



WWF Namibia Newsletter

June-July 2025

Protecting Fragile Ecosystems: Field Assessment in Skeleton Coast and Dorob National Parks

Recently, field staff from the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) teamed up with the WWF Namibia Project Team to conduct a joint scouting trip accross Dorob National Park and Skeleton Coast Park. The purpose was to identify priority sites where human impact has left sensitive landscapes in need of urgent rehabilitation.



Measures will include installing barrier fences and signage to deter further damage, producing interactive maps to visualize sensitive zones, and building public awareness through social media and community-led campaigns. These actions support park management efforts while enabling meaningful engagement with the communities that rely on these ecosystems.

WWF Namibia is working to protect biodiversity and restore dryland ecosystems through inclusive, practical conservation efforts supported by the Legacy Landscape Fund.

The team visited a range of disturbed areas, from illegal off-road tracks and disused borrow pits to long-abandoned mining infrastructure. Particular concern was raised over worsening damage in high-profile sites such as Terrace Bay, Torra Bay, and the Uniab Delta Waterfall. At Messum Crater, home to the rare Welwitschia Valley, new vehicle tracks are fragmenting the terrain, and there is evidence of cars driving directly over ancient Welwitschia plants. WWF Namibia, in close collaboration with MEFT, is planning a targeted response to reverse this degradation.



Food and Agriculture Organization and WWF Namibia Spotlight Community-Led Conservation in Zambezi

From 8 to 18 June 2025, WWF Namibia team members Simonia Kanyumara and Matthew Walters joined the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)'s Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme (SWM) for a filming expedition across the Zambezi Region. Partnering with organizations including Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), Namibian Nature Foundation (NNF), and the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), the journey highlighted how communities are leading natural resource conservation efforts on the ground.



Filming kicked off in Windhoek with interviews and footage of Devil's Claw retail outlets, featuring WWF Namibia Country Director Dr. Juliane Zeidler and Namibian Association of Community-Based Natural Resource Management Support Organizations (NACSO) Director Maxi Pia Louis. The team continued on to Katima Mulilo for field meetings and visits to cluster farms and conservancies that showcased agricultural innovation and community-driven meat distribution.

At Sobbe, Bamunu, and Kwandu Conservancies, the deployment of camera traps alongside local game guards captured meaningful moments of community-based wildlife monitoring. Governance meetings and hands-on conservation efforts reflected the strength of local leadership and grassroots stewardship.

Capturing these stories is more than just recording events; it is about amplifying voices, celebrating progress, and creating a powerful visual archive to inform and inspire.



By documenting efforts in real time, we are able to showcase the impact of local leadership and ensure that community successes do not go unnoticed. It also strengthens transparency, learning, and long-term accountability for conservation outcomes.

The footage will contribute to a global video series designed to motivate policymakers and conservation stakeholders. Explore more about the Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme here: [**Sustainable Wildlife Management Programme – YouTube**](#)

Reversing Environmental Degradation in Africa and Asia (REDAA) Stakeholder Workshop Charts Urgent Path for Wildlife Recovery

On 17 June 2025, Kamanjab hosted the REDAA Stakeholder Workshop, drawing 51 participants from conservancies, the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), NGOs, and other partners. The workshop aimed to reflect on 2024 outcomes, assess data collection progress, and accelerate interventions for wildlife recovery in north-west Namibia.



Key Findings: Troubling Trends and Data Gaps

- Wildlife populations continue to decline, with oryx numbers nearing collapse despite their resilience to drought, pointing to poaching and outmigration as likely culprits.
- Road count surveys appear to underrepresent wildlife in mountainous terrains.
- Rainfall patterns, poaching incidents, and livestock movement data remain fragmented.
- Livestock encroachment is degrading designated wildlife zones, undermining their integrity as core conservation areas.

Action Plan: Participants reached consensus on urgent priorities, including:

- Analysing aerial census and fixed foot patrol datasets.
- Incorporating livestock records to contextualize wildlife trends.
- Indexing breeding success rates and tracking oryx movements across private farmland.
- Strengthening game guard training and enhancing monitoring of poaching activity.

Next Phase Strategies:

- Evaluate wildlife zone viability and ecosystem connectivity.
- Introduce regular aerial surveys and annual sex age population assessments.
- Implement targeted reintroductions, refine harvest monitoring protocols, and conduct rain gauge refresher training.



Community Engagement and Implementation

To ensure on the ground impact, the workshop concluded with a commitment to bolster anti-poaching enforcement, reinforce zonation frameworks, and elevate community conservation awareness, anchored by a forthcoming outreach road show designed to translate policy into practical benefits for both wildlife and local communities.

To explore how REDAA is supporting wildlife, livestock, and livelihoods in Namibia's dry lands, visit the [**project overview on REDDAA's website**](#)

Strengthening Ties: WWF Namibia Deepens European Partnerships

In early July, WWF Namibia Country Director Dr. Juliane Zeidler embarked on a strategic outreach trip across Europe to strengthen collaborations with key partners in Sweden, Germany, and the Netherlands.

A Palace for Conservation

A highlight was Juliane's first visit to WWF Sweden, whose offices are uniquely located in the former royal summer residence at Ulriksdal Palace, just outside Stockholm. Despite it being peak Swedish vacation season, CEO Gustaf Lind hosted Juliane for lunch in the Orangery gardens and an office tour. Juliane also presented WWF Namibia's current programme to senior portfolio leads, including the team managing the Leading for Change initiative. Engaging discussions touched on community conservation, trophy hunting challenges, and sustainable finance.



Thank you to the entire WWF Sweden team for hosting me so graciously during the summer break!-Juliane

Conservation Finance in Focus

In Frankfurt, Juliane was joined by Netsai Bollmann from WWF Germany's KAZA portfolio team for productive meetings with KfW Development Bank. Discussions with Marcus Stewens (Namibia portfolio) and Nils Meyer (KAZA programme) focused on long-term financing options for Namibia's community conservation and protected areas. As KfW prepares to define the next phase of support to KAZA, WWF Namibia continues to advance coordinated approaches. Meanwhile, colleagues Pauline Lindeque and Mike Knight represented WWF Namibia at the Kasane workshops in mid-July



Strengthening Environmental Assessment Collaboration

A planned visit to WWF Netherlands and the Netherlands Environmental Impact Assessment Commission was unexpectedly delayed due to train disruptions, but initial online discussions are underway. Juliane met virtually with WWF Netherlands CEO Jelle de Jong and KZA PIA lead Christiaan van der Hoven to align on shared programme interests and explore future support for EIA work in Namibia's Department of Environmental Affairs.

These engagements reaffirm WWF Namibia's commitment to strong international partnerships that fuel innovation, funding, and joint visioning across conservation sectors.

Curious about how WWF Namibia's work is supported globally? Visit their websites to learn more about how we are all working together for nature:

- [WWF Sweden](#)
- [WWF Germany](#)
- [WWF Netherlands](#)

Charting a Sustainable Future for Namibia's Protected Area Network

On 4 June 2025, key stakeholders and partners convened west of Windhoek for a landmark **National Validation Workshop**, marking the culmination of a yearlong journey of collaboration, consultation, and inclusive design that began in July 2024.

This gathering represented a defining moment for conservation in Namibia; the formal validation of all outputs generated through a nationwide engagement process involving regional and local consultations. At the heart of this process were the January 2025 field visits to communities adjacent to the Zambezi, Hamweyi, and Kanovlei State Forest Reserves, along with forestry staff serving as duty bearers.



The workshop focused on finalizing the GEF co-financed project titled *Safeguarding the Future of Namibia's Protected Area Network*. This ambitious initiative is designed to secure the ecological, environmental, and social future of Namibia's terrestrial protected areas, which cover 17% of the country and safeguard critical biodiversity. The workshop also marked WWF's first high-level co-hosting alongside newly appointed MEFT Executive Director Mr. Sikongo Haihambo, enhancing WWF's national profile and demonstrating the Together Possible approach in action.

Highlights and Outcomes:

- **Hosted by** the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT), with support from WWF Namibia, KfW, the Game Products Trust Fund (GPTF), and the WWF GEF Agency.
- **Validated** project design and environmental safeguards for the CEO Endorsement Request (CER).
- **Secured** broad stakeholder endorsement, with only minor refinements required.
- **Strengthened** collaboration across government, civil society, academia, and community representatives.

Final inputs to the project were completed shortly after the workshop, and the submission to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was finalized on 19 June 2025, a significant milestone in Namibia's pursuit of long-term conservation financing.

This effort complements the Namibia for Life initiative, which is a pioneering programmatic funding for community conserved areas. Together, these projects support Namibia's sustainable development agenda and contribute directly to **SDG 15 (Life on Land)** and **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**.



Raising the Conservation Voice: Launching the 2025 CBNRM Communications Campaign

WWF Namibia and the Namibian Association of CBNRM Support Organisations (NACSO) are proud to announce the launch of the Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Communications Campaign 2025, a dynamic multi-partner initiative designed to elevate Namibia's conservation narrative.



Campaign Purpose

Community-Based Natural Resource Management empowers communities across Namibia to protect biodiversity, steward natural resources, and support sustainable development. This campaign will build on that success by boosting strategic communication, showcasing grassroots stories, and uniting partners around a shared vision.

Highlights of the Week: 4-8 August

A packed schedule of sessions brought together key conservation voices and communication teams:

- **4 August:** Strategic visioning with WWF Namibia, NACSO, and Community Conservation Information Hub teams
- **5 August:** Digital strategy and content planning workshops
- **6 August:** Storytelling and advocacy training for field and support staff
- **8 August:** Media Breakfast and dialogue with journalists and press partners
- **8 August:** Fireside Chat with stakeholders, youth leaders, and the Conservation organisations

Why It Matters

CBNRM is more than a conservation model; it is a movement that places communities at the heart of environmental stewardship. By enhancing storytelling and outreach, this campaign ensures that local successes are seen, heard, and celebrated across Namibia and beyond. Stronger communication leads to greater public support, improved policy influence, and a deeper understanding of how communities are shaping conservation outcomes. Whether you are in the field or supporting from afar, your voice contributes to a national story that deserves the spotlight.

Get Involved

To learn more or participate in the campaign activities, contact:

Margretha Kampulu, WWF Namibia Senior Communications Manager at mkampulu@wwf.na

CLIP Meeting Reinforces WWF Namibia's Vision for Collaborative Conservation

On 19 to 20 June 2025, the Marienfluss Conservancy, the northernmost and most remote in the landscape, hosted the first Consultative Landscape Innovative Platform (CLIP) meeting of the year. The gathering brought together 56 participants with strong representation from all 14 conservancies, along with key partners advancing conservation and community development across the region.

The meeting featured a sightseeing activity and working sessions, where the approved budget was presented and stakeholders aligned on joint priorities for the months ahead. Landscape partners also shared progress updates on initiatives underway, encouraging transparency and shared ownership.

This CLIP gathering directly supports WWF Namibia's strategic commitment to integrated landscape management. It promotes conservation that is community-led, inclusive, and coordinated across institutions. By encouraging cooperation among conservancies, government agencies, and NGOs, the platform strengthens ecological resilience and supports sustainable livelihoods in line with WWF's goals for dryland ecosystems.

The Ministry of Agriculture participated to highlight ongoing work in the area. Conservancy representatives welcomed the opportunity to engage directly with CCFN, which provided clarity on available support and strengthened coordination around mitigation of Human Wildlife Conflict, a core priority under WWF Namibia's wildlife stewardship approach.

The Marienfluss Conservancy expressed sincere gratitude for being selected to host the meeting and acknowledged the broader community of practice for traveling to one of Namibia's most isolated landscapes. This gathering exemplifies WWF Namibia's commitment to elevating remote voices, empowering local leadership, and developing lasting conservation solutions.

To see how these collaborative efforts came to life during the CLIP meeting in Marienfluss, check out the [CCFN Facebook post](#) highlighting reflections and moments from the gathering



Community Conservation Fund of Namibia
June 24 · 🌐
CCFN joined stakeholders at the Collaborative Landscape Innovation Platform (CLIP) for the Skeleton Coast-Etoshia Conservation Bridge, a powerful initiative protecting m... [See more](#)



Women Guardians of Nyae Nyae's Ancient Boobabs

Amid drought and escalating elephant damage in Namibia's Nyae Nyae Conservancy, local women are leading efforts to safeguard ancient baobab trees, iconic symbols of resilience and cultural heritage. With support from WWF Namibia and MEFT, a group of ten women has been trained in digital monitoring tools to assess tree health and elephant impact, while applying protective rock barriers and mesh wiring around vulnerable trunks.



By July 2025, nearly 600 boobabs had been surveyed, with 40 receiving direct protection. This initiative not only shields critical biodiversity but also empowers women as conservation leaders whose household well-being is linked to ecological stewardship.

Looking ahead, WWF Namibia plans to expand tree protection efforts across more villages, offering a powerful model of community-driven conservation that blends tradition, technology, and gender inclusive action.

Read the full story on [our Facebook page](#) and be inspired by the women who are turning resilience into action, protecting giants and growing hope, one baobab at a time.

Capturing Conservation: Camera Traps Helping to Safeguard Namibia's Wildlife

WWF Namibia, with support from WWF Netherlands, has partnered with Bamunu, Sobbe, and Kwandu Conservancies to protect wildlife and strengthen local stewardship through the **Wildlife Credits project**.

Game guards are deploying camera traps in key zones to monitor iconic species like lions, leopards, elephants, wild dogs and more. These devices offer vital real-time insights while generating verified sightings that trigger performance-based rewards for conservancies, helping communities benefit directly from protecting nature. This project is proof that when communities lead, conservation thrives. Every camera trap tells a story.

Discover how Namibia's communities are driving meaningful conservation: [WWF Namibia Wildlife Credits Post](#)



Learning to Scale for Greater Impact

As part of our ongoing efforts to capacitate staff through relevant and practical concepts that enhance our impact, WWF Namibia recently hosted a virtual Office Scaling Workshop facilitated by Kate Gardner from WWF International. We were joined by our Hub partners CLN, NACSO, and IRDNC for this engaging session, which introduced the concept of scaling as a way to amplify conservation impact.

Participants had the opportunity to reflect on projects they are involved in and how these may have scaled out by reaching greater numbers, scaled up by influencing policies and systems, or scaled deep by shifting cultural values, relationships, and behaviours.



The session also explored the key roles required for scaling, such as innovators, doers, and payers, and emphasized the importance of building solutions that are sustainable, efficient, and intentional. This initiative forms part of our broader commitment to equipping teams with the knowledge and tools needed to do more with less, and to go further and deeper in our work for people and planet.

Africa's Forgotten Fishes: A freshwater Crisis Unveiled

Freshwater fishes across Africa may not often make headlines, but they are ecological powerhouses. These species sustain millions of people, uphold vibrant cultural traditions, and help maintain the delicate balance of freshwater ecosystems. Yet today, they face an unprecedented crisis and urgently need our attention.

A Silent Extinction

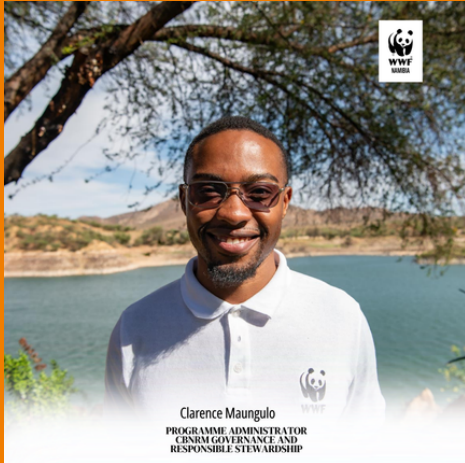
Recent assessments reveal a startling truth: one in four freshwater fish species in Africa is threatened with extinction. From the air-breathing ancient lungfish to the dinosaur-era bichirs, these evolutionary marvels are vanishing at alarming rates.



Africa leads the world in freshwater fish catch per person, yet regions like Namibia's Zambezi floodplain have seen fish populations collapse by up to 90%, threatening food security, nutrition, and cultural traditions. WWF's new report calls for urgent action, restoring habitats, curbing pollution and invasive species, and empowering communities to protect our rivers.

Read more: [WWF Africa's Forgotten Fishes](#)

Welcome to the Panda Family



We are excited to welcome back a familiar face to WWF Namibia, Clarence Maungulo. Clarence previously served as a Project Support Intern from 2022 to 2024, and now rejoins the team, bringing valuable experience and a deep commitment to conservation. His return adds renewed energy to our shared mission, and we're thrilled to continue this journey together. Welcome home, Clarence!



We are delighted to welcome Tjhoroka Ndjiharine as our new Communications Intern. Passionate about visual storytelling and strategic communications, she brings fresh energy to promoting environmental sustainability and youth empowerment through impactful, creative content.

Meet the rest of our dedicated team:
<https://www.wwfnamibia.org/about/team/>

Farewell, Not Goodbye: Honouring Three Conservation Champions

June and July brought a heartfelt turning point for WWF Namibia as we bid farewell to three remarkable colleagues who have helped shape the course of our inclusive conservation journey.

Andre Baumgarten, Benitto Ndana, and Kosmas Shilongo have each made an indelible mark through their passion, commitment, and tireless work to protect Namibia's natural heritage. Their efforts have inspired teams across the organization, elevated community voices, and strengthened our shared mission to create a more sustainable and equitable future. While we part ways professionally, their legacy remains deeply embedded in our work, our values, and our collective spirit.



Thank you, Andre, Benitto, and Kosmas. You will always be part of the Panda family.



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