioritizing of the social, is, we suggest, one of the key building blocks to effect *any* change – whether in natural resource management or in inner city slum revitalization,

At bedrock is an approach which sees the *process* as an end as well as a means. By building up the capacity of local people one is increasing local potential for adaptive and dynamic (local) governance of natural resource use.

The programme inputs to the development of conservancies aim towards the attainment of financial sustainability so that conservancy management activities are self-funded and conservancy profits are enjoyed by members through an equitable benefit distribution scheme. Both of these are direct benefits to the community either through job creation, improved natural resource availability and conservancy income. At such time they would not be dependant on any long-term support from IRDNC or similar organisations although they may well qualify for specific grants etc. through government, aid agencies NGO’s Trusts etc.

In order to reach this endpoint IRDNC provides three types of support to the developing or registered conservancy:

a) Technical Support to Conservancies.

Through its team of technical staff or through additional technical resource institutions IRDNC builds the capacity of the conservancy in areas:

- ⇒ Community Capacity Building (CCB) and institutional management and administration (e.g. financial administration, business and negotiating skills, planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities, exchange visits, communication skills etc.)
- ⇒ Natural Resource Management (NRM) (e.g. training of community game guards in wildlife management, development of wildlife management plans and systems etc.)
- ⇒ Income generation (e.g. joint venture development, own camp development, craft production and marketing, trophy hunting, live game sales and other natural resource-based enterprises.
- ⇒ Resource and skills-sharing with partners and government to promote sustainability of CBNRM
- ⇒ CBNRM advocacy support at a national and regional level in terms of facilitating a supportive political environment for the programme

b) Financial Support to Conservancies

During the period of conservancy development IRDNC contributes financially to support activities of the Conservancy Committee, employment of Conservancy and Community Game Guards, Community Activators etc. At

such time that the conservancy begins to generate income of its own, this support is reduced until the conservancy becomes financially independent after 2- 3 years.

c) Capital Support to Conservancies.

One-off grants are provided to assist with basic capital inputs such as contribution to office construction, communications equipment and transport.

In order to be considered sustainable each conservancy ultimately must become independent of both financial and technical support from external sources, although they will obviously continue to need to work in partnership with government in terms of various technical services.

At present the definition of ‘financial sustainability’ is relatively simple to ascertain according to the level of income being generated by the conservancy. Rather more difficult is the ascertainment of ‘technical’ sustainability. By the time the conservancy achieves financial sustainability it will have gone part way only to corresponding technical sustainability. Certainly, the Conservancy Committee capacity to manage its own office, finances, planning etc will have reached a certain level of independence.

However, as shown by Torra’s relative lack of forward movement in the past year despite its financial independence, it is apparent that technical support and capacity building cannot be abruptly withdrawn, and must be phased out according to the needs of individual conservancies. Continuing inputs are also necessary with respect to other areas of technical support such as NRM, income generation etc. Currently it is possible to project that such technical input will be required by the conservancy for up to 2 years after financial independence has been achieved.

It could then be argued that as a financially independent institution the conservancy should be able to pay for further technical input requirements from any external organisations including IRDNC, even though donor funding may still be required to subsidize some such community costs.

7.1 IRDNC Exit Strategy

With the stated objective of complete or partial sustainability of 26 conservancies by 2007, it is important to look at the implications of this both to the conservancies and also to IRDNC as an organisation.

Table 2. Projected funding to components of the Programme.

	FY03	FY04	FY05	FY06	FY07	Total	FY07 as % of FY03
Core Costs IRDNC	960000	960000	960000	960000	960000	4800000	100
Technical Support Costs to Conservancies	2335392	2335392	2243808	1900368	1305072	10120032	56
Financial Support Costs to Conservancies	1428000	1315500	939500	525000	253000	4461000	18
Capital Costs IRDNC	480000	336000	282000	72000	0	1170000	0
Capital Costs to Conservancies	500000	250000	250000	0	0	1000000	0

It will be seen that by the final year of the programme in FY07 there will be no further capital expenditure to the conservancies or to IRDNC for technical support to the conservancy programme.

Financial support to the conservancies will have been reduced to 18% of the figure for the first year as a result of the successive financial independence of up to 16 conservancies.

Technical support to the conservancies in FY07 will have reduced to 56% of the FY03 costs showing the increased sustainability from technical support of the conservancies. It should be noted, however, that in most cases the technical support provided to conservancies is by IRDNC staff members invariably with individual technical capacities. Therefore, while it is logical to project a significant decrease in technical requirements of the IRDNC technical team, it is not so easy to reduce the size of the post for any individual on a pro rata basis. Consequently, in order to maintain individual technical officers salaries at full time level these salaries will need to be supplemented by some means such as:

- a) Charge-out of time for technical staff for further support to fully independent conservancies.
- b) Charge-out of time for technical staff for services to other projects, programmes, consultancies etc.
- c) Deployment of staff in other regions of Namibia on new projects, yet to be developed, with new sources of funding.

Depending on the results of planned organizational visioning during the next five years, and according to the socio-political climate and needs of the country, IRDNC, as a Namibian NGO and Trust, will need to choose its own post 2007 route. Should the organization decide to cease all operations, its well-trained and experienced technical staff will be in a strong position to acquire alternative employment.

7.2 End of project situation

By June 2007, the end of this, the final phase of the Kunene project, the situation in the project area should be as follows:

1. Conservancies functioning and independent

At least 20 communal area conservancies will be registered, covering 50 000 square kilometers of the project's Kunene target area and including at least 50% of its developmentally marginalized human population. At least 10 of these conservancies will be financially independent, covering their own management costs and earning a profit for members. Land-use, wildlife management, business and tourism plans and integrated natural resource maps will be developed and in use. Ten others will be earning significant income from wildlife and other natural resource-based enterprises and activities, and the others will be positive towards wildlife conservation as a land-use and have linked wise management of natural resources to their social and economic development.

2. Biodiversity maintained/increased / integrated management plans

Through the conservancies' elected committees and field staff, wildlife will be sustainably managed and environmental degradation of other natural resources – water, grazing, riparian woodlands and natural resources used by craft makers (palm tree products, barks for dyes, etc.) – will be being addressed, thereby maintaining or increasing biodiversity. Monitoring of elephants, black rhino and other key marker species will be in place, supporting government and NGO activities.

3. Livelihoods improved and more secure

Within the conservancies, the members' livelihoods will be improved and made more secure by the *integration* of appropriate wildlife utilization and community-based tourism activities into their existing extensive livestock and small-scale agriculture-based subsistence economy. Management of other key resources – water, grazing, riparian woodlands and economically valuable plants – will be improved and more integrated, with conservancies providing a forum for enhanced community co-ordination of government and NGO services.

4. Conservancy income generated and jobs created

In accordance with the rights devolved by the 1996 legislation, and the guidelines laid down by the regional North-West tourism management plan, registered conservancies will have entered into joint ventures with private sector tourism and trophy hunting operators, and/or established their own tourism-based enterprises. Related enterprises – crafts, tyre repair shops, bakeries, vegetable gardens, etc. – will be operational. Community income will thus be generated and employment opportunities in remote rural locations will have been created.

5. Democratic, transparent, accountable and effective management of conservancies taking place

The capacity of conservancy committees, in conjunction with their traditional authorities, to manage their conservancies as democratic, free-market community businesses, as well as equitably and transparently distribute its profits to members will be entrenched.

6. Forum to strengthen and exercise remote area dwellers' rights is operational

The social sustainability of CBNRM will be supported by empowerment of individuals, including women, and the allied growth of grassroots democracy. Communal area conservancies will have formed one or more umbrella body to lobby central government and to address at a national level issues affecting members and their natural resources. The rights of remote Kunene residents will thus be strengthened and a powerful forum to promote their needs will have developed.

7. NACSO strengthened and evolving to meet needs

The emerging national CBNRM support team will have evolved into a strong, cohesive forum able to pool, share, access and exchange skills as needed, in support of CBNRM. The potential strength of the national Namibian Association of CBNRM support Organizations (NACSO) lies both in a shared vision and in the diversity of its members – government, focused technical support organizations, field-based CBNRM specialists etc. – and this will continue to be built upon.

8. Regional cooperation and coordination

Regional CBNRM cooperation and coordination, including trans-boundary NRM links where possible and appropriate will have been strengthened and a forum of CBNRM specialists will be established. The forum will facilitate the exchange of skills and knowledge at different levels and seek practical ways to fast-track capacity building of a younger generation of African CBNRM facilitators.

9. Monitoring and evaluation and lessons learned documented

The 20-year implementation experience of this programme, pioneering much of CBNRM practice, and in the last five years adapting to become one of the players in a national CBNRM support team, will have been documented in a variety of ways, popular and academic. Lessons learned will have been distilled out of field experience and will be accessible to the international, regional, national and local (i.e. CBO) communities.

8. Budget

See separate document.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1: Programme logframe

See separate document.

Appendix 2: Conservancy categories

Fast-track Conservancies

Torra

Puros

Ehirovipuka

Marienfluss

Omantendeka

Waramquelle

Sesfontein

Onjuva

Sanitatas

Epupa

Sub-total 10

Medium-track Conservancies

Ombombo

Ozondundu

Ruacana

Orupupa

Enyandi

Otuzemba

Okangundumba

Swartbooisdrift

Omutati

Otjitanda

Sub-total 10

Long-track Conservancies

Okongoro

Okorusave

Oambepea

Onganga

Otjikandaverongo

Etanga

Sub-total 6

Total 26