NAMIBIA
NORTH-WEST REGION TOURISM
MASTER PLAN
VOLUME I

Prepared By: Urban Dynamics Africa
For: Ministry of Environment and Tourism
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Preface

I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to say few words of thanks on behalf of the Government and the entire Staff members of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

First of all, I would like to give my sincere thanks to the Austrian Government for having make funds available for these studies to be undertaken.

Secondly, I would give my utmost gratitude to those who compiled these two Volumes. These Volumes have been long overdue, but at last we can breath a sight of relieve now that they are available.

Thirdly, I am told that the process leading to the development of these two Volumes were very democratic and participatory involving broader community participation throughout the compilation, consulting and writing stages. On this ground, I must congratulate you for the work well done!

Fourthly, the North-western region has got a very sensitive and fragile environment Namibia ever had. On the other hand, it carries a greater potential for tourism but carries a great potential for tourism related activities. Therefore, it would be advisable to these communities to utilize their environment in a more sustainable and appropriate manner or methods and conserve it for future generations. You should start planning activities according to the required standard and do consider the carrying capacity of the areas very seriously as well.

We would, therefore, see these Volumes been fully utilized by the respective people of the two Regions (namely, the Kunene and Erongo) in their planning, programmes and activities, and not turn out to be another waste documents!

Last but not least, I would like to request the people of the two Regions to make reference or have these Volumes to serve them as reminders, whenever doing planning or developing a tourism enterprises.

P.N. Malima MP
Minister

Ministry of Environment and Tourism

Date: September 1st, 2000
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This is a summary document compiled from the main report, North-West Region Tourism Master Plan Volume II. Volume II of this report is more comprehensive and should be used for further reference. The map numbers in this report, Volume I, does not follow in chronological order. The map numbers used are identical to those in the main report. Thus, reference to maps will be the same in both reports.

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1. BACKGROUND
1.1 INTRODUCTION

The north-west of Namibia has experienced considerable tourism growth over the last decade. This growth has been effectively harnessed by the formal tourism products in the main centres and commercial farming areas. Although the communal areas have experienced similar tourism growth the residents have realised little return from wildlife and tourism over the same period. This, combined with the particularly sensitive environment of the North-west, resulted in the Kunene and Erongo Regions being identified by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) as a priority area for effective tourism development planning.

The fragile environment and currently uncontrolled tourism in the study area necessitates that a comprehensive and usable tourism master plan be formulated. This plan aims to prevent negative impacts of unplanned and uncontrolled tourism and at the same time meet the goals and objectives of communities living in the focus area. Good planning should ensure sustainable tourism development that is in line with the policies and strategies of the Ministry of Environment and Tourism which;

- respects and actively involves local communities in planning and management;
- creates social and economic incentives for sustainable natural resource management;
- maintains the natural environment;
- delivers and continues to deliver a quality visitor experience

1.2 STUDY OBJECTIVES AND PLANNING AREA

The three main objectives of the Master Plan are:

- To provide a physical, institutional, policy and management framework to guide the development of tourism in the North-West Region, for the primary benefit of decision and policy makers operating in the area.
• To establish Community Based Tourism (CBT) as a key strategy for the conservation and protection of the sensitive environment which characterises the region, particularly its fragile ecology and cultural diversity.

• To establish CBT as a key strategy for increased investment, control of resources and income generation by local communities in the development of tourism in their area.

1.3 STUDY AREA

The North-West Region, comprising the Kunene and Erongo Regions, has a combined surface area of 207974km². These two regions are located in the north-western corner of Namibia and have a perimeter of approximately 3172 km. (see location Map No 101). Although not very large in the Namibian context, it is of interest to note that these two regions are nearly as large as the whole of Uganda (235796km²)

The Kunene and Erongo Regions consist of communal and commercial land as well as National Parks. The agricultural potential of the regions has been reached, if not exceeded in most areas. The eastern part of the study area is well suited to livestock production with some arable agriculture. The extreme west is arid and not suitable for livestock production. The focus area of this study (the communal areas) is mostly marginal for agricultural activities (See Map 103). The mining and manufacturing potential is low. Distance to markets and the inaccessibility of parts of the focus areas reduces the profitability of these activities further.

Tourism, however, is not necessarily limited by inaccessibility. Potential therefore exists to compliment local economies with income from tourism, particularly in the west, which has a relatively high tourism potential and lower agricultural potential. The study area forms part of an important Namibian tourism destination and is supported by world-renowned destinations including Etosha National Park and Swakopmund. The focus area itself has equally well known resources including the Himba Culture, Epupa Falls, the desert-adapted elephant, rhino and other wildlife as well as the unspoilt appeal (wilderness value) of the western section of the focus area. Well established and expanding wildlife populations, historic sites, diverse culture, wilderness, spectacular scenery, ephemeral rivers and geological formations add value to the tourist experience. Map 1004 is a simple illustration of the above tourism zones. Other activities, such as
fishing along the coastline and hunting are also supplementary to these tourism resources.

The Communal Area Conservancy Legislation gazetted in 1996 has been well received by communities in the Kunene and Erongo Regions. Sixteen percent or 11 500 km² of the Kunene Region has been registered as conservancies. Several more communities have agreed on boundaries with their neighbours but are still in the process of meeting the requirements as laid out by the MET. In the Kunene Region this is a further 25 000 km², and in the Erongo a further 8 083 km². This means that at present more than 50% of the communal areas of the Kunene and Erongo Regions are registered as conservancies or have met the most difficult requirement of conservancies, which is boundary formation. Accommodation facilities already established in the focus area are indicated in map 605.

The communal land or "Focus Area" located within the North-West Region is indicated on Map No 103. The study focuses on developments and development proposals within the focus area. Nevertheless, commercial farmlands or registered parks within or adjacent to the North-West Region have also been considered during the course of the study. Tourism development in a National and Regional context has been considered to provide perspective to developments within the communal areas.

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Government recognised the tourism potential of the focus area prior to independence and several tourism concessions were awarded to tour operators. These include some of the areas with the greatest tourism potential and account for over 6 600 km² or 9% of the Kunene Region. However, since then, the tourism market in the focus area, Namibia and worldwide has boomed and changed fundamentally.

This boom has been effectively harnessed in Etosha, Swakopmund and latterly the commercial farms of the study area. These areas were fortunate in that their protected area or freehold status allowed for a planning process and framework within which tourism could develop. In contrast however, the communal areas, although highly attractive to tourists both locally, regionally and internationally, still lack appropriate planning and legislative frameworks to guide development.
This lack of enabling legislation has resulted in inadequate control of the relatively high volume of tourism being experienced in the focus area. Enterprise development is taking place in a haphazard and unplanned manner, without sufficient consideration paid to local and regional impacts. This is having serious negative effects on the environment and many sub-standard enterprises are emerging. These sub-standard tourist enterprises negatively impact on the value of the destination as a whole. In some cases local residents and leaders are negotiating with commercial operators to establish lodges without seeking legal and financial advice. Invariably, the deals do not reflect the economic potential of the area, the rights of local residents or an equitable distribution of income. Potential investors and operators with good intentions are also unsure as to how to best approach tourism ventures within the focus area. Amongst local residents themselves there is generally a poor understanding of the tourism industry although there is eagerness to gain the skills associated with tourism.

These problems are compounded by the fact that the most environmentally sensitive areas are often the most attractive to tourists.

1.5 THE CHALLENGE

The focus area, over the long term, is on course for a tourism disaster. Unplanned and uncontrolled tourism development has in other parts of the world destroyed once very popular destinations. This can be avoided in the focus area of this study if decision-makers at a local, regional and national level reverse the present trends. The challenge faced by regional planners will be to provide a framework that affords adequate control of tourist movement and development but does not detract from the unique, wilderness appeal of this area. At the same time, the involvement of local people in decision-making, and the link between sustainable natural resource management and benefits must be made. Local residents and entrepreneurs should share equitably the proceeds generated from tourism. Tourism development should also contribute to skills development of local communities and, over the long term, make a significant contribution to the upliftment of local living standards. This needs to be done in a way that also takes into account the needs of local, regional and international tourists.
2. STATUS QUO
2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief overview of the status quo in the study area. However, the topics are more comprehensively described in Part I of Volume II of this study report. The topics covered in this chapter include the following:

- Demography
- Urbanisation and Infrastructure
- Biotic Environment
- Tourism Perspective and;
- Geology and features of geological interest.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHY

The total population for the North-West Region in 1991 was 142,426 and the projected population for the year 2000 is 191,896. This represents only 8% of the total Namibia population. With a total surface area of 207,974 km² the average population density of the North-West Region is a mere 1.08 persons per km². (See Map No. 202)

Although the North-West Region is sparsely populated on average, high population concentrations exist to the east of the Region (east of the 150mm rainfall isohits). High densities, together with high rates of dependency on agriculture and the climatic and rainfall variability found in this area, have resulted in a situation where some areas, especially the north eastern part of Kunene, are under pressure due to unsustainable use of natural resources.

High population growth figures in especially the Kunene Region, will place more pressure on the sensitive environment. Considering the existing growth rates in the North-west Region one can assume that the total population will double by the year 2015. High dependence on the agricultural sector may further increase environmental pressure. Tourism planning on local level (conservancy level) will have to address and accommodate agricultural activities and high population growth over the medium and long term.
Unemployment levels in the Kunene Region are high and would probably follow the national trend of increasing unemployment rates. Unemployment will increase over the medium and long term as a result of the current milieu of negative real economic growth.

Unemployment rates in Erongo are alarmingly high. Rising levels of unemployment represent a danger signal for sustainability. Although the high levels of unemployment in Erongo are probably due to the presence of the large commercial centres, it should be noted that unemployment leaves in its wake vulnerability and poverty and implies more pressure on the natural resource base as a last resort for survival.

The low adult literacy rate in the Kunene Region is a matter of concern. Economic diversification is difficult to achieve with a labour force having such low skills levels.

2.3 URBANISATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

2.3.1 SPATIAL STRUCTURE

Although very low in total population, more than 300 small settlements are located in the traditional communal land of the North-West region. These settlements situated in the Omaipote-Okombahe area and in the whole of Kaokoland can be seen on Map No 301. Although some of these settlements are only a few households in size, population growth in these settlements may hold a threat to future tourism development. Increased population density in these settlements may occur with government’s policy to provide more bulk water and electricity to the rural areas.

It is noticeable that less settlements exist in the area north of the Ugab river and south of Sesfontein. This is also the area with considerable numbers of the wildlife. More settlements and higher densities north and especially north-east of Sesfontein, up to the Kunene River are accompanied by lower numbers of wildlife.

2.3.2 URBANISATION

The Erongo Region has one of the highest urbanisation levels in Namibia (63%). This may be the result of the large urban centres of Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Arandis and Henties Bay providing employment opportunities. The Kunene region, on the other hand
has a moderate to low urbanisation rate (25%). Other than the Erongo Region, the Kunene is poorly provided with large urban centres. The relatively small towns such as Opuwo, Khorixas, Kamanjab and Outjo are not rich in economic activities and do not attract people from the rural areas.

The urban population for towns and villages in the Kunene and Erongo Regions increased between 1981 and 1991 with 5.3% and 4.84% respectively, per year, compared to the population growth of 3% per year for the total of Namibia. The North-West region, as well as on a national level, urgently needs an urbanisation policy to guide the process of urbanisation. The government policy of decentralisation makes this a more important policy.

Controlled or co-ordinated urbanisation and decentralisation are particularly important for tourism development in the north-west.

2.3.3 WATER SUPPLY

Extensive bulk water supply in the north-west is mainly limited to the large urban centres of Walvis Bay Swakopmund, Henties Bay, Usakos, Uis, Khorixas, Kamanjab and Opuwo. However, many boreholes in the region have been drilled and equipped by the government and private organisations. Nearly all the small settlements in the communal area in both regions are located in close proximity to an existing borehole. The availability of water in these regions, and especially in the Kunene Region, has a determining effect on the location and establishment of settlements.

2.3.4 ELECTRICITY

As is the case with bulk water supply, bulk electricity supply in the north-west is limited to the larger commercial centres. The Erongo Region is reasonably well provided with powerlines, however, this cannot be said for the Kunene Region. The communal areas within the “focus area” are poorly covered by electricity.

The main 330 kV power line Ruacana to Omburu runs through the Kunene Region. However, no power is tapped from this line except for Opuwo who benefited from this line since 1991. Opuwo is connected to Ruacana through a 66 kV line.
The electricity network in the Erongo Region is reasonably good, however, mostly limited to the commercial areas.

Nampower has recently appointed a local consulting firm to investigate the provision of on-grid and off-grid electricity to rural areas. The Kunene and Erongo communal area is part of this investigation. Although this study and effort by Nampower are being appreciated, more consultation with other line ministries is necessary to ensure an integrated approach. The provision of electricity to remote areas in the Kunene might affect tourism development in the area.

2.3.5 COMMUNICATION

The only places with telecom services within the focus area are Opuwo, Anker, Khorixas, Sorris Sorris, Ulis, Okombahe and Arandis. Some of these places such as Sorris Sorris still use the magneto ring down circuit.

The largest part of the focus area, west of Opuwa and Khorixas and from the Kunene river in the north to the Spitzkoppe in the south has no telecommunication service.

2.3.6 TRANSPORT

Although one of the most remote areas in Namibia, the study area is fairly well provided with infrastructure. However, some of the areas are only accessible by 4x4.

Roads: Road infrastructure in the Erongo Region could be described as well provided and in good condition.

Tarred roads in the Kunene Region are mostly restricted to the commercial areas. Tarred roads in this region extend from Outjo to Otjiwarongo, Kamanjab, Khorixas and Okaukuejo. Only one main gravel road runs through the most eastern part of the region from Khorixas to Ruacana. The majority of this area is only accessible by district gravel roads. Although the standard of these roads has improved over the past few years, it is recommended that a 4x4 vehicle be used on most of the roads. The most popular and
other 2x4 and 4x4 routes are described and illustrated in chapter 6 of Volume II of this report.

In general it could be said that roads in the focus area are limited to gravel roads and that accessibility becomes more difficult in the areas north of Sesfontein.

The only improvements or upgrading of roads envisaged by the Ministry of Transport and Communication, within the next four years, are District Road 3700 between Ruacana and Epupa Falls. The other road earmarked for upgrading is District Road 3703 extending from Okangwati to Etanga via Otjitanda. The upgrading of these roads will make the northern parts of the Kunene, such as the Van Zyl’s pass, more accessible to tourists. The upgrading of the Ruacana-Epupa road will also allow a much more convenient “circle route” through the northern regions of Namibia. This road is, at this stage, inaccessible to any 2x4 vehicle.

Airports and landing strips: The only airports within the study area, which are included in the regular Air Namibia schedules, are at Walvis Bay and Swakopmund. Both of these airports are situated in commercial centres in the Erongo Region. Other airstrips that can be used by small aircraft are situated at Henties Bay, Usakos, Uis, Otjina, Kamanjab, Khorixas, Sesfontein and Opuwo. However, a number of private landing strips are located in the study area. These are mainly to serve privately owned lodges and are aimed at serving the tourist market. (refer to Map 304)

Railway line: No railway line exists to serve towns located within the focus area. However, two railway lines are located within the study area, serving some of the commercial centres.

2.4 BIOTIC ENVIRONMENT

From an environmental perspective, the north-western area of Namibia is different from all other areas in Namibia. Its ancient and recent history, its ecology and its current status differ which, in turn, mean that its current overall environment provides a development potential that differs from the potential of the remainder of Namibia (Jacobson et al., 1995). Of all the areas of Namibia, this area is most attractive for tourism from the environmental point of view.
2.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

A geological wonderland: Much of Namibia is covered by recent deposits of sand and calcrites, however, the northwest is different. Here much of the land is bare, because the harsh climate limits soil development and vegetation growth. As a result, an ancient landscape is visible on the surface. This landscape tells a story of collisions, fire, flood and ice; the story of a landscape shaped by colliding continents, volcanic eruptions, glacial advances and retreats, inundation by seas, break-up of the Gondwanaland super continent, flows of molten lava and, finally, dissection by flowing rivers. This geological wonderland of broken, arid topography is found nowhere else in Namibia.

Thin and poorly developed soils: Soils in the northwest vary in association with the diverse geology and increasing aridity from east to west. Close to the coast, soils consist of either littoral sands including large sand dunes or are salty. Further inland, soils are generally calcareous, thinly overlying a hard rock surface. Only within the flood plains of the westward flowing ephemeral rivers are there thick deposits of sand loams and sandy clay loams. These alluvial soils, when associated with high groundwater tables, often support dense stands of riparian forest of interest to wildlife and people. These are the areas that have some potential for irrigation although they often have poor drainage and are naturally saline. The soils in the northwest differ from much of Namibia where deep Kalahari sands cover the eastern and northern landscapes, calcrite and thin soils cover the central highlands and southern arid areas and deep sand dunes occupy much of the southern Namib Desert.

Rainfall, evaporation and drought: Rainfall in the north-western area is low and variable. The average annual rainfall ranging from 0 mm in the west up to 300 mm in the east. Rain may fall between October and May, but mainly in late summer – February – April. Rainfall variability is high and a place like Khomas, approximately 180 km from the coast, may, with 90% probability, expect rainfall between 22 mm and 500 mm in any one year (See Map 501). On the other hand, mean annual potential evaporation is around 3000 mm. Drought (defined as more than two years with rainfall lower than the long-term mean) is normal in the north-western area of Namibia. From a national perspective, the northwest is as dry as the southern and south-western parts of Namibia. Much of the difference lies in the occurrence of low summer rainfall combined with broken, mountainous topography, predominantly communal land tenure and comparatively high population density.
Catchments, runoff, floods and river flow: Rain in the northwest usually comes in late summer in huge thunderstorms which result in little soil infiltration and much runoff. Throughout the year, numerous small perennial and ephemeral springs support wildlife and, increasingly, livestock throughout the western Kunene Region. Nevertheless, runoff water causes the flow in the ten large ephemeral rivers (and one perennial river, the Kunene) traversing the northwest and is a prime source of water in the study area (See Map 507). As a consequence of infrequent runoff, life in the northwest focuses on the ephemeral rivers and their catchments, for their water stores and vegetation that support directly, or indirectly, most life in the area. Flood waters recharge the alluvial aquifers and surface wetlands, transport nutrients and rearrange the landscape within these ephemeral rivers. Many small farm dams and several large ones currently impede the ephemeral flows in the longer rivers with the result that water tables are lower than would naturally occur and some perennial wetlands have become ephemeral. No other ephemeral rivers in Namibia equal the ephemeral rivers in the northwest for the amount of wildlife, livestock and people they support in scenic grandeur. From a wildlife and tourism point of view, as well as from the point of view of most people living in the study area, rivers are the most important environmental component of the landscape.

Several of these rivers have already been developed both as groundwater and surface water resources, and utilisation is already at or beyond a level of sustainability. Others, particularly those in the Kunene region have not been developed to any significant extent. It is important, however, that an integrated approach be used in planning the possible development of these valuable resources. The North-west Tourism Masterplan is in a position to make a contribution in this regard since tourism, more than any other sector of the economy, requires water not only as a consumable resource, but also to support and maintain the very environment which attracts tourism. A detailed report about water resources in the North-west Region is included as chapter 8 of Volume II of this study.

Diverse and varied, meagre vegetation: The high vegetation diversity of the northwest is not highlighted in the generalised vegetation maps available. Overall, the northwest falls into the Northern Namib, mopane savanna and semi-desert transition vegetation zones (See Map 504). It is this latter zone where the broken landscape of the escarpment has contributed to development of a highly diverse vegetation with a high degree of endemism. It is only in the winter rainfall southern Namib where a highly diverse and endemic vegetation is also found in Namibia. Most important to the wildlife, domestic livestock and people of this low rainfall area, however, are the grasslands and the riparian vegetation associated with the ephemeral rivers.
Wildlife in the north-west: Large vertebrates survive in the more arid, western portions of the north-west by being nomadic. Springs and wetlands are essential watering points to the mega-fauna found here and in few places elsewhere in Namibia outside of reserves. The populations of rhino, elephant, lion, giraffe and other wildlife within this area are unique in the world (See Map505). Nowhere else does one find such a diverse assemblage of wildlife in such a dry landscape. At the same time, nowhere else in Namibia does game exist in such a spectacular and varied topography. Moreover, the dissected escarpment of the northwest harbours a diverse, endemic fauna of birds, reptiles and invertebrates with a number of species found nowhere else in Namibia.

Nomads in a variable environment: Lives of people living in the northwest are also guided by the rough landscape, variable rainfall and arid climate. In times gone by, people probably occupied the area when rains were good and moved elsewhere, or at least to the rivers, when dry times occurred. Today people still move their herds of livestock over large distances to the vegetation and water provided by the ephemeral rivers when rains fail. Others live permanently along ephemeral rivers and tap the alluvial groundwater and use the riparian vegetation to support themselves and their livestock. Elsewhere, boreholes constructed to tap the groundwater have resulted in the establishment of permanent settlements where none existed in the past. Nowhere else in Namibia do people live in such a dramatic, variable environment, in the presence of wildlife, at great distances from larger settlements and with such unique opportunities for development. It remains to be seen if these opportunities will be realised.

Spectacular landscape: The above components of the natural, biophysical environment are combined in the study area to offer a varied, spectacular landscape. Mountainous areas, broad expanses of sometimes grassy plains and coastal sand plains and dunes are all elements of this landscape. This varied and spectacular landscape provides the habitats that support the diverse biota of the study area.

From an environmental perspective, the northwest of Namibia presents a spectacular, mountainous landscape, a variable climate, limited sources of water, and a diverse vegetation and animal fauna (Annexure from Table 2.2, page 75, biodiversity study). Together, these attributes offer the potential for a rich and varied course of development or can be interpreted as an inhospitable landscape to be conquered and subdued. From the national perspective, there is much to be gained by appropriate and sensitive development of this unique region.
2.4.2 IMPACTS TO DATE ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment in the study area has been used in a variety of ways and subjected to different uses during the past century. Much of the area has been used as communal rangeland, first on a migratory basis and then on a more sedentary basis throughout the past century. Livestock was dependent on natural waters and numbers of livestock fluctuated widely with rainfall and droughts. Travellers' reports also comment on veld fires in the northern part of Kunene Region, a phenomenon that has not occurred in recent decades. Large, migratory livestock herds probably use the landscape in a manner that most closely resembles wildlife movements and consequently they would be competing with wildlife for water and grazing. Trampling by slow-moving livestock has a greater impact on the soil structure than does wildlife.

In the southern part of Kunene Region, farms were fenced in the 1940's and mainly used for livestock with the wildlife in the area granted nuisance status by the farmers. None of the fenced farms were very successful and long-term productivity was probably reduced by the use of woody vegetation and impacts on soil and grazing. In the 1960's the Odendaal Commission took back the driest farms and incorporated them into Damaraland, as part of the homelands policy of South Africa (Kambatuku 1996, Hamakwaya 1999). Some of the communal grazing areas were established early in this century, e.g. Fransfontein, the Sesfontein area, Okombahe and the Kaokoveld, and have never been fenced. (See Map 508: Land Tenure)

In the 1960's the Veterinary Fence or 'Red Line' was built across the country from east to west, isolating endemic livestock diseases in the northern communal lands from affecting the export herds on commercial farms to the south. In the west, this fence ran along the northern boundary of the fenced 'Odendaal' farms, effectively cutting the present Kunene Region in half. All of these factors have had an effect on the use patterns of the land and on the populations of wildlife although neither of these impacts is irreversible unless accompanied by other changes in land use. Poaching has been almost stopped in the area where rhinos, elephants and antelope were the main targets.

More recently, tourism has become a major land use in the area, in southern Kunene Region since the 1960s and in northern Kunene Region since the 1980s. The Skeleton Coast Park was established in 1975 but tourism in the area followed only later. Tourism in the un proclaimed conservation areas which represent most of the study area can have a variety of impacts. Tourism usually focuses on wildlife and hence tourists travel where
wildlife is most likely to be found. This includes the more arid western parts of the study area. Wildlife, and hence tourists, are attracted to water points, which tourists may then impact by indiscriminate driving or camping so as to disturb wildlife and damage water sources. Pollution, in the form of littering and solid waste, human waste and fluids associated with vehicles, is common. Wetlands, springs and riverbeds are most affected by tourist activity while the plains only secondarily so. Collection of rare and endangered plants and animals is a potential impact, the extent of which is not currently known.

All of the above land uses have impacted on the natural, biophysical environment and are determinants of the status quo situation. Some of these impacts are reversible with careful planning and management. Nevertheless, the study area occupies a beautiful but rough landscape, covering a large and varied area, where wildlife, people, livestock and a diverse flora represent the renewable resource base. In the perspective of Namibia, it is a rich, unique area of social, economic and environmental importance to the nation.

2.5 TOURISM PERSPECTIVE

2.5.1 INTRODUCTION

On a national scale the northwest region contains extremely important destinations and attractions. The focus area forms an important link destination between Namibia’s major attractions, namely Etosha National Park and the world’s biggest dunes, Sossusvlei. The attractions of the area are its wilderness appeal, unique cultures and desert-adapted wildlife. For this reason wildlife conservation and tourism should not be considered separately, since wildlife gives added value to the tourist experience. The focus area has an ever-increasing volume of tourism through the area, but has limited infrastructure and poor facilities for self – drive tours.

Community based tourism (CBT) is a relatively new concept in Namibia and has not been able to keep pace with the increased demand and has in general not been able to meet private sector quality needs. The MET, NGOs, conservancies and to a lesser extent the private sector are striving to improve this through joint ventures, bed night levies and training.
The private sector tour operators and facilities existing in the major towns and commercial farms, have kept pace with tourist demand, and similar to the trophy hunting industry, are thriving. The challenge facing the focus area lies in harnessing the present tourist industry already functioning within the area, in a way that stimulates further growth and provides adequate control.

2.5.2 EXISTING TOURISM MARKET

Total tourist arrivals in Namibia grew by 10% between 1996 and 1997 and a further 10% between 1997 and 1998. Tourist numbers, excluding Angola, have increased from 243 000 in 1993, to 333 000 in 1998. An analysis of tourist visitors for 1998 and 1997 is shown in Figure 2.1.

![Pie chart showing tourist arrivals by country for 1997](image)

**Figure 2.1: International Tourist Arrivals In Namibia By Country Of Origin For 1997**

*(Leisure, Recreation And Holidays)*

*Source: Policy, planning and management information unit, Ministry of Environment and Tourism (1997).*

The most popular destinations in Namibia are Swakopmund and Etosha, followed by Sossusvlei, the former Damaraland and the Namib Naukluft Park. *(see Figure 2.2)*
Figure 2.2: Main Attractions Visited In Namibia

Approximately 50% of tourists visiting Namibia are on organised tours. It has also been shown that over 50% of tourists visiting Namibia are above 45 years of age

2.5.3 TOURISM IN THE NORTH-WEST REGION

The north-west attracts both consumptive and non-consumptive tourism. Non-consumptive tourism dominates, but the potential for growth in the focus area in terms of consumptive utilisation must be taken into account. This is particularly important from a planning perspective, as these land-uses are incompatible within the same area.

The north-west region tourism product is made up of a combination of wildlife, scenic, wilderness, cultural and historic attractions. In general the focus area relies on well known attractions, including the Brandberg, Twyfelfontein rock art, the Petrified Forest, the desert elephant and rhino, the Kunene River, Epupa Falls and the Himba culture. The combination of vast desert landscapes, ephemeral rivers, traditional lifestyles, wilderness experience and desert adapted wildlife provides a valuable, marketable product.
The product can also be divided by accessibility, which generally decreases towards the northwest. This is consequently more expensive in terms of time and transport, although this is set off by the exclusivity such areas offer. This exclusivity creates the opportunity for adventure tourists, as does the option to canoe the Kunene River from Ruacana to Epupa Falls. Prime areas for the most profitable up-market eco-tourism development fall into these areas of the communal land.

A large portion of the focus area falls between the world-renowned Etosha National Park and Swakopmund, Swakopmund being Namibia’s most visited tourism destination. It also forms part of a combination tour of Etosha and Sossusvlei via the northwest. The focus area contains attractions which are tourist destinations in their own right, but also captures tourists moving between these two tourist centres (Etosha and Swakopmund).

The major tourist attractions of the entire project area (communal, commercial and Parks) can be divided into three main attractions with impressive scenery being common throughout.

i) In the north-east the main attraction is the Himba culture and the Kunene River.
ii) The western strip has exceptional wilderness qualities and wildlife, including desert elephant and black rhino.
iii) The central area has wildlife, historical attractions and impressive geological formations.

Visitors to the area use organised coach tours, fly - in safaris, tour operators or are self driven using either 4x4 or 4x2 vehicles. Some tourists raft the Kunene River from Ruacana to Epupa Falls. The most important tour operator routes are illustrated on Map 603. Other important routes are described and illustrated in chapter 6 of Volume II of this report.

2.5.3.1 EXISTING ACCOMMODATION

There are no hotels in the focus area. There are three urban rest camps, six up market lodges (one urban based), seven luxury tented camps, 15 campsites with showers and toilets (five of which are linked to lodges or rest camps) and four basic campsites. The rest, camps, lodges and luxury tented camps are used
primarily by overseas guests and campsites by self-drives and some tour operators. Many operators are self-contained and camp at sites of their choice.

There are approximately 75 rooms and 146 beds available in urban areas of the focus area. There are additional 115 rooms and 206 beds available in upmarket lodges and tented camps. There are a total of 95 sites available for camping of which about 70, can be said to be run by local residents.

The commercial sector has responded to the need to provide personalised high quality service. There are least 41 game farms and lodges on the commercial farms, and 24 hotels and 10 pensions in the urban areas (PPMIU, MET). There are at least 27 guest farms in the Erongo region, providing almost 200 rooms and 423 beds. In Kunene there are 15 guest farms with 139 rooms and about 310 beds. There are four hotels inland in the Erongo Region and eight in the Kunene Region.

In the coastal region (Swakopmund, Walvis Bay and Henties Bay) there are at least 18 hotels with 447 rooms and 940 beds. There are an additional 12 rest camps with 425 rooms and 1599 beds. There are eight pensions with 141 rooms and 293 beds. There are 21 other accommodation facilities, with 70 rooms.

Bed occupancy rates for 1997 in the Kunene and Erongo Regions, are low (12 to 14%). There are approximately 1,400 beds available in the both regions, providing about 35,000 bed occupancy nights. Foreign tourists dominate the occupancies in both regions, but this is particularly so for the upmarket camps in the Kunene Region which had 96% of their bed nights taken by overseas tourists. Kunene has less than 4% of occupancies being taken by Namibians and Erongo has about 20%. Occupancy rates for the coastal resorts are over 60%. The occupancy rates for the Kunene Region in particular which reflects the upmarket tented camps and lodges seem particularly low compared to observed rates in the region. This data should be used with caution if used for planning purposes.

It was estimated that in 1996 approximately 25,000 people visited the more accessible parts of the former Damaraland (Twyelfontein area), 11,000 to the Skeleton Coast Park and about 4,000 more adventurous tourists going to the former Kaokoland area. Locals mostly visit the Skeleton Coast Park, while the northern route is a mixture of both local and foreign visitors.
Between 1994 and 1996, visitors to sites in the Kunene Region increased by 13% in some commercial lodges (Etendeka Mountain Camp, Khowarib, Epupa and Palmweg Lodge) and by 35% in areas such as the Hoanib River.

2.5.3.2 TOURISM: CONSUMPTIVE

Wildlife occurs in varying densities in both the focus and broader project area. About 30 years ago (1968) legislation related to hunting on commercial farms was passed. This allowed private farm owners, who had met certain conditions as laid out by the MET, to manage and utilise their wildlife. These same rights were only transferred to communal areas in 1996, through the communal areas conservancy legislation. The trophy hunting industry on commercial farms has developed substantially, and several communal areas are now in a position to expand into this sector and have both competitive and exciting products to offer. In the past, Trophy Hunting Concessions were given out in the communal areas by the MET, but this has now become the responsibility of the conservancies, where they are established and registered.

On private land the number of game species has increased by 44% over 20 years and biomass by over 80% (Barnes and De Jaager 1996). The net economic contribution of wildlife on commercial farms increased from N$31 million in 1972 to N$56 million in 1992. The economic value of wildlife to farmers doubled over this time period (25 years).

In the communal land areas, wildlife numbers have increased dramatically.

These areas are unfenced, scenically beautiful, have big game including elephant and rhino and have in effect not been utilised for trophy hunting for the last 15 years. Two of the five registered conservancies in the project area have been awarded trophy hunting and utilisation quotas by the MET for 1999 and 2000. Both have signed contracts for 1999/2000 to the combined value of approximately N$250 000.

2.5.3.3 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN WILDLIFE AND TOURISM

The active involvement of local communities in the conservation of wildlife, including elephant and black rhino, is well documented and considered a point of
departure. These communal areas are the only in Africa to have free roaming populations of black rhino. Prior to conservancies, community involvement in wildlife was structured through the Community Game Guard (CGG) system. This system is primarily NGO funded, and brings about a partnership between the MET, communities and NGOs. Tourism development control was mainly through the MET with input from the Traditional and Regional Authorities. Thorough community consultation was not undertaken. No control was afforded to local communities in the awarding of tourism and trophy hunting concessions and little consultation with local communities was done in general.

Benefits from tourism concessions were initially limited to jobs. This situation created hostility between the local community, concession holders/operators and the MET. This resulted in some concession holders negotiating with and later paying bed night levies to the surrounding communities. The first of these operators in the region were Skeleton Coast Fly In Safaris and Etendeka Mountain Camp. This improved the situation and has set a crucial president for future relations.

Tourism concessions issued before the registration of conservancies are still valid and all concessionaires are willing to negotiate with conservancies for future contracts. Palmwag Lodge, Etendeka and Hobatere have started with these negotiations.

The MET developed the conservancy approach to devolve responsibility to locally representative committees, which hold legal status and be accountable and transparent to their communities in their dealings with wildlife and tourism related activities. This legislation is amongst the most innovative in Africa. The traditional authorities are encouraged to participate in these committees, but like other conservancy members, will be required to act in accordance with the constitution, which is endorsed by the members of the conservancy.

Conservancies are legally required by MET to be audited annually, to have an equitable distribution plan for benefits distribution and a conservancy / wildlife management plan. Members are registered according to criteria identified by the community, generally having to be Namibian citizens, permanent residents of the area and older than 18 years and willing to abide by the rules of the conservancy.
Communities have responded positively to this legislation, with five conservancies already registered in the Kunene Region and more than ten in the formative stages in the focus area (see Map 606). Almost 15,000 km² (or 20% of the Kunene Region) is registered as communal land conservancies.

- The #Khoadi //Hoas (Grootberg/"Elephants Corner") Conservancy was among the first four conservancies to be registered (February 1998).
- The Torra Conservancy was also registered with the first four conservancies in June 1998.
- The Doro !Nawas Conservancy was registered in December 1999.
- The Uibasen (Twyfelfontein) Conservancy was registered in December 1999.
- The Omburo (Purros) Conservancy has elected a committee and completed all requirements as laid out by the MET. The application has been approved and gazetted by the MET (May 2000).
- The Marienfluss Conservancy, including the Hartmann’s Valley, has completed all the necessary steps to register as a conservancy. The application has been passed by the Regional Council and is awaiting MET approval.
- The Onjuva (Orupembe) Conservancy has finalised its boundaries and is in the formative stages of conservancy establishment.
- The Sanitatas Conservancy has finalised its boundaries and is in the formative stages of conservancy establishment.
- The Sesfontein Conservancy, made up of a number of communities, has been struggling for more than three years to form a conservancy. These negotiations have been stalled by the non-registration of the conservancy and in the process hundreds of thousands of dollars have been lost to this community.
MINERAL DEPOSITS AND QUARRIES

Map 902

KUNENE
OMUSATI
OSHANA
OHANGWENA
OSHIKOTO
ERONGO
KHOMAS

MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM

Map Produced by:
URBAN DYNAMICS
TOWN & REGIONAL PLANNERS

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110 120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200 210 220 230 Kilometers
- The Taiseb Conservancy (formerly Daures) has negotiated provisional boundaries and is nearing completion of the steps in conservancy formation.

- The //Huab (Frasnsfontein) Conservancy has met several of the requirements of conservancy formation, including boundary negotiations.

- The Omatendeka Conservancy has fulfilled most of the requirements but continues to be delayed by boundary disputes.

- The Ehirovipuka Conservancy has met the requirements as laid out by the MET for approval from the Regional Governor, local and head office MET officials. This community has requested access to western Etosha National Park area, for many years for tourism development.

- The Anichab Conservancy is in the early stages of conservancy formation.

- The Otuzemba, Ombombo and Otjapitjapi conservancies in the north east of the study area are all in the initial stages of conservancy formation.

2.5.4 RECENT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

- There is increased demand for a Southern African tour, including Namibia, resulting in shorter trips to Namibia by overseas tourists

- Tourists are, to an increasing degree, looking for special locations and facilities (adventure, wilderness and local culture)

- Tourists are, to an increasing extent, looking for ecologically and socially responsible destinations

- The number of Bed and Breakfast operations, guest farms and hunting farms on commercial farms has increased rapidly. These all offer personal service.
- The trophy hunting industry on the commercial farms is well established while the communal areas have only recently started to realise this potential through conservancy formation.

- A considerable increase in overlanders has been experienced in the focus area.
- The number of self-drives in the focus area is increasing

- The lack of regulated tourism within the focus area is resulting in the uncontrolled establishment of tourism facilities within the focus area. Many of these are substandard.

- The lack of control over tourists is resulting in the degradation of the environment, which, in turn, is deterring from the tourist experience.

- As local residents and tour operators open up 4x4 routes, these sites become better known and are used by self-drives. This encourages the operators to seek new exclusive routes and hence opening up more new areas.

- The fastest tourism growth is taking place outside of parks

- The trophy hunting industry is becoming increasingly important.

- To improve economies of scale of trophy hunting, conservancies are being formed on commercial farms.

2.6 GEOLOGY AND FEATURES OF GEOLOGICAL INTEREST IN THE NORTH-WEST REGION

2.6.1 INTRODUCTION

A detailed report describing the geology and features of geological interest in the Northwest Region is included as chapter 9 in Volume II of this study. It is written for the layman and is intended to highlight features of geological interest and the way they formed so that the general landscape will be of more interest to the traveller and tourist.
The continents have been subjected to many periods of rifting, burial, melting deep below the surface, volcanism, mountain building, uplift and erosion as they evolved through time. Namibia and the North-West Region are no different. The earth is 4 500 million years old, an age obtained from nickel-iron meteorites that formed at the same time as the earth. The oldest rocks found on earth have an age of 3 800 million years. Namibia rocks are considerably younger than this.

Some of the Namibian geology is well known internationally and for certain things we have some of the best localities in the world. Thus, the Damara Orogen is classical and it is easy to demonstrate all its evolutionary stages in the field. The acid Etendeke pyroclastic rocks are another classic and probably better exposed than in most places. Their origin is still controversial and not necessarily well understood. Thus, many volcanologists try to get to see them. Messum, Okenyena and the Matchless Belt have also generated a great deal of interest. The turbidites of the lower Ugab River are another classic and several of the world's top turbidite experts have come here to see them. The Otavi Group rocks are generating a great deal of interest at present. Many international field excursions of up to ten days duration have been undertaken to all these features and will continue to be undertaken in the future under the leadership of Namibian experts or international research scientists from Europe, the UK and the US who continue to work here. Some overseas mineral collectors have led groups of their colleagues on special mineral collecting tours to Namibia. Stops included Gorob (for staurolite crystals). However, these tours were never widely advertised and even seem to have been a bit secretive at times.

Thus, for the professional geologist there is a great deal of interest in most of the North-West region. However, as the above description ought to indicate, an understanding of how various features formed can also be interesting to the layman and tourist. Tour leaders could be made aware of the above geological facts but with specific reference to the routes and trails they lead. Tours could include visits to old mines (as long as these are safe) or mineral deposits. Many places that are scenically attractive are also geologically interesting. Therefore, it would probably be worthwhile to prepare descriptions of the geology at places of geological interest.
2.6.2 TRAIL DESCRIPTIONS

Well used tour routes or trails, such as the Ugab River trail, could have flora, fauna and the geology to be seen described in a route or trail booklet in order to increase interest and awareness. Butterflies should be included because they are often very attractive but so usually not noticed at all. There are a few endemic species that are rather common in places. Even large, conspicuous moths could be described. These booklets should be cheap.

2.6.3 COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Some mineral deposits are mined by small groups of the local inhabitants, mainly for mineral specimens. Many of these small miners make a very poor living. Some mineral deposits, such as Ondundu, are not mined at all. There are quite a number of people who would love to go out and find their own mineral specimens. If the necessary permits and approvals could be obtained from the authorities, it might prove viable for some small miners, if they were willing, to allow tourists and weekend visitors, at a price, to dig for mineral specimens on their claims. Such tourists and visitors would then be allowed to keep the specimens they find. The possibilities include agates and other minerals in the gas cavities anywhere in the Etendeke lavas but particularly between Grootberg and Tafelberg, quartz crystals and prehnite in the Goboboseb Mountains, nambulite (a very rare copper mineral) on the farm Mesopotamie 504 west of Khorixas, topaz and other minerals at Spitzkoppies, garnets in the Hartmannsberge and gold at Ondundu. The latter might be the most viable of all because of the romance of panning for and finding gold. However, special arrangements would have to be made, firstly with the authorities because of the law regarding the possession of precious metals and secondly because the claim owners, who are really interested in the gold underground, would have to be persuaded to allow panning to take place and to permit the local community to manage and benefit from this. Other mineral deposits, such as those with tourmaline, could be approached in the same way. (See Map 901)

The well formed staurolite crystals which occur in the Gorob area could also be turned into a similar form of revenue for the Topnaars of the Kuiseb River.
2.6.4 MINING ACTIVITIES

The five active mines, quarries and potentially commercial mineral deposits in the North-west Region are depicted on Map No. 902.

Mining has been the mainstay of the Namibian economy for most of the past century. The economy has not diversified as it should have in terms of sustainable development. Money generated by mining is needed to fund the needs of promoting sustainable development and of sustainable development itself. The North-West region has significant mineral potential and thus potential for the discovery of commercial mineral deposits. Prospecting and mining should be encouraged but in terms of environmental contracts that prospectors must now sign and in terms of forthcoming legislation. Full EIAs and Environmental Management Plans and the regular compliance with, auditing and updating thereof in order to continuously strive to reduce impacts must be requirements of any new mining venture.
3. REGIONAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE NORTH-WEST REGION
3.1 VISION

In order to move forward, a vision for the development of tourism is required. The vision for the north-west and particularly the focus area, should be to maximise tourism potential in the north west in a sustainable manner that allows:

- Local communities to work in partnership with government and the private sector through conservancy structures.
- The promotion of environmentally and socially sustainable tourism that retains the character and wilderness quality of the area.
- The promotion of the maximum economic benefits and entrepreneurial opportunities for local residents and Namibians as a whole and that these benefits be dealt with in an equitable fashion.
- The development of a quality destination which Namibians can be proud of.
- The social and economic empowerment of local communities.
- Regional, National and International tourism links to be maintained or improved.

The purpose of the North-west Region Tourism Master Plan (NWRTMP) is to provide a framework for decision-makers at a local, regional and national level to realise this vision. Tourism development must take place in a way and in areas that are acceptable to local people. This requires that planning be done in a consultative way, which promotes a high level of active community participation.

3.2 THE STRATEGY

The strategy to achieve this is to pursue the present approach of the MET in promoting low volume, low impact and highly priced destinations. This plan adopts a two-phased strategy. The first phase is described in this document and serves to provide a framework for decision-makers to approach tourism development in future and includes:

- Legislative recommendations
- Environmental considerations and tourism limitations
- A planning process
- Economic analysis
- Cost-benefit assessment
- Initial marketing strategy
- Financial strategy
The **second phase**, not included in this study, will involve taking the planning process from a regional to a sub-regional and local level. This phase constitutes using conservancies as planning units for tourism. Detailed land use planning per conservancy, following an integrated approach, is of utmost importance to ensure that tourism planning is sustainable over the long term. This process should ensure that communities are consulted and income is maximised per conservancy and its distribution is equitable.

### 3.3 NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

The National Planning Commission co-ordinates all national development programmes and directs national planning.

The MET will consolidate the National Tourism Development Plan, the Draft Tourism Policy, the White Paper and the Draft Tourism Act into the Tourism Act. Both the Draft Tourism Act and the NTDP make provision and strong recommendation for regional tourism development plans.

In the above-mentioned plans and draft legislation, emphasis is placed on developing low-impact Community Based Tourism (CBT) as a key strategy for conservation as well as the social and economic empowerment of local communities on communal land. This is reiterated in the Communal Area Conservation Legislation (June 1996) and the Community Based Tourism Policy (June 1995).

The MET is the lead ministry for tourism in Namibia. As laid out in the First National Development Plan (NDP1) the role of the government is:

"...to **enable and facilitate the development of the tourism sector. It co-ordinates inter-ministerial activities relevant to tourism, co-operates with the private sector to create a national tourism identity, passes enabling legislation for the sector, provides development guidelines and monitors development trends.**"

Specifically, the main task of the MET is to see to the sustainable conservation of the environment and natural resources based on sustainable development, clearly making it the function of the MET to see to this in terms of tourism and wildlife management. In terms of tourism, the role of the MET is specified as to:
"...create an enabling environment for the industry through a combination of product development and marketing efforts with sensitive control of tourist numbers at specific locations."

This is achieved through a number of policies and enabling legislation, including those that transfer rights and responsibilities to communities living with the wildlife resources.

Recommendations from several consultation meetings related to legislative requirements are largely directed to the MET, MLRR and links between line ministries involved in resource management. These recommendations are to bring about greater control over tourism by residents on communal areas and to allow for exclusive group tenure over selected resources and tourism.

3.4 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The regional framework consists of four main components to assist decision makers in evaluating tourism developments in the communal areas of the Kunene and Erongo Regions:

- Environmental considerations and recommended tourist activities per zone
- The identification of appropriate institutions to lead tourism development
- A decision making and planning process
- Tourism planning in non-conservancy areas

3.4.1 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDED TOURIST ACTIVITIES PER ZONE

Three environmental zones were identified in the study area. The most sensitive zone is in the west and the least environmentally sensitive in the east. The impact of various tourist activities in each zone was considered and recommendations made as to what activities and developments should be promoted and which avoided (See Map 1003).

These recommendations are guidelines for decision makers and may not be appropriate for all proposed tourism ventures. For example, if an application for a campsite is received for Zone 1, next to a proclaimed road with a clear demand and limited effect on increasing traffic into exclusive zones, then there is no reason for it not to be recommended. However, if a conservancy or developer suggests an activity not
recommended in that zone, then decision makers must be convinced that sufficient steps are proposed by the developing parties to ensure that the possible long term impact on the environment has been adequately addressed. In Volume 2, each zone has been further described in twelve management zones (See Map 1002). These management zones also describe several important exceptions to the three environmental zones (Maps 1001 and 1003).

In order to ensure better regulation of the tourism industry it is particularly important to do a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Needs Assessment in Zone 1, less so in Zone 2 and least important in Zone 3 (See Map 1001). Environmental Impact Assessments should be required prior to any development, regardless of zoning.

The following tourism activities are promoted in each of the three zones:

**Zone 1: High Sensitivity**

Zone 1 contains the very sensitive gravel plains, important tourist destinations and areas of high endemic species. It is at present the least developed zone and it is felt that above all the wilderness appeal of this zone must be maintained over the long term. It is the view of this study that a limited amount of development should be promoted in the Zone 1, and access be limited in places.

In Zone 1 the following should be promoted:

- Upmarket small (< 20 beds) to medium sized tented camps and lodges
- Over Landers and motorbikes should be limited to proclaimed roads only
- No off-road driving should be permitted
- Campsites are not promoted since they require relatively high volumes of traffic to sustain them
- Self-drive tours should be allowed on designated routes only and guided tours should be promoted
- Dry camps with no facilities should be erected where necessary for the use of overnight campers. These may provide tents and basic equipment
- Walking and pack animal trails should be promoted but attention must be given to the impact of backup vehicles supporting these activities
- Fixed-wing aircraft should be limited to direct flights to and from camps and micro lights and choppers should be avoided
Zone 2: Medium Sensitivity

Zone two is less sensitive than Zone 1 and contains the main infrastructure of the two regions. It also includes the main settlement areas and more livestock. This zone is considered to be suitable for further development and to provide the bulk of services required for Zone 1.

The following is recommended:

- In addition to the small and medium sized lodges mentioned in Zone 1, campsites should also be promoted here
- Over Landers and motorbikes should be allowed on designated routes only
- Fewer restrictions are placed on self-drive tourists and yet guided tours should still be promoted
- Fewer restrictions are placed on aircraft and walking and pack-animal trails are to be promoted

Zone 3: Low Sensitivity

Zone 3 is the least environmentally sensitive area and tourism should be promoted with as few restrictions as possible. Considerations regarding sustainability must however still be examined prior to development. There are several areas occurring in Zone 3, which are of high tourism value and are more sensitive. Some of these exceptions are detailed in chapter 10 of Volume II.

3.4.2 MONITORING PROGRAMME

3.4.2.1 LIMITS OF ACCEPTABLE CHANGE

An integrated monitoring programme is vital to the successful management of tourism in the North-west region of Namibia. This programme should identify where visitor pressure is compromising the quality of the environment or visitor experience. There are two main ways of dealing with excessive tourism impact. The first is to set limits to the maximum use of an area and the second is to set limits of acceptable change.
Carrying Capacity refers to the maximum use of any site without causing negative impacts on the resources, reducing visitor satisfaction or exerting adverse impacts on the society, economy or culture of the area.

Carrying capacity limits are extremely difficult to quantify. Carrying capacity limits also vary according to the season and factors such as tourists' behavioural patterns, facility design and management, the changing attitudes of the affected communities and the dynamic character of the environment.

It is thus recommended that the technique of Limits of Acceptable Change ("LAC") be used to monitor tourism impacts on the environment. LAC should define management actions that would be triggered in response to defined signs of visitor pressure or wear. These limits should be established for each tourism management zone.

During local (conservancy tourism) planning the impact of tourism on various factors should be assessed with consideration being given to the following:

- road condition;
- disturbances to important sites;
- the condition of the vegetation or soils;
- wildlife populations;
- pressure on sites such as queues, car parking, litter and other pollution;
- the impact of visitors on local communities; and
- visitor satisfaction levels.

The above criteria is more fully described in chapter 10 of Volume II of this study.

In order for LAC principles to be successful, regular and consistent, qualitative and quantitative data is required on all the above elements.

The decision when to terminate further tourism development in any specific area, will always remain a difficult task. However, a process of monitoring and management is vital to the successful management of tourism in the North-West Region. Limits of Acceptable Change should define management actions that would be triggered in response to defined signs of visitor pressure or wear. The indicators for monitoring are listed above.
The interpretation and monitoring of visitor experience or any other signals of visitor pressure cannot be implemented overnight. Training of local communities and implementing agencies such as Regional Councils and Ministry officials will have to take place.

The MET should establish a monitoring process and agency in consultation with the Regional Councils and Local Community Conservancy committees. The North-West Region covers a vast area with different environmental sensitivity zones and management structures. Each area has its own unique identity and may react differently to visitor pressure. The local communities, conservancy committees and officials from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism settled in regional offices are probably the best placed to perceive environmental pressure or visitor satisfaction levels. However, members of the community will not necessarily have the experience and specialist knowledge to propose adequate mitigation to cope with the increasing tourism levels.

It is therefore recommended that an Environmental Monitoring Committee be established consisting of members from conservancies in the study area, Regional Council, Ministries, Private Sector, NGO’s and local community. This committee should meet on a regular basis to discuss and handle matters of concern. Depending on the issues to be discussed, the Environmental Monitoring Committee may request assistance from technical advisors such as tourism, wildlife or environmental specialists.

The availability of qualified persons to undertake the monitoring and evaluation in Namibia might be problematic. This will even be more of a problem within the conservancy community. The MET in co-operation with NACOBTA have to invest in training of management, conservancy staff and local people to monitor visitor satisfaction levels, to monitor environmental pressure and to implement changes required for maintenance of Limits of Acceptable Change.

It is recommended that wherever possible, local communities should be trained to interpret and monitor the quality of the visitor experience and any other signals of visitor pressure. The regional MET offices together with Regional Government should ensure that this is being done and that adequate mitigation is being implemented to cope with increasing tourism levels.
3.4.2.2 PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH LAC

There are some problems associated with the use of LAC and these include:

(i) availability of qualified persons to undertake monitoring and evaluation
(ii) training of persons to undertake evaluations
(iii) implementation of any changes required for maintenance of LAC
(iv) coordination of monitoring and evaluation process
(v) management structure required to enforce any proposed changes

3.4.3 APPROPRIATE INSTITUTIONS FOR MANAGING TOURISM IN THE FOCUS AREA

The following paragraph outlines the main activities required and the institutions responsible for planning and implementing this plan. It was agreed at the final consultation workshop in Uis that Traditional Authorities are taken as the custodians of communal land and that management and equitable distribution of benefits from natural resources will be dealt with under sectoral legislation of the line ministries. The MET is the responsible ministry for tourism and conservancies are taken as the appropriate local community institution for managing wildlife and tourism on communal land. Conservancies should be the principle body in which rights to tourism are vested. This will enable them to plan tourism activities within the regional framework of this master plan. Conservancy activities will ultimately be overseen by the MET as they are the responsible ministry. The MET will be primarily responsible for ensuring that the regional plan is implemented.

Land Boards and the Regional Council should ensure that an accommodating environment is provided regionally and locally for conservancies to meet the requirements of the Regional Plan. They will also be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this plan at the local and regional level.

During a workshop held in Swakopmund, attended by traditional leaders, Regional Councillors, Ministries, Municipalities and NGO’s, it was agreed that the process for the evaluation of applications as indicated in Figure 3.1 be recommended.
3.4.3.1 DECISION MAKING AND PLANNING PROCESS

Planning is particularly important for tourism. Tourism, however, is not the most important income generating activity within the study area. Tourism should be seen as complementing existing income generating sources. The nature of tourism requires that if these components are to be maximised, land use planning and detailed tourism planning will be required.

For example it is important to keep photographic tourists separate from trophy hunters, exclusive lodges accommodating high paying guests may need to be kept separate from budget self-drive tourists. This can be achieved through
effective land use planning on a conservancy level which must fit within a regional framework such as this study.

Land use and tourism planning on a conservancy level should supplement the regional development plan. However, mechanisms and a planning process should be in place for developments to take place in non-conservancy areas.

**Step 1: Conservancy land use planning**

In order to maximise returns from natural resources and sustainably manage them in communal areas, it must be possible for local residents to plan and implement these plans where different areas are able to be used to meet different needs. It is recommended that the MLRR utilise structures such as conservancies, where residents have organised themselves and agreed to managing resources together.

Conservancies should take the lead in the tourism aspects of the planning process and a cross-sectoral approach where possible should be adopted to ensure that all ministries support the plan and that Regional Government and Land Boards will assist in the enforcement of these plans.

The output of this land use planning will be broad zones to be used for various activities which are adopted by the majority of local residents. Experts with sound knowledge and experience of tourism will be required to give advice on the various zoning options.

**Step 2: Conservancy tourism planning**

Tourism zones identified by conservancies will require detailed tourism planning per conservancy. This planning should be done within the framework of the NWTMP. Detailed tourism planning should be done for the entire conservancy, taking into account the land use zones of the conservancy as well as the rest of the region. The aim of this planning is to utilise skilled tourism expertise to ensure that the tourism potential of the area is maximised in a sustainable manner.

Detailed conservancy tourism plans, drawn up in consultation with conservancy members should include:
objectives of the conservancy related to tourism
the collection of relevant local and other tourism data
the provision of a physical framework of planned tourism activities
a detailed inventory of attractions and analysis of options
feasibility studies of these options
prioritising follow up projects including costing and responsibility
the identification of local training needs
marketing and financing options available
addressing local control issues
appropriate negotiation procedures are outlined
suggested plans for the upgrading of existing enterprises
Setting of minimum standards
Identify the Limits of Acceptable Change
Strategic Environmental Assessment and Needs Assessment
Institute tourism data collection systems to allow better future decision making.
Make provision for EIA’s for specific site development

This process should be initiated by the conservancy, conducted together with consultants and co-ordinated by an organisation such as NACOSTA with the support of the MET. The MET will accept the tourism plan after receiving recommendation from the Regional Council and possibly Land Boards and after ensuring that it is in line with the Regional Plan.

The conservancy tourism plan could be done simultaneously with the land use planning process, or may include the tourism land use-planning component only.

Step 3 - Enterprise development

Enterprises identified in the tourism plan and adopted by the MET should be allowed to be developed with few additional requirements, with the exception of location specific EIA’s undertaken by developers. Potential tourist sites should then be put out on tender, evaluated and negotiations entered into with potential investors/entrepreneurs. This should culminate in agreements being signed between the conservancy and the entrepreneur after legal and financial advice has been sought to protect both the investor and conservancy.
3.4.3.2 Non Conservancy Areas

There are areas in the focus area where conservancy formation has not started. It could be prescribed that before tourism development takes place conservancy establishment should be in process. If this is seen to be impractical, the following is proposed but should be used with care and not be used to replace the above procedure.

In non-conservancy areas, the process for tourism development needs to follow the current legal land allocation process, which is currently under review. At present, the Traditional Leader and Regional Governor consider PTO applications for recommendation to the MET who will make a further recommendation to the MLRR for final approval.

Considering the recently approved Land Act it is recommended that the local traditional leaders and Regional Council (together with the Land Boards) and emerging conservancy committees should recommend tourism developments to the MLRR. These are then referred to the MET for recommendation. The MET will then send the application back to the MLRR who will approve or decline the application, based on the MET recommendation.

Under the present system PTOs should be issued in the name of the community rather than in the name of prospective developers. The security of the investor and community can then be better protected by a contract negotiated between the parties concerned. The establishment of this contract should be consultative and involve emerging conservancy committees where they exist. Contracts should be signed by the traditional authorities and the Regional Council (or Land Board) as well as emerging conservancies where they exist. The process of PTO allocation and establishment of contracts for tourism development must:

- be transparent—consult local people through public meetings to describe intended contracts
- deal with the equitable allocation of benefits to stakeholders
- be legally binding
- follow EIA and development protocols as outlined in this document
- adhere to local and regional tourism/land use management plans
- be transferable to the conservancy committee once registered
- access legal and technical advice (particularly taking into account existing joint venture contracts eg Damaraland Camp)

Any agreements that are entered into by the traditional authorities and regional council (or Land Boards) will be binding and transferred to the conservancy committee once it is registered and implemented according to the constitution as laid out by its members. Funds should be kept in trust until conservancy registration takes place.

3.5 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

3.5.1 INTRODUCTION

The economic analysis has been done to assist local decision-makers in determining the type of tourism development allowed or promoted in their area of control, a hypothetical assessment was developed to compare the economic impact of a community campsite versus a mid-market/upmarket lodge on the local community and the regional economy.

3.5.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The hypothetical economic impact assessment comparing the economic returns of a community campsite, mid-market lodge and upmarket lodge clearly indicate that mid- or upmarket lodges provide significantly greater economic returns to the community and regional economy than a community campsite, viz:

- Mid- and upmarket lodges could contribute 10 times the amount of income to the community in the form of salaries and wages than a community campsite;
- In terms of the total direct community benefits ie income from salaries, wages, corporate profits and rental, our analysis indicates that mid- and upmarket lodges could contribute 17 times that of a community campsite;
- Mid- and upmarket lodges could contribute up to 10 times that of a community campsite to the Namibian national fiscus in the form of corporate, personal and general sales taxes;
**Total Taxation Contribution**

- An upmarket and mid-market lodge could create 6 times the number of direct and indirect jobs created by a community campsite; and

**Direct and Indirect Contribution to Employment**

- Compared to an upmarket or mid-market lodge facility, a community campsite contributes a very small amount to the regional economy.
Direct and Indirect Contribution to Regional GDP

Mid- and upmarket lodges, although providing greater economic benefit to the region clearly require a far greater capital outlay for development and hence carry a greater risk on potential return on investment. The opposite is true for a community campsite.

It is important to bear in mind that a community campsite should not be discarded as a development option. A well marketed and managed campsite could also provide economic returns to the community, although less than that of a mid- or upmarket lodge. Visitor demand may necessitate that a campsite would be more desirable in a particular area than say a mid- or upmarket lodge and hence the returns provided by a campsite are clearly better than no development at all or uncontrolled camping.

3.6 COST BENEFIT ASSESSMENT

3.6.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism has definite and often measurable impacts on the environment and socio-cultural aspects of a region. These impacts are more significant when one considers that much of tourism's appeal relies on the quality of the environment itself.
A cost/benefit assessment indicates more than just that income and employment may be created but also how tourism benefits may be distributed and what economic, social and environmental impact costs may result from the development process and ultimately whether the benefits outweigh the costs.

A cost/benefit assessment was conducted for:
- Planned versus unplanned tourism development in the region
- The development of a community campsite versus the development of a mid- or upmarket lodge

3.6.2 ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSION

Planned versus Unplanned Development

The implications of unplanned development are that tourism demand for the region may be high in the short-term and thus may provide significant short-term economic benefits for the local population and government. However, these short-term benefits will have negative implications in respect of long-term sustainability of the natural environment, social or cultural aspects of the region and economic spin-offs to the local population, local and national government.

Planned development will ensure that the tourism industry in the region is sustainable in the longer term and that the key resources on which the industry is based i.e. the sensitive environment and culture, are conserved.

Planned tourism development in the region has obvious merits over unplanned tourism development. The costs of unplanned development are extremely high and it is thus recommended that unplanned tourism development not be considered as an option for the North-West Region of Namibia.

Community Campsite versus Mid-/Upmarket Lodge Development

In terms of different types of tourism plant development the results of the cost/benefit assessments are not as clear-cut. Although mid-/upmarket tourism developments clearly have greater economic and other beneficial impacts on the local population and local and national government than a community campsite, it does not necessitate that the concept
of community campsites be outlawed. Community campsites do have merit particularly in instances where demand for such facilities exceeds supply or where large-scale investors cannot be sourced for a particular region. Economic and other benefits from a community campsite, even if they are relatively small, are better than no benefit at all.

In order to maximise the benefits and minimise the costs of tourism development in the region it is recommend that:

- Community members be encouraged to develop industries which support the local tourism industry in this way increasing the rounds of expenditure within the region and improving the tourism industry's contribution to the regional economy; and
- Tourists are educated and informed about the region's environmental and social fragility. Visitor education may be achieved through a visitor code-of-conduct displayed on signboards located in key areas within the study area and/or through brochures disseminated to all visitors to the region and displayed at all accommodation/campsite establishments.

3.7 INITIAL MARKETING STRATEGY

3.7.1 INTRODUCTION

Before any specific marketing activities are undertaken it is important that a detailed marketing plan be developed for the North West region of Namibia.

A non-prescriptive, preliminary and broad marketing strategy has been developed for the region. A detailed marketing plan resulting in an action plan for the region should be the responsibility of the association/body identified to market the region. This strategy is a base from which future discussions can be directed.

3.7.2 STRATEGY

The overriding objectives of the marketing plan for the region should be to:

- Create an awareness of the area;
- Create a desire to visit and experience the area;
- Increase the number of tourists visiting the area;
- Increase the average length of stay in the region;
- Increase the average spend per tourist;
- Attract the identified target markets; and
- Ensure that visitors are aware of the environmental and cultural sensitivity of the area.

An initial SWOT analysis was undertaken from which the region's unique selling points were identified, viz: Himba and other cultures; the Desert wildlife; Geological formations; and the wide range of features/attractions in the region. The SWOT analysis also allowed for the identification of broad target markets for the region, viz: overseas tourists with a special interest in the cultural and eco-tourism and high-income local and regional tourists with a special interest in adventure tourism, cultural and eco-tourism. Strategies to attract these target markets have been addressed.

It is recommended that a brand name and values should flow from the region's unique selling points and should be used on all marketing collateral produced for the region. Suggested marketed collateral for the region includes maps, brochures, a website, etc.

It is suggested that regional marketing should be the responsibility of a marketing entity guided by a multi-representative forum or committee specially constituted to handle the marketing aspect. Ideally the marketing entity should be located at a key access points to the region and should distribute marketing collateral to tourists and other interested parties. It is also provide a tourism information service.

Community owned and managed tourism facilities, in general, do not have sufficient funds to market their establishment and region single-handedly. These facilities rely to large extent on regional and national marketing initiatives. Given the importance of community based tourism facilities in the region it is clear that a comprehensive and well-managed marketing strategy is very important for the region.

Community campsites should, at a minimum, prepare brochures which are distributed through all tourism information centres in the region and key centres nationally, provide directional and locational signage, establish relationships with relevant tour operators and ensure that information about the campsite is provided in all regional marketing collateral.

In developing a comprehensive and user-friendly marketing plan for the region it is recommended that the following guiding principles be followed:

- The marketing plan should be formulated with input from all parties involved;
- Ensure that any and all marketing efforts of the public and private sector are co-ordinated and complementary so that the market sees a unified and consistent impression of the area;
- Keep the whole region in mind when developing the policy;
- Ensure that the region and the affected communities are aware of the consequences of the marketing plan and are able to handle the resulting demand;
- Establish limits of promotion according to, among others, visitor carrying capacities, to ensure the quality of any visitor experience in the area;
- Marketing should target all potential visitors to the area; foreign, regional and domestic;
- Measure and assess the results of the marketing and promotion strategy and incorporate findings into future decision making; and
- Ensure that any body marketing the area is made aware of and distributes current information regarding:
  - The extent of existing resources and facilities in the area;
  - The codes of conduct to be followed by the tourism industry; and
  - The codes of conduct to be followed by visitors.

### 3.8 FINANCIAL STRATEGY

#### 3.8.1 INTRODUCTION

Planned tourism development is to be encouraged to promote the economic upliftment of the region. However, in order to plan and manage the region’s tourism industry, funding is required. In addition, local and international investors need to be attracted to provide investments in tourism related developments.

#### 3.8.2 STRATEGY

**Funding Sources**

*Table 3.8.1 displays potential sources of funds for the initial and ongoing management of the region’s tourism industry.*
Table 3.8.1: Funding Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Requirements</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Public Sector/Donor</th>
<th>Private Sector</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Planning</td>
<td>Vertical responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism Monitoring</td>
<td>Greater responsibility</td>
<td>Should have an</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ideally should be a partnership</td>
<td></td>
<td>A bed levy could be applied</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>support infrastructure</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism Plant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Responsibility to</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>incentivise</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>development</td>
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<td>Training</td>
<td></td>
<td>Responsibility to</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>assist private sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitor Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>Component of tourism planning</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Control and manage visitors in their care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits of Acceptable Change</td>
<td>Monitoring &amp; implementation responsibility</td>
<td>Funding could be sourced from conservancy/park entrance fees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Incentives

Creating the right type of investment climate would be the most effective incentive that could be offered by the region to potential investors. This would include:

- Maintaining a stable and secure political, social and economic environment which helps to create a positive investment environment;
- Providing facilitation and investment assistance to potential investors. Subsidised feasibility studies and environmental impact studies for tourism developments with strong empowerment potential should be considered;
- Financial incentives (or incentives in kind) that assist in securing funding or improving viability, for feasible, environmentally responsible developments that create jobs and contribute to the Gross Geographic Product (GGP) should be offered to investors for development where previously disadvantaged individuals can benefit from empowerment through community involvement or SMME opportunities; and
- The Local Government should lobby the National Government to reduce the corporate tax rate for tourism developments to attract investment; and to offer preferential tax
rates in identified areas for specific developments, which might include developments that produce the required outcomes in terms of empowerment.

The underlying principles that should be adhered to are:

- Incentives should be structured so as to allow existing and new developers and operators to benefit;
- Incentives should ensure that market forces determine the type, size and quality of any new developments or operations - not the incentive alone;
- Incentives must meaningfully improve the investor’s, owner’s or operator’s return; and
- There should be safeguards to prevent the abuse of incentives.

Incentives should only be considered where a tourism industry project is viable in market terms, will provide the desired additional economic empowerment and social benefits, but will not produce returns sufficiently high enough to interest private sector investors.
4. RECOMMENDATIONS
4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

The NW TMP is a framework within which sub-regional tourism planning will take place. The process involves a high level of participation of local communities through conservancy structures, whilst maintaining accountability, transparency and a commitment to sustainable development. The involvement of community structures allow considerable transfer of skills and understanding of the tourism industry as well as empowering communities to negotiate on an even footing with the private sector. It also makes provision for tourism to be planned and controlled locally and to ensure a fair distribution of income amongst stakeholders, particularly local residents.

Tourism if planned and controlled over the long term has the ability to contribute considerably to the livelihoods as well as development in these two regions. If however the present situation of limited control and poor planning is pursued then these two regions will destroy their tourism potential.

To ensure the successful implementation and long term sustainability of tourism development in the Region the following basic recommendations results from the study and community participating process and should be adhered to.

CONTROL

- Additional legislation to allow the control of tourism and freedom of movement by tourists should be addressed and implemented as a matter of urgency. (Section 3)
- A Brochure explaining tourism ethical code should be compiled and distributed at information centres and main access routes.
- Co-operation between line-ministries (MET and MLRR) and support agencies must be improved, especially in resource management (Section 3)
- Tourism development and activities in the North-West Region must be subject to guidelines and criteria as determined for each environmental zone. (Section 3.4)
- That the NW TMP be included as a policy document in the NDP II
- Provision should be made in the upcoming Tourism Policy for the inclusion and implementation of Integrated Regional Tourism Strategies/Plans.

MANAGEMENT

- The proposed structure and process outlined in this study for managing tourism development in the region should be implemented by the Regional Councils, ministries and NGO's as a matter of urgency. (Section 3.4)
That the establishment of up-market and mid-marked lodges be promoted since these are providing significantly greater economic returns to the community and regional economy.

That community campsites not be disregarded as a development option and that the benefits to the communities and tourism market be explored.

All stakeholders in the tourism sector should be made aware that, although very beneficial in the short term, unplanned tourism will be detrimental to the long term sustainability of tourism in the North-west.

That planned tourism development be promoted in order to ensure long term sustainability.

In order to maximise the benefits and minimise the costs of tourism development it is recommended that community members be encouraged to develop industries which support the local tourism industry and;

That tourist be educated and informed about the region's environmental and social fragility. This may be achieved through a visitor code-of-conduct displayed on signboards and or by distributing brochures at information centres.

A detailed tourism marketing plan supplemented by an action plan should be developed for the North-west Region.

A marketing strategy should consider the marketing objectives and guiding principles for marketing as highlighted in the report.

It is recommended that a brand name and values should flow from the region's unique selling points and should be used on all marketing collateral produced for the region.

Regional marketing should be the responsibility of a marketing entity guided by a multi-representative forum or committee specially constituted to handle the marketing aspect.

That a marketing strategy include all tourism sectors since community owned facilities, in general, do not have sufficient funds to market their establishment and region single-handedly.

Community campsites should, at a minimum prepare brochures which are distributed through all tourism information centres in the region and key centres nationally, provide directional and locational signage, establish relationships with tour operations and ensure that information is provided in all regional collateral.

To create an enabling, sustainable environment while tourism planning would be a shared responsibility. Tourism Planning at conservancy level is of utmost importance and should be implemented urgently. (Section 3.8)
- Government should play a major role in tourism monitoring, however, the private sector (including Conservancies) should have an interest. *(Section 3.6)*

- Marketing should be handled in partnership between the Government, private sector and local communities/stakeholders.

- Bulk infrastructure development and maintenance should be the responsibility of the government.

- Enterprise infrastructure should be developed by the private sector (which include community members and conservancies) but the government/donors should initiate financial incentives that assist in securing funding or improving viability.

- Although the private sector should be responsible to train their own staff, the government/donor agencies should assist the private sector.

- Central, Regional and Local Authorities should provide facilitation and investment assistance to potential investors. Subsidised feasibility studies and environmental impact studies for tourism development with strong empowerment should be considered.

**INFRASTRUCTURE**

- The MET should play a leading role in requesting all other line ministries that infrastructural planning should follow an integrated approach.

- Existing proclaimed roads in environmental zone I should be maintained, however, the proclamation of new roads should be discouraged.

- A circle route, for 2 x 4 cars linking Swakopmund, Khorixas, Sesfontein, Opuwo, Epupa Falls, Ruacana and the rest of the northern regions should be promoted.

- Communication in the North-west should be improved. This may result in better marketing and planning of tourism routes.

**CAPACITY BUILDING**

- Capacity Building Programmes should be initiated, formulated and implemented and Government funds should be made available for this exercise.

- The involvement of women in training and all other tourism projects and management structures should be promoted.

**INSTITUTIONS**

- Smart partnership creation. Tourism promotion development and management is best achieved through smart partnership approach involving local communities, government, non-governmental organisations and private sector. First partnership should be promoted and supported.
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