



IRDNC

INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT
AND NATURE CONSERVATION



Strategic Plan
2015-2025



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1 Background

Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC) was established in the late 1980s to work with rural communities in northwest Namibia to conserve wildlife in Kunene Region. It evolved in the early 1980s out of a pioneering partnership with community leaders to end the massive commercial and subsistence poaching of black rhino, desert-adapted elephant and other species then taking place in northwest Namibia.

The community game guard system - whereby local people were appointed by and responsible to their traditional leaders - was initiated in 1983. Their role was not just to catch poachers but to stop illegal hunting - by conservation extension, monitoring wildlife and anti-poaching patrols in the areas where they lived. Although this community-led approach went against the political climate of that time, it made a major contribution to the recovery of wildlife in Namibia's northwest. The active participation of local people in conservation also nurtured a vision of wildlife becoming a valuable cultural, social and economic resource. In 1990, at the request of traditional leaders, IRDNC started a similar community-based programme in the Caprivi Region (now Zambezi Region).

At independence the new Namibian Government embraced the community-based conservation model to democratise discriminatory aspects of the existing conservation legal regime. An intensive consultation process by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, with IRDNC and other partners, in five communal areas, gave communities who lived with wildlife the opportunity to have an input into a new policy, which was passed in 1995. In 1996, legislative amendments were passed whereby communal area dwellers received the same legal rights over wildlife as freehold farmers through the establishment of communal conservancies.

Since the late 1990s, when the first conservancies were established, IRDNC has played a key role in supporting the development of communal conservancies and subsequent approaches to sustainable, community-based management of natural resources in Namibia. IRDNC has been at the forefront of facilitating conservancy formation, joint ventures with private tourism operators and trophy hunters based on sustainable wildlife use, capacity development for

conservancy governance institutions, wildlife monitoring and law enforcement, and links with policy making processes. Conservancies have provided the entry point for subsequent innovations in community natural resource management, beyond wildlife and tourism, such as IRDNC's work facilitating the sale and sustainable harvesting of indigenous natural plants, work on sustainable rangelands management, land use planning, co-management of protected areas, and numerous other interventions. Today, IRDNC works with 46 conservancies (30 in Kunene and 16 in Zambezi, including Kyaramacan Association representing communities in Bwabwata National Park) representing 93,840 people across approximately 45,309 km² of land in Kunene and Zambezi Regions (Box 1). In the Zambezi Region, IRDNC also helped to establish four landscape-level conservation management areas known as 'complexes'.

Scope of IRDNC's work.

Today, IRDNC works to support 46 conservancies representing 93,840 members on 45,309 km² of land.

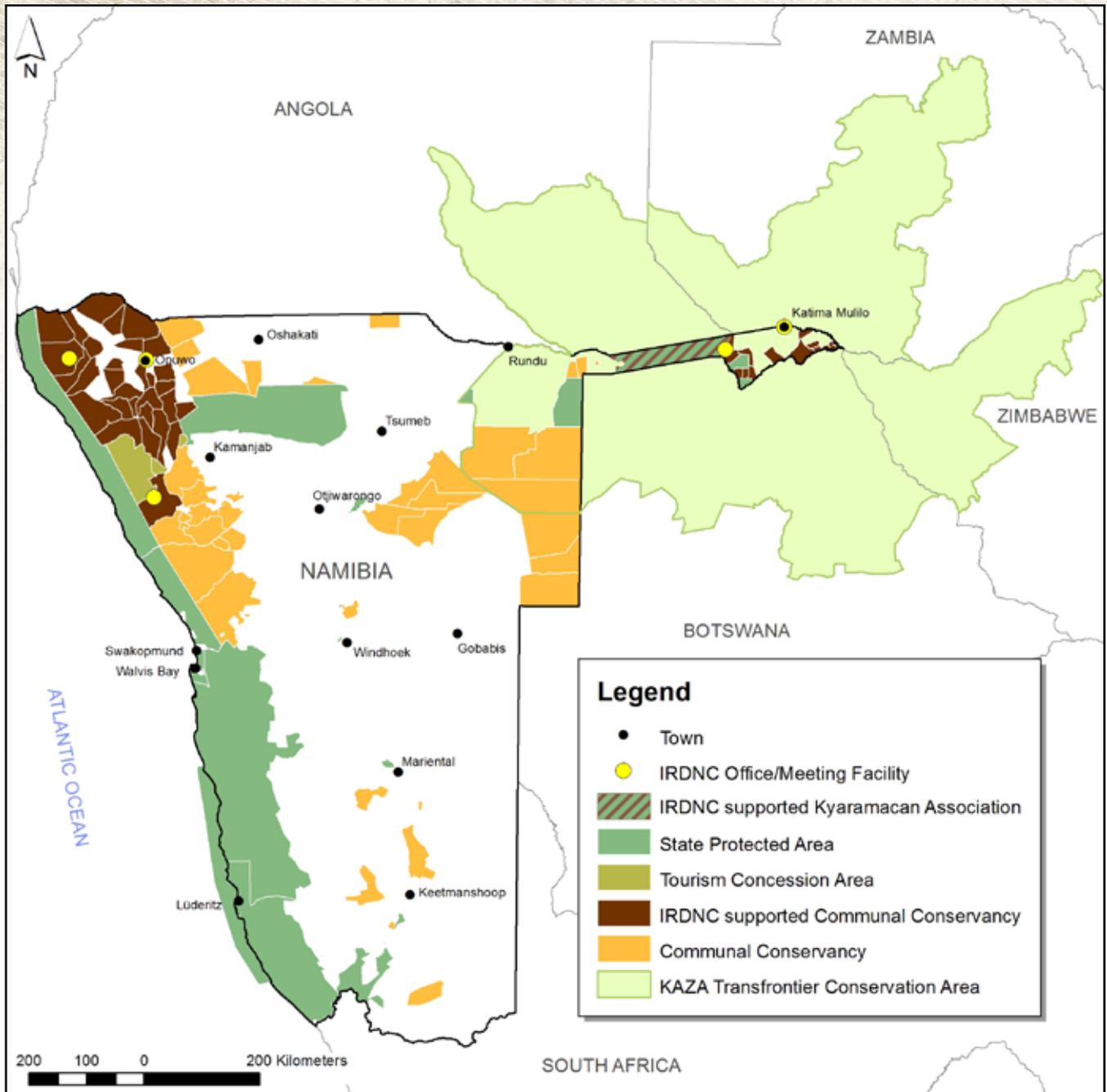
Kunene Region:

- Total area covered by gazetted conservancies: 35,106 km²
- Total number of gazetted conservancies: 30
- Total number of people in these conservancies: 54,720

Zambezi Region:

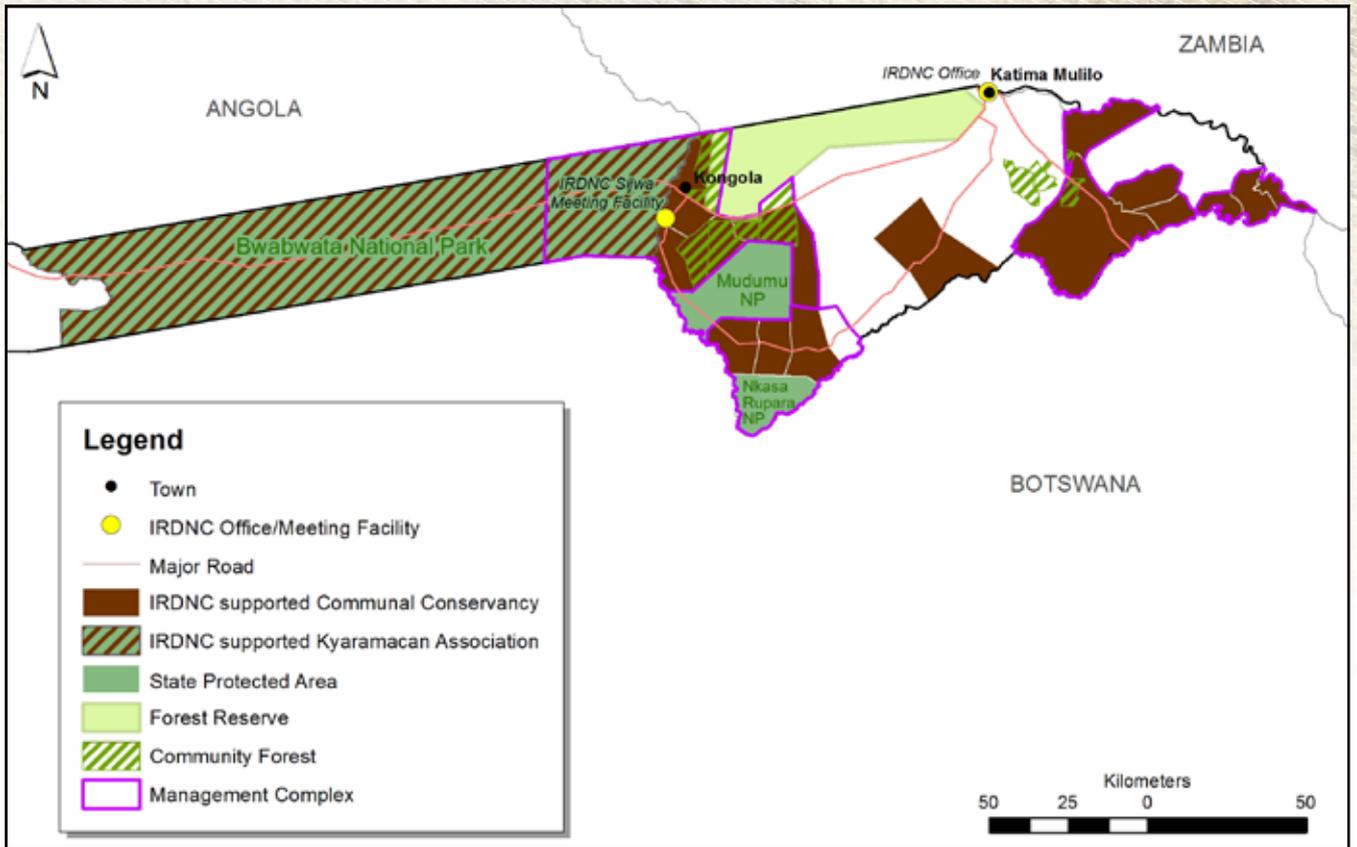
- Total area covered by gazetted conservancies (including Kyaramacan Association in Bwabwata National Park): 10,203 km²
- Total number of gazetted conservancies: 16
- Total number of people in these conservancies: 39,120

Since 2003, IRDNC has also become involved in transboundary conservation efforts focused on the five-country Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA). IRDNC has facilitated linkages through transboundary forums that link conservancies in Zambezi Region in Namibia, with counterpart communities across the border, particularly in neighbouring Botswana and Zambia.



Map 1: IRDNC Supported Communal Conservancies

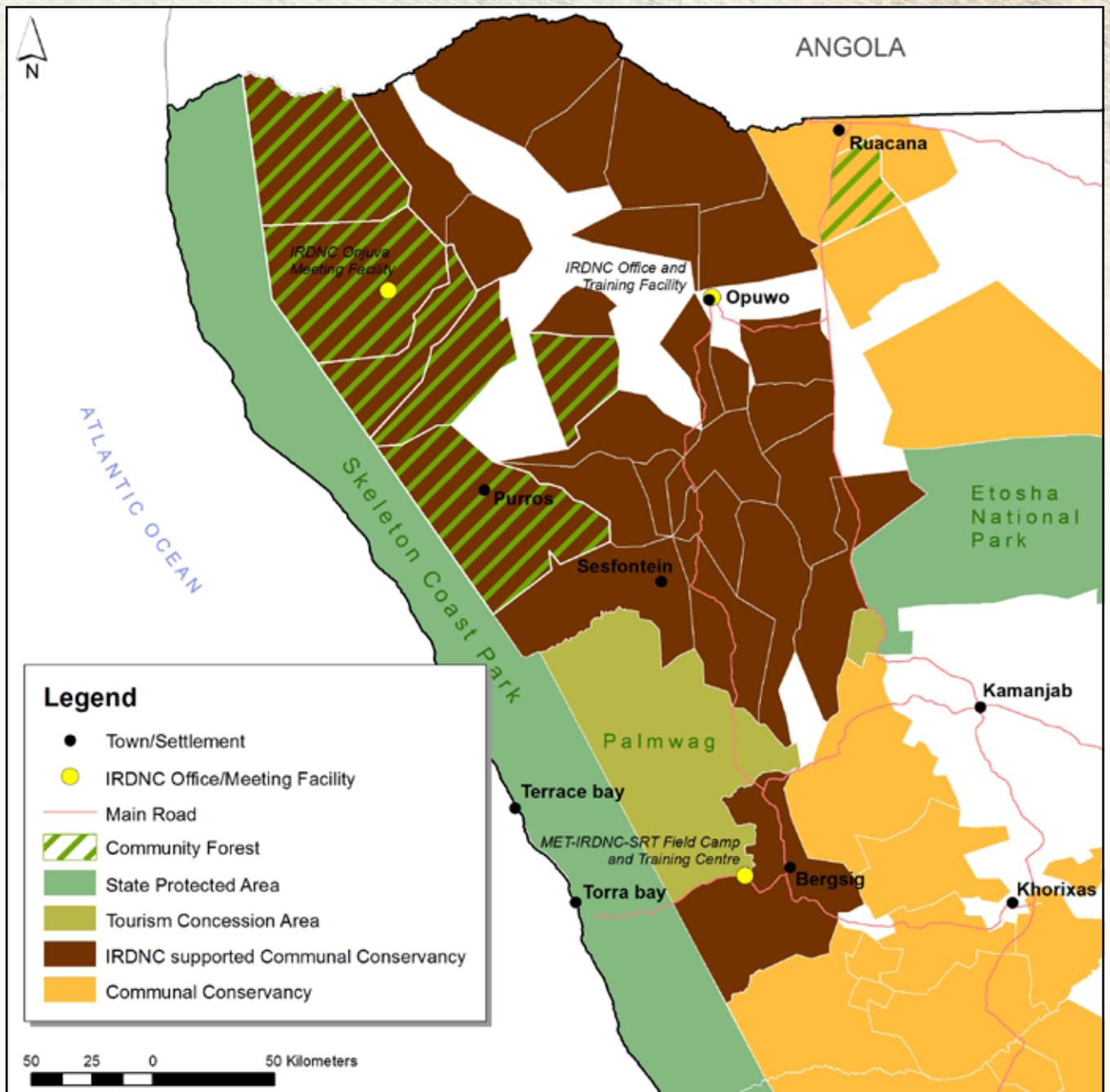




Map 2: IRDNC supported Communal Conservancies (and Kyaramacan Association in Bwabwata National Park) in North-East Namibia







Map 3: IRDNC supported Communal Conservancies in Kunene Region

The below timeline provides a summary of major points in IRDNC's development and achievements from 1980 to 2015.

Date	Description
1980	Wildlife is property of the state; widespread illegal commercial and subsistence hunting reduces once rich wildlife numbers in Namibia's northwest. Desert adapted elephants number less than 150 and black rhino are down to below 60 individuals. The worst drought in living memory grips the region, with more than 180,000 head of cattle dying of starvation. This, plus a voracious external market for ivory and rhino horn, increases local incentives to poach wildlife for both meat and money.
1982	A small team of conservationists, some of whom went on to found IRDNC, forge a pioneering partnership with community leaders to stop poaching. Local leaders appoint the first community game guards. From the start they are accountable to their communities, not to the NGO, and their aim is to 'stop' poaching, not merely 'catch' poachers. These men go on to help solve more than 20 serious poaching cases.
1985	Illegal hunting has been halted and a local vision of wildlife being more valuable alive than in a cooking pot has been nurtured.
1987	IRDNC begins the Puros project, which is the first community enterprise in Namibia to earn income from wildlife through a bed night levy from tourism.
1990	Namibia's newly independent government embraces a community-based approach to conservation. IRDNC is invited to start working in the Zambezi Region as well as its long-term Kunene Region programme.
1990	The new Ministry of Environment and Tourism asks IRDNC to help with its community consultative process aimed at developing new conservation legislation for communal areas. WWF International and later WWF-UK provide IRDNC's first international support.
1993	The Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) programme brings in major donor support (USAID and WWF) and IRDNC takes its first steps towards a national programme.
1993	IRDNC helps a community establish the country's first resident's trust – this later becomes the Torra Conservancy once enabling legislation gets passed.
1993	IRDNC's founding directors receive the Goldman Grassroots Environmental Prize for Africa, the first international recognition for IRDNC's ground-breaking work.
1995	Damaraland Camp opens in the emerging Torra Conservancy and becomes the first joint venture tourism partnership between a community and the private sector (Wilderness Safaris) in Namibia.
1996	Namibian legislation is amended to allow for the establishment of communal conservancies. Two years later the first four conservancies are registered.
Late 1990s	IRDNC begins to promote transboundary natural resource management collaboration between communities in the Caprivi (now Zambezi) Region and their neighbours.
2000	The Namibian Association of Community-Based Natural Resource Management Support Organisations (NACSO) is formed (first called the CBNRM Association of Namibia), with IRDNC as a founding member.

Date	Description
2001	Amendments to the Forest Act provide for the establishment of community forests.
2003	IRDNC begins rangeland management activities in Kunene North. Later, IRDNC technical staff play a vital role in training the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry in Holistic Rangeland Management and help bring Community Based Rangeland Management into 5 further regions of Namibia (Omusati, Oshana, Oshana, Oshana, Oshikoto and Kavango).
2004	The first of four Transboundary Natural Resource Management Community Forums is established around the Caprivi (now Zambezi) Region.
2004	IRDNC starts to work with Himba conservancies to market one of their high value indigenous plants (<i>Commiphora wildii</i>) internationally. Plant resources that previously were not used commercially are given commercial value and now contribute significantly to the income of rural women who otherwise do not have any chance to gain access to cash income.
2006	The Kyaramacan Association, which represents the residents of Bwabwata National Park, is officially recognised by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism as the legal entity representing all people living inside the Park. The Association later secures concessions for trophy hunting and tourism in the park, and obtains quotas to sell Devil's claw (<i>Harpagophytum procumbens</i>), a plant sold internationally to reduce pain and fever.
2011	66 registered conservancies generate almost N\$ 50 million (US\$ 4.2 million) in revenue.
2011	Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe sign a treaty that marks the official launch of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA-TFCA), the largest TFCA in the world, covering nearly 520,000 km ² .
2012	After two decades of dormancy, more than 30 elephants are poached in the Caprivi (now Zambezi) Region. Most of the elephants are killed inside national parks.
2012	First rhino poached in Kunene Region in nearly two decades. Quick action by community members from Anabeb Conservancy ensures an arrest and recovery of the horns. The poacher is only convicted in 2014, receiving a seven year sentence.
2013	By the end of 2013, there are 79 registered conservancies and 32 registered community forests in Namibia, covering at least 163,396 km ² and generating N\$ 72.2 (US\$ 6.1 million) in income.
2013	The National CBNRM Policy is launched by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism. The policy creates the needed framework for a more integrated approach to community-based natural resource management.
2014	With IRDNC support, the Opuwo Processing Facility and Visitors Centre is officially opened. The processing of plant resin to produce essential oils is an important step in adding further value to the raw materials and earning additional income for harvesters.
2015	By mid-2015, there are 82 gazetted conservancies.

2 10 Key Trends: The Changing Context for Community-based Natural Resource Management in Namibia

This section describes ten key trends shaping community-based natural resource management in Namibia, providing critical context which IRDNC's new strategic plan responds to and incorporates.

2.1 Scaling Up CBNRM in Namibia

During the past twenty years Namibia has established itself as one of the world's leading models of wildlife conservation and community-based natural resource management. These efforts have been well documented through scientific analyses, and growing international publicity associated with Namibia's approach to conservation and its remarkable national achievements.

Since the late 1990s, Namibia's communal conservancies programme has steadily grown and expanded, to the point where today there are 82 conservancies covering more than 16 million hectares, or nearly 20% of Namibia's total land area. With more than half of all communal lands in the country within conservancies, these areas encompass approximately 180,000 people living in rural areas.

The development of conservancies managed for wildlife and other natural resource uses has greatly strengthened Namibia's overall wildlife management system. Today, around 42% of the country's total land area is under some form of improved management, such as government protected areas, private concessions, private freehold conservancies, and communal conservancies. Entire regional landscapes in the northwest and northeast of the country consist of a mosaic of state and communal lands under different types of wildlife and natural resource management. Within these landscapes, wildlife has broadly recovered and increased. Namibia has the largest population of free-ranging black rhinos outside state or private lands, in the country's northwest; it has a growing population of lions outside protected areas in the same region; and its national elephant population has increased from about 7,500 animals in 1995 to around 20,000 in 2010.

Other species, including regional endemics such as Hartmann's mountain zebra, are widespread and have increased markedly since the 1990s on communal lands¹. Namibia today is thus one of the world's leading examples of large-scale wildlife recovery - in a global context where wildlife populations are rapidly contracting - and successful landscape-scale conservation.

Namibia has also built on its initial experimentation with communal conservancies since the 1990s with further sectoral reforms, notably the establishment of community forests in 2001. There are now 32 community forests, many of which are wholly contiguous with conservancies. There are also initial models for community-based fisheries management emerging in the inland floodplains of Zambezi Region, which have the potential to improve the management and governance of a locally important and potentially high-value natural resource. The expansion of community-based natural resource management from the wildlife sector to other areas such as forests and fisheries, as well as rangelands management, presents opportunities for integrating the management of multiple natural resources within a common framework, as well as for adding to the overall suite of resource management activities and values available to communities. It also creates a growing imperative to avoid the proliferation of parallel local management structures and institutions, in addition to uncoordinated external government, NGO, or donor interventions and support models.

1

NACSO, State of Community Conservation in Namibia, 2013

2.2 Wildlife in Communal Lands: An Increasingly Valuable Economic Asset

Accompanying the spatial growth of conservancies since the late 1990s has been a surge in the overall revenues communities have captured from wildlife, driven by both an increasing availability of business opportunities in conservancies, supported by the facilitation of organisations such as IRDNC, as well as increasing wildlife numbers. In 2013, the conservancies generated N\$ 72.2 (approx. US\$ 6.1 million) in direct benefits, including cash returns, employment, and in-kind benefits such as game meat. At the national level, related enterprises contributed an estimated US\$ 400 million to the Net National Income (NNI) in 2012²

A growing national tourism industry has both benefitted from the conservation gains recorded by the conservancies, and has helped to drive conservancy incomes and expansion. According to the MCC, the contribution of travel and tourism to Namibia's GDP is expected to increase from 14.5% (US\$ 1,051.7 million) in 2008 to 20.7% (US\$ 2,967.9 million) by 2018 and from 18.2% (77,000 jobs) to 23.7% (129,000 jobs) of total employment in that same period. The recently concluded Millennium Challenge Account-Namibia project (Conservancies Development Support Services) focused on increasing commercial investments in conservancies, resulting in 25 new joint venture agreements being signed between 2011 and 2014, and total income to a set of 25 conservancies from joint ventures increasing from N\$ 4.9 million in 2010 to N\$ 8.3 million in 2013.³ IRDNC has played a key role facilitating numerous joint venture agreements over the past five years, which have enabled the continued growth in the potential and actual value of wildlife in conservancies.

In addition to the financial benefits, several surveys and community consultations have confirmed that wildlife and its conservation provide more than only monetary benefits to conservancy members.⁴ Communities report that they are proud of their wildlife, that wild animals are significant in their culture and that they are glad that their children will grow up able to see wildlife around them.

2.3 Opportunities Beyond Borders

A significant opportunity lies in the application of Namibia's experiences and achievements to transboundary areas, particularly the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA), of which the Zambezi Region conservancies comprise an important component. Transfrontier conservation has been under development in the region for over a decade, though has struggled to become manifest and impactful on the ground largely due to the lack of clear community rights over wildlife and natural resources in countries such as Angola and Zambia.

Nevertheless, KAZA presents an enormous community conservation and tourism opportunity - with perhaps over one-third of all of Africa's remaining elephants, among other rich natural assets spread across the five countries - and ultimately the future viability of the conservancies in Zambezi Region is heavily tied to dynamics around land use, wildlife use and movements, and tourism development in the wider transboundary KAZA region (see Maps 1 and 2). It is also important to note that KAZA depends heavily on community-based management, as the spatial heart of the area in southern Zambia, bordering Namibia's Zambezi Region, is predominantly communal land under customary authority. IRDNC, drawing on its experience facilitating CBNRM in Zambezi Region and its strong grassroots ties and capabilities, has a unique positioning within KAZA as the main source of expertise in CBNRM and community-level facilitation, capacity building, enterprise development and collaborations.

*„Wildlife is
Namibia's gold“*

*- Late Prince George
Mutwa of Bukalo,
Salambala Conservancy*

² National CBNRM Sustainability Strategy

³ CDSS final review, 2014

⁴ IRDNC Lessons Learned, 2011

2.4 Local Governance

Governance issues are at the centre of many of the challenges conservancies face. Despite considerable investments in the capacity of the conservancy committees, by IRDNC and other support organisations, consensus has emerged around a number of fundamental challenges facing conservancies today:

- Even as total revenues have grown in many conservancies, benefits to conservancy members have remained limited, either due to mismanagement by conservancy committees, or investment of increasing revenues in the committee budgets, such that costs increase with revenues and additional revenues are not translating into greater benefits for members. Another reason for limited benefits is that many conservancies simply do not generate enough revenue to pay for minimal operational costs; let alone benefits for members (this is especially applicable in Kunene).
- Relatedly, there is a sense that the involvement of conservancy membership in budgeting, reporting, and overall holding of the committees accountable for their use of resources has become attenuated, perhaps due to the fact that so much recent investment (e.g. the MCA work focused on enterprise development) has focused on building the management capacity of the committees, rather than ensuring more direct involvement and oversight by the conservancy memberships.
- Despite intensive training, the technical capacity and strategic vision of the committees, particularly in terms of using conservancy income to invest effectively in rural development opportunities at the community level, or drive the generation of enterprise opportunities within the conservancies, often remains limited.

In sum, despite often increasing revenues and economic opportunities, conservancies remain limited in their generation of benefits for their members, and there is a sense that conservancies are, at least in some cases, being run primarily by and for the committees rather than the entire membership. These challenges cut to the heart of the entire premise upon which CBNRM is based, and bring the long-term sustainability of many conservancies into question.

2.5 Social & Demographic Trends

The social and demographic composition of rural communities in Namibia is changing, as is taking place in neighbouring countries and across much of Africa. Human populations are growing, placing increasing pressure on natural resources. This is witnessed in the growing pressure on land and demand for expansion of agriculture in Zambezi Region, and changes in pastoralist grazing practices in Kunene. This is impacting wildlife habitat conditions, the ability of conservancies to control and manage land and resource uses, and the future outlook for wildlife movements across landscapes.

„There is no point in teaching graveyards”

– Beaven Munali, IRDNC Assistant Director, Zambezi Region

An additional major change is generational and cultural, with growing numbers of youth, who often have different values and life expectations from the previous generation. Rural areas of Namibia have high levels of unemployment and limited business opportunities. Many among the growing numbers of youth do not want to be small-scale farmers or pastoralists or live in rural areas; youth who become educated often emigrate to urban areas. Cultural values related to wildlife, natural resources and the environment are becoming weaker and not necessarily carrying over from one generation to the next. This presents a challenge in terms of community incentives and behavioural choices, for example as it relates to illegal use of wildlife and land use designations, that underlie the sustainability of the conservancies and CBNRM as a whole.

2.6 Illegal Wildlife Use & Human Wildlife Conflict

During the last several years, a surge of commercial poaching has taken place in Namibia, targeting rhinos and elephant in particular, and posing a significant threat to one of the conservancies' flagship species, the population of black rhinos in Kunene Region. Challenges in addressing this situation have led to concerns around the potential for more top-down law enforcement interventions and even posing the danger of weakening both the community-based policy narrative and governance approach within Namibia. This surge in poaching is linked to the wider regional increase in poaching of elephants and rhinos over the past five years, particularly of rhinos in neighbouring South Africa's Kruger National Park.

At the same time, human-wildlife conflict is increasing in communal areas due to the recovery and expansion of wildlife as a result of improved local protection and management through the conservancies. Species such as lion in Kunene and elephant and buffalo in Zambezi are a source of increasing conflict, reducing the net benefits from wildlife due to the economic costs they impose on individuals and weakening local support for sustainable use and management.





2.7 Land Fragmentation

An important long-term threat to the viability of conservancies and rural resource uses is land fragmentation, particularly in Zambezi Region with its higher agricultural potential and denser population. The fragmentation of conservancies into patches of conserved land and wildlife habitat can undermine both conservation values as well as commercial tourism potential. The limitations of conservancies to legally control land use is a related challenge. The Communal Land Reform Act currently being implemented, which allows for private registration (and under some conditions, fencing) of plots further compromises the potential for wildlife outside of protected areas. There is an increasing focus on securing corridors and engaging more in land use planning and zoning as a response to this. This is particularly critical in Zambezi Region, where the conservancies provide critical passageways for movements of elephant and other wildlife between Botswana's Okavango Delta system and Angola and Zambia to the north.

2.8 Fragmentation of Natural Resource Management

Namibia has developed one of Africa's strongest frameworks for CBNRM through the conservancies, and extended this approach to the forestry, and to a lesser degree, the inland fisheries sector. However, as CBNRM expands and deepens in the country and becomes applied to a wider suite of natural resources, it is imperative to ensure an integrated approach that enables local communities to manage the full suite of natural resources in their areas without a proliferation of parallel management institutions or policy frameworks that create additional local costs or conflicts.

Furthermore, some key sectors are not yet closely coordinated and harmonised or supportive of CBNRM, leading to potential conflicts and loss of opportunities for the efficiencies of integrated management. This is particularly important with regards to land, livestock, and agriculture, which are sectors of growing

importance in rural Namibia and where there may either be synergies or conflicts with the conservancies and related CBNRM initiatives. Livestock development and management policies and practices, for example, are increasingly promoted by policy-makers and politicians in Namibia. If integrated with CBNRM objectives, for example through efforts to promote improved rangeland condition or integrate livestock grazing and wildlife conservation practices, livestock development may support the wider suite of natural resources in rural areas. Alternative policies, for example the promotion of additional veterinary fencing that fragments wildlife range, can however undermine much of the progress of CBNRM and the economic value generated locally and nationally by wildlife.

2.9 Global Pressures on Local Wildlife Policy and Uses

At the international scale of conservation policy, the escalating poaching crisis in Africa has revitalised activist networks in North America and Europe critical of wildlife trade and sustainable use. Much more top-down militarised approaches to stopping poaching have become prevalent in this international policy discourse; although southern Africa continues to resist this, as in the South African government's moves to encourage dialogue around rhino conservation and trade policies.

Indicative of this changing climate, Namibia's recent attempt to auction a black rhino trophy hunting export permit in the US resulted in a flurry of western public criticism, although it also resulted in some high-profile defences of Namibia's successful track record in conservation.⁵

Conservancies in Zambezi Region are particularly vulnerable to any potential restrictions on the importation of trophy hunted elephant products in North America or Europe. Zambezi's conservancies depend heavily on elephant trophy hunting, generating 68% of total revenue, amounting to N\$ 19.5 million (US\$ 1.5 million) in 2013/14. The loss or restriction of this income could undermine local support for conservancies in Zambezi, and thus severely limit available options for securing key wildlife corridors and habitats through conservancy land use measures in Zambezi. This in turn would have critical implications for KAZA's wider transboundary ambitions.

Despite those challenges, the ivory and rhino poaching crisis has also captured global attention, and significant resources, on African wildlife conservation. In that context, Namibia's experiences over the past several decades have more resonance and importance than ever, as both African countries and international funders and conservation groups look for effective models and solutions to current problems.

⁵ See: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/21/opinion/a-trophy-hunt-thats-good-for-rhinos.html?_r=0



2.10 Changing Resourcing of CBNRM in Namibia

For Namibia's own national CBNRM programme, resourcing questions have become more urgent as the long-standing flow of large-scale foreign investment to support the conservancies is not sustainable; more than N\$1 billion was spent over the past 25 years to support conservancy programmes. While there remains significant and growing international interest in the Namibian CBNRM programme as a model of conservation, sustainable development, and rural economic opportunity, in the future it is likely that funding sources will be more fragmented, often involving smaller amounts and grants over shorter periods of time. The reclassification of Namibia as a middle-income country and the end of many years of large-scale US government support to CBNRM in Namibia are both significant factors in these trends.

This changed circumstance may result in greater transaction costs in terms of fundraising and reporting to different funders than IRDNC and other Namibian organisations have experienced in the past. Nevertheless, there remain significant opportunities, both within IRDNC's existing funding network, and looking to wider regional settings such as KAZA. The initiative to establish a trust fund financial model for a proportion of conservancy support is important and far-sighted, but will take some years to develop and establish as a source of funding.

At present, the situation is thus one where, after two decades of support, conservancies have proliferated in number and spatial extent, and grown in the complexity and scope of their operations, for example through the development of numerous joint ventures, some of which have complex financing and governance arrangements. The demand for different kinds of support services to conservancies over a growing geographic area comprising 20% of the country, has never been greater; while at the same time, resources for supporting the conservancies, at least from external funding agencies, are reduced. This creates a fundamental conundrum for IRDNC and other supporters of CBNRM in Namibia, which this strategic plan seeks to address.

Within this context, however, the Namibian government and international supporters of CBNRM in Namibia, notably WWF, are actively exploring new approaches to resourcing conservancy support and providing for the long-term financial sustainability of CBNRM.⁶ This involves, as a key step, the establishment of a trust fund that would provide resources to support conservancies. The Ministry of Environment and Tourism has also shown a new level of willingness and interest to increase its direct financial support to conservancy capacity development, oversight, and resourcing. These create new opportunities for redesigning the patterns of financial support for conservancies and CBNRM overall in ways that are less dependent on external grants and more aligned to the long-term interests of actors within Namibia.

6 National CBNRM Sustainability Strategy

«The CBNRM programme is the only truly transformative initiative that has taken place in Namibian society since independence.»

– Len le Roux,
IRDNC Board member

3 IRDNC Strengths and Weaknesses

3.1 Strengths

IRDNC has been at the centre of the conception, development, and scaling up of CBNRM in Namibia for the past thirty years. Thus it has played a central role in the transformation of natural resource management approaches in Namibia since the 1990s, catalysing the many environmental, economic, and institutional changes that have resulted since that time. This has placed IRDNC on the vanguard of community conservation work and thinking not only in southern Africa, but globally, for the past several decades.

IRDNC's work rests on three fundamental pillars:

- natural resource management
- livelihood and enterprise development
- strong local governance

IRDNC's strength as an organisation is rooted in its deep history and experience in working to facilitate CBNRM, basing its work on strong principles and values related to community ownership and empowerment, and progressively innovating through new programmes and initiatives that add value to natural resources or attempt to solve new problems that arise. Such innovations include developing new value chains for sustainable harvesting of indigenous natural plants, converting this into a significant new economic opportunity for individuals within conservancies; supporting the progressive expansion of economic opportunities for conservancies, including through concession areas allocated to conservancies within national parks (e.g. Bwabwata National Park); and creating a conservancy insurance scheme to address human-wildlife conflict. A wide range of new initiatives IRDNC developed and pioneered in the past have now become mainstream parts of Namibia's CBNRM programme.

IRDNC's work with conservancies has been defined by its holistic approach, resting on the three fundamental pillars of natural resource management, enterprise





development, and strong local governance. The breadth of IRDNC's interventions have been unique within Namibia's CBNRM landscape and have given it an unmatched hands-on experience working to facilitate and enable different aspects of CBNRM in the field. Reflecting this, IRDNC's staff and board hold a combination of technical expertise and strong field facilitation capabilities; the dedication, experience, and creativity of IRDNC's diverse staff is a major organisational strength and key to the organisation's successes.

Another key to IRDNC's impact has been working in strong long-term partnerships with government, private tourism and hunting companies, local communities and traditional authorities, and numerous other NGOs, particularly the local and international groups that collaborate through the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO). Strong partnerships have been key to Namibia's achievements over the years, and IRDNC has played a leadership role in supporting these. IRDNC has been able to achieve what it has because it has been able to build and maintain relationships around shared interest and trust between itself and a diverse suite of collaborators and partners. This work is not easy, but it is essential in the multi-faceted realm of rural conservation and development.

Within the landscape of Namibian conservation and development, IRDNC is distinguished by its track record and reach at the grassroots level. IRDNC has made a true commitment to supporting communities over the long term, in a flexible and responsive manner, and helping them to solve the complex natural resource management problems that they face. IRDNC has worked with communities and maintained its presence during periods of civil strife and violence, when others have left. Many other rural development and conservation efforts over the years have been built out of IRDNC's work and presence in rural areas, from work on HIV-AIDS to food security to natural resource management. IRDNC's strong community facilitation skills and grassroots network have been key to its growing role building trans-boundary community networks within KAZA during the past decade. IRDNC's strength has been facilitating and consolidating the capacity for collective action at the local level — empowering communities to take control of their own resources, and solve their own problems, and build their own futures. This has motivated IRDNC's work throughout its history.

„Everything IRDNC does is based on promoting local ownership - of ideas, solutions, process.“

- Dr Margaret Jacobsohn,
IRDNC co-founder

3.2 Organisational Challenges

IRDNC faces a range of limitations and challenges as an organisation that also must be factored into its plans for the next decade. A major challenge is the broad reality of decreasing resource availability, at least in the short term with the loss of large sources of funding such as the MCA. This has led to downsizing of staff in recent years, contributing to reduced capacity in the field, increased reliance on remaining staff, and overstretching the organisation as a whole. With the continued growth of conservancies, this has led to a chronic state of overstretch for staff, as well as for available infrastructure such as field vehicles. Trying to do too much work in too many places with too few human and physical resources has at times challenged IRDNC's delivery, its rigor and consistency, and its ability to work in a reflective and responsive manner.

In addition, IRDNC needs to revitalise, re-orient, and re-prioritise its work with conservancies. There is a sense that the past five years have been largely dominated by the need to deliver outputs derived from the MCA project. While the MCA funded work enabled considerable progress in growing enterprises and income to conservancies through its focus on joint ventures, IRDNC's work became overly focused within the confines of the MCA deliverables and requirements. For example, a great deal was invested in technical training of conservancy committees, while the ability to work with a wider segment of the community and maintain deeper local presence was compromised.

Trying to do too much work in too many places with too few human and physical resources has at times challenged IRDNC's delivery, its rigor and consistency, and its ability to work in a reflective and responsive manner.



4 Vision & Mission

Vision

Rural communities in Namibia and neighbouring transboundary conservation areas are empowered through strong, self-sustaining community institutions and have a thriving natural resource base that improves livelihood options and benefits.

Mission Statement

IRDNC strives to improve the lives of rural people by diversifying the socio-economy in Namibia's communal areas to include wildlife and other valuable natural resources and to build up the capacity of rural Namibians to sustainably manage and benefit from their local natural resources.



«One finger cannot pick up even a grain of sand»

– African proverb

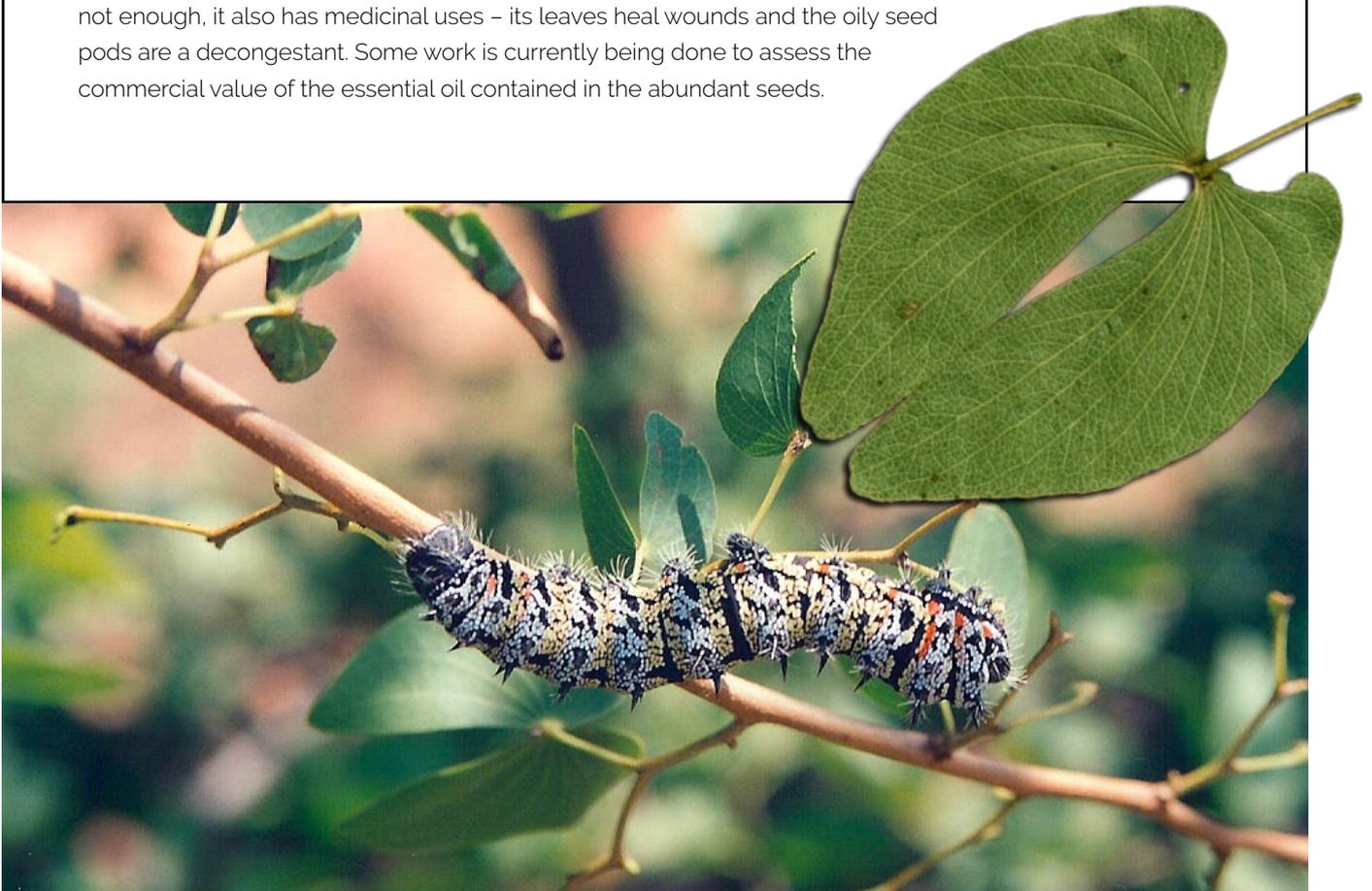
5 Values & Principles

- All of our work with communities is based on mutual trust and respect for their ideas and solutions, is responsive to their needs, driven by their interests, and supports their rights, responsibilities, and ownership.
- We are dependable and accountable to the communities we serve, as well as our partners and collaborators in government, other organisations, funders and supporters.
- We carry out all of our work with the highest level of personal and professional integrity, dedication, and perseverance in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles.
- IRDNC's work is based on a consistent presence and long-term commitment built on a vision that is not bound by our lifetimes.
- We are rooted in the communities we serve; our work starts with people and depends on strong relationships with these communities
- We are committed to transparent and durable partnerships, being team players, and supporting collective action that delivers change.



IRDNC's logo is the leaf of a mopane tree (*Colophospermum mopane*)

The leguminous mopane is an emblematic tree in Namibia – tough and resilient, able to withstand extreme conditions (both flooding and drought) - it grows in both regions where IRDNC works. In arid parts of the Kunene, it is a gnarled little tree vital for fodder and shade. In the higher rainfall areas of the Zambezi, it grows tall and straight, and produces valuable pest-resistant wood for durable building material and twine from its young bark. The mopane's excellent hardwood produces long-lasting coals - its red burning embers lie hidden in the ashes and are useful to restart fires on chilly mornings. The tree hosts the nutritious mopane worm that provides vital protein to rural communities. As if that were not enough, it also has medicinal uses – its leaves heal wounds and the oily seed pods are a decongestant. Some work is currently being done to assess the commercial value of the essential oil contained in the abundant seeds.





6 Theory of Change

IRDNC strives to increase the rights of rural people to use and own their diverse range of natural resources, and to manage these resources sustainably. We believe that a healthy natural resource base lays a foundation for rural development. This is fully optimised when natural resources are secured outside of protected areas and will ensure a vibrant local economy and improved livelihoods of individuals.

IRDNC's Theory of Change



There will be better livelihoods and improved natural resource management and conservation ...

IF communities have the rights to use, manage and own their natural resources,

and IF they have the capacity to govern these resources through their own community-based institutions that enhance local democracy and accountability,

and IF they are able to generate benefits which diversify and strengthen their local economies.



7 Strategic Goals

IRDNC's work over the next decade will be organised according to five focal long-term strategies that will serve as the basis for organizing its work and addressing the major opportunities and challenges it faces in pursuit of its vision and mission. These five strategies are:

- **Revitalising community governance** - with a particular focus on strengthening and mobilising the membership of conservancies to play a greater role in the oversight and leadership of their areas.
- **Increasing benefits to members** - working to ensure that the growing revenue and natural resource-based opportunities in conservancies and the wider rural landscape benefits conservancy members and other individuals directly.
- **Diversifying and integrating CBNRM** - enabling communities to integrate the management of wildlife, forests, fisheries and other natural resource management and resource-based economic activities.
- **Transboundary natural resource management** - with a focus on KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area, building on the track record of grassroots engagement and network-building to achieve tangible progress in community-based natural resource management in communal lands in neighbouring countries, particularly Zambia and Angola, and strengthening ties between communities in those countries and those in Zambezi Region.
- **Strengthening the constituency for CBNRM** - revitalising the narrative around CBNRM both inside and outside of Namibia, including key actors in Namibia such as traditional authorities, politicians, and government agencies, as well as global audiences and decision-makers that influence the ability of Namibian communities to generate benefits from wildlife and other resources through trade and enterprise.

7.1 Revitalising Community Natural Resource Governance

All conservancy members understand and are empowered to enforce their constitutions, especially with regard to financial decisions. At least 70% of conservancies that earn income have skilled managers who participate in a leadership development programme. All conservancies have active programmes for engaging women and youth.

The entire premise of CBNRM in terms of delivering sustainable natural resource management outcomes and improvements in local economies and livelihoods depends on having strong local governance institutions that enable local groups of people to transparently make decisions, share and allocate resources, and enforce rules and management systems. In recent years, the conservancies, through their committee-based governance structure, have often struggled to provide this sound basis of local governance.

Based on IRDNC's long-term involvement working with the conservancies, including in their original design and formation and facilitating extensive training and support of the committees in recent years, we believe that the root issue lies in strengthening the ability of the conservancy members to not only hold their committees accountable, but to exert a greater leadership and ownership role over the entire process of CBNRM. We believe that the management of the conservancies has become too focused on the administrative work of the committees, undermining the wider sense of ownership and collective mobilisation amongst the broad membership. The flow of information, decision-making processes, allocation of conservancy revenues and other resources, have become too concentrated within the confines of the committees. For the conservancies to be sustainable and to deliver the kinds of outcomes that their members hope for, it is critical that the community as a whole has a greater role in overseeing and shaping the way that conservancies are governed.

IRDNC views one of our foremost strategic priorities for the next decade to be revitalising the governance of conservancies, and CBNRM more broadly, through greater direct engagement, mobilization, and empowerment of the members of conservancies and the entire community constituency. We will continue to provide appropriate technical support to committees, but we will prioritise new or enhanced strategies to engage the members. These will include:

- To strengthen the rights of conservancy members to exercise oversight and control over key decisions, such as through improvements in conservancy constitutions in ways that shift rights and responsibilities between committees and the membership;
- To develop mechanisms that enhance the ability of the membership to participate in decisions regarding the use of conservancy revenues, such as promoting quarterly meetings;
- To strengthen the technical management capacity of conservancies through promoting professional and qualified conservancy managers. This will include developing appropriate strategies, such as the employment of skilled managers who can serve 'clusters' of conservancies, for sharing and reducing the costs of improved management personnel, as well as developing approaches to mentor conservancy managers and leadership.
- To invest in strengthening engagement with, and the role of, women and youth in conservancy governance and CBNRM more broadly. This may include establishing youth representative structures or youth advisors within conservancy governance institutions, developing new mechanisms for outreach to youth within the conservancy membership, and working with conservancy committees and managers to develop overarching youth engagement programmes.

7.1.1 Implementation: 2015/6 Priorities

To pursue this long-term strategic goal over the next year, we will undertake the following priorities:

- Carrying out community visioning surveys in both Kunene and Zambezi Regions, with a target of three surveys in single conservancies or a cluster of adjacent conservancies. These surveys will engage the membership on key issues such as decision-making processes, income distribution and budget allocation, conservancy governance, and work to develop a fresh and revitalised vision for conservancy management and governance.
- Strengthening engagement with Traditional Authorities (TAs) in both regions, particularly focusing on engagement in Kunene around the current rhino poaching crisis.
- Developing clearer strategies for long-term engagement and mobilisation of women and youth, including options such as a crafts competition for women, the possibility of football tournaments linked to conservation to engage youth in Zambezi, and various exchange visits or tours to facilitate new ideas and generate dialogue on this area of work.



7.2 Increasing Natural Resource Benefits to Members

At least 50% of Kunene conservancies will generate enough revenue to provide benefits to members, 30% will earn enough to pay for their running costs and 20% will still require some external funding. At least 80% of Zambezi conservancies will generate enough revenue to provide benefits to members, 100% will earn enough to pay for their running costs and thereby be financially self-sufficient.

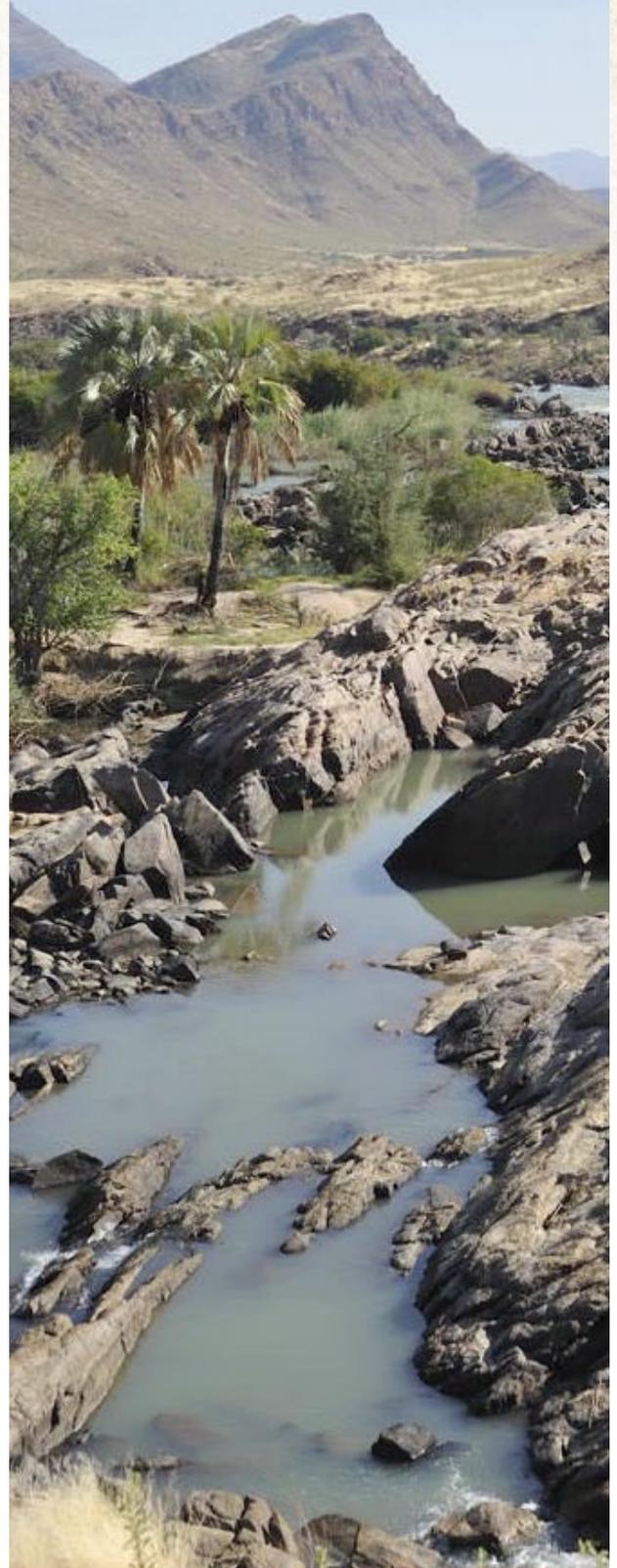
Although conservancies have significantly grown their revenues in recent years, a challenge remains in the way that the economic benefits from wildlife translate into income at the household level. The majority of revenue realised from tourism or hunting contracts and joint ventures are invested in conservancy management functions, or community development projects. A small proportion of conservancy income translates into direct benefits for members and individual households. At the same time, the costs to individual households from growing wildlife populations, in the form of crop destruction or livestock predation, have increased. This economic dynamic at the level of individual conservancy members' benefits and incentives must change if conservancies and CBNRM are to be viable in the long term.

IRDNC will consequently prioritise addressing this situation, aiming to see a greater proportion of conservancy income get channelled directly to members and individual households. Key to this, and linked to the governance issues described under the previous strategy (section 7.1), is changing the pattern of conservancy revenue allocation to better control management costs. IRDNC will also work to further diversify the range of income-generating options that conservancies and individual members can use to generate benefits. This includes growing markets for indigenous natural plants and ventures such as Mashi Crafts, which provide important opportunities for individual members to capture benefits from sustainable natural resource product harvesting and sale. Lastly, IRDNC will work to improve its approach to reducing human-wildlife conflict as a measure to reduce costs to conservancy members and residents.

In the near-term, work in this area will focus on strengthening the management of established conservancy enterprises and joint ventures, including improving the financial management of existing revenue streams. IRDNC will explore new systems for conservancies to access quality financial management support and expertise through third-party service providers, as described in Section 8.2.

7.2.1 Implementation: 2015/6 Priorities

- Develop, introduce and monitor business and financial sustainability plans in Kunene pilot sites and all conservancies in Zambezi.
- Develop and pilot new systems for conservancies to access financial management support from qualified third-party service providers.
- Carry out review of existing joint venture agreements and implementation, and revise contracts as required to optimise benefits and terms.
- Strengthen Joint Venture Management Committees through compliance dashboard.
- Integrate feedback to members and wider community on revenues and benefits with conservancy visioning exercise under section 7.1.1.





7.3 Diversifying and Integrating Community-based Natural Resource Management

By 2025, at least 80% of all Kunene and Zambezi Region will have integrated land-use and natural resource governance strategies implemented that optimise sustainable resource management and benefits for users.

Over the past 20 years, Namibia's approach to CBNRM has been largely focused on wildlife and tourism. During the past decade, CBNRM approaches have been extended to forestry and to a more limited degree to inland fisheries management. With the involvement of new sectors, often with their own governing laws and policies and institutional frameworks (e.g. Community Forests), there are both opportunities for diversifying local management practices and sources of benefits beyond wildlife, and the need to develop a harmonised and coordinated framework whereby communities can manage all of their natural resources through a single integrated set of local institutions and management systems. Ultimately the goal should be to further integrate other sectors and resources such as rangeland governance, water management, and community land tenure, as far as is possible. This is a critical priority for CBNRM in Namibia going forward and will be a key strategic focus for IRDNC over the next decade, to work for this diversification and integration of multiple natural resources into strong and functional local management systems.

In order to pursue this objective, IRDNC will work at multiple scales to diversify and integrate CBNRM across multiple sectors, from the landscape to the policy level. Locally, IRDNC will test and scale integrated community-based organisations for exercising rights over natural resources and diversifying benefits. In Zambezi, this may focus on forestry and fisheries, as well as land use planning involving agriculture, while in Kunene the focus may be more on rangelands and

livestock management. Where feasible and appropriate, collective group rights over land will be sought and tested as a part of an integrated CBNRM approach and framework.

IRDNC will prioritise its work in key sites where integrated approaches can be used to strengthen natural resource-based land uses. This includes key wildlife corridors in both Zambezi and Kunene, where compatible land uses are most likely to endure if multiple natural resource values can be integrated to enhance overall returns at the local level from conservation. Joint venture agreements will also be integrated with these land use planning efforts. IRDNC will also work to influence national and regional land use planning and wider development and infrastructure planning, in order to promote compatibility with local land and resource use systems.

This work will include activities such as participatory local level planning processes that integrate different land-use options, applying land use and management practices that will enhance the condition, productivity and resilience of land sustainability for optimum efficiency over the long term under different land use scenarios and land tenure regimes; creating mechanisms at different levels where relevant stakeholders cooperate for integration and prioritisation of land use options and creating resource governance mechanisms across different user groups.

7.3.1 Implementation: 2015/6 Priorities

- Establish one or two pilot sites in Kunene where community organisations (conservancy or other CBO) can integrate all local natural resource management functions.
- Assist conservancies to engage with all natural resource sectors to improve integrated management, with a focus on complexes or 'clusters' of conservancies in key wildlife corridors in Kunene and Zambezi.
- Develop strategies to guide IRDNC's future role and niche in agriculture and livestock sectors, with initial steps comprising a formal review of IRDNC's holistic rangeland management programme, and development of a strategy to improve food security in Bwabwata National Park.
- In order to secure wildlife resources in the near term and address current challenges, develop a more coordinated approach to reduce poaching and protect local wildlife populations. This will focus on increasing community awareness of the impacts of poaching through information sharing meetings at village level, regular feedback meetings with traditional authorities, politicians and regional officials, and working with communities to participate in anti-poaching task forces and other government initiatives.





7.4 Prioritising Transboundary Natural Resource Management

By 2025, CBNRM will be firmly entrenched in the policies and practice of all neighbouring states.

Transboundary natural resource management, particularly in KAZA around the borders of Zambezi Region, presents both a major opportunity and an urgent challenge for CBNRM in Namibia. The long-term viability of CBNRM in Zambezi Region, a narrow strip of land sandwiched between Angola, Botswana and Zambia, depends on the wider transboundary patterns of land use, wildlife movement, and tourism investment. At the same time, for the goals and ambitions of KAZA to succeed, natural resource management must be practiced and supported by rural communities in northern Botswana, southern Zambia, and south-eastern Angola.

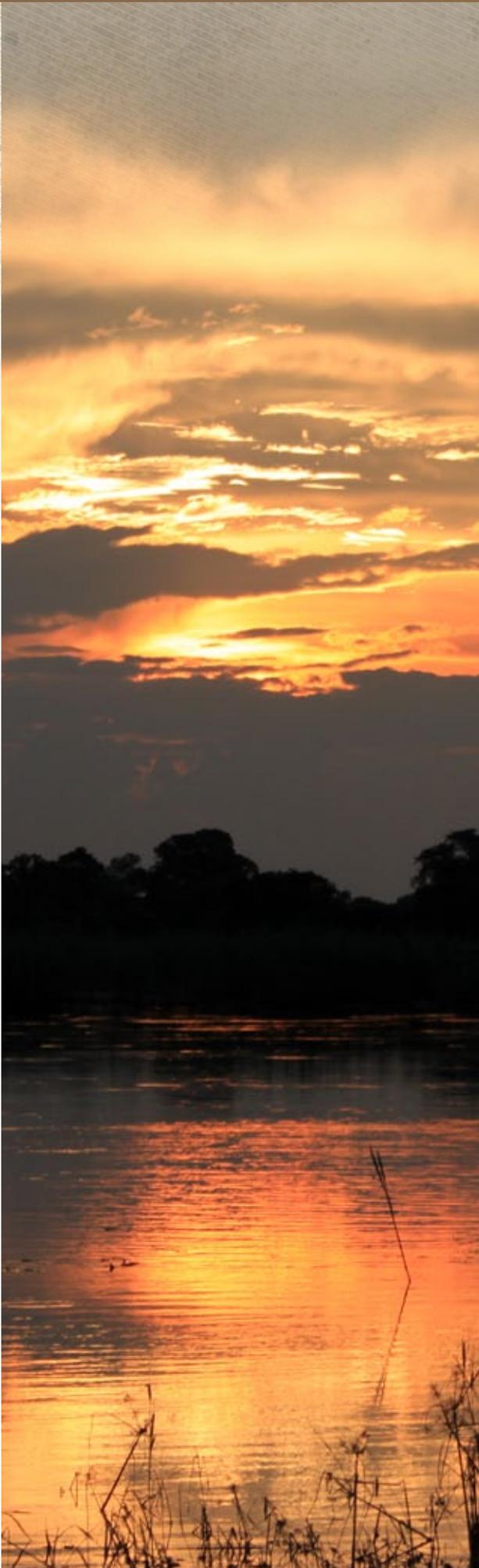
Namibia, and IRDNC, possesses the expertise in the design and implementation of CBNRM on which KAZA's ultimate viability hinges. IRDNC's long-term goal is to make CBNRM a competitive land use within this transboundary landscape. IRDNC's critical role and opportunity within KAZA is to provide its expertise in CBNRM design and facilitation, link communities across borders, ensure community interests and voice are able to influence tourism development and conservation planning processes, and build local management capacity in partnership with key transboundary counterpart and partner organisations.

7.4.1 Implementation: 2015/6 Priorities

IRDNC will lay the groundwork for longer term and deeper engagement within KAZA by extending its work with transboundary community forums to develop pilot sites in neighbouring countries, design and pilot new CBNRM work in Namibia with transboundary dimensions, and strengthen its positioning within KAZA. Specific priorities are:

- Investigate opportunities for conservancies managing fishing rights and to issue fishing permits, and to better enforce in Namibia the fishing ban that is enforced in neighbouring Zambia.
- Renew the MoU that guides transboundary activities between Kwandu Conservancy and the Imusho Village Action Group in Zambia.
- Develop a formal MoU with KAZA secretariat for IRDNC provision of CBNRM support, and accompanying funded work plan.
- Identify one site in each of Angola and Zambia to pilot aspects of CBNRM (e.g. fisheries, timber, anti-poaching), and establish activities on the ground with local partners by end of 2015.
- Collate data and reports on movement and trade (legal and illegal) on high value species (e.g. fish, timber, elephants, INPs) within the transboundary system.





7.5 Strengthening the Constituency for CBNRM

By 2025, CBNRM principles will be recognised internationally as the only sustainable means to conserve nature outside of protected areas.

For the past two decades, IRDNC has been at the forefront of expanding the philosophy and practice of CBNRM in Namibia by creating and supporting local, national and transboundary regional conservation and rural development alliances. This remains a priority; even more so now that CBNRM discourse has become mainstream whilst CBNRM practice remains limited internationally. At a national level, IRDNC will work with youth, women and traditional leaders to increase their knowledge of and involvement in CBNRM.

IRDNC's experience - both in pioneering the conservancy programme with its partners in Namibia, and in the establishment and activation of a new model of park co-management with the support of MET in Bwabwata National Park - is ensuring that new protected areas build on the community-based natural resource management approach and strengthen community partnerships with government. It is critical that these models succeed as they hold the potential to provide solutions for some of the most embattled parks in Africa as well as to revitalize the parks model throughout Africa and beyond. IRDNC aims to be a centre of excellence for CBNRM practice in Africa, and to use our experience and skills to promote CBNRM principles internationally. General priorities for achieving this include:

- Develop a clear IRDNC communications strategy.
- Increase youth, school learner and traditional authority involvement in CBNRM.
- Participate in select international forums and develop long-term partnerships to promote CBNRM and to foster CBNRM exposure and lesson-learning opportunities.
- Develop IRDNC staff skills to advocate for CBNRM internationally.

7.5.1 Implementation: 2015/6 Priorities

During this next year, IRDNC will continue to invest time to strengthen existing partnerships, and will also reach out to potential new partners to increase our exposure and develop collaborations that will allow us to share our experience with other NGOs and institutions to inform best practice internationally and build our staff capacity to provide world-class CBNRM support to communities. This includes strengthening the following networks and relationships:

- Fundecor (Costa Rica), Mpingo Development Conservation Initiative (Tanzania) – A south-south collaboration between these three organisations, each of them regional leaders, would improve each organisation's aim to be a 'centre of excellence'. This partnership will also allow for lessons to be shared regarding financial sustainability – an objective shared by all three organisations (and largely achieved by Fundecor).
- PCI Media is a potential partner to develop innovative communication strategies for behaviour change among youth and society in general – both with regards to wildlife crime as well as conservancy governance.
- The ICCA Consortium provides an opportunity for IRDNC to liaise with, learn from, and share its experiences and practice with a diverse group of similar-minded international organisations – all of whom share the goal of increasing the rights of local communities over their land and resources.
- IRDNC intends to join IUCN and has started to participate in SULi (Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Initiative) and the CEC (Commission on Education and Communication) to increase our ability to influence conservation discourse, and to learn from experiences elsewhere.
- NGOs operating in neighbouring countries are important partners to IRDNC – as we have the potential to co-facilitate and support CBNRM processes in the countries where these organisations are based. In this regard, IRDNC will continue to strengthen links with ACADIR (Associação de Conservação do Ambiente e Desenvolvimento Integrado Rural – Angola), WWF Zambia and other national NGOs in the KAZA Transfrontier Conservation Area.





8 How we will work: Rationalizing our Investments

To achieve the long-term vision, strategic goals and near-term priorities described in the previous sections, IRDNC will need to confront a number of basic operational challenges related to how it works and how it allocates its effort and resources. The most fundamental challenge that must be addressed is that IRDNC cannot possibly provide all needed support services to all conservancies in the regions where it works. Ways of reducing the routine support and oversight provided to conservancies in recent years must be sought, without jeopardising the ability of conservancies to receive the support that they need. Achieving this will require shifts in organisational strategy, approach, and perhaps culture in terms of how resources are invested and rationalised.

Three basic strategies will be used to rationalise and allocate IRDNC's time and resources: prioritising sites based on a combination of criteria designed to identify the greatest opportunities for IRDNC to achieve its long-term vision of sustainable, viable CBNRM — focusing efforts on 'clusters' of conservancies which align with prioritised sites — and strengthening the management capacity and support options of conservancies through third-party service sourcing.

„If we try to keep every conservancy alive, we will die”

- IRDNC staff comment during strategic planning workshop

8.1 Prioritising Sites for Investment

IRDNC will increasingly focus its efforts on sites where there is real potential for long-term viable and sustainable CBNRM, and where IRDNC can best achieve the long-term goals described in Section 7. IRDNC's long-term goal is to get conservancies to the point where they are profitable and productive, based on a strong natural resource base, diverse suite of enterprises and economic options, and strong local governance and management. Not every conservancy has the natural or social capital to perform at a high level and some conservancies have questionable viability, at least in terms of being self-sufficient in the long term.

IRDNC will establish a basic suite of site selection and prioritisation criteria, which may include:

- Financial/Commercial Viability (joint ventures etc.)
- Wildlife/Conservation Value- e.g. connectivity, key species and populations and potential for integration of different sectors (e.g. community forestry)
- Conservancy Governance (motivation of members, willingness to invest in supporting conservancies by local population, demand for action and support)
- Opportunities to expand scale of impact by working with 'clusters' of adjacent or near-by conservancies

In relation to the last point, 'clustering' conservancies will be an important strategy for both choosing sites that are viable from a conservation and economic perspective, in terms of working at sufficient landscape scales, and for improving the efficiency of service provision. Clusters of collaborating conservancies will enable IRDNC to work more efficiently with these groups of conservancies, by working in a less spatially fragmented manner.

8.2 Professionalising Management and Sourcing Support Services

A key strategy for reducing conservancies' dependence on IRDNC for routine support of management and administration of conservancies lies in improving both conservancy management capacity, and options for third-party service provision to conservancies.

In order for conservancies to be viable and to become less dependent on IRDNC for routine support, the quality of professional management of conservancies needs to improve, particularly in light of the proliferation of enterprises and business ventures now taking place in conservancies. A key step which IRDNC will promote is for conservancies to employ qualified managers. However, in order for individuals with the necessary qualifications and capabilities to be employed by conservancies at an affordable level that does not consume most conservancy revenues and reduce benefits to members, it is proposed that managers should be employed by clusters of adjacent conservancies, i.e. capable managers can exercise key management and development functions for more than a single conservancy. 'Clustering' thus is a key strategy for achieving economies of scale in the employment of suitable professional conservancy managers. By helping conservancies source and employ managers, mentor and train them, and make the case to conservancies to invest in upgrading their management capacity in this way, IRDNC will be able to reduce the routine support conservancies require, and strengthen the long-term viability of the conservancies in the process.

An additional strategy will be to facilitate new arrangements for conservancies to access the minimum support services they may require for adherence to MET compliance requirements. These basic support services would cover areas such as:

- Wildlife law enforcement and monitoring
- Financial management
- Routine networking and planning events (e.g. Bi-Annual planning, chairperson's meetings)
- Basic governance (e.g. committee and AGM training)

IRDNC will work with MET and NACSO to develop new arrangements for the provision, funding, and sourcing of these support services. For financial management, for example, IRDNC will transition away from providing bookkeeping support and training, and will work through NACSO to identify independent service providers, or an appropriate NACSO member organisation, that can provide these services. Such services may be paid for by either MET or the conservancies themselves according to their own needs and demand. IRDNC may provide other support services around wildlife management and monitoring, network participation, and basic governance if funding to pay for these services is available from either MET or conservancies themselves.



9 Strengthening Our Organisation

In order to pursue our mission and achieve our major long-term goals, IRDNC will need to continue to develop as an organisation in a number of critical ways.

9.1 Financing

Perhaps the greatest organisational challenge for IRDNC going forward will be reformulating and developing its funding model in response to the changed funding environment in Namibia. In order to pursue the goals described in this strategy effectively, IRDNC will need to secure stable and flexible long-term sources of funding that are aligned with its core goals and priorities. IRDNC will avoid overly restrictive project funding, short-term and smaller grants that bear high transaction costs, and consultancy-mode service provision that is not fully aligned with our mission and priorities.

IRDNC's funding strategy will be based on the following basic pillars:

- To deepen and replicate key strategic long-term partnerships with organisations that have strong vested interests in IRDNC's work and are fully aligned with our mission. These relationships provide long-term sources of funding as well as access to networks and the ability to showcase our work. Models for this are IRDNC's relationships with WWF and Bread for the World, and IRDNC will prioritise deepening these partnerships and building new relationships modelled on these types of strong partnerships. These partnerships can also be critical to connecting with new private and government funding opportunities, particularly foundations and philanthropists based in the US and Europe.
- Pursuing funding opportunities linked to social enterprise, where IRDNC has a strong track record in innovating and scaling enterprises based on sustainable natural resource use, but has not framed its work in this way nor pursued significant funding within this space.
- Even as conventional CBNRM funding sources in Namibia dwindle, there are likely to be growing

opportunities within KAZA and IRDNC will capitalise on its key strategic positioning within KAZA to secure resources to support its transboundary work and CBNRM work within Zambezi Region.

- To provide for the organisation's long-term sustainability, IRDNC will work with key partners to establish an endowment fund, based on a goal of raising a capital endowment of at least US\$ 5 million by 2025.
- IRDNC will seek opportunities to fund its work in Namibia through new sources of funding such as the CBNRM trust fund currently being developed, as well as through service provision contracting with MET in so far as it aligns with IRDNC's priorities.
- To strengthen fundraising from private sector sources within Namibia where there is alignment of interests, notably for things such as a conservancy youth programme, or anti-poaching work in Kunene, where marketing and conservation links with private companies can be pitched.

A key component to enabling IRDNC to strengthen its fundraising efforts and pursue new sources, as well as undertake challenging long-term projects such as a capital campaign for an endowment, IRDNC must improve its communications strategy and profile. A communications strategy will be developed that will support both operational and organisational goals and priorities, enabling IRDNC to better showcase and promote its work, build networks, and document its achievements.





9.2 Human Resource Development

A diverse, experienced, and dedicated staff is one of IRDNC's main organisational strengths. However, at present IRDNC's staff runs the risk of chronic overstretch and there are gaps at some key positions and weaknesses in certain skills and needs. It will be important to continually review IRDNC's human resource capacity in terms of its alignment with the work that we do and that we want to do as we begin to move through this new strategy. It will also be important to review human resource needs in light of the impact and outcomes of the strategies described in Section 8, which are designed to also address the problem of overstretched staff by reducing and prioritizing the activities that IRDNC undertakes.

An additional priority area within human resources lies in developing improved approaches to the professional

development of existing staff. This can be done through more formalized and thoughtful approaches to mentoring and coaching of junior staff, the development of individual staff development plans, creating professional opportunities for staff such as courses and exposure trips, and incentive-based measures such as performance-linked bonuses. Developing and refining these approaches will be an important element in strengthening IRDNC's human resource base. Linked to the issue of mentoring and staff development is the issue of succession planning, and the need to invest in both recruiting and developing younger, more qualified staff members, to enable them to rise within the organisation over time. This is important to the sustainability of the organisation.



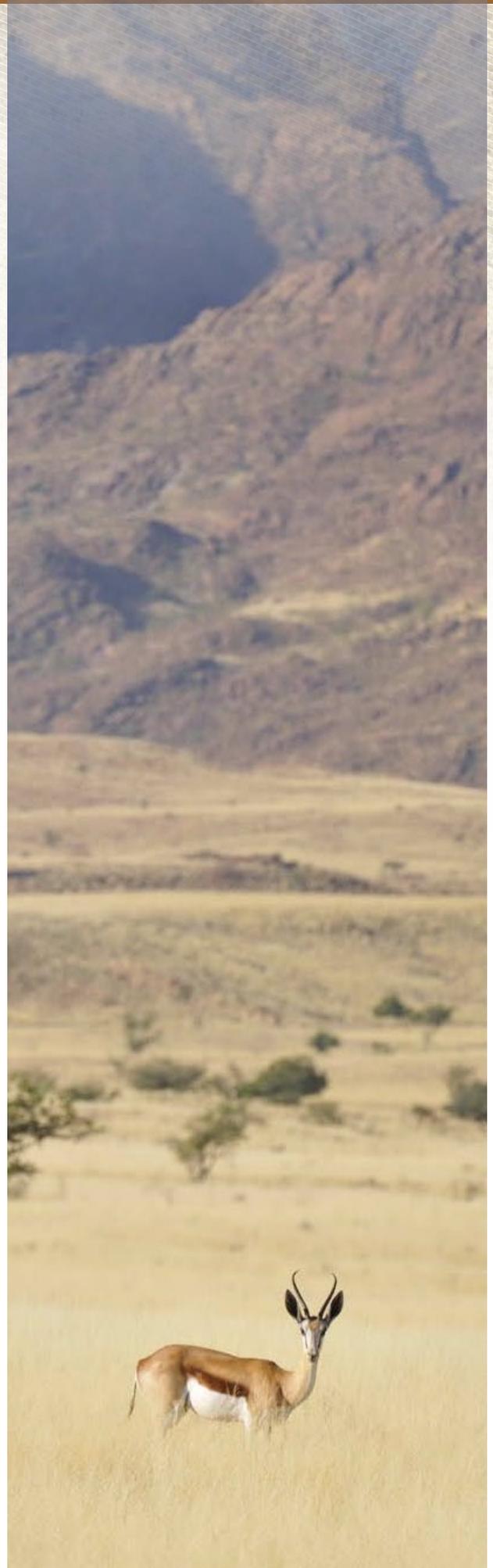
9.3 Infrastructure

IRDNC will improve the key infrastructure that supports its staff to carry out work in what are often challenging conditions in remote areas. Infrastructure priorities focus on vehicles and office facilities. For vehicles, IRDNC needs to improve maintenance in order to prolong the lifespan of vehicles. We will assess the maintenance system in terms of costs and manageability to determine the optimal maintenance system, i.e. if IRDNC should invest in doing more of its own vehicle maintenance.

For office facilities, the key long-term objective is to secure ownership of our key facilities and offices, particularly the Kunene office in Opuwo and Katima Mulilo. In Opuwo we will build our own office at the Village Rest Camp. For the Rest Camp, Wereldsend and the Sijwa facility, we will develop a clear plan for cost recovery from these facilities in order to improve maintenance and reduce the currently high costs carried.

9.4 Board Development

IRDNC's board of trustees has not changed for some time; with no new members or skills added to the board for the past six years. The organisation would benefit from the expansion of the board to include members with knowledge of and experience working with donors, and successful, committed Namibians who share IRDNC's vision.



10 Strategic Collaborators & Partnerships

IRDNC maintains close relationships with its NACSO partners and the Namibian government, with whom we collaborate on a day-to-day basis. Another key characteristic of our work has been to nurture linkages for the benefit of conservancies - whether in community health, agriculture or research, amongst other fields. IRDNC's field-based presence provides potential new partners with easy access to conservancies and the ability to tap into the relationships we already have. In order to contribute to skills development in Namibia, we have hosted countless student interns who have gone on to take up prominent roles in the Namibian government and society in general. As the fostering of transboundary linkages becomes a more important component of our support, we will continue sharing our experiences with communities and partner institutions from neighbouring countries and beyond, both to secure the conservation gains made in our focal geographical areas, and also to further promote CBNRM best practice elsewhere.

NACSO – As one of its founding members, IRDNC is committed to NACSO's vision that our joint skills and resources contribute to a unified and effective Namibian conservancy programme. NACSO's Working Groups provide platforms for lesson-learning, benchmarking and development of new strategies that can be scaled up at a national level. IRDNC plans to continue its active involvement in the Natural Resource Management and Institutional Working Groups, and to increase its engagement with the Business, Enterprise and Livelihood Working Group. IRDNC intends to become more involved in national-level advocacy through NACSO.

Government/MET – The Government of Namibia has made major advancements to increase the rights of local communities over natural resources, and deserves the praise and recognition it has received for its commitment to CBNRM. IRDNC plans to continue to build upon our track record of working closely



with government to support integrated resource management. IRDNC will also reach out to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism to develop strategies to reduce the dependency of conservancies on IRDNC for routine technical assistance and support. We aim to increase our collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (especially its Directorate of Forestry) and other line ministries, including the newly established Ministry of Poverty Alleviation.

WWF in Namibia – WWF is one of IRDNC's oldest and most faithful partners. WWF in Namibia recognises that sustainable development solutions are locally-developed and owned, and as such, it has put immense efforts into supporting conservancies through local NGOs, with IRDNC being WWF's primary local partner in the regions where we work. IRDNC draws on and benefits from the technical expertise offered by WWF, which has contributed significantly to building IRDNC's own capacity. WWF has also been instrumental in

securing funds for the national CBNRM programme, including funding IRDNC. IRDNC will continue to invest in its synergistic collaboration with WWF.

KAZA Secretariat – IRDNC will work with the KAZA Secretariat to continue building local-level transfrontier links to increase the voices and involvement of local communities in transboundary natural resource management. We will also continue to pursue partnerships with NGOs operating in neighbouring countries, particularly Zambia and Angola.

Polytechnic of Namibia and University of Namibia – IRDNC's long-standing partnerships with these Namibian educational institutions, through support with curriculum development, guest lectures, exam moderation and hosting of student interns, will be sustained as IRDNC would like to continue to shape CBNRM discourse and to influence the next generation of Namibian CBNRM leaders.



11 Key Personnel



John K. Kasaona (JKK): IRDNC's Executive Director, one of 12 children to Himba-Herero parents, only went to school at the age of eight because his cattle-herding role ended when most of his family's cattle died in the great drought of the early 1980s. He joined IRDNC as a field officer in 1992 and two years later was awarded a bursary to study for a conservation diploma at the Polytechnic of Namibia. JKK worked in all sections of IRDNC over the next decade, being promoted to Assistant Director in 2009, Co-Director in 2010 and Executive Director in 2014. After giving a TED talk in 2010, JKK has become a sought after CBNRM speaker internationally, and has contributed to two US congressional hearings on conservation issues, as well as to the illegal wildlife trade meeting organised by the UK government in 2014. His passion and commitment to uplift rural Namibian communities through CBNRM has never wavered. He is chairperson of NACSO, and highly respected both locally and among Namibian decision-makers. Apart from his powerful community facilitation skills, JKK has made a major contribution to enhance understanding and support for CBNRM among top political decision-makers in Namibia and beyond.



Karine Nuulimba joined IRDNC as a social intern in 1997. Her interest in the development challenges of minority groups that was sparked by the seven years she spent working for IRDNC in the Zambezi (formerly Caprivi) Region led her to Botswana, where she led the Kuru Family of Organisation's TOCaDI (Trust for Okavango Cultural and Development Initiatives). While in Botswana she subsequently also worked as Programme Director for Letloa Trust. She returned to Namibia in 2009, and has been an IRDNC Co-Director since 2010, and Programme Director since 2014. Her 12 years of field-based experience has given her a solid foundation for the management role she has held for the past five years. Karine has a Master of Practical Anthropology from the University of Cape Town.



Beaven Munali, IRDNC's Assistant Director based in the Zambezi Region, has worked for IRDNC for 25 years starting when he pioneered and led the first community ranger team in the Zambezi (formerly Caprivi) Region. He promoted the sustained local linkages that have evolved into more formal transboundary conservation initiatives and was one of the team who assisted with development and implementation of the Management Oriented Monitoring System (known locally as 'the event book') for Community Rangers. Beaven is an advisor to conservancies on law enforcement, natural resource management and political advocacy, and his intimate knowledge and relationship with traditional leaders has inspired their commitment to CBNRM. He believes that wildlife holds a key to uplift people's lives, and has committed his life to this cause.



Janet Matota, who is also a Zambezi-based Assistant Director, has dedicated 22 years in IRDNC to uplift the role of women in CBNRM. She established the first Community Resource Monitor team, which is still operational and now integrated into conservancy structures. Janet was the lead facilitator for craft development, and was instrumental in the development of the now self-sufficient Mashi Crafts. Janet's infectious enthusiasm for empowering women has prompted her to facilitate a series of confidence building seminars with women, and she is a role model for the women of her region and beyond. Janet's organisational skills, and absolute reliability make her an invaluable member of the IRDNC team.



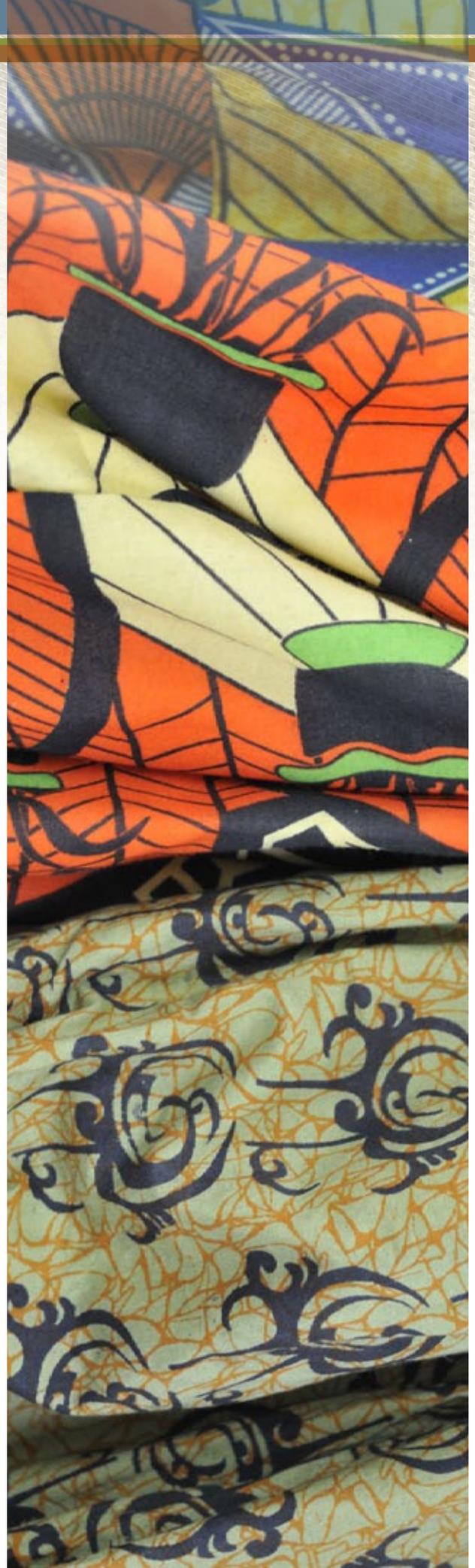
Basilia Andoroone Shivute was born and raised north of Etosha National Park, where she attended primary education while practicing traditional subsistence agriculture. She has a Master's degree in Biodiversity Management and Research from the University of Namibia and Humboldt University in Berlin. Basilia has accumulated hands-on experience in sustainable tourism, environmental management, local economic development, environmental awareness and education, community engagement as well as project management over the past ten years through employment by a world-class tourism company, regional consultancy firm and highly reputable non-governmental field-based organization. Her primary interest lies in awareness creation and community empowerment. Basilia joined IRDNC in 2013 as Operations Manager for the Kunene Field Programme and is responsible for coordination, administration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.



Dominic Muema is IRDNC Zambezi's Manager of Operations. During his nine years with IRDNC, he has coordinated the natural resource management team, building up a world-class group of field practitioners in human-wildlife conflict mitigation and landscape level conservation, before he took on the overall management of IRDNC's Zambezi programme. Dominic is known in Namibia for the outstanding work he did as a VSO volunteer with N/a Jqana Conservancy. Dominic has also worked on conservation projects in Kenya, his native country, and Thailand.



Roger Collinson, the Technical Advisor to IRDNC Kunene, has some 39 years' experience in the innovative planning, management and development of many renowned game ranches, game reserves and national parks and CBNRM projects in southern Africa – including South Africa, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia, Madagascar and Lesotho. This experience has been gained as both 'hands on' manager and 'arms length' advisor involving a wide range of clients in the private sector, government and NGOs and Community Based Organisations. This experience also covers a wide range of topics including ecosystem management, ecological research and monitoring, ecotourism, wildlife utilization, reserve infrastructure, staff development, financial sustainability, CBNRM and Community Based Tourism joint ventures. In this regard he has a number of publications to his name, has given numerous presentations to a wide variety of audiences, received awards (both personally and for projects he has been involved with) and served on a number of Boards - including the South African National Parks Board (SANParks). Roger has that rare gift of seeing opportunity in every challenge, and his trademark laughter, optimistic energy, matched with his strategic and practical insights cannot be matched. Roger has an MSc from the University of Natal (now the University of KwaZulu-Natal).

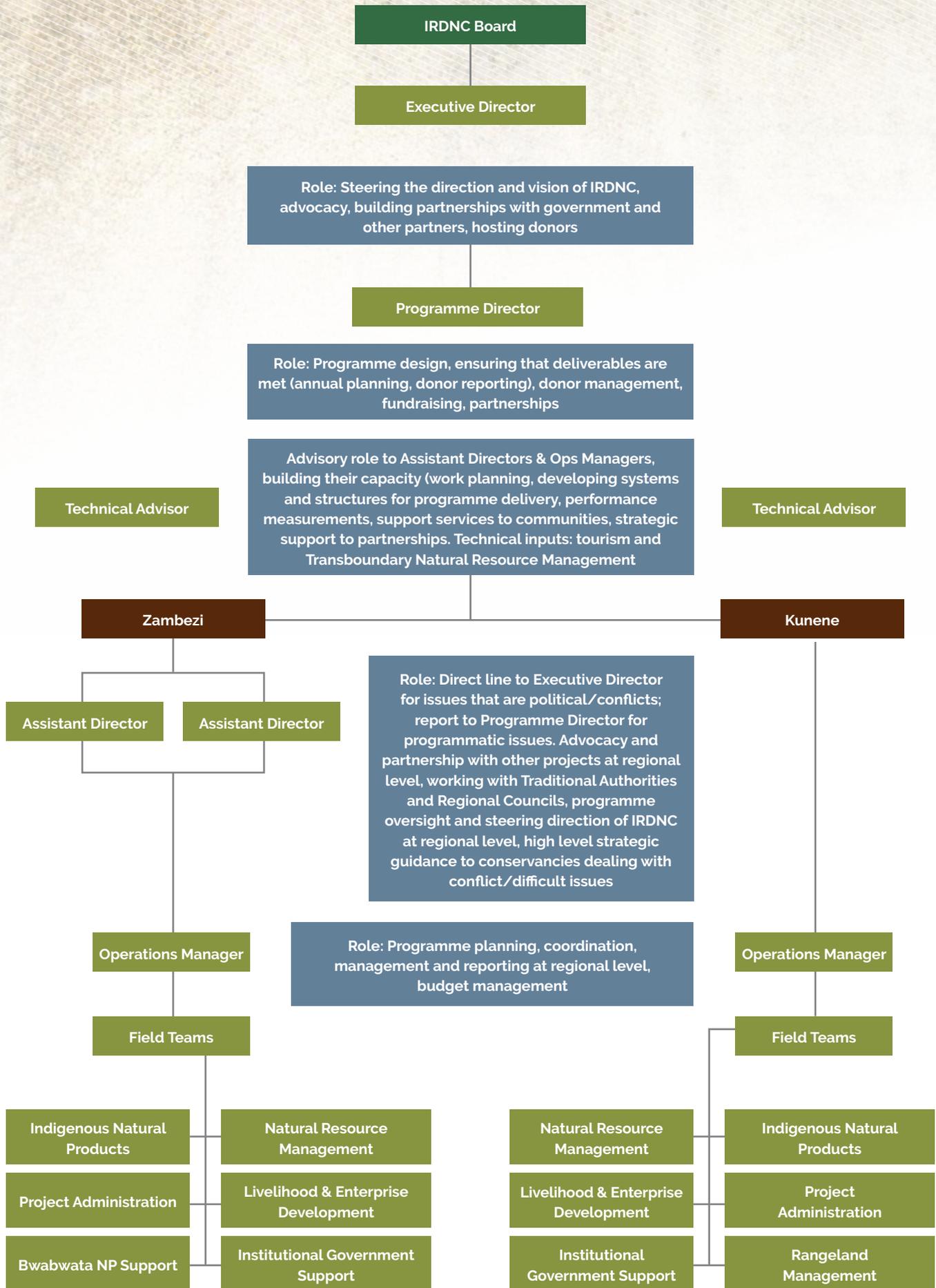


IRDNC is governed by a board of trustees who are appointed for a two year period, and re-appointed every two years. IRDNC's board of trustees comprise:

- **Adv. Andrew Corbett**, IRDNC Board Chairperson, was the Director of the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) from 1992 – 1999. The LAC carries out innovative legal work in the areas of human rights, land and environment, HIV/AIDS and labour reform. In addition to his current professional role as advocate, Adv. Corbett also holds a number of other board positions, including that of board member of the Namibia Nature Foundation and has served as an Acting Judge of the High Court of Namibia.
- **Leonard le Roux** served as the Executive Director of the Rossing Foundation for two decades. He is currently a Senior Director of the Synergos Institute. At Synergos, Len spearheads the African Public Health Leadership and Systems Innovation Initiative, which is creating a replicable model for improving public health leadership and systems performance, beginning in Namibia.
- **Clara Bohitile** was a member of the National Assembly from 1995-2005 and again from 2007 - 2010. She also served as the Deputy Minister of Basic Education and Culture from 1995-2005. She is known in parliament for her contributions to rural development, adult education and basic education for the marginalised. Ms Bohitile is a member of the SWAPO Central Committee. She is also an aspiring commercial farmer, and was named as the Emerging Farmer of the Year for 2006 by the Namibian Agricultural Union. In September 2010, she made history when she was the first woman ever elected to chair the board of the Namibian Meat Corporation.
- **Garth Owen-Smith** is an internationally known Namibian conservationist, and was a founding co-director of IRDNC and board member since 2000. He resigned from his co-directorship in 2010. Since the 1960s, when Garth started working in the Kunene Region, he has been striving to assist rural communities to link social and economic development to the conservation of the region's wildlife and other natural resources. His work has contributed directly to the revival of wildlife populations and to communities earning significant income through natural resource enterprises. He was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize in 1993, jointly with Dr Margaret Jacobsohn, for their efforts on conservation of wildlife in Namibia. In 2010, Mr Owen-Smith published *An Arid Eden: A Personal Account of Conservation in the Kaokoveld* and he continues to work in CBNRM as well as lead specialist conservation expeditions.
- **Dr Margaret Jacobsohn** was a founding co-director of IRDNC and board member since 2000. She resigned from her co-directorship in 2010. Dr Jacobsohn is an anthropologist, journalist and community-conservation pioneer whose doctoral research in anthropology and archaeology brought her to Namibia's Kunene Region in the 1980s. Together with Mr Garth Owen-Smith, she pioneered efforts to increase the ownership and control of rural communities over their natural resources, which led to the establishment of IRDNC. She is a published author and has written numerous articles and texts on the Himba and on community-based natural resource management (CBNRM). Dr. Jacobsohn and Garth Owen-Smith currently oversee a trailblazing community-based tourism company; Conservancy Safaris Namibia, that is jointly owned by five Kunene conservancies.
- **John K. Kasaona**, IRDNC Executive Director, and **Karine Nuulimba**, the Programme Director, are also board members since 2010.











IRDNC Windhoek

2nd Floor, 19 Lossen Street
Windhoek

Tel +264 61-228506/9
Fax +264 61-228530

E-mail: irdnc@iafrica.com.na

IRDNC Zambezi & Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area

Private Bag 1050, Ngweze

Tel +264 66-252518
Fax +264 66-252108

E-mail: irdncc@iway.na

IRDNC Kunene

Wereldsend Environmental Centre
PO Box 24050, Windhoek

Tel +264 67-697055
Fax +264 67-697054

E-mail: irdnc@iafrica.com.na

 www.irdnc.org.na

 www.facebook.com/irdnc



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