THE LAND ISSUE IN NAMIBIA: AN INQUIRY

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The Land Issue in Namibia:
An inquiry

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# CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>List of Maps</td>
<td>(iii)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>(v)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 1 : Introduction</strong></td>
<td>1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 2 : The Historical evolution of Namibian Agriculture</strong></td>
<td>7-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Land policies before 1915</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Land and Labour at the end of German colonial rule</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Land policies after 1915</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Post-Mandate Land Policy: White Settlers</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>The Profitability of Settler Farming</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Post-Mandate Land Policy: 'Native Reserves'</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Land Tenure</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>'Native Reserves' and Agriculture</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>Agricultural Policies in the Reserves</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CHAPTER 3 : The Commercial Sector</strong></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Overview of the Commercial Sector</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.1</td>
<td>Economic Contribution</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.2</td>
<td>Branches of Agriculture</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1.3</td>
<td>Production Support and Agricultural Financing</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Farms and Farm Businesses</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Distribution of Ownership</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1</td>
<td>State, Church and Company-owned Land</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2</td>
<td>Individual Owners</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3</td>
<td>Distribution of Land and Farms</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Environmental Issues</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4: 'Communal' Areas

Introduction 90
4.1 Land and Land Tenure in Communal Areas 90
4.2 Land Tenure in the Communal Areas 94
4.3 A Preliminary Assessment of Land Shortage in Namibia 98
4.4 Farming Systems 103
4.5 Productivity and Communal Farming 104
4.6 Discussion 108
4.7 Conclusion 112

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion 116-119

APPENDICES 120-172

4.1 Caprivi 120-134
4.2 Kavango 135-142
4.3 Owamboland 143-145
4.4 Damaraland 146-147
4.5 Bushmanland 148-160
4.6 Hereroland 161-163
4.7 Rehoboth 164-170
4.8 Namaland 171-172

BIBLIOGRAPHY 173-186
LIST OF MAPS

Chapter 3

3.1 Geographical distribution of commercial farming districts 43
3.2 Farming activities 47
3.3 Stockfarming potential: commercial farming districts 68
3.4 Rainfall and evaporation 68
3.5 Rainfall variability 68
3.6 Soil types 68
3.7 Vegetation 68
3.8 Major dams and larger water supply schemes 81
3.9 Occurrence of groundwater 81
3.10 Geohydrological environments 82
3.11 Carrying capacities

Chapter 4

4.1 Geographical distribution of communal areas 90

Appendices

4.1.1 Caprivi: geographical location 120
4.1.2 East Caprivi: water supply and road accessibility 125
4.1.3 East Caprivi: population distribution, 1983 125
4.2.1 Kavango: geographical location 135
4.2.2 Kavango: population distribution 136
4.2.3 Kavango: geology 137
4.2.4 Kavango: groundwater potential 137
4.2.5 Kavango: rainfall and distribution of boreholes 137
4.2.6 Kavango: water points and stock concentration 137
4.2.7 Kavango: 'Tribal' areas 137
4.2.8 Kavango: existing development and infrastructure 138
4.2.9 Kavango: existing agricultural projects 142
4.3.1 Owamboland: physiography 143
4.3.2 Owamboland: Etosha catchment area 143
4.3.3 Owamboland: population distribution 143
4.4.1 Damaraland: rainfall 146
| 4.5.1 | Bushmanland: geographical location | 148 |
| 4.5.2 | Traditional distribution of Bushman groups in Namibia | 149 |
| 4.5.3 | Nyae Nyae | 150 |
| 4.5.4 | Bushmanland: Ju/Wa farms in Eastern Bushmanland, 1986 | 152 |
| 4.5.5 | Bushmanland: proposed game reserve | 155 |
| 4.6.1 | Hereroland West: water supply scheme | 161 |
| 4.6.2 | Hereroland: settlement patterns | 161 |
| 4.7.1 | Rehoboth: geographical location | 164 |
| 4.7.2 | Rehoboth: evaporation | 164 |
| 4.7.3 | Rehoboth: rainfall | 164 |
| 4.7.4 | Rehoboth: carrying capacities | 168 |
| 4.7.5 | Rehoboth: location of government-owned farms outside the Gebiet | 168 |
| 4.8.1 | Namaland: carrying capacities | 171 |
| 4.8.2 | Namaland: groundwater | 171 |
| 4.8.3 | Namaland: boreholes | 171 |
| 4.8.4 | Namaland: distribution of wards, 1989 | 171 |
# List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Land in the police zone occupied by Black Namibians in 1913</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Temporary reserves in Namibia, 1920</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Land utilisation in 1946</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Recommendations of the Native Reserves Commission</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>Reserves set aside for Black Namibians, 1923-1926</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Reserved areas, 1932-1951</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Livestock, land and water ratios, 1956</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Composition of GDP at current prices</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Annual changes in contribution to real GDP</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Gross farm incomes, 1988/9</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>No. of cattle farm units, 1986</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Exports of live cattle, carcasses, beef cuts, and canned meats, 1979-1988</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Exports of Karakul pelts, 1983-1988</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Exports of small stock to South Africa, 1984-1988</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Value of agricultural exports, 1980-1988</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>Fluctuations in meat exports, 1984-1988</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>Department of Agriculture loans to commercial farmers, 1987/8</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>Land Bank: long term mortgage loans, 1984-1989</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.12</td>
<td>Long term mortgage loans: purposes for which granted</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>Land Bank: medium term loans, purposes for which granted 1984-1989</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>Land Bank: medium term loans, applications considered and granted, 1984-1989</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>Land Bank loans to farmers other than 'whites', 1979-1989</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>'Racial classification' of applicants for Land Bank loans, other than 'whites'</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>Farm businesses and farms by district, 1975-1989</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>Stock reductions by district, 1978-1982</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>Soil types: general characteristics and limitations</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>Catholic Church-owned farms</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>Geographical distribution of foreign-owned farms</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>Foreign-owned farms by owners' nationality</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>Distribution of land, 1982</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>Distribution of ownership</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>Regional variations in distribution of farms</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.26 Estimated surface area affected by bush encroachment in selected commercial farming districts, 1986

Chapter 4

4.1 Homelands proposed by the Odendaal Commission 92
4.2 Agro-ecological regions in the communal areas 93
4.3 Agro-ecological regions and carrying capacity of homelands 99

Appendices

4.1.1 Changes in Caprivi settlement sizes, 1959-1982 124
4.2.1 Agro-ecological regions: Kavango 136
4.2.2 Land use in Kavango, 1989 137
4.2.3 Livestock estimates: Kavango, 1986-1988 138
4.2.4 Mashare and Nkurenkuru production projects: Production figures, 1986-1989 140
4.2.5 FNDC Irrigation projects in Kavango 1986 141
4.3.1 Income derived from stock sales, Owamboland, 1983-1987 144
4.6.1 Land area, livestock numbers and boreholes: Hereroland, 1989 162
4.6.2 Fenced off farms on communal land: Hereroland, 1989 163
4.7.1 Sizes of privately owned farms in Rehoboth, 1983 165

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Despite the apparent abundance of land, the issue has dominated the quest for the end of colonialism in what was known as South West Africa. Judging by recent African history, it will continue to pursue Namibia into the first decades of its independence.

The publication of this study marks only a moment in a continual search to find a satisfactory understanding of, and solution to, a complex social problem. It is, therefore, not the definitive word on the topic but a series of considered statements which follow upon a year of delving into what Namibians and others agree is a political labyrinth.

The study of the land issue is also an academic labyrinth: like no other, land disputes draw on all disciplines. A recent South Africa conference¹, for example, considered the issue from the perspective of the economist, the lawyer, the sociologist (and social anthropologist), the historian, the agronomist, the botanist, the geologist, the geographer and the farmer.

Those interested in the burgeoning theoretical literature on the Land Issue in southern Africa (and elsewhere) will not find it in this study which is more of an inventory than a carefully deliberated discourse. The study draws, as it were, only a base line. It contains, therefore, few recommendations aside from the important suggestion that, sooner rather than later, the collection of the necessary statistics on land and agricultural issues in Namibia should be undertaken. In the past, as the study constantly suggests, the collection of data was as fragmentary and distant as the colonial system under which the country was governed.

Approaches to understanding and explaining the land issues have developed strong ideological roots. Because of its tentative nature, this study has eschewed dabbling in these. Many will find this unsatisfactory: certainly this is understandable. After all, how land is used is central to the manner in which Namibia, like all countries, will develop. Namibians themselves, however, will have to determine how best this precious resource is to be employed. In any case as developments all over the world have shown, slavish adherence to ideological positions have weakened the capacity of governments to respond to the demands of their citizens. In short: narrow ideological approaches to social issues, like land use, is on the wane.

Part of Namibia’s scenic charm is the harsh, unforgiving landscape. But what soothes the tourist’s eye is not accommodating for the agriculturalist: it is, as the study suggests, not easy to farm in Namibia.
But landscape alone does not shape agricultural policy: politics are central. Namibia’s history is neatly divided into three political phases. First, the period before Germany colonisation of which very little is popularly known. Secondly, the relatively brief period of German colonisation which set the overall pattern of economic distribution and its manifestation in agriculture. This pattern, thirdly, was honed and reinforced by the eighty-odd years of South African occupation. Pretoria’s seeming determination to incorporate the colony as a “fifth province of the Union” saw the worst accesses of apartheid being applied to Namibia. So, for example, Namibia, too, was cut and carved into “Bantustans”; as Chapter Two illustrates, the country’s agriculture was deeply affected by the ideological ambitions of its large neighbour.

Chapter Three focuses attention on the beneficiaries of apartheid, the relatively rich, white sector. While many consider the notion of Namibian commercial sector as misnomer - arguing that farming is seldom commercially viable - there is little gainsaying the suggestion that, in the main, white farmers have benefitted more than others in Namibia. This is dramatically illustrated by the extent to which commercial farmers, as opposed to their counterparts in the communal areas, have enjoyed access to extensive financial and technical assistance. Chapter Three describes the contribution of commercial agriculture to the economy, and presents such statistics as exist on farm numbers and the distribution of land and farms among the predominantly white commercial farmers. It also raises several issues which will need further consideration in the formulation of resettlement and redistribution policies, such as the question of foreign ownership of farmland and environmental problems in the commercial farming districts.

The country’s communal areas are the focus of Chapter Four. Post-1960s developments in land distribution, land tenure arrangements in the communal areas, problems of agricultural production in the subsistence or residual sector, the productivity of communal farming and its relationship to traditional farming practices are among the issues discussed. Appendices to Chapter Four deal with each communal area in turn, and should be read as a complement to the chapter. The appendices provide some basic information and statistics on each area, describe the physical characteristics, land use and tenure arrangements which obtain, and in some cases highlight area-specific issues which have arisen around access to and use of land. They are largely descriptive and by no means claim to be definitive analyses of complex regional dynamics.

Chapter Five presents some tentative conclusions.

Although this study is primarily concerned with agricultural issues, Namibia’s agriculture is patently not divorced from the rest of the country’s economy. To site agriculture within the broader economy a brief discussion of the salient features of Namibia’s economy follows.

Namibia comprises a land area of 832 144km2 (excluding the contested enclave presently called Walvis Bay). The country
comprises a total population of between 1.5 and 1.6 million people. These are estimated figures since there has been no population census since 1981. In 1989 the country witnessed the return of some 40 000 exiles. Traditional population counts were based on the compulsory South African racial nomenclature. The country's largest and capital city, Windhoek, has an estimated population of 200 000.

The country's infrastructure is relatively well developed by African standards. Twenty years of colonial war, however, skewed this development towards the strategic concerns of South Africa. A feature of all discussions about Namibia is the extent to which the country's development, politics, and other societal fabric is oriented towards its rich powerful neighbour.

The country has an estimated 4 438km of tarred road. Gravel roads, which for this purpose can be considered as relatively maintained (by central authority) non-macadamised surfaces are 25 034km in length. Dirt roads, relatively unmaintained surfaces, are estimated to comprise 12 239km. The country's sheer size and the paucity of infrastructure make air travel important. Namibia has 28 airports of which the largest, of international standard, is located 40km from the capital. These figures need however to be set against the colonial setting of the country: tarred roads were important for military purposes as indeed were airports. They are also obviously important for the existing agricultural infrastructure. Not surprisingly, therefore, the distribution of tarred roads and airports favour the white commercial sector.

Telecommunications were also important for strategic purposes, and the country is estimated to have a telecommunications network stretching 1 500 000 km. These serve 71 post offices and 16 postal agencies: the country has an average of 58 telephones per 1000 people.

The length of Namibia's electricity transmission lines is 6 400km and the country has a peak demand of 200 mw: the central electricity generating corporation, SWAWEK, has a peak capacity of 600 mw. Again, this is mainly oriented to the white sector of the population.

In the area of health the familiar pattern of distribution exists. Namibia has 68 hospitals and 170 clinics. The average beds per 1000 people is 6. The country is said to have 300 doctors, including specialists, and 4 380 nurses.

Unlike other countries in Southern Africa Namibia's economy has shown a buoyancy in the 1980s. This is demonstrated by these estimated rates of expansion: 1986, 3.2%; 1987, 2.8%; 1988, 2.3%. Understanding and interpreting Namibian economic statistics are at times blurred by the effects of South African
military expenditure in the country. In this way the recognition of dependable statistics is almost impossible and, arguably, only on the second or third year of independence will sustainable baselines for the country’s economy be identified.

This proviso aside, growth in real output during 1988 is said to have emerged mainly in the tertiary sector which grew at 3,2%. The secondary sector also showed rates of expansion (1,8%), while, during 1988, the increase in the primary sector was limited to 1,3%.

The country showed a growth in total real gross domestic product in 1988 of 2,3% as against a growth rate of 2,8% in 1987 and 3,1% in 1986. This gradually weakening trend follows firm growth in all sectors of the economy with the exception of manufacturing. The following is a summary of growth rates in important sectors of the economy in 1988:

* Transport and communication: 6,8%
* Construction: 5,9%
* Electricity and water: 5,1%
* Fishing: 26,0%
* Mining: 1,0%

Another declining sector was agriculture which showed a 2,3% fallback during 1988 as against a 2,9% increase in 1987.

The growth rate of the real national product fell from 5,1% in 1987 to 2,8% in 1988. This reflects the more moderate rise in real domestic output. Improvements in the terms of trade during 1988 reflect a 23% rise in export prices as against a 13% rise in import prices. This, however, was neutralised by the effect which the sharp rise of 90% in real net factor payments had on the gross national product. Per capita income, based on 1980 constant prices, declined from R948 in 1987 to R946 in 1988.

During 1988 real gross domestic expenditure rose 8,7%. Real private consumption expenditure fell back to 1% in 1988 as a result of high interest and inflation rates but demand for consumer variables remained relatively strong as evidenced by the high level of consumer bank credit. Government expenditure also rose by 3,3% in 1988, mainly as a result of an increase in the remuneration of government employees which increased the wage bill. In 1988 real gross domestic fixed investment also increased. Government showed an increase of expenditure in real fixed capital which followed an increase in building construction. In addition public corporations increased their capital expenditure mainly as a result of capital outlays by the electricity corporation, SWAWEC, and the National Housing Corporation.

Turning to prices the country showed a relatively high inflation rate of 12,9% with quarterly variations of up to 16,2%. Increased costs of food prices show fairly substantial fluctuations. Much of Namibia’s inflation is imported from South Africa. While it is difficult to tease out Namibia’s foreign trade figures from that of South Africa, it is estimated that the
values of merchandise exports recovered remarkably in 1988. Apart from mineral exports (excluding diamonds) the country has shown a strong export performance. Moreover the rise in the value of merchandise imports slowed down considerably when these rose by 22% in value. This latter trend is in line with the tailoring off in domestic demand.

The situation of the current account is set out as follows in the government's Statistical/Economic Review:

Despite the sharp increase in the trade surplus during 1988, the aggregate balance on the current account ended up with a deficit of R83 million, after large surpluses were recorded during the preceding six years.

This deterioration in SWA/Namibia's current account balance was brought about first, by increased freight and merchandise insurance payments on its imports, second, by sharp increases in dividend payments to foreigners which originated mainly in the mining industry, and finally, by slightly reduced transfer receipts mainly as a result of the reduced budgetary aid provided by South Africa and the phasing out of South Africa's financial responsibility towards the local railway administration.

*******************

The project was initiated by Gerhard Töttemeyer Director of the Namibian Institute of Social and Economic Research [NISER], University of Namibia. Funding was provided by Consolidated Diamond Mines. The economic history of Namibia has been deeply influenced by multinational mining corporations of which CDM is an important one. Clearly such corporations are not without an interest of their own in the preferred economic policies followed in African and Third World countries. The executive director of CDM, Mr R. Gower, saw the researchers briefly on agreeing to the project and will only see the final product once it is complete. We would not suggest that CDM has no interest in this study or its findings but would like to make the point that at no stage did CDM try and influence its direction and findings.

The research was done by Fiona Adams and Wolfgang Werner. Both came to the study with mixed experience in research in the land issue and of Namibia. Adams, for example, is a South African with a background in sociology and journalism. Werner, on the other hand, is a born Namibian with degrees in rural development and economic history. Peter Vale, who led the study, was in 1989 a visiting professor within NISER at the University of Namibia. His own interests are in political science and international relations. We believe that this study's findings reflect a good spread of this experience.

Administrative assistance and office accommodation were provided by NISER, the Centre for African Studies (University of Cape
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Namibians gave generously of their time, knowledge and expertise during our fieldwork in that country. We are unable to thank each person or organisation individually, but are grateful to the many peasant and commercial farmers, party political and church representatives, state officials and others who gave up valuable time in the hectic period leading up to the 1989 elections. Special thanks are due to those who acted as our translators in the communal areas.

*****

NOTES

3. The discussion which follows is derived mainly from EDA/Namibia, Department of Finance, Statistical/Economic Review, (Windhoek, 1989), pp.4-7.
4. Ibid, p.7
CHAPTER 2
THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION
OF NAMIBIAN AGRICULTURE

Introduction

The centrality of land in the quest for a new Namibia seems self-evident: about 90% of the population derives its subsistence from the land, either as commercial or subsistence farmers, or as workers employed in agriculture. But the structure of ownership and tenure does not only affect those who derive their livelihood directly from the land. The racially-weighted distribution of land was an essential feature in the colonial exploitation of Namibia's resources, directly affecting the profitability not only of settler agriculture, but also of mining and the industrial sector. As in pre-independence Zimbabwe, 'the whole wage structure and labour supply system depended critically upon the land divisions in the country.' Access to land determined the supply and cost of African labour to the colonial economy. So, the large scale dispossession of black Namibians was as much intended to provide white settlers with land, as it was to deny black pastoralists access to the same land, thereby denying them access to commercial pastoral production and forcing them into wage labour.'

It follows that colonial land policies cannot be fully understood unless set within the process of capital accumulation in Namibia.' Conversely, changes in the distribution and utilisation of land will affect the entire economic structure of independent Namibia.

Capital accumulation in Namibia was facilitated by the establishment of 'native reserves'. As in South Africa, these not only provided cheap labour to the settler economy, but enabled the colonial state to exert political control over the population through co-opting indigenous leaders and appointing local headmen:

into the colonial system as lower-level bureaucrats who administered the 'native areas' on behalf of the administration in return for an annual salary together with bonuses of all kinds, retaining those elements of 'native law and custom' that were not subversive of the capitalist system.'

'Native reserves' provided a wage subsidy to the colonial economy. By protecting these reserves from further encroachment by white settlers, they served to keep in existence some form of subsistence production. A system of communal land tenure ensured that every household had access to land. But the same system denied communal peasant farmers the opportunity to accumulate capital for
themselves. As a result, reserve households were generally
dependent on wage labour to secure their subsistence needs;
at least one member of a household had to engage in wage
labour to augment incomes and harvests. But access to land
— however tenuous — also implied that capitalist employers
could pay wages well below the value of labour power. In
addition, it was assumed that the dependents of workers
could maintain themselves off the land. Cash wages thus
did not have to include the reproduction of workers’
dependants.4

Conceivably this line of reasoning may be thought to be
somewhat theoretical. However, a perusal of documents
pertaining to the formulation and implementation of a
‘native reserve’ strategy in Namibia suggests otherwise.
From the onset of South African rule in 1915:

native reserves’ were to provide labour to the colonial
economy by channeling black Namibians back to the rural
areas by providing additional land. It was made quite
clear, however, that this land should not enable them to
‘concentrate there as a tribe or tribes’.

Instead,

married women and children should live on the reserves
and have the benefit of the milk from the cattle ... men
should go out like the natives of the Transvaal and leave
their women at home on the reserves until they return.5

In other words, the reserves were:

... a place upon which ... the aged, the infirm and
certain unemployed natives could claim the right to
reside.6

Agriculture in ‘native reserves’ was variously referred to
as the communal or traditional sector, as opposed to the
commercial sector. This dichotomy led to myths about the
ability of black or ‘traditional’ farmers to farm as
efficiently as white or ‘commercial’ farmers. Such beliefs
were reinforced by the increasing marginalisation of
reserve agriculture, which contrasted sharply with a
booming settler agricultural sector. Before addressing the
validity of these assertions in modern Namibia, this
chapter will explore the historical development of
Namibia’s ‘dual economy’ — that is, its commercial and
subsistence farming sectors. It will show how agriculture
in the ‘native reserves’ was always subsumed under the
long-term objective of establishing Namibia as a white
settler colony. In pursuit of this objective, black
Namibians were dispossessed of their pastures and resettled
in marginal areas. The chapter will also show that the
establishment of settler agriculture was fundamentally
dependent on massive state intervention in the form of financial assistance, while simultaneously undermining black agriculture in the reserves, thus forcing the majority of black Namibians into wage labour.

2.1 Land policies before 1915

Pre-colonial agriculture and land use differed markedly from contemporary forms of agriculture in the 'native reserves'. In the area known today as the 'Police Zone', Herero and Nama people led a predominantly pastoral existence.* The scarcity and unpredictability of pastures required these communities to disperse widely over the territory in small groups to utilise existing resources efficiently. Moreover, the maximisation of pastures and water resources required a high degree of mobility, characterised by epicyclic patterns of migration.15

In the regions to the north, the indigenous population combined settled agriculture with cattle herding. In Owamboland the products from millet and sorghum were supplemented by a range of vegetables and spices ... by goat's milk, eggs, and sometimes meat ... by fish swept down in floodwaters; by game; and by the fruit-bearing trees.12

After harvests, cattle were turned onto the fields but were driven to cattle posts in the woodlands during the rains.13 Centralised political authority:

enforced a 'rough system of rotation of pasture land': wells and cacimba (small dry season reservoirs) were maintained; the tunda (sandveld) was grazed during the rainy season ... the areas adjacent to the cacindas, talas (permanent pools in stream beds), and rivers, were reserved for the dry season when water was unavailable in the tunda.13

In the light of prevailing myths about the productivity of communal agriculture, it is significant to recognise that pre-colonial communities in Namibia produced sufficient surpluses to allow the development of local and regional exchange. Trade caravans from Owamboland to the south were a frequent occurrence in pre-colonial Namibia, trading metal artifacts and tools for Herero cattle.14 In the south, where the Nama were described as 'extremely wealthy and rich in cattle' at the beginning of the last century, trade was conducted with the Cape.15 Intensive hunting had depleted local elephant and ostrich populations to such a

---

* Unable to control the northern regions militarily or by a police force, the German colonial authorities declared in 1907 that police protection should be confined 'to those areas which fall within the sphere of influence of the railway line or main roads'. It was added that 'settlement must for the time being be confined to the aforementioned areas'.16 The creation of the Police zones arose out of these circumstances.
level by the 1870s that trade in cattle increase." In Owamboland the demand for cattle soon transformed 'the traditional seizure of cattle for the king's court ... into a regular form of taxation'. Kings increasingly paid their debts to traders not from their own herds, but turned to internal taxation to maintain both the European standard of living to which they had become accustomed and sufficient patronage to retain the loyalty of their followers."

Gradually a new stratum of men without cattle developed and migrant labour was the chief response to growing pauperisation.

The availability of land in Owamboland was little affected by these processes of trade and internal differentiation. Indeed, before 1920 'land for cultivation was ... far from being a closed resource'. An official map in 1920 indicated that 'only c.40% of the Oshana zone south of the present border was settled'. Despite high population densities, the land potentially available for cultivation 'was sufficiently in excess of cultivators' maximum requirements to prevent any general pressure on the production of staple crops'."

Lack of data makes it difficult to assess the impact that cattle trading had on pastoral communities in the Police Zone. On available evidence it appears that trade enhanced the process of internal differentiation among Herero pastoralists and facilitated the growth of more centralised political structures. An important corollary was the 'division' of Hereroland into several loose chieftaincies. In the mid-1870s nine major chieftaincies were identified in an estimated population of 84 000 Herero." At the same time, twelve Nama and Oorlam chieftaincies with clearly defined boundaries were identified in southern Namibia."

Although not directly depriving communities of land, the concentration of power in the hands of individual chiefs enabled the manipulation of customary rights vis a vis land allocation and land use. As early as 1876 Chief Maherero, for example, proposed to set aside certain areas in Hereroland as reserves for pastoralists so as to enable Europeans favourably disposed towards him to settle on the remainder of the land." In 1883 a German trader, Adolf Leuderitz, obtained the first tracts of land from King Joseph Fredericks in the south, and by mid-1885 he had 'acquired ... the ownership of a very large portion of South West Africa and the mineral rights in a considerable portion of the remainder'."

Increasingly, German colonial officials acquired land by signing so-called protection treaties with indigenous rulers. Exploiting local conflicts, the former promised protection to individual kings against their adversaries.
signatories of protection treaties in return were not permitted to alienate any land to ‘a different nation or members thereof’ without the consent of the German Emperor. Similarly, indigenous rulers abrogated their rights to enter into any other treaties with foreign governments. 23

Systematic colonial settlement of Namibia did not occur, however, until the early 1890s. 24 During the preceding decade, the German Imperial Government had hoped that concession companies would administer and develop the territory. As a result, they acquired large tracts of land: by 1893 essentially all of Namibia had been parcellled out to eight concession companies. 25 Far from investing capital in Namibia, these companies blocked the introduction of settlers into the country ‘by holding back sales of land for speculative purposes’. 26

Although much land in southern Namibia had been signed away by ‘protection treaties’, very little actual alienation of land had occurred before 1897. Traditional rulers resisted selling land outright to Europeans. 27 A series of natural catastrophes, however, rapidly changed this state of affairs. Most notable was the rinderpest pandemic which swept through the country in 1897, wiping out an estimated 90% of the cattle stock. 28

In Ovamboland, stock losses increased the pressure by kings on what little livestock remained among commoners, forcing many to seek wage employment.

The survival of kingship structures and of crop cultivation within the family unit, the distances to the centres of employment, and the controls imposed by both traditional and colonial authorities on migrant labourers combined to restrict the form of proletarianisation to recurrent migrancy, rather than permanent settlement. 29

In Hereroland, the large scale loss of cattle meant that many Herero engaged in wage labour for the first time. More importantly, however,

cattle losses had made the Herero more dependent on a supply of European goods, and in particular had eliminated the use of cattle in barter and had made land itself the object of business transactions. 30

In 1897 officials reported for the first time that Maheerero, by now appointed Paramount Chief of the Herero by the German colonial administration, ‘will henceforth sell farm land right in the midst of [his] territory’. 31 Not only was he willing to sell land: communal land was cheap. Chiefs charged on average 50 Pfennigs and 1,50 Marks per hectare of land asked for by the Government. Communal land was also made more attractive by ‘the fact that the chiefs were usually paid in kind, with the value...
of the goods delivered being arbitrarily determined by the settlers'. In this way prospective buyers saved 'at least another 50%'.

Under such conditions the pace of dispossession increased rapidly. By 1902 only 31,4 million hectares of land, out of a total of 83,5 million hectares, remained in African hands. Of the remainder, 29,2 million hectares were owned by concession companies, 19,2 million hectares by the colonial state and 3,7 million hectares by white settlers. The Herero had retained only 46 000 head of cattle out of a herd estimated at 100 000 in the early 1890s. At the same time, 1051 German settlers had in excess of 44 000 head of cattle.

Alarmed by these developments, Rhenish missionaries suggested in 1901 that reserves be established for Herero pastoralists. Despite initial opposition by the government in Berlin, boundaries for such reserves were announced at the end of 1903. While reserves were conceived of as a protection against further encroachment on pastures by white settlers, their sizes soon became a point of dispute. Indeed, the very notion of establishing reserves with demarcated boundaries was perceived as a further step in the process of dispossession, and not as an attempt to protect black agriculturalists. Anger over the land question and the unscrupulous trading practices of German settlers in their attempts to procure land and cattle from the Herero led to the outbreak of war in 1904.

This war had devastating consequences in the Police Zone. Between 75 and 80% of the Herero and approximately 50% of the Nama perished during the fighting and the defeat of the Herero and Nama enabled the German colonial authorities to appropriate the land and cattle of these communities. At the end of 1905 a formal order announcing the expropriation of all 'tribal land' – including that given to the missionaries by the chiefs' was signed. More specific orders followed in 1906 and 1907, empowering the colonial state to expropriate all the land of the Herero and Nama.

Additional regulations in 1907 introduced a system of identity cards and service books for all black Namibians over the age of eight. Furthermore, 'only with the permission of the Governor could natives (sic) obtain land or land rights'. Stock breeding by black Namibians thus became dependent on special permission of the Governor: it was not granted before 1912, however. Squatting on uncultivated or unsettled land was also strictly controlled. Cumulatively, these regulations amounted to a system of forced labour.

With economic power and competition broken, the base was laid for the transformation of Namibia into a settler colony. Easy terms and generous financial assistance from the colonial state dramatically accelerated white
By 1913, 1 331 farms were in private possession, of which 118 were on lease and 193 dormant. The total area allotted was 13.4 million hectares (some 32% of the total area of 42.3 million hectares available for white settlement), leaving almost 29 million hectares of land unallotted: 1 587 white adults were on these farms. There were also 337 ‘closer settlement holdings’ of about 10 hectares each: 180 - with an area of 708 hectares - were uncultivated in 1913.

Stripped of land and cattle, the Nama and Herero were forced into wage labour. This process coincided with a severe labour shortage. The dramatic increase in land settlement intensified the demand for agricultural labour, while the opening up of the Otavi copper mines in 1906 and the Leuderingt diamond fields (1908) 'created overnight an acute shortfall in the labour supply'. This was exacerbated by German extermination policies which, during the wars, had eliminated most of the potential labour force in the Police Zone. Governor Leutwein admitted that 'of the three assets of the protectorate, its mining, farming and Native labour, we have destroyed the second entirely and two-thirds of the last'.

Under German colonial policies segmentation of the labour force also occurred. Under the forced labour regulations, Herero and Nama labour was reserves for farmers and urban areas in the Police zone, whereas labour for the mining and construction sectors had to be sought elsewhere. As a result, attention was increasingly focused on Owamboland as a source of labour. Aided by processes of impoverishment and a system of labour recruitment (formalised in 1911), labour migration from Owamboland to the south increased from below 2 000 per annum before 1908 to an average of 10 000 per annum for the period 1910-1914.

Circumstances in the Police Zone, however, required slightly different methods of labour procurement. Although a plethora of legislation existed to force black Namibians into wage labour, this could effectively only be implemented with regard to prisoners of war. However, large numbers of Herero and Nama managed to evade oppressive German labour laws by eking out a precarious existence in the bush as squatters on Crown land. In attempts to channel such squatters into wage labour, the issue of ‘native reserves’ was raised again after initial plans to establish reserves had been abandoned in 1904 as a result of the war. In 1906 Captain Kurt Streitwolf proposed to grant the Herero ‘land for a bit of agriculture and sufficient grazing for about 1 000 cattle’. He pointed out that in doing so the colonial state would be able to drastically cut its expenditure on the upkeep of refugees. The thought of ‘native reserves’ was unacceptable to most other senior officials, however, who
regarded them as laying the basis for renewed revolt." But the idea that they might be useful in the provision and control of labour lingered.

In January 1908 Governor von Schuckmann proposed that the Herero should be allocated some Crown land in an effort to entice them to surrender to the colonial authorities. The proposed land consisted of two farms, Omburo and Otjihaenena, which measured 9,000 and 10,000 hectares respectively. Provided they engaged in wage labour, the government would permit the Herero to keep their small-stock and a limited number of cattle." But once again, 'reserves' were not established. In 1911 colonial officials argued that the absence of 'vagrants' rendered the establishment of 'reserves' unnecessary."

Notwithstanding the absence of 'reserves' and regulations prohibiting the ownership of livestock, many farmers allowed black labourers ownership of cattle. Farm labourers frequently received livestock in lieu of wages. In addition, if farmers refused to accommodate the livestock of labourers, they ran the risk of desertion by their labour force. In spite of this, 'the government was extremely slow to relax its ban on Herero cattle-raising, which it regarded as a move towards a renewal of tribal organisation and as a threat to the whole land settlement'.[6] Between 1911 and 1914, 34 applications for permission to keep livestock were received by the colonial government. Of these, 30 were approved.[6]

Until 1914 the view among colonial officials was that the question of black ownership of livestock could only be addressed once the national herd had enabled white settlers to put farming back on a profitable footing. When the German Secretary of State, Dr. Solf, argued in May 1914 that the prohibitions on cattle ownership should be abolished, it was largely motivated by a concern of the Reichstag for the health of black Namibians. The Reichstag also contended that a limited degree of self-sufficiency among Namibia's black population was desirable; it would free the colonial government from the responsibility of providing famine relief and would lead to greater security in the colony: 'a poor and dissatisfied population could easily develop grievances'.[6]

2.2 Land and labour at the end of German colonial rule

Official figures on wage employment suggest that near the end of the German colonial period both the potential and actual labour reserves in the Police Zone had been fully employed. For example, an estimated 90% of black males were in wage employment; only 200 Herero and Nama were not so employed." Farming employed
12 523 labourers as against 9 541 in the 'larger industrial concerns'.' So complete was the process of dispossession that an eminent African historian has observed that Namibia 'must have been the only colony in the world where the settlers resisted the taxing of Africans. It was unnecessary'.

Although permanent 'native reserves' were not needed, the increase in black-owned stock on settler farms forced the German colonial government to address the issue again towards the end of its rule. The Herero, for example, were promised some land around Orumbo in the Windhoek district, but the outbreak of World War I ended this pledge. As a result, in 1915 black Namibians in the Police Zone controlled no more than 2.8 million hectares (including Rehoboth), or a trifling 6% of the total land area of 45 million hectares in the Police Zone. Rehoboth aside, these areas consisted of reserves granted by the German colonial administration to communities which it had regarded as loyal during the anti-colonial wars of 1904-1907. Table 2.1 below lists the 'native reserves' in existence in 1913.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>NAME OF RESERVE</th>
<th>AREA (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keetmanshoop</td>
<td>Berseba</td>
<td>575 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmbad</td>
<td>Bondels</td>
<td>174 505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethanie</td>
<td>Soromas</td>
<td>8 212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>Okombaha</td>
<td>172 780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outjo</td>
<td>Zesfontein</td>
<td>31 416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fransfontein</td>
<td>36 188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehoboth</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 756 618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2 756 719</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The unequal distribution of land was paralleled in the apportionment of livestock. By 1913 white settlers owned 183 000 head of cattle (some 90% of the total national herd of 206 000 cattle); the balance (22 476) were owned by blacks. In small stock numbers black Namibians were slightly more fortunate; they owned 300 000 (30%) of the national herd of roughly one million small stock. Available evidence suggests that the distribution of stock among Namibia's black population was uneven. The Berseba community alone in 1913 owned an estimated 2 000 head of cattle and 25 000 small stock, or an average of four cattle and fifty head of small stock per capita.
Although most black Namibians in the Police Zone had been forced into wage labour by 1914, many succeeded in evading efforts by German colonial officials to round them up. Numerous Herero, for instance, had never engaged in wage labour at the end of German colonial rule. A 1912 government commission conceded 'that there were still many vagrant natives' whose ranks were constantly enlarged by deserters, mainly from settler farms. Despite tight controls, 'there was a persistent movement among the Africans (sic) to reassemble' by leaving labour camps and settler farms.'

The Owambo and Kavango communities in the north of the country were not as closely affected by German colonial policies. Early efforts by Governor Leutwein to bring the Owambo kingdoms under German protection by means of treaties were rejected by their kings. Until 1915 the German colonial administration had no jurisdiction either in Owamboland or Kavango. While military posts were established at Namutoni, Okaukuejo, Nurugas and Nkurenkuru, Governor Leutwein resisted trying to conquer Owamboland, although this option had been considered before the Herero and Nama wars. Apart from Berlin's opposition to any further military activity in the colony after the 1904 war, Owamboland was not seen to have any mineral potential or any land suited for white settlement. Besides, as we have seen, a steady supply of labour was on stream and there was no need to introduce taxation.

2.3 Land policies after 1915

In July 1915 German colonial forces were defeated by troops of the Union of South Africa. A period of military rule ensued which lasted until 1920. During this time black Namibians were able to reverse some of the gains made by white settlers. These developments, and the response by the South African colonial authorities, had important implications for the land question.

Although still in its infancy, settler farming was damaged by the outbreak of war. Large-scale agricultural depopulation occurred as numbers of reservists were drafted while others sought refuge in towns. Looting of property and stock theft occurred on a large scale. In three years (1914-1917) stock numbers on settler farms decreased to 55% of their 1914 level. The termination of capital inflows from Germany, combined with a lack of markets for cattle, ushered in a period of economic stagnation.

But this proved a boon for those who had been pushed into forced labour. Taking advantage of the disruption created by the war, large numbers of farm labourers deserted their work and regained control of their ancestral lands by squatting on both unoccupied settler farms and Crown land. Settlements proliferated all over the territory. Some 15
settlements were counted in the Okahandja district in 1916 and in the adjacent district of Windhoek, 10 000 head of small stock and 550 large stock grazed on 19 different cattle posts." The acquisition of small numbers of stock by black Namibians was fairly widespread."

This process was facilitated by the low level of agricultural development prevalent on settler farms. Unable to pay cash wages, many farmers had to resort to some form of labour tenancy in order to attract and keep labour. The most common form of tenancy was a system whereby farm labourers were permitted to graze a certain number of cattle on white farms in lieu of wages. Several farmers permitted black Namibians to graze stock on their farms against payment of a grazing fee. Under existing economic conditions, and given the size of many settler farms, this proved more profitable than cattle farming."

Tenancy arrangements were not, however, the most efficient way of procuring labour. Farmers with abundant land were favoured over those with little land to spare, which seriously hampered the distribution of labour. Moreover, the possession of livestock diminished the necessity for black Namibians to engage in wage labour. The magistrate in Okahandja pointed out in 1921 that:

German farmers allow too many natives to squat on their farms, and to have stock there. These natives are ... nominally working on the farm, but actually are peasants, owning enough stock to supply their wants."

The possession of livestock reinforced the problem of desertion. Appalling labour conditions made farm labour unattractive and led to widespread complaints to the colonial state about the handling of 'native policy'. Many white farmers viewed developments with grave misgivings, urging that the basis of settler agriculture was threatened. Farmers in the Kalkfield district sourly summed up the position as follows:

The natives have ... [brought] ... about our economic retrogression during the last years - and it is a fact that through their constant maliciousness they have begun to take from us our courage and joyfulness in following the profession of the farmer. The other day a new settler, a Boer, put it strikingly by saying, 'This country is hell for the white man!'"

Troubled about the labour shortage and persistent complaints by settler farmers, the South African state intervened on behalf of white farmers. In 1915 a circular providing for a system of occupation licences was issued. Under this, squatters were compelled to pay grazing fees of 3d per head of large stock per month and 2s6d per ten head of small-stock. To discourage squatting, black males over 16 years of age had to pay an additional 2s6d per head."
A memorandum issued a year later sought to curb labour tenancy; no location was to be established on private property except with the Administrator’s consent. No more than ‘10 families or individual persons may reside on any one farm or property’.

South Africa’s policy with regard to squatters in Namibia was a remarkable deviation from their own 1913 Land Act. The principal object of this Act was to increase the supply of farm labour to the colonial economy by transforming squatters into labour tenants." This was achieved by ‘restrict[ing] African land leasing and purchasing rights to the existing reserves’. Policy in Namibia, however, boiled down to tacit approval of rent-paying squatters. To some extent this reflected a concern by the South African state to appear more benevolent than the former German regime." More importantly, however, the policy was an attempt to increase the supply of labour.

This apparent paradox in the execution of ‘native policy’ in South Africa and Namibia was a reflection of two fundamentally different situations. In contrast to the Union, many in the Police Zone had been dispossessed of all their land and cattle, and this – according to colonial officials – was the root cause of the labour shortage in Namibia, particularly on farms. The Officer in Charge of Native Affairs in the Windhoek district went so far as to suggest in 1916 that towns were supplying rural areas with labour. The reasons for this, he suggested, had to be sought in ‘the German policy of allowing natives no land whatever as a home’. It was further assumed:

that the natives would prefer farm labour to town labour if they had grazing reserves within reasonable distance of their places of employment."

Therefore, to attract people back into the rural areas, South Africa followed a ‘Back to the Land’ policy rather than restricting access to land."

The form which this took – i.e. rent-paying squatters – was also influenced by constitutional limitations with regard to the allocation of land. For the duration of the First World War it was not possible to alienate Crown land, and consequently no areas could be set aside as ‘native reserves’." Instead, so-called temporary or ‘stock reserves’ were established. The extent of these is detailed in Table 2.2 below. Stock reserves were never intended to enable black pastoralists to develop commercial agriculture, but rather as ‘farm labour producing centres’." The necessity of ‘stock reserves’ was succinctly set out by the Secretary for the Protectorate in a letter to the Secretary for Lands in Cape Town:

18
It is considered necessary to do this as a large number of Namibians working on private farms find the owner unable to allow grazing for their stock, thus the already deficient supply of labour is still further decreased by the native clearing out in to the Desert or squatting on vacant Crown land in order to maintain his cattle. These reserves are not the same as in the Union; they merely consist of farms set aside in each district for the purpose of the above-mentioned, and there is no intention of creating reserves to which tribes could remove themselves and thus restore their old method of living under their Chiefs."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>RESERVE</th>
<th>EXTENT (ha) (approx.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warmbad</td>
<td>Bondelswarts</td>
<td>175 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hirachabis</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethanien</td>
<td>Bethanien (incl. Soromas)</td>
<td>10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketzmannshoop</td>
<td>Vaalgras (or Witbooisende)</td>
<td>46 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Berseba</td>
<td>736 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibeon</td>
<td>Witbooisvlei</td>
<td>20 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maltahoe</td>
<td>Neuhofer</td>
<td>10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehoboth</td>
<td>Boachanas</td>
<td>20 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
<td>Orlamo North</td>
<td>6 071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eros</td>
<td>1 316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aukegas</td>
<td>4 479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Puersteinalde</td>
<td>6 386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okaekuraa/Oviniekiro*</td>
<td>no figure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
<td>Ulchinas</td>
<td>5 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gunichas</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aminuis</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>Ovitoto</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okwoyo (sic)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
<td>Awarawl Ost (sic)</td>
<td>13 958</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neubrunn</td>
<td>13 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Otjimbingue</td>
<td>13 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>Otjohorongo</td>
<td>25 000</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okombahe</td>
<td>172 713</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outjo</td>
<td>Zesfontein</td>
<td>50 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fransfontein</td>
<td>10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Otjeru</td>
<td>10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein</td>
<td>Ovismes</td>
<td>4 645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Otavifontein</td>
<td>2 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cauws</td>
<td>5 674</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Werner, W., 'An Economic and Social History', p.123

Note: * According to LW 1 3/15/2 Depression Commission: Memorandum to Native Affairs, Windhoek, 14.6.1923, this area comprised about 20 farms.

19
Far from interfering with the supply of labour to the economy as farmers alleged, colonial officials felt that stock reserves:

would act as a stimulus to labour, for the natives would be under close control and the payment of such taxes as may be levied could be effectively enforced. These taxes would have to be earned.”

But if the South African government was precluded from alienating land for the establishment of permanent reserves, it was also unable to embark on a systematic settlement of whites in the territory. Nevertheless whites were permitted to cross into Namibia from South Africa. Once in the territory, they were issued with grazing licenses in respect of surveyed but unoccupied farms, mainly in the South. Grazing fees amounted to 6d per head of large stock per month, and 2s6d per 100 head of small stock.

By 1919 the direction of land policy was still unclear. One the one hand, white settlers and farmers became increasingly hostile towards the government’s lack of intervention against black squatters and temporary reserves. Black Namibians, on the other hand, were said to be ‘in a state of much anxiety if not distress’.

2.4 Post Mandate Land Policy: White Settlers

It was not until the end of the war that the Union government could clearly define its land policy. Under the Mandate South Africa obtained ownership of all Crown land in Namibia, as well as ‘the right to grant permission to search for and mine minerals on all Namibian land in the Police Zone.’ The Treaty of Peace and South West Africa Mandate Act of 1919 enabled the Governor-General of the Union to introduce South Africa’s Land Settlement Act of 1912 as amended in 1917 and the Crown Land Disposal Ordinance 1903 of the Transvaal as amended in 1906.” The Land Settlement Proclamation, 1920 encompassed most of the provisions of the South African Acts. A Land Board was established to facilitate settlement: this was followed by the establishment of a Land Bank in 1921.”

In effect, the Land Board had no influence over policy. Land settlement was entirely in the hands of the Administrator while the Legislative Assembly had no voice in the formulation or implementation of policies.” Moreover, the first Land Board established in 1920 did not include any local farmers, but ‘was composed entirely of farmers from the Union who knew little of local conditions’.”

20
During the early 1920s, South Africa followed a ‘deliberate policy ... to settle poor people from the Union upon land in South West Africa.’ Funds were advanced to settlers to defray the cost of conveying their families, ‘together with a reasonable amount of furniture, second-hand farming implements, and animals for stud purposes’ to Namibia by rail. On arrival, the Administration issued leases of Crown land to allottees ‘with the option to purchase the government farms’. It also advanced moneys appropriated for that purpose to provide the lessees with stock, implements, seeds and other things necessary to enable them to develop and work their farms beneficially.

Allotment requirements were very low; applicants were not even required to possess ‘fixed capital for the allotment of a holding’. They were only required to have ‘sufficient capital to develop and work the holding beneficially in the discretion of the Land Board’ and a figure of two hundred and fifty pounds per settler was fixed in this regard. The then Secretary for South West Africa, Mr H P Smit, conceded that this sum was only nominal:

It was not too carefully scrutinised. As a rule, a settler would make up a statement that he possessed so much stock. When he fell short of the amount fixed, he just made it up by furniture and farming implements.

Moreover, no specific enquiry was made with regard to the history or qualifications of the applicant, beyond a statement ‘made in his application form and the testimonials he had’.

With this generous financial assistance land settlement went ahead but with little regard for farming conditions in the territory. By the mid-1920s over 1 000 settlers had arrived, notwithstanding the fact that farming conditions between 1920 and 1925 were variously described as ‘bad ... suffering from drought’ (1920); suffering from a lack of markets (1920-1924) and financial depression (1923). In early 1926 880 holdings had been allotted to 1 106 settlers, with a total area of 7.5 million hectares and a total valuation of 636 859 pounds. An amount of 248 000 pounds had been advanced to settlers during this period; the average capital brought in by settlers was 745 pounds per family. The colonial administration spent considerably more money on land settlement after 1925 than during the first six years of the Mandate. From 1926 to 1932 a total of 875 993 pounds were spent on advances to, and waterboring, for settlers. During the same period only 381 new holdings were allotted to 413 settlers. This suggests that additional advances of money had been granted to settlers who were allotted farms before 1926.
Total capital spent on land settlement during the phase up to 1932 was, however, considerably more than these advances. Several Departments incurred expenditures related to land settlement. A large portion of the million pounds spent by the Works Department, for example, was spent on land settlement or related projects. Well over 450,000 pounds spent by the Irrigation Department and an amount exceeding 300,000 appropriated by the Department of Agriculture have to be added to direct expenditure on the financial and waterboring grants mentioned above."

The ranks of white settlers were increased by the arrival and settlement of 350 families (1,900 individuals) from Angola in 1928. Notwithstanding fierce opposition to the scheme by Administrator Werth in 1925, and by the Legislative Assembly, 'the Union decided against the wishes of the Assembly to bring in ...[these]... Boers'." More than 150 farms were allotted to 200 Angola Boer families. In contrast to the Land Settlement Scheme, the government in Pretoria provided half a million pounds towards defraying the costs of settling this group. Each family received grants amounting on average to 1,500 pounds. Included in the sum was a 250 pound allowance for a pump, windmill, or reservoir, 150 pounds for a dwelling, and 400 pounds for the purchase of breeding stock." However, omens for the success of this settlement scheme were bad; not only were most of the Angola Boer settlers very poor, but their arrival coincided with the onset of both a serious drought and the Great Depression.""

As a result of these factors, land settlement was temporarily halted between 1932 and 1934 but resumed in 1935. In his annual report for 1937 the Administrator acknowledge that 'land suitable for settlement is fast running out'." Despite this, 609 farms were allotted to 727 settler families in the five years from 1935 to 1940. This brought the total to 2,122 farms and 2,349 settler families by 1940.""

By the end of World War Two, almost all Crown land in Namibia had been allocated. As Table 2.3 below demonstrates, only 6.3 million hectares of unsurveyed Crown land, in remote areas, remained for settlement; two thirds was deemed 'unsuitable for settlement'. The balance could be 'surveyed into about 294 farms'.""
TABLE 2.3
LAND UTILISATION IN 1946

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Within the Police Zone:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Surveyed farms</td>
<td>31,961 091 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban areas</td>
<td>425 341 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Native Reserves'</td>
<td>4 151 208 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehoboth Gebiet</td>
<td>1 303 400 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibited and diamond areas</td>
<td>7 629 652 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsurveyed Crown land</td>
<td>6 361 108 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside the Police Zone:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owamboland, Kavango, Caprivi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zipfel, Kakokoveld, Namib desert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and game reserves</td>
<td>82 290 860 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: General Rehabilitation Commission, p.16.

The Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission advanced the opinion that settlement could not be further increased, and that the time [had] already arrived for greater recourse to vocational training of farm children for the trade, industries and professions.\(^{115}\)

But the demand for farms exceeded the availability of land. About 1256 'landless' whites were identified as possible applicants for Crown land farms.\(^{116}\) The General Rehabilitation Commission was appointed in August 1945 to enquire into mechanisms to 'ensure social security for all European persons in South West Africa'. It was asked, \textit{inter alia}, to investigate the division of unsurveyed Crown land in the Police Zone into units 'and the allotment of such farms to grazing licence holders who are not [yet] owners of land'. It was also to scrutinise the desirability of pushing back the Police Zone to release more land for settlement by white farmers.\(^{117}\)

Faced with its recommendations, the South African government proceeded to open up sub-marginal land for settlement by shifting the boundary of the Police Zone in 1950. In this way, sufficient land was released for 275 farms.\(^{118}\) By shifting the boundary of the diamond area (Sperregebiet), land was made available in the Namib desert.\(^ {119}\)

These efforts made possible the allotment of 880 farms (some 8 million hectares) to new settlers between 1946 and 1954.\(^ {120}\) By 1955 there were 5214 farm units in Namibia and this figure remained unchanged until 1960. No more land could be allotted to white farmers; the Namibian colonisation process was complete.\(^ {121}\)
By the mid-1940s subdivision of land had only occurred on 295 farms, or about 10% of the total. While this was not considered to be a problem at that stage, the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission warned that the situation would not remain satisfactory indefinitely. Until this moment, sons of farmers were able to secure their own holdings from Crown land or obtain grazing licences,

but there will be few such opportunities in the future and, if sons and daughters' husbands cannot enter other walks of life on a commensurate scale, need may compel the parent to resort to subdivision.\textsuperscript{122}

By the end of 1965 there were 8803 farming units in Namibia.\textsuperscript{123} In 1960 the number of farmers in the territory was given as 5216, suggesting that several farmers owned more than one farm unit.\textsuperscript{124}

\section{2.5 The Profitability of Settler Farming.}

Since its inception settler farming in Namibia has been crucially dependent on state financial aid. Generous grants have been matched only by equally generous assistance during times of crisis to save the settler or commercial farming sector from economic collapse. During the financial and economic depression of 1921-1923, for instance, a scheme was introduced which provided for the reduction of the prairie value of all settlement farms by 25% and also provided for a remission of rent in respect of the first period of the settler's lease.\textsuperscript{125}

Similar action was resorted to after 1929, when the Great Depression, coupled with an unprecedented drought, threatened settler farming with economic disaster. With some farmers having lost between 60% and 70% of their livestock, the colonial state introduced a variety of relief measures.

Land Bank instalment payments due by farmers were extended, and a certain amount of interest due was added to capital. The provisions of the Fencing Act were suspended and co-operative societies for arranging the debts due by farmers to merchants were established. Debtors of the Administration were granted what was virtually a moratorium, and relief works were started for people who were out of employment ... Certain export subsidies were paid owing to the very low prices that stock and produce were realising.\textsuperscript{126}

Despite, or perhaps because of, generous financial assistance from the state to establish settler farming in Namibia, productivity and profitability of white agriculture were considered too low by world standards in
the late 1940s. The reasons for this have to be sought in the level of development of commercial settler farming. In the northern cattle ranching regions, for example, Gellert found that in the late 1940s the majority of farms had less than five camps and many had only one or two. Rotational grazing was difficult to practice under these circumstances, with detrimental effects on both the quality of pastures and the ecology. Moreover, about one third of all cattle and sheep farms did not have sufficient waterpoints for daily watering of stock. For watering livestock on alternate days, most cattle farms (but only about a third of karakul farms) had sufficient waterpoints. In summary, Gellert stated that cattle farming in Namibia was very primitive and "came closer to robber-farming than the rational utilisation of natural resources." He was of the opinion that under given farming methods and using minimum farm sizes as his criterion for evaluation, there were 20% too many farming units in Namibia. The optimal utilisation of pastures would require a 50% reduction of farming units, however.

Given the low level of development in agriculture, many farming units in Namibia were considered too small to provide white farmers with an income deemed adequate to maintain their standard of living. Although subdivision of land had only take place on 295 farms by the mid-1940s, and was not, as mentioned above, considered to be a problem, Gellert estimated that 50% of farms in the southern karakul producing region and up to 70% in the northern cattle region were either bordering on or too small to provide white farmers with an adequate income. The distribution of gross income for rural white males at that time seems to support Gellert's views. Out of a total white male population of 10 359 in 1946, 8312 or 80% earned nothing or below 500 pounds per annum. 12% (1235) earned between 500 and 100 pounds, and 812 (8%) had incomes over 1000 pounds per annum. If all 4000 farmers in 1946 were placed in the higher income group, about 2000 would have earned less than 500 pounds.

According to the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission such incomes were too low to enable farmers to develop their land. It was pointed out that no farmer, 'beginner or other, well-to-do or otherwise' could make a success of his farming business and raise and educate a family on less than 1000 pounds per annum.

All he is able to do is produce food for the nation or raw products for its industries by exploiting the existing fertility of the land; he is not able to develop the productivity of his holding by fencing, camping, finding water or to make provision for drought, or to apply measures for conservation of the soil.
The low level of development of settler farming had detrimental effects on the condition of pastures and the soil. The absence of camps and consequent free roaming of cattle encouraged selective grazing, thus depleting the more nutritious perennial grasses. Although overstocking at this time was only evident on 25-30% of farms, bush-encroachment was already becoming a problem. By the 1960s it was estimated that 40% of farms were affected by bush-encroachment, two to four million hectares of farmland had become useless for farming purposes, and carrying capacities in affected areas had decreased by about 20%. In recognition of these problems the Long Term Agricultural Policy Commission recommended, inter alia, that steps should be taken towards:

- the conservation and reclamation of the soil and pastures;
- the conservation of water and the augmentation of existing supplies; [and] the adoption of improved methods of farming with the view to improving the quality and quantity of farm products.

Following these recommendations, the colonial state stepped up its financial support in the 1950s to give effect particularly to the first two recommendations.

Investment in settler farming increased significantly after 1950. Boreholes increased in number from 16 137 in 1950 to 34 015 in 1960, thus doubling the total on white farms. Farm dams increased from 8 272 in 1946 to 17 354 in 1960. A Soil Conservation Board was established to encourage farmers to improve their pastures. Soft loans and grants from the state were dependent on farmers consenting to the planning of their farms by the Board. Ninety per cent of all farms were said to be so planned in the 1950s and 1960s. By the early 1960s, the numbers of camps on white farms had at least doubled from their mid-1940s level.

Although these measures contributed a great deal to increase productivity on settler farms, the commercial settler sector was still considered to suffer from several fundamental weaknesses in the 1980s. Some of these are discussed in Chapter 3 below.

2.6 Post-Mandate Land Policy: 'Native Reserves'

While extensive financial assistance was essential to establish white farmers, the future success of white settlement was dependent on the restructuring of socio-economic relations in the countryside. More specifically, the gains made by black Namibians in the acquisition of livestock and the control of land had to be reversed, both to release pastures for white settlement and to compel
stock owners into wage labour by introducing various forms of taxation. Fundamental to this process was the division of land on a racial basis. In terms of Act 49 of 1919, the right to alienate land for the establishment of 'native reserves' rested with the Union Parliament, while Proclamation No. 13 of 1920 authorised the Administrator to dispose of Crown land 'for the use and benefit of aboriginal natives, coloured persons and Asiatics'.

Little time was lost in appointing the Native Reserves Commission, which was charged with investigating, inter alia, the control, size of and conditions in existing reserves, and the availability and distribution in those reserves of potential labour for white farms. After the Commission had submitted its first report in June 1921, additional members were appointed 'to discuss ...[its]... recommendations and particularly to advise as to the allotment of suitable areas for permanent native reserves'.

The enlarged Commission recommended the racial division of land in Namibia and proposed to introduce segregation, arguing that Namibia 'still offered opportunities for carrying out a policy of segregation without disturbing vested rights'. More particularly, the Commission was influenced in its recommendation to establish permanent 'native reserves' by:

(a) the necessity for the removal of natives' settlements from essentially European areas;
(b) the desirability of obviating 'Black Islands', i.e. small isolated native reserves within white areas;
(c) the necessity of preventing renting of land to natives, commonly known as 'kaffir farming';
(d) the desirability of providing healthier and more natural living conditions for the native population;
(e) the advisability of providing facilities for better and more efficient official control of reserves.

In addition to these recommendations, the Commission also advised that certain areas should be set aside on lines similar to those of the Union Native Lands Act of 1913, in which 'natives might be permitted to purchase or otherwise obtain ground for their own use away from "White Areas"'. The area envisaged for this purpose was east of the Waterberg Reserve and north of Gobabis, later known as the Eastern Reserve.

Although no 'Native Purchase Areas' were ever formally set aside, no legislation existed to prohibit the purchase of private farmland by black Namibians. The barrier to acquisition of private land was economic, not legal. Without assistance from either the Land Bank or Land Board, it was impossible for black Namibians to buy land in the commercial settler farming areas. When, for example,
residents in the Otjihorongo reserve decided to buy a farm adjacent to the reserve in the early 1950s, they could only contribute 5 000 pounds to the purchase price of 20 000 pounds. Nor, indeed, could the estimated 750 taxpayers in the reserve generate sufficient capital to pay interest on a loan. Politically the colonial administration was committed 'to keep white land white and black land black'.

Table 2.4 below summarises the main details of the reserves proposed by the enlarged Commission:

| TABLE 2.4 |
| RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NATIVE RESERVES COMMISSION |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Proposed reserves | 794 938 ha |
| 2. Reserves to be closed | 139 288 ha |
| 3. Land earmarked for reserves in case of future extension, or of unsuitability of proposed reserves | 655 650 ha |
| 4. Land held by natives under German treaties or agreements | 636 881 ha |
| 5. Approximate total extent of land occupied by natives or to be occupied as reserves | 945 343 ha |
| 2 237 874 ha |

Available figures make it difficult to ascertain whether the recommendations of the enlarged Native Reserves Commission increased the land held by black Namibians or not. Inconclusive evidence suggests that access to land in the Police Zone was reduced. If, for example, the 950 000 hectares of land held under German treaties and agreements are subtracted from the total area of well over 1,5 million hectares of land grazed in 1920 (see table 2.3 above), just over 550 000 hectares remain (or only 100 000 less than what the Commission proposed as new reserves). This figure does not include certain farms utilised by black pastoralists in the Windhoek district in 1920 (farm numbers 204 to 225 and 128 to 130). The area set aside for future extension included the Eastern Reserve, an expanse of land covering the waterless Sandveld. The usefulness of this land can be judged from the fact that it is still uninhabited, and can therefore hardly be regarded as a meaningful addition to existing pastures. On the whole, the extent of land proposed for reserves was 'infinitesimal in comparison with the area occupied by Europeans or available for European occupation'.

While the Administrator regarded the proclamation of reserves as a matter of the utmost urgency, he conceded that:
owing to water giving out in places and various unavoidable difficulties, no very rapid progress can be made.\textsuperscript{133}

Undeterred, the colonial administration went ahead to clear areas designated for white settlement of black pastoralists. The Native Administration Proclamation, 11/1922 was issued, which laid down that:

natives may not be permitted to squat on land by owners or lessees thereof if not in employment, without permission of the Magistrate, nor may more than ten families be employed without permission.

It also authorised the Administrator to:

set aside areas as Native Reserves for the sole use and occupation of natives generally, or of any race or tribe in particular and ... prescribe regulations therefore.

The Ovambo and Kavango regions, which lay outside the Police Zone, were excluded from this Proclamation.\textsuperscript{134} The following reserves were proclaimed from 1923 to 1926:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 2.5</th>
<th>RESERVES SET ASIDE FOR BLACK NAMIBIANS, 1923–1926</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME</td>
<td>YEAR OF PROCLAMATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berseba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bondels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fransfontein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okombahe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soromas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesfontein</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aminuis</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epukiro</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuhof</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjituoe</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovitoto</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tses</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibeon</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterberg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East</td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjihorongo</td>
<td>1925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjimbingue</td>
<td>1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although several additions were made, the basic racial division of land was left intact until the 1960s. In 1923 the Kaokoveld was established as a reserve north of the Police Zone. Owamboland (proclaimed by Proclamation 40/1920 as the Magisterial district of Owamboland), was set apart as a reserve by the Owamboland Affairs Proclamation, No. 27 of 1929. Similarly, the Kavango region became a reserve through the Okavango Native Territory Affairs Proclamation, No. 32 of 1937, while in 1940 the Eastern Caprivi became a reserve in terms of Government Notice No. 1210 of 1940.\(^{13}\) Within the Police Zone small additions to existing reserves were made after 1926.\(^{14}\) Only three additional reserves were declared, as Table 2.6 indicates. By 1962 an area of close on 22 million hectares – including the Rehoboth Gebiet – had been set aside as ‘native reserves’.

\[
\text{TABLE 2.6} \\
\text{RESERVED AREAS, 1932-1951} \\
\text{NAME} \quad \text{YEAR OF PROCLAMATION} \quad \text{AREA (ha)} \\
\hline
\text{Aukeigas} & 1932 & 10,862 \\
\text{Eastern} & 1947 & 1,260,000 \\
\text{Warmbad} & 1951 & 14,523 \\
\hline
\]


Implementation of the reserve policy prompted large scale resettlement. Although no accurate figures are available, substantial numbers of Herero pastoralists were removed from their settlements in the district of Windhoek and the Rehoboth Gebiet to Epukiro, Aminuis and Waterberg East reserves.\(^{15}\) Frequently, the threat of removal gave rise to determined resistance by the communities involved. In the Windhoek district, for example, the colonial administration used violence to force Herero pastoralists to move to more marginal reserves in the east of the country. In this action, windmills and pumps were put out of action and huts were burned. But it was bombs dropped into the hills of Orumbo by military aircraft which made Chief Hosea Kutako lead his people away.\(^{16}\)

2.7 Land Tenure

The principle purpose of ‘native reserves’ was to provide the incipient settler economy with cheap labour by undermining independent pastoralist production. In addition, Namibia’s black population was scattered over the entire
country, effectively rendering political opposition impossible. These objectives were clearly spelled out in a letter by the Administrator to the Prime Minister of the Union in 1921:

I have practically fixed these reserves and have so located them as to prevent on the one hand too many black islands, and on the other hand to provide labour centres, rendering, at the same time, concerted action or organised effort on the part of the natives as a whole difficult.¹⁶¹

It was difficult for the colonial state to tightly control access to land and production in the reserves in order to prevent further agricultural development. The Native Reserve Regulation No. 68 of 1924 set out the terms on which land in the reserves was to be allocated and utilised:

the land remains the property of the Administration, though once having been set aside as a reserve, the land may not be alienated or used for any other purpose except with the consent of both Houses of the Union parliament.¹⁶²

In addition, traditional leaders in the Police zone had no powers of their own with regard to the allocation of land in reserves. While the regulations did provide for a communal land tenure system, its allocation for residential and agricultural purposes could only be made by Reserve Superintendents. They also had the power to:

prohibit for any period ... the grazing of the animals or any particular species of animal in any portion of the common grazing ground ... for the better preservation of the grazing.¹⁶³

The Native Reserve Regulations did not apply to the Kaokoveld, north of the Police Zone, or to the Berseba reserve. With regard to the three small reserves in the Kaokoveld — those of Chiefs Oorlog, Muhona Katiti and Kahew-Nawa (sic) — the colonial administration held that they had retained their authority to deal with civil and criminal complaints and disputes. The right to allot sites should, therefore, remain in the chiefs' hands. Ultimate ownership of the land was retained by the colonial state. Rights to land in Berseba fell outside the scope of the Native Reserves Regulations. These were recognised under a treaty of Friendship and Protection, entered into with the German government in 1885.¹⁶⁴

The situation with regard to tenure in Owamboland and Kavango was quite different to Police Zone reserves. Communities in these areas practiced dryland cropping, and the land was therefore divided into residential and agricultural sections on the one hand, and grazing land on
the other. Each section was governed by slightly different forms of tenure: while agricultural land was held and tilled by individual families, pastures were utilised communally. At the same time traditional political structures were still largely intact.\textsuperscript{135}

After conquest, the region known as Owamboland was occupied by eight chieflaincies. Ondonga, Ukualuthi, Ukuambi and Ongandjera were still ruled by kings, while Ombalantu, Ukuanyama, Okolonkathi and Eunda chose their own headmen, 'subject, however, to confirmation by the Administration'.\textsuperscript{136} Each chieflaincy occupied a well-defined area. The respective kings or headmen were regarded as owners of the land and in this capacity allotted arable land to heads of homesteads ('kraal heads'). Sizes of arable allotments varied 'according to the requirements and standing of the individual'. In four areas (Ondonga, Ongandjera, Ukuambi and Ukualuthi), a payment was made to headmen on allocation of land, its magnitude depending on the size of the land.

Allocation of land conferred permanent usufruct on the allottee, 'subject to good behaviour and loyalty to the Chief'. Upon death, an allottee's heirs took possession of the homestead and land. With regard to ejectment, the situation differed between kings and headmen. The former had powers of both allotment and ejection, whereas 'headmen [were] required to refer any questions of ejectment to the officers of the Administration. This was consistent with stated government policy to make land tenure 'as permanent as possible'. Eviction was regarded as an extreme measure and was seldom resorted to. Other mechanisms ensured that no land was left unutilized. For example, if an allottee was unable to cultivate his land to the same extent as his predecessor, he could be ordered 'to exchange with ...[another]... with more working hands whose allotment [was] too small for his requirements'.

An increasing shortage of water in Owamboland made communal use of waterholes necessary. Cleaning and improvements to existing waterholes was done by all those utilising the water. Waterholes dug outside the inhabited areas, such as at cattle posts, were regarded as the property of the person who dug them who had the 'right to prevent any stock being watered at such a water hole with the exception of that belonging to the chief'.

2.8 'Native Reserves' and Agriculture

The area of land set aside for 'native reserves' is meaningless if not set against the quality of the land, its infrastructure - both physical and in terms of financial support - and the farming systems practiced.
Black pastoralists in the Police Zone were removed to areas further away from infrastructure which were also less endowed with natural resources, particularly water. The Herero who had settled close to the Waterberg, for example, were moved further east and their land was given to white settlers. Writing to the Secretary for South West Africa, the Magistrate in Otjiwarongo stated that 'it should be remembered that in removing them [the Herero] from Waterberg we deprived them of their permanent water supply'. Regarding a suggestion that, in compensation for the loss of Waterberg two farms should be included in the recommended reserve, the same magistrate commented:

The two farms Opumanda and Trompetenhalter were prior to the war occupied and abandoned by German settlers owing to a lack of permanent water. They are, however, eminently suited for the natives and [are] an essential part of the reserve.

The main problems with the new reserves were a lack of water coupled with inadequate pastures. In 1929, six years after its initial occupation, Otjituoo reserve in the northeast had only one permanent borehole. From mid-1927 reserve residents had spent about 1500 pounds out of reserve funds on the search for water. In Otjihorongo reserve, which had a proclaimed area of 330 000 ha., only one out of six boreholes sunk in 1924 was successful. By the early 1930s 16 boreholes had been sunk at a cost of 3200 pounds but only six yielded any water. 'All of these boreholes [were] debited against the Reserve Fund'.

Aminuis and Epukiro reserves were no exception. By 1927 stock owners in Aminuis had lost 'some 2500 head of large stock' 'in spite of the efforts of the natives to sink wells'. In October of the same year the superintendent reported that the situation regarding grazing and water was so serious:

that I am of opinion that unless the Administration can come to the natives' immediate assistance ... I venture to state that we may even expect the natives to pack up, lock, stock and barrel, and quit the reserve.

Regarding the Epukiro reserve, the Assistant Secretary for South West Africa conceded that:

the high hopes that were entertained on the original inspection of the reserve were not borne out by experience, either in respect of the grazing potentialities or the water supplies.

The reserve had no permanent open water, and well sinking had proved fruitless, 'the rock to be pierced being very compact and the water table lies rather at too great a depth'. Although Epukiro had nine successful boreholes supplied with windmills and reservoirs in August 1928, the
Native Commissioner stated that the north-eastern portion of the reserve ‘has been out of reach ... there being no supplies’.

Soils and pastures in many new reserves were only of marginal quality. Although Epukiro was a large reserve, only a fraction was useful as pastures for large stock. After an inspection tour of Epukiro the Veterinary Officer in Gobabis, Dr. Maag, reported that the veld along the omuramba:

may be regarded as a good small-stock veld, the soil is hard and good fine grasses and fodder bushes are growing there. But this veld is only a small strip along the omuramba, about half a mile to one mile broad. The veld outside the omuramba to the north and south must be described as a poor grazing veld for large stock and only suitable during the green season for small stock ... The sickness amongst the cattle may be diagnosed as stiffsickness and may be caused by the poor veld.

In the new reserves the pastures lacked phosphorous, which gave rise to gallamiekte or ‘sandveld disease’. In 1925 the superintendent of the Aminuis reserve reported to the magistrate in Gobabis that grazing on the reserve was very poor; ‘... there is lots of grass but it is not edible for cattle. There is very little sweet grass here’.

Land south of the Otjituuo reserve in the Grootfontein district was described as:

dotted with sand dunes and practically impassable by either man or beast ... it is highly improbable water could be found in this locality. Grazing is reported to be of a sandveld type and it is considered this area does not warrant the expense of exploitation.

The general situation was far from satisfactory in the mid-1950s. Available figures suggest none of the reserves in the Police Zone had an optimal ratio of livestock to waterpoints to land. If the recommendation by the Boring Engineer in 1924 is an acceptable yardstick, the maximum number of large stock watered at one point should not have exceeded 600 head. However, ten out of eighteen reserves in the Police Zone exceeded this limit. In the Berseba reserve, for example, one waterpoint served 1 047 large stock units. In those cases where the maximum number of large stock units watered at one point did not exceed 600, there was not enough water to facilitate the optimal use of available pastures. In the Bondels reserve, for example, an average of 360 large stock units had to be watered at one point, while one waterpoint served on average 8 310 hectares. Table 2.7 provides more detail.
TABLE 2.7
LIVESTOCK, LAND AND WATER RATIOS, 1956

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESERVE</th>
<th>Ha/LSU</th>
<th>ESTIMATED CARRYING CAPACITY (LSU/ha)</th>
<th>AVERAGE ha. PER WATER-POINT</th>
<th>AVERAGE LSU PER WATERPOINT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berseba</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25 956</td>
<td>1 047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bondels</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8 310</td>
<td>3 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krantzplatz</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7 838</td>
<td>7 368</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neuhof</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4 007</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soronas</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2 619</td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tena</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1 018</td>
<td>553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warnbad</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2 417</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fransfontein</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6 354</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okombebe</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14 438</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjihorgono</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11 613</td>
<td>1 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjimbingue</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7 585</td>
<td>761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okovototo</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2 448</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anuins</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14 995</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epukiro</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29 348</td>
<td>808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>1 806</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>128 768</td>
<td>713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjituo</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>31 617</td>
<td>1 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterberg East</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13 613</td>
<td>1 620</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Olivier, 'Incoortingsbeleid', p.360. Typographical error for Okombebe column three corrected.

2.9 AGRICULTURAL POLICIES IN THE RESERVES

The colonial administration did little to encourage agricultural development in the 'native reserves'. Between 1923 and 1931 it spent a total of 45 800 pounds from revenue and loans on boreholes in the reserves. This was only 5 000 pounds more than the 40 800 pounds spent for the same purpose on settler farms in 1932 alone. No expenditure was made on waterboring in the reserves from revenue or loan funds after 1931. Until the late 1940s the proportion of total expenditure spent on black agriculture never exceeded 7%, averaging around 4.5% per annum. In 1936 the South West Africa Commission found that 'Native administration in the territory was not entirely satisfactory' and commented that:

the Administrator and the Legislative Assembly have always been disinclined to be too liberal with appropriations for services peculiarly in the interests of the Natives and were given in times of financial stringency to pruning such services first. This was done on the principle that it would be inequitable further to tax Europeans for the services conceived entirely in the interests of the Natives, who hardly contribute to revenue at all.
The assertion that the 'native reserves' were being developed at the expense of the white taxpayer was deceptive, since white settlers in Namibia did not pay any income or personal tax in the 1930s. The development that took place was financed from mining revenues and loans from the Union. The S.W.A. Commission criticised the absence of a tax on settlers, particularly in view of the fact that, as they put it, 'year after year the budget requires to be balanced by loans from the Union'. In addition, the Commission felt that mining revenue:

belong[ed] to the people of the Territory, Native as well as European. The European's initiative and technical equipment did not create, but merely exploited the wealth. To do this native labour contributed.

Consequently the Commission recommended that more funds should be appropriated to develop the 'non-European races from their backward condition to the direction enjoined by Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations'.

Needless to say, South Africa was not sympathetic to this reasoning and rejected the recommendations of the S.W.A. Commission. Instead, it argued that:

it is impossible to force the development of the native races. Their advancement in civilisation must be a matter of gradual growth.

So, far from increasing expenditure from revenue and loan accounts to facilitate development, the colonial administration asserted that people in the reserves should 'depend on themselves' for the development of their reserves.

But little potential existed to raise enough capital in the reserves to facilitate agricultural development. Total revenues collected in Police Zone reserves were 8 342 pounds in 1930, 12 615 pounds in 1935, 15 750 pounds in 1940 and 13 799 pounds in 1945. In 1943 only three reserves had a credit balance of over 5 000 pounds, while another four had less than 1 000 pounds. The severity of the financial constraints on agricultural development can be evaluated in the light of costs of providing water: in 1949, for example, it cost about 100 pounds per borehole to provide water in the reserves, excluding drilling expenditure.

Unable to generate revenues from agriculture in the reserves, development depended on reserve residents entering the labour market.
The residents know that new dams, windmills, fencing, schools, pedigree stock can be purchased when monies are available in the Trust Funds and this is an inducement to them to go and work to save the monies required or to give their services in the Reserve.¹⁰

Viewed against the increased demand for labour following the drought and Depression, it is clear that the state did not intend to facilitate economic development in the reserves. Instead, a new policy of ‘self-reliance’ was designed, in order to put pressure on reserve dwellers to offer themselves on the labour market.

Such agricultural development as was initiated to assist the reserves in reproducing themselves was tightly controlled by the state. Apart from levying grazing fees on stock owners, the administration discouraged individual enterprise. Stock sales in the Herero reserves, for example, occurred at auctions organised by and held under the auspices of the reserve superintendent. All private dairying in the reserves was discouraged by the state, and stock owners who had bought their own milk separators were forced to sell them and join so-called communal cream schemes. As with stock sales, dairying was only permitted under close white supervision.¹¹

The lack of financial support for reserve residents was matched by an absence of agricultural support services. Until 1947 agricultural extension work was carried out by the administrative personnel of the reserves. In the same year a senior agricultural officer was appointed with headquarters in Windhoek, together with three additional agricultural officers (one each for Owamboland, Kavango and the northern areas of the Police Zone). During the 1950s, agricultural staff for reserves were reduced in number, leaving only one agricultural officer for the Owamboland and Kavango regions.¹² Agricultural posts, especially in Owamboland, had been vacant for long periods of time, ‘and were frequently filled by young and inexperienced people devoid of the experience and knowledge of their predecessor[s]’. Indeed, the development of the reserves was ultimately the responsibility of the Chief Native Commissioner, who put together the budget of the tribal trust funds.¹³

2.10 Conclusion

By the early 1960s land settlement in Namibia had come to an end. Settler agriculture was firmly entrenched on the best pastures, accounting for some 50% of all agricultural land, while Black Namibians were confined to a meagre 25%.¹⁴ The predominance of white farmers on the land was further reflected in the distribution of livestock: in 1962, for
example, white farmers owned over 1.7 million cattle (75% of the total national herd of 2.3 million), 2.6 million karakul sheep (96% of the national total), and 50% of all goats in the country. 194

Massive state intervention ensured the rapid growth of the commercial white agricultural sector. Its contribution to gross domestic product increased steadily from R1.7 million in 1920 to R39.4 million in 1964 (at factor cost and current prices). 138 The structure of white agriculture was, however, fundamentally skewed. South Africa encouraged livestock production (cattle and karakul sheep) for export, at the expense of developing a viable diary industry and crop production to provide food for the country. 198 Moreover, the export of cattle and karakul pelts was controlled by South African and European companies.

Black agriculture, on the other hand, had become 'a parody of pre-colonial herding and cultivation'. 197 Although black peasants and pastoralists retained a stake in agricultural production through communal land tenure in the reserves, increasing land shortages diminished the ability of these agriculturalists to be self-sufficient. 198 Overgrazing became acute in many reserves. By 1955 the stock ratio in Ovamboland 'was down to under two hectares per head of cattle ... far below the safe carrying capacity of the pasture'. 199 Similarly, per capita grain output in the area dropped by one third between 1957 and 1972 from 2.5 bags per person in 1957. As a result, a third of rural cash expenditure in Ovamboland in the early 1970s was spent on food. 200

Agricultural decline in the reserves forced thousands of peasants and pastoralists into wage labour. Between 1950 and the late 1960s the percentage of men absent from the Ovambo region increased from around 35% to 45%. 201 Estimates for the reserves in the Police Zone are slightly lower, ranging from 25% upwards. 202 Black agriculture in Namibia had thus effectively been reduced to a 'residual, not a subsistence sector' by the early 1960s. 203 Deprived of former fertile lands and state agricultural support, black Namibians were increasingly forced to supplement their incomes from agriculture by engaging in wage labour, or to abandon agricultural production altogether. Chapter 5, which focuses on the so-called 'communal areas' in the post-1960 period, will pursue this theme in more detail.

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NOTES


internal_text
Quoted in Gottschalk, K., ‘South African Imperialism with special reference to the formation of South African policy in Namibia, 1915-1929’, Ph.D., University of Cape Town, forthcoming. The authors would like to express their gratitude to K. Gottschalk for permission to use the quotation.

161. Ibid. See also Sections 3, 9, 11 and 32 of Government Notice 68 of 1924 in The Laws of South West Africa, (Windhoek, 1924), pp. 87-91.
163. Ibid. The following paragraphs are based on information supplied to the Permanent Mandates Commission of the League of Nations by the Administrator in Report of the Administrator, 1929, pp. 98-101.
164. SWA A 158/23, Vol. 1, Magistrate Olliborgo to Secretary of the Protectorate, 6.9.1923.
165. The following paragraphs are drawn from Wernez, ‘An Economic and Social History’, pp. 172-174.
166. Ibid., Magistrate of Olliborgo to Native Commissioner, Windhoek, 16.6.1923, p. 2.
167. Ibid., SWA A 158/97, Vol. 1, Assistant Secretary to H.H. the Administrator, n.d. [1933], p. 29.
168. Ibid., SWA A 131/11, Vol. 1, Assistant Secretary to H.H. the Administrator, n.d. [1933], p. 29.
169. Ibid., pp. 34-36.
172. Ibid., p. 21.
173. Ibid., p. 19.
174. Ibid., p. 16.
175. SWA A 157/2, Superintendent Amnis Reserve to Magistrate Goabiles, 16.2.1925, p. 2.
177. SWA A 125/5, Vol. 1, Geometric Engineer to Secretary for SWA, 11.12.1924, p. 4.
179. Ibid.
185. Ibid., para. 348, p. 333.
188. Ibid., p. 107.
193. Ibid., p. 384.
196. Ibid., p. 63.
198. Ibid.
200. Ibid., p. 28.
201. Ibid., p. 29.
203. Ibid., p. 31.
CHAPTER 3

THE COMMERCIAL SECTOR

Introduction

The thrust for Namibia's independence was, in part, driven by an expectation that land would be redistributed from the white dominated commercial farming districts. SWAPO's election manifesto and its economic policy stipulate that the new government is:

committed to land reform in order to redress the imbalance created by the colonial policies of land allocation on a racial basis. The objective of the new policy will be to transfer some of the land from the few with too much of it to the landless majority.¹

While emphasising that wholesale nationalisation of land is not an option, SWAPO has stated that certain categories of land in the commercial areas will be targeted for redistribution after 'just and fair' compensation to existing owners.²

Redistribution of commercial farmland is inextricable from the restructuring of the freehold system of land tenure in the commercial areas. SWAPO's objectives on agrarian reform are to:

increase the effectiveness of agricultural production; redirect structural changes to increase participation of the Namibian people in agricultural production decision-making and the sharing of the surplus; and effect structural changes in the present system to bring about an overall strategy of rural development.³

Given these objectives, studies conducted by UNIN have put forward a variety of models for new land tenure systems. On the basis of these SWAPO proposes mixed ownership of land which will involve private commercial farming, state farms, co-operatives, and peasant family farming.⁴

This chapter neither attempts to evaluate the proposed models of land tenure, nor predicts in which forms they will - or should - be implemented in either the commercial or communal farming areas. Nor does it identify which land should be made available for redistribution. These issues will be determined by Namibians themselves on the basis of what is both desirable and practical.

However, the redistribution and land tenure policies which are finally adopted by the new government will need to be informed not only by political considerations, but also by the inherited pattern of land ownership in the commercial farming districts. Apart from the repetition of a few basic - but often contradictory - facts, little attention has been paid to ownership patterns in the existing literature on Namibia's agricultural economy: partly, this results from a lack of available data.⁵

42
This chapter aims to fill some of the gaps. The first section provides an overview of commercial agriculture and its place in the Namibian economy. The second section discusses farm and farm business numbers and changes in these over time. The third section outlines the most prominent features of land ownership, including the distribution of land and of farms among landowners and the extent of foreign ownership. Finally, environmental issues in the commercial sector which will impact on redistribution and resettlement policies are sketched. Issues which need assessment before redistribution can occur are highlighted.

It must be stressed that the data presented below suffers from both qualitative and quantitative limitations. One of the legacies of Namibia’s colonial history and the post-war policies pursued by South Africa towards the country is a deficiency of statistical data for the agricultural sector. Until the early 1980’s no Department of Statistics existed in Namibia and responsibility for collecting economic data was vested in various government departments in Pretoria.¹

The commercial farming areas have been better serviced by state research facilities since Pretoria relinquished control over the collection and publication of Namibian data. But basic information on farm numbers, sizes, and patterns of ownership is still extremely difficult to procure and is not always reliable; much is also out of date. Though an agricultural census was conducted in 1975 things have changed since that time. A severe drought in the early 1980’s, together with political instability and fluctuations in world markets for Namibia’s agricultural products have taken their toll on commercial agriculture. The effect of these and other factors on the structure of ownership has not, however, been statistically documented. Nor has a comprehensive data bank for the agricultural sector been established, despite repeated recommendations in this regard.² Though some effort has been made by the Directorate of Agriculture to collect basic information, the identification of ownership patterns remains a problem.

This chapter starts with these deficiencies and, at the outset, urgently recommends the implementation of a complete agricultural census. The findings of such a survey should chart the new government’s agrarian reform programs. This study’s work, however, can nonetheless be used as a precursory indication of current trends.
MAP 3.1: Geographical distribution of commercial farming districts

3.1 Overview of the Commercial Sector

3.1.1 Economic contribution

Production in the commercial farming sector dominates agriculture's contribution to GDP and to exports, which fluctuates in response to irregular rainfall and periodic droughts. These fluctuations are illustrated in Tables 3.1. and 3.2 below:

| TABLE 3.1 |
| COMPOSITION OF GDP AT CURRENT PRICES |
| Agriculture & fishing | 11.5 | 14.4 | 12.2 | 9.4 | 8.5 | 7.8 | 7.8 | 12.3 | 12.6 |
| Mining & quarrying | 43.6 | 30.2 | 27.7 | 26.6 | 25.9 | 35.7 | 36.3 | 24.6 | 28.1 |
| Manufacturing | 3.9 | 4.5 | 4.9 | 5.3 | 5.2 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 5.1 | 4.7 |
| Electricity & water | 1.8 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 1.7 | 2.2 |
| Construction (contractors) | 3.5 | 4.5 | 4.1 | 3.6 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.5 |
| Trade, catering & accommodation | 11.5 | 13.6 | 13.6 | 13.2 | 13.0 | 11.1 | 11.2 | 14.4 | 12.0 |
| Transport & communication | 5.3 | 5.2 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 5.5 | 6.0 | 6.6 | 6.7 |
| Financial & business services etc | 5.3 | 5.9 | 6.7 | 7.2 | 7.8 | 7.0 | 6.4 | 7.0 | 6.7 |
| Community, social, personal services | 1.3 | 1.6 | 1.7 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 2.0 | 1.8 |
| General government | 9.6 | 15.1 | 18.8 | 20.6 | 21.7 | 18.8 | 19.0 | 22.6 | 19.9 |
| Other producers | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 2.8 |


The commercial agricultural sector has contributed an average of 10.7% to Namibia's GDP over the past decade. It thus ranks fourth after mining (which has contributed 30.9% to GDP on average), general government (28.4%) and trade, catering and accommodation (12.4%). Fluctuations in agriculture's contribution to GDP are as follows:

| TABLE 3.2 |
| ANNUAL CHANGES IN CONTRIBUTION TO REAL GDP (PERCENTAGE CHANGES) |

| Agriculture & fishing | 24.5 | 3.3 | -9.4 | -22.2 | -11.4 | 8.8 | 0.1 | 26.7 | 2.0 |

Source: SWA/Namibia, Department of Finance, Statistical/Economic Review, p.16.

44
The agricultural sector also makes an important indirect contribution to other sectors of the economy:

Given that agriculture is integrated into the SWA economy, it contributes indirectly to income generation through inputs into agriculture derived from local resources, and through the channelling of a large proportion of agricultural outputs into local industry. For example, agriculture is strongly vertically connected with secondary sectors which inter alia deliver the following inputs: fish products, wheat mill products, livestock feed, manure, insecticides etc. The link with various tertiary sectors such as trade, transport and services is also fairly strong. It is estimated that for every R10 million of inputs derived from agriculture there is R5,3 million income generated in other non-agricultural sectors.

Horizontal connections through agriculture are created with branches of industry such as meat processing, tanning, dairies, oil refineries, wheat mills, and also indirectly with bakeries and other food processors. According to estimates an income of R2,7 million is added to every R10 million worth of outputs delivered to industry by agriculture. The real power of this linking mechanism or multipliers in agriculture is only apparent when one takes into account that the average direct contribution of agriculture to GDP between 1970 and 1986 was merely 8,0% but when the ripple effect on the economy is considered, agriculture’s total contribution to the country’s income is 11,8%.

Although agriculture’s contribution to GDP is small when set against mining, the agricultural sector as a whole is the country’s dominant employer. It has been estimated that up to 70% of the country’s population may be directly or indirectly dependent on agricultural production for their livelihood. Up to 90% of the population in the communal areas are engaged mainly in subsistence production, while the commercial agricultural sector is the country’s single largest provider of wage employment.

A gradual decline in the numbers of workers employed on farms has, however, been apparent since 1956. At that time farm workers numbered around 45 000. The introduction of widespread fencing and camps, a switch to casual labour (especially on karakul ranches in the south) and the substitution of capital for labour have made steady inroads into employment opportunities in commercial agriculture. However, despite the fact that black workers on white-owned farms labour under the most poorly paid and repressive conditions of any sector of the commercial economy, commercial agriculture still provides employment to an estimated 32 906 workers, who represent 16% of the country’s labour total labour force. Given an average household size of nine, commercial agriculture supports at least 300 000 people, or 25% of the country’s population.
3.1.2 Branches of Agriculture

Commercial agriculture can be divided into a number of different branches, of which stockfarming (involving both cattle ranching and karakul pelt production) has historically been the most important. The geographic distribution of different farming activities are illustrated in Map 3.2 below. Table 3.3 and Figure 3.1 below illustrate the dominant position of stockfarming in the commercial agricultural sector in terms of its contribution to gross farm incomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRODUCT</th>
<th>RAND VALUE</th>
<th>% of GFI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>287 451 595</td>
<td>58.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small stock</td>
<td>80 058 061</td>
<td>16.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pels</td>
<td>41 984 659</td>
<td>9.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game</td>
<td>21 889 000</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh milk</td>
<td>12 202 560</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>9 660 940</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>6 976 300</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>6 537 545</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>5 585 308</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wool</td>
<td>4 196 965</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat</td>
<td>2 169 579</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>1 950 000</td>
<td>0.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucerne</td>
<td>1 672 200</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mohair</td>
<td>1 291 164</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit</td>
<td>803 250</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunflower</td>
<td>527 289</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts</td>
<td>292 500</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>142 000</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>R487 425 546</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MAP 3.2:
Farming activities

Source: Adapted from First National Development Corporation, Namibia: Development and Investment, p.134.
MAP 3.3: Stockfarming potential: commercial farming districts

KEY
A. High potential beef area
B. Medium potential beef area
C. Etjo catchment area
D. Mixed beef & sheep
E. High potential sheep area
F. Medium potential sheep area
G. Low potential sheep area

Source: Adapted from SWA/Namibia, Die Boesveldproduksiebeheer-raadingskomsie, 'n studie van die beskikbaarheid van nie-kommerciële beelderyf in die kommersiële boerderygebied van SWA beskryf, (Ginsbok, 1988), p.6.
Beef is the mainstay of Namibia's agricultural economy and the country is a net exporter of this product. Some 77 000 tonnes of beef are marketed annually, up to 90% of which is exported, primarily to South Africa. Exports of beef and veal in 1987/88 and 1988/9 were 63 334 tons and 62 534 tons respectively. The value of beef exports have fluctuated wildly in the past decade, but currently stand at around R147.5 million per year. Table 3.5 below provides details on the proportion of cattle exported to South Africa and overseas markets, the fluctuating values of which are reflected in Table 3.8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>SOUTH AFRICAN MARKETS</th>
<th>SOUTH AFRICAN MARKETS</th>
<th>OVERSEAS MARKETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>60.1</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>68.6</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>50.7</td>
<td>40.1</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>50.6</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AVERAGE</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Meat and pelt production from small stock (sheep and goats) takes place in the southern districts and in the mixed large and small stock central districts (see Maps 3.2 and 3.3).

Karakul production in the south has historically been the second most important branch of commercial agriculture after beef; however, in recent years the role of this branch has declined in response to fluctuations on world markets for karakul. In addition, farmers rebuilding herds after the decimating drought of the early to mid-1980's have tended to favour higher yielding meat animals, such as Dorper sheep, in response to the strong South African demand for mutton and lamb. As a result, Karakul pelt production dropped from 3.5 million pelts in 1980 to 0.75 million pelts in 1988. Although the demand for karakul on the international fur market has improved since the early 1980's, fears of another price collapse together with the strong South African sheepmeat market have acted as barriers to increased karakul production.
Karakul pelts are produced for export, primarily to Europe, and in common with beef exports have been subject to wild fluctuations on world markets. In 1980 karakul pelts had an export value of R42.8 million; this declined to a low of 10.2 million in 1983, but has since recovered to R34.6 million in 1988.²³

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PELTS ('000)</th>
<th>AMOUNT ($ MIL)</th>
<th>AV. PRICE/PELT ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>10.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>15.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>10.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>14.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>24.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>27.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Approximately 1800 commercial farmers in the southern and central districts also produce small stock meat, primarily mutton and lamb.²⁴ The export value of these has steadily increased in the past decade: from R9.1 million in 1980 to R30.5 million in 1985 and R56.8 million in 1988.²⁵ Sheep meat exports have been exclusively to the South African market and account for nearly 80% of the country’s production.²⁶

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>TOTAL SMALL STOCK MARKETED</th>
<th>SMALL STOCK EXPORTED TO SOUTH AFRICA**</th>
<th>% OF SMALL STOCK EXPORTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>538 771</td>
<td>320 982</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>747 466</td>
<td>551 954</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>685 247</td>
<td>530 690</td>
<td>77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>786 611</td>
<td>616 052</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>778 688</td>
<td>612 551</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Note: These figures include both small stock marketed on South African open and controlled markets, and stock slaughtered in Namibia by SWAENS and exported for own account.


Table 3.8 below illustrates the value of cattle, karakul and small stock exports between 1980 and 1988.
per year.\textsuperscript{21} Not all sales of live animals or venison are from private farms, however; game culled in state-owned nature reserves also contributes to this sector of agriculture.\textsuperscript{22}

Aside from the various kinds of stock farming, the commercial agricultural sector also produces a limited variety and quantity of crops. Maize, wheat and sunflower are the main crops produced, and these are marketed via the Agronomic Board which also issues permits for imports. Dryland agronomy is, however, only possible in a small area of the country where rainfall is above 500mm annually, and in the commercial farming districts this limits dryland agronomy to the Otavi highlands in the Tsumeb-Grootfontein-Outjo triangle (see Map 3.2 above). According to recent estimates, some 23 198 ha are under cultivation by 153 farmers, of which 15 548ha are under white maize, 3 000ha are under yellow maize (which is primarily used for animal feed), 900ha are under sunflowers and 1 750ha under wheat.\textsuperscript{23}

Irrigated agronomy takes place around the Hardap Dam on the Fish River, some 15km north of Mariental. Sixteen hundred hectares are presently under irrigation in 46 units of 33ha per unit, and a further 600ha are planned. Lucerne, wheat, grapes, vegetables, cotton and mielies are grown in this area.\textsuperscript{24} In addition farmers living along the banks of the Orange River in the south produce limited quantities of fruit, vegetables, lucerne and cotton, most of which are exported to South Africa.\textsuperscript{25}

The country is a net importer of agronomic products. In the 1988/9 season, 29 456 tons of wheat representing 85.9\% of the country’s requirement was imported from South Africa, in addition to 13 000 tons of yellow maize (89.6\%), 35 663 tons of white maize (76\%), 8 847 tons of sunflowers (91.1\%). 59.2\% of the country’s vegetable requirements were also imported.\textsuperscript{26} Fodder imports from South Africa run to R50 million per year, yellow maize and sunflower seed imports total R10 million, and staple food commodities (white maize and wheat) total R35 million per year, although these amounts may vary according to the size of the Namibian harvest in any particular year.\textsuperscript{27} When harvests of staple foodstuffs from the communal areas are taken into account, the country produces only 36\% of its white maize requirements, 9\% of yellow maize, 16\% of wheat and 7\% of sunflower.\textsuperscript{28}

The country’s first and only wheat processing plant was opened in Windhoek in 1986, making it possible to process and dispose of Namibian wheat locally; formerly this product had to be marketed in South Africa.\textsuperscript{29} The country also has an oil press for sunflower seeds at Omaruru, white maize mills at Otavi, Windhoek, and Katima Mulilo in the Caprivi, and yellow maize mills at Windhoek, Omaruru and Otavi.\textsuperscript{30}

Namibia is a net importer of pork (60\% of the country’s requirements), broilers (90\%), eggs (40\%) and vegetables (80\%).\textsuperscript{31} Although the country is self-sufficient in milk, the dairy industry only meets 10\% of the country’s butter and cheese requirements; the balance is imported from South Africa.\textsuperscript{32}
3.1.3 Production support and agricultural financing

Unlike farmers in Namibia’s communal areas, those in the commercial sector have access to, and enjoy the support of, a wide variety agricultural organisations. These include a well-organised and influential co-operative movement, marketing boards for meat, karakul and agronomic products, financial institutions such as the Land and Agricultural Bank, and a network of agricultural extension, research and marketing departments under the auspices of the Administration for Whites.

Among the most important of the private sector institutions which serve commercial farmers are the South West African Agricultural Union (hereafter SWAAU), and Agra (Co-operative) Limited. The former acts as a mouthpiece for commercial farmers in Namibia, and also plays an important role in the collection and dissemination of data on commercial farming. SWAAU has some four thousand members, organised into regional agricultural unions; sub-committees of these unions deal with specific issues such as problem animals, development, soil conservation, economic issues, privatisation. Commodity associations represent the specific interests of producers of karakul, meat, agronomic products, dairy, poultry, pork, and game.

Until 1977 membership of SWAAU was restricted to white farmers, but since then an attempt has been made to facilitate the development of farmers’ associations in the communal areas in order to broaden SWAAU’s support base. It appears, however, that SWAAU’s history (until recently) as a mouthpiece for white farmers only, as well as its refusal to recognise the inherently political underpinnings of Namibia’s agricultural economy, have had some negative effect on its organising efforts in some of the communal areas, particularly Ovamboland. SWAAU argues that it is a strictly non-political organisation which confines its activities to meeting the various marketing, processing and input supply needs of its members. It has, however, historically been part of the dominant power block, has primarily represented the interests of white farmers, and has been centrally involved in the formulation of agricultural policies in Namibia. Thus while SWAAU may not have an overtly party-political orientation, there can be little doubt that it has played a political role in representing the particular interests of white farmers and as such has contributed to the creation of the country’s distorted dual agricultural economy.

Agra (Co-operative) Ltd dominates the co-operative movement in the commercial sector and has some 5000 farmer members. It:

provide(s) standard input supply services to members via a network of 29 branches in every region in the commercial farming areas. Agra also operates grain mills, processing facilities for hides and skins, and an estate agent service
for transactions in farm land. In the case of controlled products AGRA acts as principle or as an agent under the regulation of the three Marketing Boards. Recently AGRA also indicated their willingness to extend their services to communal areas.\(^3\)

In addition to the production support services provided by SWAAU and AGRA, farmers in the commercial districts have access to three institutional sources of agricultural financing, namely the State, the Land and Agricultural Bank, and commercial banks.

Chapter Three above discussed the crucial role played by state financial aid in both establishing and maintaining settler agriculture. Commercial agriculture remains dependent on this aid. The second tier Administration for Whites, for example, provides loans to white commercial farmers through its Department of Agriculture, and caters for those farmers who are not sufficiently financially strong to qualify for loans from either the commercial banks or the Land Bank, but who are still regarded as having the potential to be successful farmers. The Department caters for those farmers whose assets are valued at less than R300 000 (at 1986 prices), except in cases where farmers require loans for the provision of workers’ housing or for soil conservation measures when the upper limit of assets is raised to R350 000.\(^4\)

Loans are provided for a variety of purposes, including consolidation of debts, purchase of stock or implements, infrastructural development aimed at soil conservation, and construction of boreholes and workers’ housing. Farmers may also receive loans for the purchase of additional land in order to facilitate consolidation of farms regarded as uneconomic: 1986 an amount of R6,7 million had been granted to 88 farmers for this purpose.\(^5\) In a bid to encourage settlement by new farmers, properties may be bought on their behalf by the Department of Agriculture and rented to new farmers in return for payment of 1/10th of the purchase price of the farm. Between 1980 and 1985 R21,2 million was used to settle 185 new farmers under this scheme.\(^6\)

In 1987/8 the following loans were granted by the Department of Agriculture:

53
TABLE 3.10
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE:
LOANS TO COMMERCIAL FARMERS, 1987/8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>NO. OF LOANS</th>
<th>TOTAL AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stock purchases</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>R1 364 045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlement scheme</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>838 245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional land</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2 235 557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/10th scheme</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1 341 635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-year scheme</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>601 375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements: house</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers' housing</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1 098 567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invader bush</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>425 167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and borehole works</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>241 024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrigation equipment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production aid</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>141 258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming business capital</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructural</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>630 956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implements</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>170 231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivated pasture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redemption of debts</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>713 928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drought aid</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>448 606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>114 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>255</strong></td>
<td><strong>R1 053 204</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Farmers have also been provided with inducements to stay on the land in the face of financial and political instability. For example, in response to an exodus of farmers from the northern commercial districts in the late 1970’s the Windhoek administration made substantial funds available to farmers in a bid to both resettle abandoned ranches and prevent further abandonment. The security motivation underlying this move is clearly evident in one land settlement scheme, which lasted until 1985, in terms of which some 888 farmers qualified for financial assistance from the state because of their 'approved' security status, and because they undertook to live continuously on their farms, join the local commando, and acquire government permission before selling their farms within a ten year period. In return these farmers were paid an annual amount of R2 000.00 by the state simply for living on their farms continuously throughout the year, and in addition gained access to credit on extremely favourable terms. Full mortgages on land purchases were granted at interest rates even lower than the existing subsidised levels for state credit, which also extended to 50% of debt liabilities and virtually any capital expenditure."

Commercial farmers who do not qualify for loans from the Department of Agriculture are referred to the Land and Agricultural Bank. This institution originated from the Landwirtschaftsbank fur Deutsch-Sudwestafrika, which was brought into being by the Imperial German Ordinance of 9th June 1913. During World War I the Landwirtschaftsbank was utilised not only by farmers, but also by the German Government in order to
finance its military operations in the territory. After the War the Bank was placed in liquidation at the request of the Administration, and was taken over by officials of the Union Land Bank of South Africa. In 1922 the Union Land Bank ceased its operations in the territory; the Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa was established in terms of Proclamation 10 of 1922. The Land Bank functioned autonomously until 1969 when it was incorporated with the South African Land and Agricultural Bank in terms of the Land Bank Amendment Act (No 31 of 1969). It once again became autonomous in 1979 after enactment of Proclamation No. 147 of 1979."

The Land Bank serves commercial farmers both directly, through the provision of medium and long term loans, and indirectly via cash credit advances to the SWA Agricultural Union and cooperatives, which finance farmers’ production inputs." Tables 3.11 and 3.12 below provide details on long term mortgage loans over the past five years (1984/5 – 1988/9):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED</th>
<th>LOANS GRANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NUMBER</td>
<td>AVERAGE AMOUNT R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84/5</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>97 330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85/6</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>122 289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86/7</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>139 668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87/8</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>183 739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88/9</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>260 503</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Long term loans are primarily granted for the purchase of land; during the 1988/9 financial year, for example, loans for land purchases accounted for 78% of the total amount of long term loans granted by the Land Bank. The average amount considered per application in 1988/9 was R260 503, which represents a 41% increase on the 1987/8 average of R183 780. "Loans in this category are based on a limit of 80% of the Land Bank Board's valuation of the security offered, which is in turn based on an assessment of the agricultural and stock breeding value of the property involved by Bank-appointed valuators." These valuators are farmers from the particular district who, in the Bank's view, have a sound management record; land offered as security for loans must be regarded by these valuators as economically viable." Loans for farm purchases are available over a period of up to 25 years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>AMOUNT APPLIED FOR</th>
<th>AMOUNT GRANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURCHASE OF LAND</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>17 171 470</td>
<td>10 533 868</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>25 659 402</td>
<td>16 694 984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>21 191 422</td>
<td>13 097 050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>25 522 843</td>
<td>17 510 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>51 291 992</td>
<td>35 535 337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REPAYMENT OF BONDS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>6 753 235</td>
<td>4 299 007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>1 412 809</td>
<td>994 096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>561 225</td>
<td>550 808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>1 182 889</td>
<td>892 966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>2 584 077</td>
<td>1 460 506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONSOLIDATION OF DEBTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>13 245 760</td>
<td>5 231 841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>8 042 325</td>
<td>3 367 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>1 370 616</td>
<td>811 804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>2 047 880</td>
<td>1 305 324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>6 942 991</td>
<td>3 634 834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIXED IMPROVEMENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>127 190</td>
<td>111 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>489 500</td>
<td>249 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>411 803</td>
<td>375 936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>1 091 500</td>
<td>798 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>829 551</td>
<td>829 454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PURCHASE OF STOCK AND EQUIPMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>2 120 938</td>
<td>1 176 684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>2 183 351</td>
<td>1 017 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>1 784 402</td>
<td>1 310 402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>1 950 390</td>
<td>1 402 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>5 300 723</td>
<td>3 690 569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>39 418 643</td>
<td>21 302 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>37 787 387</td>
<td>22 323 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>25 419 438</td>
<td>16 126 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>31 795 502</td>
<td>21 908 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>66 949 334</td>
<td>45 150 700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Medium term loans for 5–10 years are granted by the Land Bank for the purchase of both stock and equipment. The amounts granted between 1984/5 and 1988/9 were as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
<th>AMOUNT APPLIED FOR</th>
<th>AMOUNT GRANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of Sheep</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>51 160</td>
<td>10 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>28 000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>120 000</td>
<td>65 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>30 000</td>
<td>60 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>60 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of Cattle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>264 800</td>
<td>36 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>30 000</td>
<td>30 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>38 500</td>
<td>38 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>70 000</td>
<td>70 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>331 650</td>
<td>241 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of Other Livestock</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>37 000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>40 000</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of Tractors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>28 499</td>
<td>28 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>44 363</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>298 721</td>
<td>298 668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase of Other Implements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Equipment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>46 848</td>
<td>7 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>58 021</td>
<td>50 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>12 584</td>
<td>12 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>61 535</td>
<td>51 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>234 160</td>
<td>201 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/5</td>
<td>391 307</td>
<td>81 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/6</td>
<td>197 384</td>
<td>80 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/7</td>
<td>171 084</td>
<td>116 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/8</td>
<td>201 535</td>
<td>121 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988/9</td>
<td>924 531</td>
<td>801 400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Fewer medium- than long-term loans were applied for and granted during the past five years, although there was a sharp increase.
in the former in 1988/9. The Bank attributes this increase to rising finance charges and interest rates, as well as an improvement in farming conditions which encouraged farmers to enter into debt more freely." The year 1988/9 also saw a sharp increase the percentage of medium term loans granted by the Bank, as the following table illustrates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED</th>
<th>LOANS GRANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NUMBER</td>
<td>AVERAGE AMOUNT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84/5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26 087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85/6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28 197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86/7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42 771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87/8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33 589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88/9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66 038</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A third source of agricultural financing for commercial farmers are the commercial banks, whose role is primarily the provision of short-term working capital in the form of overdrafts on bank accounts. Detailed figures in this regard are not available.

Although individual owners of commercial farms are predominantly white, the past decade has witnessed the advent of a small group of black Namibians who own farms in the commercial districts. The promotion of black ownership of farms under freehold title has been actively pursued - though with limited success - by both the central government and second tier Representative Authorities in the communal areas. Partly this move was intended to ease pressure on land in the communal areas by siphoning off successful farmers and, through the so-called demonstration effect, promoting a transition from subsistence to commercial production. Given the structurally disadvantaged economic position of black Namibian farmers - especially their historical exclusion from access to state and private credit facilities enjoyed by whites - legislative measures alone would have been insufficient to facilitate black ownership of commercial farmland. Indeed, as Chapter 2 indicated, no legislation exists to expressly prohibit the purchase of land in the white areas by black farmers. Barriers to the purchase of land have been economic and not legal. This is especially true given the inflated land prices of the 1980s. The establishment of State credit schemes (administered and sometimes initiated by
the second tier Representative Authorities), and the extension of Land Bank services to black farmers, have been aimed at facilitating black ownership of commercial farmland in the past decade.

One such State credit scheme, adopted by the Damara Representative Authority in 1987,\textsuperscript{58} highlights the limitations of financial aid from the state to black aspirant commercial farmers. It is worth some detailed attention. The 1/40 scheme (as it became known) involves the purchase of farms in the white districts by the second tier Damara Representative Authority, on behalf of individual farmers. After renting the holding from the Representative Authority for a five year trial period, an option to buy the farm from the Representative Authority was to be authorised for successful farmers. For their part, applicants are required to provide 1/40th of the purchase price in cash before occupation, or within three months thereof. No further payment is required in the first two years of occupancy. Rental for the following two years is set at 1\% of the purchase price: this increases to 2\% in the fifth year, whereupon ownership is transferred from the Representative Authority. From the sixth year, on the supposition that the farmer satisfactorily passes the trial period and exercises the option to buy the farm, payment involves thirty-five yearly instalments of capital, plus 2\% interest on the diminishing balance of the loan.\textsuperscript{59}

Although at first glance the 1/40th scheme appears generous, access is limited by testing the qualifications and the existing economic situation of applicants. In theory the scheme is open to all Damara farmers. In practice, however, only applicants who own 200 head of cattle or 1200 small stock units, and who can raise the initial payment, are eligible. This means that eligibility for financial assistance in the purchase of a commercial farm is limited to those who enjoy a position of comparative economic strength: in effect, those who have moved beyond subsistence agriculture.\textsuperscript{60}

Further, provisions which govern use of the farms suggest that effective control of the land rests in the Representative Authority, not the farmers who buy these farms. Although after five years successful occupancy farmers can acquire freehold title to the land, several 'rights' normally regarded as an integral part of freehold tenure are denied these farmers. Most important are the rights to dispose of the land at the owners' discretion, to sub-let it, and to determine who lives on the property. In all senses the 1/40th scheme is a restricting contract: for example, written permission is needed to run the animals of a third party on the farm, sublet the property in the event of cession of interests to a third party, allow others, outside of family, to live on the property, or sell within five years after transfer of ownership. The implication of this final clause is to bind the owner to at least ten years of occupancy. With the exception of political officials and
traditional leaders, it is also required of owners to show occupancy for eleven months of the year in a dwelling deemed habitable by the Representative Authority. If these conditions and the financial obligations are abrogated, the Authority— as the other contracting party—is empowered to terminate the contract on 90 days written notice.\textsuperscript{27}

Land loan schemes have provoked enormous controversy and accusations of favouritism, corruption and fraud have been a feature of their implementation.\textsuperscript{28} The core political point, however, is that land loan schemes are seen to be solely for the benefit of a few within the communal areas, many of whom double as state officials in the second tier Representative Authorities.\textsuperscript{29}

The past decade has also witnessed the extension of the Land Bank’s services to black Namibian farmers. Although the Land Bank Act does not expressly exclude black farmers from access to loans, those who farm in the communal areas are rendered ineligible as a result of the Act’s requirement of security for loans in the form of a mortgage on measured up farms.\textsuperscript{30} Land in the communal areas is owned communally rather than under freehold title and can therefore not be used as security against loans. Further, although the Bank is also legally empowered to grant loans against security in the form of promissory notes, it argues that problems attached to the control and administration of such loans makes their extension to the communal areas impossible.\textsuperscript{31}

However, although the Bank does not provide financial assistance to farmers within the communal areas, in the past decade it has extended loans to black farmers for the purchase of farms in the commercial districts. According to the Bank, it is not interested in the ‘racial classification’ of its loan applicants. Furthermore, its records do not reflect this ‘classification’. Consequently, it contends that it is unable to provide any indication of the service it provides to black Namibian farmers in particular, and argues that black farmers who apply for loans are evaluated purely in terms of the objective economic criteria which apply to white applicants.\textsuperscript{32} However, in 1989 the Bank provided considerable detail to the Secretary of Finance on the ‘racial classification’ of applicants for Land Bank services in the past decade.\textsuperscript{33} The limitations of this assistance to black Namibian farmers are evident in Tables 3.15 and 3.16 below:
TABLE 3.15
LAND BANK LOANS TO FARMERS
OTHER THAN ‘WHITES’
1979-1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING</th>
<th>NO. OF APPLICATIONS</th>
<th>AMOUNT R</th>
<th>NO. OF LOANS GRANTED</th>
<th>AMOUNT R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31.3.80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>625 205</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>311 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.81</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>838 539</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>478 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.82</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>466 000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>408 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>164 200</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>136 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.84</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>632 162</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>169 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.85</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>79 357</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>79 300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.86</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>754 300</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>621 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.87</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>580 700</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>239 600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.3.88</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>490 000</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>224 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.1.89</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>634 580</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>645 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5 285 043</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3 315 800</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Personal communication from Mr. P. Erlich, Managing Director, Land and Agricultural Bank of South West Africa, to the Secretary for Finance, Windhoek, headed Konference om publikusie van United Nations Institute for Namibia (Nusek), dated 11.2.83, ref. WA(1) 7C/rdp, Appendix p.2.

The average amount granted to black farmers during the past decade was R70 531.91 per farmer. Farmers ‘classified’ as Herero account for thirty of the forty seven loans granted, and the majority of these (19 loans) were for farms in the Gobabis district adjacent to Hereroland. The following table provides a breakdown of the ‘racial classification’ of black farmers who applied for and were granted loans. As is evident, no applications were received from the northern communal areas of Owamboland, Kavango or Caprivi.

TABLE 3.16
‘RACIAL CLASSIFICATION’ OF APPLICANTS
FOR LAND BANK LOANS,
OTHER THAN ‘WHITES’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>‘POPULATION GROUP’</th>
<th>NO. OF APPLICANTS</th>
<th>NO. OF LOANS GRANTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herero</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coloured</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baster</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nama</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dasara</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ibid.
There are indications that the Land Bank recognises the need to reevaluate its policy in order to widen access to its services by black farmers, but only with regard to measured up so-called economic units in the communal areas.  

In the case of both state land loan schemes and Land Bank loans, no expressly racially discriminatory legislative barriers exist to prevent black farmers gaining access to credit in order to purchase farms in the commercial districts. However, successful applicants are limited to those who have effectively already moved beyond subsistence farming and are able to meet the financial obligations which credit entails.

The historically disadvantaged economic position of black Namibian farmers ensures that few qualify under present conditions. How many black farmers acquired land through state financed land loan schemes is unknown; however, according to official sources there are 230 black owners of commercial farms, of whom 47 received loans from the Land Bank. These 230 farmers represent 0.05% of the 4045 farm owners in the commercial sector and only an infinitesimal amount of the total number of black farmers in the country.

3.2 Farms and Farm Businesses

One of the results of deficiencies in the development of an agricultural and land use data base in Namibia is that it is difficult to determine with any precision the precise number of farms and/or farm businesses in the country. The 1975 Agricultural Census and information collected by extension officers in the sixteen commercial districts suggests the following numbers of commercial farm businesses and farms: (Note: farm businesses may comprise more than one farm.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Farm Businesses</th>
<th>Farms</th>
<th>Variation</th>
<th>Variation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1975(1)</td>
<td>1982(2)</td>
<td>1982(2)</td>
<td>1989(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjiuca</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>+37</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsumeb</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>+3</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>-18</td>
<td>838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjiwarongo</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>+54</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
<td>1182</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>+76</td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>-4</td>
<td>716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
<td>602</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>-23</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>+12</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>+78</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
<td>1536</td>
<td>1589</td>
<td>+53</td>
<td>2255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keetmanshoop</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>-19</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariental</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>+78</td>
<td>769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karasburg</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>-31</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maltahoë</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>-6</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethanien</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>+11</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luderitz</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swakopmund</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>+8</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUB TOTAL</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1717</td>
<td>+42</td>
<td>2083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>4393</td>
<td>4564</td>
<td>+171</td>
<td>6358</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: (1) Harrison et al, Proposals, p.100.
(2) Ibid, p.192.
(3) [SWA/Namibia, Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry], Phase in besit van nie SWA/Namibie burgers, (Windhoek, m.d.[1989]), p.4.

These figures suggest an increase in the number of farm businesses between 1975 and 1982, which reflects a different situation than might have been expected in the light of crises in commercial agriculture during that time. First, the late 1970’s saw an escalation of the bush war and the extension of martial law to the whole of the white farming region north of
Windhoek. PLAN activity in the heart of the white cattle ranching zone deepened insecurity among the farming community; by 1980 the SADF had admitted that it could not guarantee the safety of farmers’ premises nor of their transport in the region. Moorsom argues that the war was responsible for an exodus of settler farmers from the land, and that financial incentives made available by the Windhoek administration failed to stem the flight. By 1978, for example, it was estimated that as many as 40% of the farmers in Grootfontein had abandoned their farms.

Second, this was compounded by a deterioration in farmers’ financial fortunes, resulting from a complex interplay between environmental factors and structural weaknesses in the commercial sector. The late 1970's saw the start of what was to become one of the worst droughts in the country’s history, which led to a sharp drop in stock figures despite the announcement of a comprehensive drought aid programme by the government. By 1982 it was estimated that the national cattle herd had shrunk by two thirds from 2.5m head of cattle to 0.85m; in addition, valuable karakul breeding stock were being slaughtered on a large scale as a result of the drought. Within the commercial sector, stock reductions from 1978 to 1982 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3.18</th>
<th>STOCK REDUCTIONS BY DISTRICT : 1978-82</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
<td>CATTLE (†)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein &amp; Tsuaeb</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjiwarongo</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outjo</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maltahoee, Bethanien, Keetmanshoop &amp; Luderitz</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Division of Veterinary Services in Harrison et al., Proposals, p.109.

For smaller farmers in particular the costs of restocking were prohibitive and some were forced to sell their farms. In the Bethanien district, for example, the cash-flow and capital implications of restocking were described as "quite frightening" by a South African-based consultancy commissioned to enquire into the profitability of farming; it was estimated that restocking in this district would involve an investment of R117 000 per farm, "with repayments even on an extended basis of ten years amounting to R12 000 per farm annually and interest at 5% amounting to an additional R5 600 annually".

Although the drought was the immediate cause of a growing
financial crisis its effects were compounded by the manifestation of structural weaknesses inherent in the commercial sector. The most important of these weaknesses is the country's dependence on volatile external markets for its narrow range of agricultural products. As discussed above, up to 90% of beef production is exported, as is 70-80% of small stock meat (mutton and lamb); karakul production, which after beef has historically been the second most important agricultural enterprise in the country in terms of sales, is entirely for export.  The markets for these products are extremely volatile. Cattle sold on the South African markets, for example, increased in numbers from 199 757 in 1977 to 236 435 in 1979, but dropped sharply to 112 501 in 1984. Marketing of karakul pelts is heavily dependent on European fashion whims, and is particularly susceptible to fluctuations on world markets. The early 1980's saw a decline in the volume of retail fur sales in virtually all European markets, partly as a result of the anti-fur campaign in Western countries. Weakened demand together with increased competition in fur supplies resulted in the collapse of karakul pelt prices, which reached an all-time low in September 1982. The combined effects of drought, declining demand and low pelt prices result in the most serious depression in the karakul industry since its inception, from which it only began to recover in 1986.

An additional structural weakness exposed during the early 1980's was the high level of indebtedness of the farming community. Although farmers continued to be heavily subsidised by the state, their debt burden increased dramatically during the early 1980's as a result of rising production costs and inflation. Loans from the Land Bank increased by approximately 25% between 1980 and 1983, while farmers interest burden was raised by two thirds. By October 1982 the indebtedness of 4 498 farmers to the Land Bank, Department of Agriculture, commercial banks and commerce amounted to R157 704 850, an average of R35 061 per farm, R460 per 100ha, or R136 per large stock unit. According to Harrison et al, the indebtedness of the farming community was 'not particularly serious' when related to total farming investment; however, it assumed 'frightening proportions' when related to the low annual output per farm and the historically low level of profitability of commercial agriculture.

The combined effects of war, drought, and financial crises would be expected to prompt a decrease in the numbers of farm businesses in the 1975-1982 period. However, Table 3.17 above shows an opposite trend.

Circumstances in the commercial sector have changed since the early 1980's. Meat and pelt prices recovered, stock levels rose, production costs levelled off, dramatic rises in the price of land helped offset farmers' debt burden, unimpeded access to South Africa markets was enjoyed, and the drought broke in most parts of the country. Structural weaknesses in the commercial sector remain, but the improvement in farmers' financial situation is undeniable.

Table 3.17 above shows a slight decrease in farm numbers between
1982 and 1989, suggesting that a trend towards fewer wealthier farmers accompanied the overall improvement in farmers' financial situation. This is borne out by the available figures on concentration of ownership, which are discussed below. However, marked variations in farm numbers on both a regional and a district basis can be traced in this period. The trend in the northern and central regions seems to have been a drop in farm numbers in most districts; with the exception of Grootfontein, Otjiwarongo and Gobabis all districts show a drop in farm numbers. This is possibly attributable to the consolidation process which accompanied the abandonment of farms during the bush war. Although some abandoned farms were run by managers or simply left idle, others were bought up by neighbouring farmers and added to existing holdings. In such cases, the consolidated holdings are run as single farm businesses and are enumerated as single farms. However, if this trend has validity it is surprising that Grootfontein—an area highly susceptible to abandonment—demonstrated an apparent increase in farm numbers.

The trend in the south, conversely, is an apparent increase in farm numbers all of the sheep-producing districts, which suggests that sub-division rather than consolidation occurred in these districts. The validity of this trend must, however, be doubted: First, the Sub-Division of Agricultural Land Act (No 70 of 1970) expressly prohibits sub-division unless consent is obtained from the Minister of Agriculture, who must be satisfied that it will not result in the creation of uneconomic units. For purposes of sub-division, uneconomic units are defined as farms which, in view of the carrying capacity of a particular area and the standard of living regarded as acceptable by white farmers, are not capable of sustaining a minimum stock level of 400 large stock units or 2000 small stock units. It is widely recognised that carrying capacities have steadily declined as a result of poor farm management, bush encroachment, and drought. For this reason it is doubtful whether large numbers of farms, particularly in the south, would have qualified for sub-division between 1982 and 1989. Indeed, in the period from 1982 to 1985 only 13 farms qualified. The extent of sub-division implied by increases in farm numbers in Table 3.17 is therefore questionable.

Second, a policy of promoting consolidation of uneconomic units in order to improve profitability was adopted by the state following the 1983 publication of recommendations by Harrison et al. It was argued that financial problems experienced by the farming community in the early 1980s were not only attributable to drought and poor product prices, but more importantly to the size of farm businesses, and some 2000 farm businesses were regarded as too small to provide a satisfactory standard of living to their white owners. The implementation of a program aimed at reducing the number of farm businesses was strongly recommended. Consolidation, it was argued, 'would enable the size of business of those remaining in operation to generate an acceptable level of disposable income.' Although the Legislative Assembly for Whites rejected the recommendation for active state involvement in the purchasing and leasing of uneconomic units, the necessity for consolidation was recognised and a policy of
providing funds to farmers for this purpose, on favourable terms, was adopted in order to facilitate consolidation."

Consolidation was not promoted merely for economic reasons, however. As a 1983 Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee made plain, there was also an underlying political motive:

financially healthy farmers with larger units will exert better control in the northern units over enemy (sic) movements on their farms."

Substantial funds for consolidation have since been provided by both the state and the Land Bank. By 1984 the latter had received 154 applications for loans for consolidation, involving an amount of R13,5 million while in 1987 alone the Directorate of Agriculture granted 21 loans in an amount of R2 235 557.

The efficacy of loans alone in promoting consolidation is clearly open to question. However, although the state’s efforts to promote the process fell far short of 1983 recommendations, it must still be doubted whether the suggested trend towards sub-division in the south has much validity: it was precisely these areas which were hardest hit by the effects of the drought and which, as a result of widespread environmental degradation, experienced the most pressing need for consolidation.

It can thus be seen that the available official data on farm numbers suggests trends which run counter to the changing fortunes of the farming community in the past fifteen years, and the accuracy of these figures must therefore be questioned.

3.3 Distribution of Ownership

There are four categories of commercial farm owners: individuals, who own the bulk of land in the commercial farming districts; the churches, particularly the Roman Catholic Church; companies; and the state, which owns experimental and production farms in addition to land classified as ‘agriculturally unusable’. As previously mentioned, data on ownership patterns are extremely scanty. The following outline highlights some of the features of and issues surrounding land ownership in the commercial districts, drawing on such data as does exist. There are, however, a number of important gaps which will require additional research.

3.3.1 State, church and company owned land

It is standard practice in the literature to classify land in Namibia into two main categories: first, that which is agriculturally unusable and has been demarcated as nature reserves, diamond areas, urban areas and roads. Some 12,6 million hectares of land, owned by the state, fall into this category, representing 15% of the country’s surface area (excluding Walvis Bay). Second, agricultural land, which comprises 69,6 million hectares and is subdivided into
commercial farmland and communal areas. The state also owns land in this category, both in the commercial and communal areas; the focus here is on the former.

Most of the 12.6 million hectares which are classified as agriculturally unusable are concentrated along the country’s west coast, in and around the Namib desert. This coastal plain stretches along the South Atlantic coast, from the South African border in the south to the northern border with Angola. With the exception of small areas along river beds, it is incapable of supporting any type of agricultural production.

The main environmental factors which make it unsuitable for agricultural use are its rainfall and soil types. With an average annual rainfall of under 100mm (see Map 3.4) the Namib is among the driest regions of the world. Its rainfall is also extremely variable; the average deviation may be more than 80% of the annual average rainfall (see Map 3.5), and is not only inadequate to support crop production, but, together with soil types in the region, also influences the type of vegetation which is present (see Maps 3.6 and 3.7). Desert soil types in the Namib are generally infertile, except for small areas along river beds, and are also sensitive to wind erosion and have a low water retaining capacity (Table 3.19).

The limited vegetation these soils and the area’s low rainfall support is unsuitable for stock farming; the southern half of the Namib is dominated by virtually barren sand dunes, while the northern Namib is also largely barren with the exception of a few hardy desert plant species of little or no agricultural value (such as the kokerboom, welwitschia mirabilis, and low thorny bushes). The southern Namib is divided into two strictly controlled diamond zones, comprising a surface area of 54 876km², while 6.5 million hectares in the central and northern Namib have been proclaimed desert nature reserves.

It would be mistaken to assume, however, that all state-owned land outside of the commercial and communal farming areas is in fact unusable for agricultural production, despite its classification as such in the literature. For example, until the late 1960’s Khwe “bushmen” in the area which presently forms the West Caprivi Game Reserve practised a mixed subsistence including fishing, small scale husbandry with goats and a few cattle, gardening, hunting and gathering. These subsistence farmers were evicted from the West Caprivi when it was proclaimed a game reserve in 1968.

Calls have subsequently been made for the restoration of the area to those who have returned as squatters around army bases. Increasing land pressure in parts of East Caprivi have also prompted calls for this game reserve to be re-opened for agricultural purposes.”

68
MAP 3.5: Rainfall variability

Source: Adapted from SWA-Namibia, Department of Government Affairs (van der Merwe, J.K., ed.) National Atlas of South West Africa (Namibia), (Cape Town, 1981), Map 12.
# MAP 3.6: Soil types

## General Characteristics and Limitations

**SOIL TYPE** | **AGRICULTURAL UTILITY** | **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS AND LIMITATIONS** | **AREA** (ha)
---|---|---|---
Fersiallitic | High | Well weathered tropical soils with low water-retaining capacity; potential for irrigation | 0.6
Solumic and planosollic | Moderate-Low | | 
Halomorphic | Low | Danger of salinization; wetness; flooding hazard | 1.2
Arenosollic | Low | Low water-retaining capacity; sensitive to wind erosion | 2.8
Arenosollic | High | Low water-retaining capacity; sensitive to wind erosion; potential for irrigation | 8.6
Alluvial | High | Low water-retaining capacity; sensitive to wind erosion; potential for irrigation; danger of salinization; flooding hazard | 1.2
Poorly-developed lithosollic | Low | Shallow, stony, steep | 20.8

**Source:** Adapted from first National Development Corporation, Namibia, p.135.
The policy implications of this are clear: the new government will need to weigh up the potential benefits of maintaining certain conservation areas (both for purely ecological reasons as well as for the economic contribution such areas make through the tourist industry) against the agricultural and food needs of the country as a whole and the land needs of farmers in areas bordering on existing game and nature reserves.

State-owned property in the commercial farming districts is used for research and production purposes. The Central Administration owns five experimental and forestry farms at Sonop, Homajena, Sandveldt, Gelap and Brandwag. In addition, the Administration for Whites owns experimental farms at Uitkoms, Neudamm, Kalahari and Hardap, and production farms at Koppieslaagte and Pfannenthal. Several of the other second tier Administrations also own farmland in the commercial districts: the Administrations for ‘coloureds’, ‘Basters’ Hereros, Damaras and Caprivians own at least one commercial farm each.” [It is interesting to note that the farm owned by the Administration for ‘coloureds’ is, at 62 900 ha, the second largest property in the Mariental district.”]

Activities on farms belonging to the central government and the White Administration are primarily geared towards the technical agricultural needs of commercial farmers. These farms conduct courses and workshops, information days and farmers days, as well as research activities. Although no figures are available, it appears that white farmers are the only beneficiaries of these services.”

The Roman Catholic Church is the single largest church owner of farmland: its farms range in size from 40 ha to over 47 000 ha and have a total surface area of 136 693 ha. These farms have the following geographical distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 3.20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATHOLIC CHURCH FARMS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISTRICT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karasburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaururu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marienthal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outjo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total area of land owned by the Catholic Church, therefore, is slightly smaller than Tswanaland and could make a sizeable contribution to the resettlement process if, as is popularly expected, it is made available to the new government for this purpose.

In 1979 there were approximately 50 company-owned farms in the commercial districts." Detailed information on the kinds and sizes of companies involved, the purposes for which these farms were bought, the uses to which they are put, and changes which might have taken place in the past decade, is not available. It is therefore not possible to comment on company ownership of commercial farmland in Namibia, except to say that it occupies a less important position that individual ownership of farmland.

3.3.2 Individual owners

The majority of the country's 4 045 farm owners are individual white farmers. Within this group, some considerable ambiguity exists over a category of owners called 'foreign absentee landlords', whose land has been targeted by SWAPO for redistribution purposes. The current situation of this category is reflected in the following statistic: 352 farms, 5.6% of all commercial farms, were owned by "foreigners, including South African citizens, who were not resident full time in Namibia on 31.12.87".57

This figure is obviously less than the figure of 48% 'foreign absentee' ownership most readily cited in the literature. The discrepancy between the two figures flows from a misinterpretation of a 1976 study which isolated a 48% rate of absentee ownership in the Grootfontein-Tsumeb-Otavi triangle, seemingly the result of the abandonment of farms during a particularly hostile period of the bush war. But this 48% figure has, through propagation, become the currency by which the category of absentee landlords is judged.

Further confusion has followed from the conflation in the literature of two categories: absentee owners, and foreign owners. The two are not necessarily identical: absentee owners may include Namibians whose farms are run by managers or who farm on a part time basis only. Some 1100 farm business were run on this basis in 1982.100 Foreign owners, on the other hand, are not necessarily absentee landlords; some may be citizens of other countries but resident full time on their farms in Namibia.

The geographical distribution of foreign-owned farms is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>NO.</th>
<th>% OF DISTRICT'S TOTAL NO OF FARMS</th>
<th>COMBINED SURFACE AREA (ha)</th>
<th>% OF DISTRICT SURFACE AREA (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NORTH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovitjoe</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3,7</td>
<td>79 325</td>
<td>3,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsumeb</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5,4</td>
<td>50 284</td>
<td>5,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1,9</td>
<td>30 847</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjiwarongo</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>122 927</td>
<td>6,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CENTRE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7,2</td>
<td>261 544</td>
<td>7,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1,8</td>
<td>75 417</td>
<td>1,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20,3</td>
<td>172 905</td>
<td>20,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13,3</td>
<td>170 346</td>
<td>12,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4,8</td>
<td>100 377</td>
<td>6,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koetmanshoop</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>8,6</td>
<td>384 335</td>
<td>10,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henties</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0,99</td>
<td>58 615</td>
<td>1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karasburg</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13,4</td>
<td>562 964</td>
<td>17,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maltahoeho</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7,7</td>
<td>189 296</td>
<td>8,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethanien</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9,6</td>
<td>212 031</td>
<td>12,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luderitz</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18,5</td>
<td>201 079</td>
<td>16,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>2 678 293</td>
<td>7,3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [SMA/Naabia, Department of Agriculture and Forestry], *Plase*, p.4.

Table 3.21 suggests that the southern sheep producing districts have the highest proportion of foreign owned farms (7,0% of farms in the south, or 9,6% of its surface area), followed by the mixed cattle and sheep producing central region (5,9% of farms, 6,5% of surface area), and finally the northern cattle districts (3,5% of farms, 3,5% of surface area). South Africans dominate ownership of these farms; 174 properties, of which 147 are in the south, are owned by South Africans. West Germans dominate ownership in both the central region (91 farms) and the north (60 farms). Total distribution of ownership among foreign nationals is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OWNERS' NATIONALITY</th>
<th>NO. OF FARMS</th>
<th>% OF FOREIGN OWNED FARMS</th>
<th>% OF TOTAL FARMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South African</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West German</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>0.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.0009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: [Namibia, Department of Agriculture and Forestry], Flass, p.4.

Set against the total number of farms and land in the commercial area, foreign owned farms represent only 5.6% of farms and 7.3% of surface area. However, set against the size of the communal areas set aside for the majority of the country’s population, land owned by non-Namibians takes on a more significant meaning: for example, the 2,678,293 ha owned by non-Namibians is more than half the size of Ovamboland, a communal area which supports nearly half the country’s population. So, although foreign owned land is substantially less than anticipated in the literature, it could nonetheless make a large contribution to the redistribution process if such a route is chosen by the new government.

But it will be necessary to look beyond numbers alone to the types of production currently engaged in on these farms and the levels of utilization: both will play a major role in influencing future use patterns and capacities. In the absence of any specific indication of what production systems the new government hopes to implement on expropriated land, it is difficult to comment on the significance of current use patterns. However, environmental constraints on land use determine that there is relatively little flexibility in the kinds of agricultural production which will be possible on redistributed land. There will, for example, be little room for the extension of agronomy on these farms, if it is assumed that current uses of land represent what is possible under given environmental conditions: only 3.9% of foreign owned farms are currently used for agronomic purposes (in combination with stock farming). Stock farming (whether cattle, sheep, goats, or game) will undoubtedly have to be the dominant agricultural activity on redistributed farms: currently 62% of foreign owned farms are used exclusively for stock farming, while a further 8.8% combine stock and game and 5.8% are used exclusively for game. 193 As the Namibian environment requires extensive units of pasture management, it seems highly unlikely that extensive sub-division of these farms for redistribution to individual peasant farmers and their families will be possible. Those farms currently used for game farming or not used for any identifiable agricultural
purpose are likely to provide the most flexibility in terms of future use; however, it should be borne in mind that in some instances game farming is practised precisely because environmental degradation has rendered land unsuitable for any other agricultural production. It can therefore not be assumed that all foreign-owned farms where game farming is practised are simply hunting or holiday farms which could be used for a different and perhaps more productive purpose.

It is clear therefore that the determination of future use of foreign-owned farms will need to be informed not only by the new government’s equity goals but also by inherent environmental constraints, among other factors.

Extension officers responsible for collecting information estimated the level of utilisation of these farms; however, the criteria used in their evaluation were not particularly explicit. It appears that the primary factor in evaluation was the level of production measured against an (unspecified) productive capacity. "Underused" farms, for example, were defined as those on which stock, game or crop farming took place on a limited scale only; these farms were used primarily for hunting or holiday purposes. 18% of foreign owned farms in the north were regarded as underused (13 farms); 32% of those in the central region (40 farms) and 42,6% of those in the south (66 farms). Foreign owned farms regarded as fulfilling at least 80% of their potential were defined as "reasonably used"; however, what that potential was and how it was measured was not specified. Of foreign owned farms in the north, 38,9% (28 farms) fell into this category as did 39,2% of those in the central region (49 farms) and 43,2% of those in the south. "Well used" farms were those which displayed "optimal utilisation of potential"; 43,1% of foreign owned farms in the north (31 farms) satisfied the unspecified definition of optimal utilisation, as did 27,2% of those in the central region (34 farms) and only 9,7% of those in the south (15 farms). The final category was "over used" farms, i.e. those on which degradation of resources was apparent. Neither the degree nor kind of degradation was specified. Very few foreign owned farms fell into this category, however: 1,6% of those in the central region (2 farms) and 4,5% of those in the south (7 farms).

In the absence of a more explicit definition of the terms used in the above evaluation, it is difficult to comment on these figures. However, the evaluation seems to have been informed by market-oriented technical considerations; in this regard it is perhaps it is perhaps significant that only 22,7% of all foreign owned farms were regarded as fulfilling optimal utilisation of potential. This suggests that, in theory at least, there is considerable room for increasing the level of production on these farms. Criteria which will govern the new government’s evaluation of foreign owned properties will undoubtedly incorporate more far reaching social issues, given that the new government intends to use expropriated land as a mechanism for the attainment of social and economic equity.
Those defined above in the category "under used" may enable the adoption of new production systems and land tenure arrangements more readily than, for example, "well used" farms which have already been developed according to specific and entrenched production processes.

Misinterpretations of the extent of foreign ownership which have been prevalent in the literature are to be expected given the inadequacies of the state’s data base, and the lack of independent comparative data. It follows that if there is to be effective agricultural planning in Namibia a comprehensive agricultural census is essential. In its absence, a new government will find it extremely difficult to marry its agrarian reform objectives and the expectations of the Namibian people, with existing ownership patterns. One such expectation, among a cross-section of Namibians, is that expropriation of foreign owned farms will release a significant proportion of commercial farms for redistribution purposes. If, however, figures on foreign ownership collected by the Department of Agriculture are accurate (and in the absence of any comparative data it has to be assumed here that they are), it is clear that this expectation cannot be met: only 5,6% of commercial farms are owned by foreigners.

This figure may be substantially reduced by the time agrarian reforms are implemented. SWAPO's position on foreign ownership has alerted foreign owners who face no immediate legal or political mechanisms to prevent them selling their properties in order to avoid being bought out by the new government. Although SWAPO has emphasised that redistribution of land will only take place after 'just and fair' compensation, it seems unlikely that the new government will have sufficient funds to match what foreign owners could expect to receive for their farms on the private property market, where both demand and land prices are high.134

The new government may, however, find support for expropriation of foreign owned farms from an unexpected quarter: impressionistic evidence suggests that some white farmers themselves reject foreign ownership of commercial farms. This rejection is partly based on nationalistic impulses, but is also undoubtedly motivated by a desire to deflect the perceived threat of nationalisation under a SWAPO government away from resident farmers’ own properties. Farmers interviewed suggested that in some cases foreign owners who are not resident on their farms pay insufficient attention to the maintenance of farm infrastructure (particularly fencing), and that this creates stock control problems for adjacent farmers. In addition, considerable resentment was expressed over the effect of foreign ownership on land prices: the high land prices which have been characteristic of the agricultural property market in recent years were directly attributed to the benefits foreigners have gained from the Financial Rand. High land prices, it was argued, have the effect of both blocking the entry of potential new Namibian farmers into agriculture, and preventing some existing farmers from acquiring additional land. Farmers interviewed did not view expropriation of foreign owned farmers primarily as a mechanism for redistributing land to landless
peasants from the communal areas, however, but rather as a means of ensuring that all agricultural land in the country is productively used rather than merely held as an investment or for holiday/hunting purposes.\textsuperscript{186}

It is also possible that the degree of absentee ownership and abandonment of farms by white farmers after independence may be less than anticipated. Statistics on existing absentee ownership (as opposed to foreign owned farms) are virtually non-existent, or are so dated as to be useless as a barometer of present conditions. However, improvements in the economic climate of the commercial sector since the early 1980’s has increased the attractiveness of farming as an economic proposition and can be expected to have prompted a return to the land by some of those farmers who abandoned their farms during and after the drought.

Concerning potential future abandonment of farms as a political response to SWAPO’s election victory, it is our impression that although SWAPO’s proposed policy of nationalising some commercial farms has undoubtedly created a degree of insecurity within the white farming community, no large scale abandonment of farms can be expected. Farmers interviewed on the eve of the independence elections expressed considerable optimism about their future under a SWAPO government.

Partly this optimism is motivated by a recognition that the new government will not have sufficient funds at its disposal to buy out commercial farmers on a large scale, at least in the foreseeable future. The perception that ex-Zimbabwean white farmers who sold up and left at independence are now clamouring to return to Zimbabwe was also held up by Namibian farmers as a reason for optimism about their future under a SWAPO government.

But white farmers also look to South Africa, which no longer provides the option of a convenient and, in their view, politically palatable alternative to life under a SWAPO government as a result of South Africa’s own political momentum towards majority rule.\textsuperscript{186} While it cannot be claimed that these impressions are necessarily an accurate reflection of the mood of the white farming community as a whole, they do suggest that the rate of absentee ownership and abandonment of farms may be less than anticipated after independence. The determination of current levels of absentee ownership will therefore also require detailed attention by the new government.\textsuperscript{187}

### 3.3.3 Distribution of land and farms

Having sketched some of the characteristics and issues surrounding the kinds of owners of commercial farms in Namibia it is pertinent to look briefly at the concentration of ownership. In essence there are two ways in which the physical distribution of land can be measured: first, in terms of the proportion of agricultural land individual farmers own. Second, concentration of ownership can be measured by looking at the
numbers of farms owned by farmers. The available information in each of these categories is somewhat scanty and additional work in this area is needed.

Information collected in 1982 in 15 of the 16 commercial districts suggests the following distribution of land among the country’s then 4 450 farm owners:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>NUMBER OF OWNERS</th>
<th>AVERAGE SIZE OF HOLDINGS (ha)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A: Mainly beef producing areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>6 823</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>5 886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>10 038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>6 918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>7 205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjivarongo</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>6 267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outjo</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>6 789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsumeb</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>7 035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>7 895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 2 757</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Mainly sheep producing areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethanie</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>12 545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariental</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>12 435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keetmanshoop</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>9 518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luderitz</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>19 086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maltahoe</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>10 977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karasburg</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>13 992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL: 1 693</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 165</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: May include more than one farm.

Source: Harrison et al, quoted in SMA/Namibia, Die Roosvieelsproduksiebevorderingkomitee, 'n Studie, p.31.

Although no indication is given of whether owners are individuals, companies, the churches or the state, Table 3.23 suggests that farm owners in the southern sheep producing districts tend to own more land than those in the mixed and cattle producing central and northern districts. This is partly explained by the harsher environmental conditions which pertain in the south. However, there are discrepancies between the population-to-land ratios of the southern commercial districts and those of the southern reserves (Namaland and Rehoboth), which share common environmental conditions. In Rehoboth, for example, only five out of 450 farms in 1983 were more than 10 000 ha; 77% of farms were less than 4000 ha. (See also chapter 4 below.)
The reasons for such discrepancies go beyond purely environmental determinants and lie in colonial assumptions concerning ‘acceptable’ standards of living for white and black farmers respectively, and the amount of land seen as necessary to sustain minimum stock levels under given environmental conditions.

The determination of minimum stock levels and consequently, minimum land requirements in different areas, for example, has not been free either of racial bias or assumptions. An Agricultural Policy Advisory Committee in 1983 explicitly linked the recommended minimum stock levels of 400 large stock units and 2000 small stock units on white farms to standard of living, and suggested that each ‘population group’ should determine its own norms for the number of stock required to maintain its own standard of living.\textsuperscript{115}

If the surface area represented by farms regarded as unviable was subtracted from the figures in Table 3.21 above, the average size of holdings would be considerably greater in each district. A 1983 study isolated commercial farms of less than 2 000 ha as being too small to constitute viable economic units if their main production was cattle, sheep or goats. Of the 6 358 farms at that time, nearly 2 000 were smaller than this minimum recommended size.\textsuperscript{114} At 1982 stocking rates only 2 432 farms were regarded as viable; at potential stocking with acceptable stocking rates, this figure rose to 3 764 farms.\textsuperscript{117}

The available information on the distribution of farms (as opposed to amount of land) in the commercial sector suggests an increasing concentration of ownership on a national scale. The number of farm owners has dropped by 10\% since 1982 to its present level of 4045 owners, who own 6350 farms.\textsuperscript{112} This process has undoubtedly been prompted by the economic crises in commercial agriculture. Data on the distribution of farms between these owners is extremely scanty. However, a 1989/9 sample survey of 3323 farm owners shows the following distribution of farms between these owners:\textsuperscript{114}
TABLE 3.24
DISTRIBUTION OF OWNERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>INDIVIDUAL OWNERS WHO HAVE</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>TOTAL OWNERS HOLDINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>FARMS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariental</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobabis</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windhoek</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjo</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keetmanshoop</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjivarongo</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karasburg</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haltahoe</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethanien</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsunub</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karibib</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luderitz</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swakopmund</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>2112</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This table shows that the majority of farmers own single holdings (63% of farmers), 25% own two holdings, 8% own three, 2.7% own four and 0.3% of farmers own five holdings within individual districts. However, these figures do not reflect situations where farmers own properties in more than one district; such figures might substantially alter the ownership pattern on a national level.

Regional variations in ownership are as follows:

TABLE 3.25
REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN DISTRIBUTION OF FARMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGION</th>
<th>TOTAL NO. OF FARM OWNERS</th>
<th>% OF FARM OWNERS WITH</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FARMS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>1 185</td>
<td>65.8</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>1 184</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ibid.
The northern districts reflect a higher concentration of ownership in numbers of farms per owners as against the central and southern districts; 42.2% of farmers in the north own more than one farm as opposed to 33.9% in the central districts and 40.8% in the south.

The policy implications of this pattern of concentration of ownership are clear. SWAPO has pinpointed individuals with ‘too much land’ as one category of owners who might be required to relinquish land for redistribution purposes. The above figures suggest that if ownership of farms is limited to a certain number of farms per owner, a substantial proportion of commercial farms could - theoretically speaking - be targeted for redistribution. The number of farms so released would of course depend on where a ceiling was placed. However, there is no clarity on whether the determining factor will be the number of farms owned, or the amount of land encompassed.

One example illustrates the importance of defining what criteria are ultimately to be used. In the Karasburg district, the average size of single or multiple consolidated units according to 1982 figures was 13 992ha per farmer. According to the 1988/9 sample survey, 111 farmers in this district own single farms; of these, 26 farmers have properties above the area average of 13 992 ha per owner. If the number of farms owned by an individual is adopted as the main criterion in identifying farms for redistribution, these 26 owners would be excluded despite the fact that between them they own an average of 23 309 ha each. Conversely, a significant proportion of those farmers who have more than one holding in the Karasburg district own less than 13 992ha: 50% of the 44 farmers with two holdings, 21% of the 14 with three holdings, and 25% of those with four holdings. There is thus not necessarily any correlation between the numbers of farms an individual owns, and the amount of land this represents.

Clearly, such statistics say nothing about the quality of the land, its productivity, or its suitability for redistribution purposes. Such factors will be crucial in identifying land for resettlement. Some of the farms acquired as second or third properties by individual farmers are not economically viable on their own (according to the farming community’s own criteria for the amount of land needed to sustain an acceptable standard of living under given environmental conditions). The question of economic viability is, of course, a relative concept, and the new government may adopt a definition which for political and ideological reasons is based on different criteria to those which guide commercial agriculture. However, the Karasburg example suggests that targeting farmers with a certain number of farms, as opposed to a certain amount of land, will not necessary guarantee the acquisition of sufficient (or indeed suitable) land to meet redistribution and resettlement needs.
3.4 Environmental Issues

Both the liberation movement and the colonial authorities have documented the environmental determinants of land use in the commercial farming districts in some detail. It is not necessary to repeat these ‘givens’, but rather to suggest some constraints which Namibia’s natural environment imposes on the potential for redistribution of commercial farmland. Such constraints are only one of a range of factors which will shape agrarian reform, but in the Namibian context they are worth special mention. The limitations of the country’s natural environment automatically restricts the range of policy options open to the new government, and raise issues of resource management which will need to be structurally integrated into any agrarian reform program.

Two broadly-defined categories of environmental constraints in the commercial areas can be identified: unalterable factors inherent in the harsh natural environment, and constraints which are the product of an historical mismanagement of natural resources. In some respects, man made problems can be overcome, or at least halted. However, reversing the environmental blunders which accompanied colonial rule will be a lengthy process. But reform programs will need to be structured in such a way that the degradation of natural resources is not exacerbated.

The availability of water is undoubtedly the most influential environmental determinant of land use in the commercial districts, and will be a crucial constraint on agrarian reform. The types of production which will will be engaged in on redistributed land, for example, will be determined at least in part by the availability and accessibility of water in the commercial farm districts.

Commercial agriculture has historically been dominated by stock farming; this dominance is economically and politically the result of a policy of honing Namibian agriculture to meet the needs of industrial South Africa, in particular its needs for a ready supply of red meat and an export market for its dairy products, vegetables, fruit and grain crops. However, it would be mistaken to assume that the dominance of stock farming in the commercial sector is solely the product of deliberate economic and political policies on the part of South Africa. The environment also dictates what types of production have been possible on commercial farms, and places limits on what will be possible if some of this land is redistributed.

The country’s low and variable rainfall, for example, makes most of the land which falls into the commercial districts unsuitable for any agricultural purpose other than stock farming. In the south, the average annual rainfall is between 100 and 200mm and is highly variable, with the result that this region supports vegetation which is only sufficient and suitable for small stock farming. Rainfall increases to around 300mm annually towards
the centre of the country, and pastures improve to the extent that both small stock and cattle can be farmed, while rainfall of 300–500mm annually in the northern commercial districts is sufficient in quantity and reliability to support extensive cattle farming. (See Maps 3.2 – 3.7.)

Dryland crop cultivation is only possible in areas which receive an annual average rainfall of above 500mm and in Namibia this limits the commercial cultivation of crops (such as maize, wheat and sunflowers) to the Tsumeb-Otavi-Grootfontein triangle. Nor has it been possible to extend arable land in the commercial districts in any significant degree through irrigation. Namibia’s rainfall is not only low and variable, but as a result of high temperatures and low humidity, its effectiveness is greatly reduced by evaporation. Some 83% of the total rainfall evaporates immediately, 14% is lost through evapotranspiration, 17% is available as surface runoff, 2% is available for harnessing in surface storage facilities, and only 1% recharges groundwater sources. (See Figure 3.2.)

The implications are first, that surface water is scarce resource in the country, particularly in the commercial districts which have no permanently flowing inland rivers, lakes, or other natural bodies of fresh water which can be harnessed for irrigation purposes. Of the country’s perennial rivers only the Orange in the south has any immediate relevance for the existing commercial districts, but use of its water is subject to agreement by South Africa as a result of an 1890 agreement between Britain and Germany which demarcated the northern bank of the Orange as the border between the two countries. The extension of arable land through irrigation from the Orange would therefore require co-operation from the South African government.

Second, although most of the country’s manmade dams are concentrated in the commercial districts (see Map 3.8), the present irrigation potential of these is limited; only the Hardap is used for irrigation purposes, supporting 45 farm units of 33ha each. Problems of increasing salinity have also been experienced in this region.

Third, the use of groundwater for irrigation purposes is both expensive, (because of the depth to the water table in most areas), and environmentally dangerous. Groundwater occurs in varying quantities over most of the country, with the exception of the Namib desert (see Map 3.9). However, of the six major geological environments associated with the occurrence of groundwater (see Map 3.10), groundwater is only close enough to the surface in stream bed alluvials to be tapped relatively easily and inexpensively. In other geological environments the expensive construction of boreholes up to 300m deep is the only means of reaching water. Further, as only 1% of rainfall replenishes groundwater supplies, this water resource is highly Sensitive to exploitation. The scarcity of permanent surface water supplies and seasonal variations in flowing rivers and storage dams mean that groundwater is already heavily used to meet domestic and industrial water needs.
FIGURE 3.2: WATER BALANCE

Source: SWA/Hamibia, Department of Water Affairs, *Perspective*, Fig.1.
MAP 3.8:
Major Dams and larger water supply schemes

LEGEND

- Town responsible for own water supply
- Pipelines
- Roads
- Dams
- Rivers

Scale: 0 50 100 200 300 400 km

Compiled by: Secretary for Water Affairs - Namibia
MAP 3.9: Occurrence of Groundwater
MAP 3.11: Carrying capacities

Source: Adapted from SWA/Namibia, Die Boövleinsproduktsbevorderingskomitee, "in Studie", Fig. 1.
A lack of arable land in the commercial districts has not only influenced the historical emphasis on stockfarming, but has implications for agrarian reform if this is to include redistribution of commercial farmland. Most importantly, unlike Kenya or Zimbabwe, subdivision of settler farms into small plots for cultivation by peasant farmers is clearly not an option in Namibia, with the possible exception of the Otavi highlands. The inherent limitations of the natural environment dictate that stock farming will continue to be the dominant agricultural activity on redistributed land.

Further, the division of existing private stock farms into smaller units for farming by peasant families will also be unviable from an environmental perspective. Namibia’s low and variable rainfall supports limited densities of vegetation suitable for grazing; this dictates that both cattle and small stock are herded over large areas. The environment thus requires extensive units of pasture management. As Map 3.11 illustrates, carrying capacities are particularly low in the south of the country, where even larger units of pasture management are required than in the cattle producing districts further north.

By carving existing farms up into smaller parcels for reallocation to peasant families, there is a very real danger that environmentally safe stocking rates could be exceeded. The long-term result would undoubtedly be an exacerbation of environmental degradation (already a prominent feature in the commercial farming districts) and a further degeneration of pastures.

Namibia’s natural environment is not only harsh; it is also unforgiving of human error and mismanagement. The commercial districts display a number of environmental problems which have been caused, in part, by an injudicious management of natural resources. These, too, place certain limitations on the redistribution process.

The most pressing manmade problem in the commercial districts is bush-encroachment, which is taking on ‘alarming proportions’.117 Although not exclusive to the commercial farming districts, the extent of the problem is best documented in these areas. In essence, bush encroachment involves the gradual replacement of grazing by types of bush which are inedible to cattle or sheep. Dense concentrations of this bush are now found in areas with the highest production potential for cattle; Okahandja, Otjivarongo, Grootfontein, Tsumeb and Outjo are particularly badly affected. In 1981 it was estimated that in Outjo alone, 31% of the district’s surface area (and an even higher proportion of grazing) had been engulfed by invader bush.118 By 1986 this had risen to 50%.119 8 million ha of grazing land in the cattle producing areas had been turned into dense bush by 1983, and varying degrees of bush also affected grazing on 5.8 million ha of the adjacent mixed farming areas.120 The following degree of bush infestation was recorded in seven of the sixteen commercial farming districts in 1986:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>SURFACE AREA (ha) ('000)</th>
<th>ESTIMATED BUSH INFESTATION (%)</th>
<th>TOTAL BUSH INFESTATION ('000 ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grootfontein</td>
<td>2 565</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2 052</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsumeb</td>
<td>894</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjiwarongo</td>
<td>1 955</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1 466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjo</td>
<td>2 628</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1 314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okahandja</td>
<td>1 432</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobabis</td>
<td>4 039</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2 020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaruru</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>14 363</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SWA/Mambis, Die Rolvleisproduksiebevorderingskomitee, 'n Studie, p.49.

At one level, bush-encroachment can be regarded as simply a product of competition between plant species for moisture. Not only do bush species have a competitive edge over grass in the battle for moisture, but most are not subject to depletion through grazing. They are also better able to withstand drought and do not require the same critical period of regeneration as annual grass species. Once invader bush takes hold as a result of drought or overgrazing, the consequence is a gradual diminution of grazing and a reduction in the land’s carrying capacity.

It has been estimated that as a result of bush-encroachment and other factors long term carrying capacities are 20-30% worse than they were twenty years ago. In the Karstveld, for example, carrying capacities have declined from 1:10ha to 1:15 ha and even 1:30ha in some areas, while in the thorn bush savannas of the central mixed cattle and small stock region, degeneration of grazing as a result of bush-encroachment has reduced carrying capacities from 1:8/10ha to 1:15/20ha.

Bush-encroachment is not simply the product of an inherent competition for water between plant species, however. Prior to the introduction of domestic stock, game and natural fires played a crucial role in controlling bush densities and maintaining an ecological balance between plant species. The introduction of domestic stock on its own is also not sufficient to account for the degree of bush infestation which has taken place. The ecological balance between plant species has been upset by overgrazing and overstocking, which have been characteristic of settler ranching in the past thirty to forty years.

Part of the problem lies in the attitudes of a sector of the commercial farming community which has sacrificed long-term environmental considerations to short-term profits. As Moorsom puts it,
Since droughts mask long term degeneration in the vegetation, many settlers adopt a short-term perspective, increasing stock numbers rapidly before the pasture has had time to recover from drought, overstocking during good years, and retaining too many animals when drought sets in once more.\textsuperscript{123}

A failure to recognise that droughts are an integral part of the ecosystem, and to plan production accordingly, is one of the attitudinal problems which has been noted among some farmers. The commercial farming community itself recognises that the attitudes of some of its members is a major problem; in 1983 some 800 farmers were identified by conservation officers as those:

\begin{quote}
wat nie 'n flenter omgee wat van die natuurlike weiding op hulle plase word nie, doelbewus die plase uittrap en oorbewe, en as rooibouers bestempel kan word. \textsuperscript{124}
\end{quote}

Among other attitudinal problems, it has been noted that there is an unwillingness among certain farmers to accept new farming practices which could improve pasture management.\textsuperscript{125} In addition, existing legislative measures have proved ineffective in ensuring sound resource management practices. Partly this is the result of farmers' attitudes:

\begin{quote}
many take as their starting point the idea that the state has no right to force on them certain laws or prescriptions regarding conservation of natural resources.\textsuperscript{126}
\end{quote}

There has also been an unwillingness to prosecute farmers who employ environmentally detrimental farming practices. Although the Soil Conservation Act (No 76 of 1969) makes provision for punitive measures, not a single farmer has been charged with any offence despite overwhelming evidence that malpractices do occur.\textsuperscript{127} The role of mismanagement and poor farming practices in causing ecological problems was emphasised in the adoption of a Reclamation Strategy in 1988 by the White Legislative Assembly. Along with measures specifically designed to monitor bush-encroachment, the Reclamation Strategy involves an attempt to develop an awareness among farmers of the importance of environmentally sound farming practices and thus also has an educative function.\textsuperscript{128}

However, the root causes of bush-encroachment go deeper than the attitudes of individual farmers and legislative deficiencies; they are located in the structure of settler farming as a whole:

\begin{quote}
At the heart of what is potentially a serious ecological crisis lies ... the policy of maximising settler farming. One of the most fundamental contradictions in a semi-arid environment is the ecological rigidity of relatively small-
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{84}
scale private enterprise farming in an environment which requires flexible methods and very extensive units of pasture management. The division of the hardveld into a mosaic of fixed separate ranches deprived stock farming of the mobility over wide areas which in pre-colonial times was a crucial means of coping with an unreliable rainfall."

In addition to the direct economic consequences of bush encroachment, (which have included a loss of an estimated R50 million in beef production over the past thirty to forty years,) this environmental problem also has a number of direct implications for agrarian reform. First, effective control needs to be exercised over future land use. It is clear that colonial land settlement laid the basis for environmental degradation. It cannot simply be reversed. A return to pre-colonial systems of land use in the commercial areas is clearly impractical. Nor is it compatible with the new government's agrarian reform policies; while emphasising that some commercial farmland held under freehold title will be redistributed in the interests of social and economic equity, SWAPO has nonetheless guaranteed the continued existence of private commercial farming and thus a 'fixed mosaic' of farms.

On the other hand, however, Namibia can ill afford environmental abuse. It is therefore crucial that effective control mechanisms over land use are factored into agrarian reform programs, and that appropriate legislation is designed to prevent further abuses. The existing Soil Conservation Act, for example, has been described as a 'bulldog without teeth'. It has been suggested that farmers who refuse to improve their resource management practices should be blacklisted and denied financial assistance from the state. In extreme cases, they might be forced to relinquish their farms in order to make way for conservation-conscious farmers. Such 'radical' suggestions come not from the ranks of the liberation movement, but from within the commercial farming community itself.

Second, the loss of some 15 million hectares to bush makes a significant dent in the amount of productive commercial farmland which could, theoretically, be targeted for redistribution. Resettlement of peasant farmers from the reserves will clearly be of little benefit if the land allocated to these farmers has been rendered un- or underproductive by bush-encroachment. Resettlement in bush-infested areas could both exacerbate environmental degradation, and perpetuate poverty. A detailed evaluation of the ecological condition and potential productive capacity of land targeted for redistribution will thus be necessary before resettlement can take place.

Third, agrarian reform programs will need to be accompanied by education aimed at preventing further bush-encroachment, and changing attitudes towards the natural environment. The Soil Conservation Act makes provision for the establishment of conservation committees in each commercial farming district, which have the responsibility of informing and advising farmers on conservation measures and of developing appropriate attitudes. The extent to which these structures actually
function is not known; however, it seems clear that they should either be strengthened and extended or, if they are deemed unacceptable by the new government, replaced by new community-based structures which incorporate resettled farmers.

Fourth, both legislation and educative measures will need to be informed by current research into optimal carrying capacities and stocking rates. Continuous monitoring of carrying capacities and of bush encroachment will also be necessary if agrarian reform programs are to avoid the environmental blunders of the past. In this regard, the satellite monitoring program implemented in terms of the National Reclamation Strategy will undoubtedly make a valuable contribution.¹³⁸

Finally, bush-infested land should not be completely written off for resettlement, stock farming, or other productive use. Successful attempts have already been made to control or eradicate invader bush. Experiments at the Omatjennê Research Station, for example, have shown that the introduction of goats into areas infested by Sekelbos can reduce the concentration of this particular species which is not inedible to goats.¹³⁹ Eradication measures aimed at restoring natural grazing by destroying bush have included burning, chemical destruction, and mechanical harvesting.

However, none of these methods are without problems. Burning, for example, can stimulate the growth of some species of bush, while chemical destruction, although effective, is costly. It has also been suggested that chemical destruction can lead to a long term reduction in carrying capacities. Mechanical harvesting is also costly (around R240 per hectare at 1983 prices) and can lead to an even greater infestation of bush.¹³⁸

Manual harvesting of bush is, perhaps, a better option. Although expensive and time-consuming, it has the advantage of opening up a range of potential side benefits if undertaken on a large scale. Apart from the immediate creation of employment opportunities, recent research indicates that these might include the provision of a variety of low cost energy sources for both domestic and industrial use, including densified wood fuels in the form of briquettes, pellets or extrusions, and natural wood. In addition, mechanically-harvested bush can be processed into products such as low cost wood-based building materials (chipboard and wood-cement board), which could both open up local manufacturing possibilities and create further employment opportunities.¹³⁹

Namibia’s low and variable rainfall and the mismanagement of natural resources which has been a feature of commercial farming place important limitations on the kinds of agrarian reform which will be possible in the commercial sector.

Neither redistribution of land based on the division of commercial farms into family plots for cultivation, nor extensive sub-division of commercial farms for stock farming purposes are feasible options from an environmental perspective. The environment dictates that stock farming on large units will continue to be the dominant agricultural activity in the
commercial areas. Further, large tracts of previously productive farmland have been rendered un- or underproductive as a result of bush encroachment and while restoration of grazing in these areas is possible, it will be a lengthy process.

This is not to suggest, however, that redistribution of land is impossible within these constraints. It has been suggested that the creation of state farms or co-operatives on redistributed farmland would be viable options as these would both maintain the large units of pasture management which the environment requires, and allow economies of scale to be achieved. Provision for both these options has been made in SWAPO's agrarian reform program.

Further, the intensification of reclamation efforts could have the long-term effect of not only regenerating grazing in bush-infested areas, and thereby restoring the productive value of the land, but opening up much-needed employment opportunities in the country and facilitating the provision of low-cost energy sources and building materials. However, the redistribution of land from the commercial districts as part of an agrarian reform program needs to be accompanied by a sober recognition of the fragility of the natural environment, and a detailed evaluation of its resources.

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NOTES


5. This, in contrast, is a substantial body of literature devoted to technical agricultural issues (particularly in and through the various state and commercially-linked research bodies), and to the post-colonial legacy of the agricultural economy de exist. For the latter, see for example, UNIN, SWAPO's Policy Position on the Land Issue, (Windhoek, 1989), pp.16-33; UNIN, SWAPO's Policy Position on the Land Issue, (Windhoek, 1989), pp.17-22; Koos, H., Transforming a wasted land, (London, 1982), pp.67-72.


9. For example, Harrison, Progress, p.69; SWA/Namibia, Debates of the Legislative Assembly of the Chita Representative Authority, 1983, Vol.1.


17. SWA/Namibia, Department of Finance, Economic/Statistical Review, p.16.


21. FNDC, Namibia, p.10.
CHAPTER 4
THE 'COMMUNAL' AREAS

Introduction

It is customary to identify the Namibian economy as dualistic: its two components are variously referred to as 'commercial' or 'modern' as against 'communal' or 'traditional'. Whatever terminology is used, the underlying assumption is that the communal sector is, by its very nature, geared to subsistence production and incompatible with commercial agriculture.

These assumptions underlie the Draft National Development Strategy, published in 1985. This report argued, for example, that cattle in the reserves are held largely for social and cultural rather than economic reasons, with the result that only 1-2% of livestock herds in the reserves were commercially marketed. 'Traditional agriculture' and the existing communal land tenure system are, it was concluded, inimical to effective, competitive agriculture.

Chapter 2 discussed the historical evolution of Namibia's dual economy. The argument was advanced that 'native reserves' were structurally unable to provide a sufficient basis for the development of black agriculture. The main function of the reserves was to provide cheap labour for the colonial economy and to facilitate political control. In the mid-1960's, however, existing 'native reserves' were restructured, ostensibly to improve the welfare of black Namibians, including the development of 'reserve' agriculture. This chapter briefly surveys these developments and discusses the issue of land tenure in the communal areas within a wider legal context. Thereafter, both the potential and current utilisation of the communal areas are assessed. In so doing several issues which are important in planning for land reform are highlighted.

4.1 Land and Land Tenure in Communal Areas

Namibia's 'communal areas' - also known as reserves or homelands - comprise 33.6 million hectares or 40.8% of all land in the country. Following the proposals of the Odendaal Commission, the 'communal areas' (as they exist today) comprise ten different homelands, including the Rehoboth Gebiet. An estimated 850,000 people, or 70% of the population, are accommodated in these areas, 90% of whom 'are directly dependent on primary agricultural production'. The commercial sector, for its part, provides a living for about 300,000 people, or 25% of the total population, and comprises 43.8% of the country's surface area.

This distribution of land is the outcome of proposals made
MAP 4.1: Geographical distribution of communal areas

in the mid-1960s to enlarge and consolidate the 'native reserves'. Under the guise of promoting '... the material and moral welfare and the social progress of the inhabitants of South West Africa, particularly its non-White (sic) inhabitants', the Odendaal Commission was appointed in 1962 by the South African government to make 'recommendations on a comprehensive five-year plan for the accelerated development of the various non-white groups of South West Africa'.'

The recommendations made by the Commission had little to do with promoting the welfare of black Namibians, however. Instead, they mirrored a desire to entrench territorial apartheid in Namibia, and embed the dualistic character of its economy. The homelands proposed by the Commission differed from the original 'native reserves' in that they were both enlarged, and constituted on an ethnic basis; self-government for each ethnic homeland was the ultimate objective. As some of the reserves were too small 'to exist as self-governing homelands', the Commission proposed that they be 'integrated with the nearest homeland of their own population group'. The seventeen existing reserves in the Police Zone were to be consolidated into seven ethnic homelands. As part of this process of 'tidying up apartheid' the Commission envisaged the forced removal of an estimated 115 600 people.'

The Commission also pointed out that experience had shown that 'virtually all' existing reserves '[had] been unable to achieve more than a subsistence economy'. It was further argued that the amalgamation and expansion of some of the reserves, together with 'further training and active co-operation of their inhabitants', would ensure that all homelands would 'provide a proper livelihood ... for their respective population groups'.

Economic development was not envisaged as part of a wider national development strategy, but rather within the ethnic enclaves proposed by the Commission. It argued that conditions for such development would best prevail if homeland residents 'are not unsettled unnecessarily by disrupting their existing strong traditional family and homeland ties'. To achieve these political and economic objectives, the Commission proposed to reduce the number of existing reserves, while increasing their total size. The latter flowed partly from the purchase of 426 white farms, and partly from the deproclamation of government land and game reserves. As a result, the total area set aside for black Namibians increased from 22 million hectares to about 32.7 million hectares, an increase of close on 50%.' Table 4.1 below provides a summary of additions proposed by the Odendaal Commission.

91
Table 4.1

HOMELANDS PROPOSED BY THE OENDAAL COMMISSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of existing reserves (ha)</th>
<th>Area of proposed homeland (ha)</th>
<th>Gain or Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owambo</td>
<td>4 201 000</td>
<td>5 607 200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kavango</td>
<td>3 299 617</td>
<td>4 170 050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caprivi</td>
<td>1 153 387</td>
<td>1 153 387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaokoveld</td>
<td>5 525 129</td>
<td>4 898 219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damaraland</td>
<td>626 375</td>
<td>4 799 021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hereroland</td>
<td>4 374 469</td>
<td>5 899 680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namaland</td>
<td>1 115 529</td>
<td>2 167 707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tswana</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>155 400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushmanland</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>2 392 671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baster</td>
<td>1 312 239</td>
<td>1 386 029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>21 607 745</td>
<td>32 629 364</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Although the increase in total land area may look impressive, its agricultural potential is limited. An acute lack of surface and underground water renders large portions of land useless for stock or arable production.

In some areas this problem is compounded by the presence of poisonous plants and pastures suffering from deficiencies in base elements. Over 30% of the Herero communal area, for example, is unsuitable for any agricultural activity due to the presence of gifblaar, and the absence of water. Yet other additions to existing ‘reserves’ consisted of marginal desert land. No less than 87% of Damaraland, for example, falls within the desert or semi-desert agro-ecological region. Forty per cent of Damaraland’s entire area lies in the Namib desert, which is described as virtually barren, offering no possibilities of dryland cropping and only ‘very little stock-farming’ potential. Similarly, the entire Nama communal area is classified as semi-desert.

Table 4.2 below lists the different agro ecological regions which make up the communal areas:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMUNAL AREA</th>
<th>AGRO-ECOLOGICAL REGION</th>
<th>AREA IN ha.</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL AREA</th>
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<td>7</td>
<td>662 372</td>
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</table>

Source: SWA, A Five Year Plan for the Development of the Native Areas, (Kindhoek, n.d.[1966]), Table xv, pp.15-35.

Notes:
* 44 080 ha for a game reserve are included in this figure, and are not included in the calculation of carrying capacity below.

** Key to agro-ecological regions:
1. Namib desert region: barren, dryland cropping impossible, very little stock-farming possible.
2A. Semi-desert region: Southern Namibia region. Suitable for extensive small-stock farming.
2B. Semi desert region: Western escarpment. Same as 2A.
3A. Bush savannah region: Central Plateau. Extensive stock farming, with large stock...
predominating.
5A Marginal Cropping region: Grootfontein-Tsumeb area. Extensive large stock farming, dryland cropping (mainly veld).
5B Marginal Cropping region: Owamboland Oshana area. Extensive large stock farming and dryland cropping.
6 Okavango River region: Dryland cropping combined with extensive stock farming.
7 Etosha Plains region: Extensive stock farming, conditional on sufficient water supplies. Saline underground water.
8A Savannah Forest region: Kaukauveld forest area. Extensive stock farming.
8B Okavango Forest region: Potential large stock farming with limited arable production on alluvial soils. Owing to lack of surface water, virtually unutilized for agricultural production.
9 Western Caprivi region: Same as 8B.
10 Eastern Caprivi region: Extensive stock farming and crop production.

The agricultural potential and utilisation of these areas will be analyzed in more detail below. Having established the size and locality of these areas with regard to the agro-ecological regions they comprise, we turn to an examination of the systems of land tenure in operation.

4.2 Land Tenure in the 'Communal Areas'

In terms of the League of Nations mandate, all land held by the previous German colonial government was conferred on South Africa. Only the Governor General of the Union had the power to legislate over the allocation of Crown land, but he also retained control over the actual process of allotment. So it was that the White Legislative Assembly (which was created in 1925) did not have any powers with regard to land issues until 1949.

Act 23 of 1949 transferred certain powers to the Legislative Assembly. The authority to allocate Crown land, for example, now rested with the Legislative Assembly in Windhoek and, despite Article 16 of Proclamation 11/1922, neither the Governor General nor the South African Minister of Native Affairs could alienate land for ‘native reserves’. This had to take place in future by Ordinance of the Legislative Assembly or by an Act of the South African Parliament. In April 1955 all ‘native reserves’ in Namibia became part of the South African Native Trust, which was itself established in terms of Article 18 of Act 18/1936. The Odendaal Commission proposed certain changes to the constitutional ownership of land and its recommendations to grant self-government to the homelands provided for the transfer of all land within homeland boundaries to respective ethnic Legislative Assemblies in trust for the population. In terms of these
recommendations such Assemblies would have the authority to release land for alienation to individual ‘citizens’ of the various homelands, subject to permission from the South African State President. Alienation to a ‘non-citizen’ could only occur with the approval of both the Legislative Assembly and the State President. 13

No fundamental legal changes occurred with regard to ownership of land until the late 1970s. Although only three Legislative Assemblies were established (in Owamboland, Kavango and Caprivi), the principles of the Odendaal Commission prevailed until 1990. In 1978 Proclamation AG19 conferred all Trust matters to the South African Administrator General in Namibia, which paved the way for the promulgation of the Representative Authorities Proclamation, 1980. More commonly known as AG8, this enabled ethnic ‘second tier authorities’ or ‘representative authorities’ to become the trustees of land in the homelands, although ownership continues to rest with the Central Government. AG8 also gave representative authorities powers identical to those proposed by the Odendaal Commission: they were able to allocate, sell or lease communal land under their authority, provided the Cabinet issued a certificate confirming that such land was not required for public or official purposes. 14 Proclamation 101 of 1985 transferred the Administrator’s authority as trustee to the Cabinet of the ‘Transitional Government of National Unity’.

Despite these changes to legal ownership of land in the communal areas, no attempt has been made to either specify or change land tenure patterns in the homelands. Generally-speaking, land tenure in Namibia’s homelands is communal (with the exception of the Rehoboth Gebiet, where private ownership is the norm). In the northern mixed farming regions, peasants acquire usufruct of arable land, while cattle are grazed on communal pastures. In the southern pastoral regions, pastures are grazed communally with several exceptions. In legal terms, the allotment of land in communal areas is the prerogative of the superintendent or ‘native commissioner’ of individual areas, although in recent times this authority has also been extended to Executive Committees of the Representative Authorities. Individual kings and headmen do not have any legal powers to allocate or withdraw land. 15

In practice, however, the situation is very different. All communal areas are divided into wards, each with its own headman or sub-headman. The Ovambo communal area, for example, consists of seven sub-regions; three fall under traditional kings and the remainder under chiefs appointed by the government. Senior headmen are in control of subdivisions of each sub-region, which in turn are further divided into wards under headmen or sub-headmen. As many as 50 sub-headmen, who control a village and its surrounding land, can come under the authority of a senior headmen. In the Herero communal areas, the Legislative Assembly has made provision for 52 wards, each falling
under a headman. The situation in the Nama, Caprivi and Kavango communal areas is very similar in its basic structure. For political reasons, however, the Nama administration does not recognise several of the traditional leaders and has instead appointed its own headmen. At grassroots level, therefore, parallel power structures operate in different communal areas. (For more detail, see the appendices to this chapter.)

Although traditional leaders and headmen have no legal powers to allocate land, all applications for land are directed through them, including applications from outside operators such as the First National Development Corporation and private companies. In some areas (such as the Caprivi) the Representative Authority itself makes a point of acquiring the permission of the traditional authorities before using land for its own purposes. As a rule, traditional leaders and headmen consult with their councils and the community before approving or disapproving a newcomer’s application for land. In none of the communal areas was it our impression that it was common to refuse applications for land; indeed, membership of a specific - mostly ethnically defined - community entailed automatic rights to land. The size of an allotment is determined by a number of factors, most important of which is the availability of land in a particular areas. Unutilised land can be opened up by individuals at their own expense; in the Herero communal area, for example, several farms have been fenced and camped by individuals with private capital.

In the northern communal areas a small fee is usually payable to the headman or senior headman on allocation of arable land, although there is no uniform system in practice. (In the southern areas, it is not customary to pay on allocation of land.) Once access has been granted, usufruct is held until the death of the ‘owner’. His or her direct relatives are then entitled to take over the land. In some areas the fee has to be repaid by heirs, but in others this is not necessary. It appears that women are entitled to hold land in all of the communal areas, but in practice it is mainly widows or divorced women who do so.

Available evidence suggests that chiefs and headmen have no further control over the land, although in one interview in Owamboland it was stated that senior headmen in this area can reclaim land if the owner is not working it. Since subsistence needs and social pressures ensure that all allocated land is in fact use, this seldom occurs. Although headmen and their councillors inspect land which is due to be allocated in some communal areas (for example, the Caprivi and Hereroland), there does not appear to be any uniform system in operation. Traditional means of pasture control do not appear to have adapted to conditions of acute water and land shortage, and nor have any mechanisms evolved to limit the number of livestock grazing on communal lands.
Large parts of the Nama and Damara communal areas and the Rietfontein block of Hereroland comprise former settler farms, which were incorporated as fenced and partially fenced units into those communal areas post-Odendaal. Virtually all these are utilised on a communal basis, with up to ten families farming on one farm. Similar conditions obtain in the Rehoboth Gebiet, where there are enclaves of communal lands in amongst the region’s fenced off private farms. Although camps exist on some of these farms, rotational grazing is not practised, nor have any attempts been made as yet to introduce co-operative farming on these units."

Communal land tenure is no longer uncritically accepted by all farmers in the communal areas. The larger stock owners in particular have come to regard the system as detrimental to further economic development, and argue that it has, for example, made it impossible to improve the quality of cattle since no proper control can be exercised over stud bulls and cows. In the Caprivi so-called commercial farmers also argued that a major stumbling block inherent in the communal system is that it precludes farmers from using land as a security against loans, thereby preventing them from gaining access to the generous financial assistance extended to farmers in the commercial areas by the Land Bank, and to other sources of financing. Moreover, the absence of camps is regarded as an encouragement to overgrazing. Opposition to private camps is strong however; in the Herero communal area competing interests have delayed a decision on whether to introduce camps on communal pastures and the issue has been passed from headmen to the Legislative Assembly and back again several times with no resolution.

Such complaints and demands neatly dovetail with the aims of both reformist politicians and government planners to transform the reserve peasantry into a small group of kulas. The first Five Year Plan released in the mid-1960’s stressed that ‘agricultural planning must ... pave the way in converting an existing subsistence economy to an exchange economy’. More recently, white agricultural planners and politicians have called for the ‘upgrading’ of communal areas through a transformation of existing production and property relations into fully-fledged capitalist relations of production. A government official was quoted in the Financial Mail as saying that:

Ultimately we must convince blacks to move away from the communal system. It’s a stumbling block to black commercial agriculture. Black farmers can’t get loans, for instance, because they don’t own property. Similarly, government employees living in communally owned areas can’t take advantage of 100% housing loans because they don’t own their plots."
Another official added that 'at present homelands are enclaves of socialism and we want efficient capitalist agriculture'. The advantages and disadvantages of these suggestions will be looked at in more detail below.

4.3 A Preliminary Assessment of Land Shortage in Namibia

The most common form in which land shortage manifests itself in the communal areas of Namibia is overgrazing. Evidence of this is largely descriptive, however. A study conducted in the early 1980s suggested that over- and selective grazing had resulted in the disappearance of perennial grasses in Damaraland, leading to large-scale soil erosion. As a result, carrying capacity was very poor and many years of good rainfall were needed for recovery." Similarly, the settled portion of the Herero communal area was regarded as over-populated and over-exploited in 1989, with an average stocking rate 40% higher than the recommended figure."

The northern areas are no exception to this process of over-utilisation and shortage of land. Here peasants live in high concentrations along the main water courses: 90% of the population of Kavango is settled within ten kilometres of the Okavango river, for example." Available evidence indicates that both arable and grazing land are under increasing pressure. In Owamboland, arable plots have decreased in size from an average of 6.3 hectares per household in the Oshikango region in 1958, to 2.6 hectares in the whole area in 1980." During the same period, stocking rates on grazing land reached alarming levels. In the late 1970s up to one large stock unit per 1.05 hectares was recorded in Kavango, whereas the stocking rate in the densely populated areas of Owamboland varied between 3-5 hectares per large stock unit." Attempts to determine the actual carrying capacity of the communal areas are bedevilled by a near-complete absence of reliable data on stocking rates, pasture degradation, and actual utilisation of the land. It may be useful, therefore, to look at the potential carrying capacity of the communal areas, according to the agro-ecological regions into which they are classified. The only identifiable attempt at determining the potential carrying capacity of the communal areas was made in the mid-1960s in the first Five Year Development Plan. It defined 'carrying capacity' as:

that unit area which is required for the maintenance and production of one large stock unit for a period of twelve months without there being any deterioration in the soil and the vegetal cover."

A summary of agro-ecological regions and carrying capacities, as determined by the Five Year Plan, is provided in Table 4.3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HOMELAND</th>
<th>AGRO-ECOL. REGION</th>
<th>AREA IN ha</th>
<th>CARRYING CAPACITY ha/LSU</th>
<th>TOTAL CARRYING CAPACITY</th>
<th>LSUs Dec. 89</th>
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</thead>
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Source: SWA, A Five Year Plan for the Development of the Native Areas, (Windhoek, n.d.[1986]), Table 15; SWA/Namibia, Directorate Veterinary Services, Namibia Stock Census December 1989, (Windhoek).
Table 4.3 suggests that stocking-rates in all communal areas are still within the limits recommended in the mid 1960s.

Several factors need to be considered, however, before drawing such conclusions. First, it cannot be assumed that the carrying capacity of communal areas is as it was in the 1960s. Impressionistic evidence, which suggests declining carrying capacities in the Damara communal area as a result of rapid ecological degradation, has already been cited. Indeed, the maximum carrying capacity of that area was given as 84 000 large stock units (LSUs) in the late 1970s, or 46% of the potential carrying capacity suggested by the Five Year Plan. A recent report on the Nama communal area suggested that the carrying capacity in that region was on average 4.5ha per small stock unit (SSU), or approximately 27ha/LSU. This is almost half the carrying capacity suggested by the Five Year Plan. It is reasonable to assume that similar processes have occurred in most, if not all, of the communal areas, although no data exists to substantiate the point scientifically. The implication for the argument presented here is that carrying capacities in the communal areas today are much lower than in the 1960s.

A second problem with these figures is that they are based on the assumption that 100% of all communal land is capable of being utilised: This is clearly not the case. In most areas, an absence of sufficient water and/or the presence of poisonous plants renders large areas unusable for agriculture. In Owamboland, for example, only 3% of the total areas was cultivated in the mid-1970's. Moreover, only 80% of the potential pasture area, or 66% of the entire land, was grazed because of a shortage of water.

In 1980, only 10% of the sand plateau in Kavango was supplied with water; the remainder was unutilized. By 1990 only an estimated 5% of Kavango's 4.9 million hectares were utilised for agricultural production. Large areas of Damaraland are unutilized because of water problems. In those parts which are some distance from the major rivers - Ugab, Omaruru, Unjab and Huab - problems are experienced in finding strong groundwater. Only 10% of all boreholes are successful. As a result, the maximum carrying capacity of the area was given as 84 000 LSUs in the late 1970s, or 46% of the potential carrying capacity suggested by the Five Year Plan. With regard to Hereroland it is more difficult to estimate how much land is unutilized. A recent estimate put the figure as high as 55% of the total surface area of Hereroland East and West. The southeastern corner of Hereroland measures over one million hectares, but accommodates only 10 farmers.
It is clear then that the LSUs represented in Table 4.3 graze on small portions of the communal areas. This means that certain pastures - particularly around water points - are heavily overgrazed, while others are underutilised. In several areas, therefore, the land question does not so much refer to an absolute shortage of land as it does to a lack of infrastructure to utilise land efficiently. Ovamboland, Kavango and Hereroland have a total of about 11 million hectares of un- or under-utilised land."

The argument has thus far demonstrated that stocking rates in the communal areas are at dangerously high levels, with potentially serious ecological risks. The conventional response to this has been to urge stock owners in communal areas to reduce their stock numbers so as to alleviate the pressure on land. However, this response rests on the assumption that existing stock levels are in excess of what people need. Unfortunately no attempts have been made to test these assumptions and to determine the minimum acceptable incomes for agriculturalists and pastoralists, and hence their land requirements.

Although the Five Year Plan laid down minimum land requirements, this was done in a purely arbitrary manner. The Plan simply postulated an annual income of R450 as satisfactory. It further argued that stock owners had to sell 30 cattle per annum to attain this income level. In the mixed farming areas it assumed cultivators needed eight hectares of arable land and sixteen cattle to attain the same income." By relating these requirements to carrying capacities, the Five Year Plan calculated the minimum area of land necessary to support families on communal land and concluded that the communal areas in Namibia were large enough to provide 118,715 families with an ‘independent livelihood’ on the land."

This brief discussion of the findings of the Five Year Plan has no more than historical value. It is interesting to note, however, that if the minimum incomes postulated by the Plan were accepted today, Namibia’s communal areas are not able to support the estimated 181,000 families living on communal land, even if 100% land utilisation is assumed."

This contention is reinforced if the views of small farmers on acceptable incomes are taken into account. Interviews in the communal areas suggest that what is acceptable to planners is not acceptable to farmers themselves. The Commissioner in Okakarara held that a herd of less than 100 LSUs was too little to provide an acceptable income; in his view a herd of about 250 cattle would be needed. it is possible to determine the monetary value of this minimum: assuming an average rate of offtake of 13% and an average price of R400 per head of cattle", a herd of 100 animals would provide a gross monetary income of R5,200 per annum.
Significantly, the minimum acceptable income in predominantly small stock areas, such as Namaland and Damaraland, was much lower. Here, 200 head of small stock (equivalent to about 5 LSUs) were regarded as too little, condemning the owner to poverty. In such cases, subsistence could only be ensured through off-farm income in the form of wage earnings from children or other relatives, or pensions. A minimum of 500 goats (about 85 LSUs) was needed to provide a relatively good income."

This discussion highlights several points. First, it emphasises the fact that, taking the expressed needs of communal farmers into consideration, present land areas are insufficient to provide them with an acceptable income under present farming systems. Second, the discrepancy between what is acceptable to planners and what is acceptable to communal farmers reminds us that setting target incomes, useful as it may be for planning purposes, hinges on a socio-political judgement which often reflects the values of development planners rather than those of the people concerned. (The minimum desirable income laid down in the Five Year Plan, for example, was in no way related to the actual needs of different sectors of the rural population.)

Third, the assumption is all too often made that the communal areas consist of a homogeneous population with equal land requirements. This does not reflect the reality: farmers in the communal areas are characterised by a high degree of differentiation. In Namaland, for example, 50% of stock owners had fewer than 100 SSUs in 1986, while 70% of these owned less than the average of 196 SSUs per registered farmer.\textsuperscript{54} While all cattle owners experience a shortage of land, their reasons for doing so differ. Wealthy stock owners, for example, complain that the communal pastures cannot accommodate their large herds, while poorer stock owners feel their access to pastures threatened by the wealthy.

Increasing pressure on the land is also deepening competition for available pastures. Indications are that poorer communal farmers are becoming marginalised. Much mention was made in interviews that richer stock owners ‘encroach’ on the land available to poor pastoralists. A member of the Herero Legislative Assembly argued that farming on communal land was leading to disunity, with different sections of the population oppressing each other, not giving the farmer with 500 cattle the opportunity to farm.\textsuperscript{55} In the Nama communal area a similar situation exists. Here, several wealthy sheep farmers are enjoying sole occupation of some of the surveyed farms incorporated into Namaland (see Appendix 4.8), whereas up to ten poorer farmers had to produce on a communal basis on similar farms.\textsuperscript{56}
4.4 Farming Systems

The capacity of land to satisfy the subsistence needs of any group of people depends as much on its natural potential as on the social and economic production relations under which it is exploited. In defining the nature of the land problem in Namibia, it is therefore imperative to consider different farming systems.

In the northern region, dryland cultivation is largely based on family arable holdings, averaging between 2,6ha in Owamboland to between 1 and 4ha in Kavango. Family stock have access to communal pastures. In Owamboland fields are laid on raised ground between the oshanas and are fertilised with kraal manure at the rate of approximately 0,1 ton per hectare; artificial fertilisation is exceptional. Circumstantial evidence suggests that cultivation in all three northern communal areas is still largely done by using a hoe: tractors are hardly used. In 1973, 24 tractors were identified in Owamboland, cultivating 2 150ha or 1,4% of the total area under cultivation. Although subsidised ploughing schemes have been run by the Departments of Agriculture in the Caprivi and Kavango, their impact on production has been minimal. (See appendices 4.1 and 4.2).

The average number of cattle owned by peasant families in Owamboland and Kavango in 1979 was 7,6 and 7,12 respectively, but little is known about their distribution within the population. In Caprivi, on the other hand, the average number of cattle owned by stock owners was 48,9 in 1980, with herd sizes ranging from 4 to 236.

In the southern communal areas extensive stock farming is practised. In the more arid regions (Namaland and Damaraland) small stock rearing predominates over large stock, and goats are preferred to karakul sheep (see Map 3.2 above). Cattle breeding is the chief pastoral activity in the Herero communal area. Settlements are permanent and concentrated around water courses and boreholes. A system of seasonal grazing is used with livestock moving to temporary cattle posts. Generally- speaking, all families have access to communal water and pastures.

While this characterisation of farming systems in the communal areas is brief, it serves to illustrate that the nature and extent of land shortage is contingent on the type of economic activity and the socio-economic conditions under which it is carried out. In the mixed farming areas of the north, peasants require land both for cultivation and stock breeding. As a result, the prevailing farming system is characterised by a high degree of interdependence: crop production is dependent on livestock for both draught power and to fertilise the soil. Draught power, of necessity, will become more and more important as
ploughs replace the hoe in cultivation. In turn, livestock depend on crop residues for feeding in dry months." Cattle are also an important source of nutrition and income. In 1986, income from cattle sales to local abattoirs amounted to R3,1 million in Owamboland alone."

The central point to emerge is that land shortages can take on both different forms and degrees of severity. In the pastoral communal areas, land shortage generally refers to a dearth of grazing or a lack of water on available pastures. But this picture is more complicated in the mixed farming areas: here three dimensions of shortage can be identified:

- a shortage of cropland to feed the family
- a shortage of grazing to maintain livestock and vegetation
- a shortage of draught power to cultivate the land."

4.5 Productivity and Communal Farming

A view persists among agronomists and government officials that the communal farming system is responsible for low output and productivity. Although the underdeveloped nature of infrastructure in the communal areas and a lack of access to markets are also cited, the ultimate reason for agricultural inefficiency is ascribed to 'traditional methods which are not geared to the free market system and which are further limited by social and political practices'."

Central to these claims is the belief that communal land tenure systems do not lend themselves to competitive agriculture." It is suggested that these tenure systems preclude the implementation of pasture conservation programs, frustrating attempts to bring stocking rates in line with carrying capacities. This negative perception of communal land tenure was graphically described by a member of the Nama Legislative Assembly when he likened it to a driver's licence: 'You have the right to ride over the proclaimed areas, but you can do nothing about repairing the road. This applies to communal ground as well'. He continued, 'the communal system makes agricultural extension and training almost impossible, because at best ... only extend[s] to basic animal health'. Stock improvement schemes are impossible to implement and communal agriculture is thus doomed to further decline along with further destruction of the veld."

These images are reinforced by an assumed unwillingness of pastoralists to sell their cattle. It is alleged, for example, that communal farmers keep cattle largely for social and cultural reasons, with the result that only between 1 and 2% of herds held in communal areas are marketed commercially. It then supposedly follows from this that 'traditional agriculture inhibits effective,
competitve agriculture."

If official figures are to be believed, productivity in communal areas is indeed low when measured against marketed output. While 42% of the national cattle herd was owned by communal farmers in the 1980s, their contribution to meat production was only 4%. The average yield of cereals produced per hectare is, at 243 kg, considered low. Taken together, the contribution of communal farming to GDP was estimated at 2% in 1983.

The conceptualisation of low productivity in the communal areas as a problem related primarily to 'traditional' agricultural practices had important implications for development strategies proposed by planners of the former Administration. These strategies invariably pre-empted any suggestions of land reform by putting the development emphasis on transforming 'traditional' agriculture into 'commercial' agriculture. The central motivation for such plans was a concern to protect and conserve existing pastures. The best way this could be achieved - according to agricultural planners and politicians - was to fence off communal land into camps and 'economic units'. This strategy, it was argued, would facilitate rotational grazing and therefore the gradual improvement of pastures.

The long-term socio-economic effect of 'economic units' would be the consolidation of the middle and rich peasantry at the expense of poorer communal farmers. Indeed, the long-term objective of the Draft National Development Strategy for SWA was to develop a 'financially healthy middle class of agriculturists' by transforming 'traditional' agriculture into 'market-oriented' production. Several government planners hoped that the establishment of 'economic units' would either lead to the disappearance of poor stock owners from the communal lands, or that they would seek wage employment rather than remaining on the land.

Although proposals to establish 'economic units' on communal land were first made in the early 1970s, the issue was only taken up ten years later. The extent to which such units have been fenced off differs between the communal areas. In Namaland proposals were made in 1988 to settle stock farmers with 400 or less head of small stock on 8 000 hectare farms; these were to be subdivided into four 2 000 hectare units, which would be allocated to individual farmers on the basis of a 'teenprestasie' of at least 5% p.a. for any financial assistance. Farmers who expanded their agricultural production accordingly would be allocated another 2 000 hectares, up to a maximum of 8 000 hectares. Those who showed no potential of succeeding would be encouraged to leave subsistence farming and work in a different sector of the economy. It was estimated that about 270 of these farms could be established in Namaland, accommodating about 1 500 people at an average family size of five people.
Although the Nama Legislative Assembly supported the establishment of economic units, financial restrictions prevented the appropriation of the necessary funds to implement these policies. It could not be ascertained whether any farmers had been settled on individual farms and if so, how many.

The most advanced proposals for the implementation of individual or 'economic' farm units were developed for the Herero communal areas. A scheme was proposed which had as its objective the settlement of full-time commercial farmers on units which could ensure minimum incomes through the opening up of then unused areas. An assumption was made that an annual income of between R20 000 and R25 000 would be adequate for Herero farmers. With a carrying capacity of about 12ha/LSU and a stocking rate of 85%, such a net income would require about 350 head of large stock and a minimum farm size of 4 900 ha.87

The Administration sought to accommodate as many stock owners in this scheme as possible, setting the lower limit for participation at 50 LSUs. The largest stock owners qualified for sole occupation of a surveyed farm, while the remainder had to share farms. The total number of farmers sharing was limited to four, thus leaving the smallest stock owners with 2 000 hectare units.88 The Administration was to control access to communal pastures vacated by resettled farmers so as to ensure the gradual rehabilitation of grazing. Stock numbers would be limited to the carrying capacity of the land. Improved training and provision of extension services for farmers remaining on communal land would, it was envisaged, gradually change communal farming systems towards 'market-oriented' agriculture.89

Such attempts to transform communal land tenure into individual title reflected to some extent the interests of wealthy communal farmers. For some time, these farmers had been demanding their own farms: indeed, many in Hereroland had begun to fence of individual farms on communal land. In the Epukiros area, for example, twelve farms have been fenced, at least one of which measures 10 000 hectares. 32 farms are fenced in Otjine and in Okamatapati 41 farms have been surveyed and fenced around artificial water points, which will ultimately service 56 surveyed and fenced farms. While the Rietfontein block consists of surveyed and fenced farms initially intended for white settlers, most of these are utilised communally.90

No attempt seems to have been made to fence off communal land for farming purposes in the Damara communal area. A draft proposal of the Department of Agriculture in the Damara Administration suggests that the communal utilisation of surveyed farms, incorporated into Damaraland as a result of the Odendaal Commission, should be converted into some form of co-operative. In terms of this proposal, farms should become the responsibility of those who farm them.91 This system, it was argued, would facilitate better pasture management and would therefore contribute to soil
and water conservation, which would in turn result in higher yields per stock unit." The Department of Agriculture would lay down rules and regulations with regard to grazing systems and breeding practices." No mention is made in the proposal about possible forms of financial assistance by the state.

Responses to proposal to transform the communal land tenure system to 'economic units' have been mixed. Predictably, the middle and rich peasantry have welcomed such proposals: they have long seen the communal land tenure system as a stumbling block to capitalist farming. The interests and perceptions of these farmers were succinctly expressed by a member of the Herero Legislative Assembly, who stated that 'our greatest desire in life is to farm on an economical basis', but that because of the high concentration of people in the communal areas '[we] cannot be rich because this is just impossible'. Similarly, the problem of poverty in the Nama communal area was ascribed to the fact that farmers 'are unable to own any land'. Dozens of motions have been passed in the Nama, Damara and Rehoboth Legislative Assemblies condemning the communal land tenure system and pressing for individual ownership of land.

While both middle and rich stock owners have demanded individual land holdings, their support has not been unqualified especially around the proposed size of 'economic units'. The view was expressed in the Herero Legislative Assembly that a 5 000ha farm was too small for many farmers." Comparable objections were raised in the Nama Legislative Assembly about the proposed 4 000ha 'economic units'." Those communal farmers who criticised the size of 'economic units' had cast their eyes beyond the boundaries of communal areas, and their demands for more land focused on the acquisition of farms in the commercial farming areas. A speaker in the Nama Legislative Assembly, for example, stated that:

if it is the prime aim and purpose of this government to develop the Nama farmers, then they should be prepared to develop them at the expense of the white farmer ... The opportunities which the white farmers have today, [Nama] ... could have had already."

This view has been shared by rich stock owners in other communal areas. The opinion was expressed in the Herero Legislative Assembly, for example, that whites should share their property with black farmers:

If there is a white person who owns ten farms then he must hand half of these to the government so that the government in turn is able to sell these to individuals who are able to afford to buy them." It is more difficult to assess the responses of less wealthy stock owners to attempts to fence communal land. Interviews conducted in the communal areas indicate that
‘economic units’ elicited strong opposition from poor stock owners; such conflicts frequently ended up in the law courts.” Opposition to ‘economic units’ should not be construed as rejection, but rather as defense of the narrow access to land. Several people indicated that ‘economic units’ were acceptable in principle, provided that the majority of poor stock owners did not lose access to land.”

In the absence of more comprehensive data an analysis of class differentiation in the communal areas has to remain rather sketchy. It is, however, important to recognize both this and the corresponding interests and expectations which flow from such differentiation. In order to plan for land reform and redistribution, attempts will have to be made to determine, as accurately as possible, the relative size and needs of different categories of communal farmers. In the Herero communal areas preliminary surveys indicate that approximately 8,3% of stock owners qualified for Land Bank loans to purchase land in the ‘commercial’ farming areas. Another 16% would have qualified for agricultural credit from the Representative Authority of the Hereros.”

4.6 Discussion

The foregoing discussion raises several critical issues about communal agriculture. All too often, as we have seen, planners have based their arguments on assumptions, rather than fact. It is too simplistic, for example, to assume that communal farming per se is the root cause of ecological degradation and low productivity. Similarly, ‘economic units’ cannot be said to be the only or even the most appropriate solution to Namibia’s ‘crisis of the commons’.

It is not clear that there is a direct causal link between low productivity in the communal areas and ‘traditional’ farming practices. Another conceptualisation of the same problem might be to enquire whether poor performance and ecological deterioration have ‘more to do with the historical forces that have generated a particular people-to-resource balance ...and/or... lack of supporting services’.” With regard to the first point, we have noted how communal farmers in the southern region were forced to work areas which most had never farmed before. As a result of water shortage large parts of the communal areas cannot be utilised for grazing or agriculture; so, overgrazing exists around water points.

This condition is aggravated by a lack of supporting services supplied by the state. In terms of AG8, responsibility for the provision of agricultural support services on communal land rested with each ethnic representative authority:” agricultural credit was thus a function of these institutions. While the provision of credit was governed by the Agricultural Credit Act, 28/1966, a lack of funds during the 1980s prevented the distribution of credit to communal farmers.”
As a rule, therefore, the majority of communal farmers do not have access to agricultural financial institutions such as the Land Bank, Agricultural Credit (Landbou Krediet), or other co-operative facilities. Several communal farmers indicated that the main difficulty in obtaining loans was the requirement for collateral in the form of privately owned land.

Unlike their white counterparts, communal farmers receive no subsidies for waterboring which has to be financed from personal funds, or with loans raised from commercial banks. Although the second tier Representative Authorities do play an important role in the provision of boreholes, funding to these bodies has been insufficient to meet the needs of the rural population for water (see, for example, Appendices 4.1 and 4.2). Budget allocations to the Departments of Agriculture in the communal areas are low and average a paltry 5% of the total allocated to agriculture nationally. With a shortage of public funds in the 1980s, communal farmers were encouraged by the Representative Authorities to make larger financial contributions towards the revenues of these Authorities; this meant, for example, that grazing fees were increased in most communal areas.

Further, to cut expenditure subsidisation of ploughing services and the purchase of diesel for water pumps was curtailed, and the responsibility transferred to farmers themselves. The Nama tribal councils, for example, provide diesel free of charge to the community out of tribal accounts, but in other areas stock owners have to purchase diesel and share the costs. In reported cases, rich stock owners have purchased diesel for pumps and then demanded a payment by all stock owners using the pump, irrespective of the number of stock watered.

All communal areas in Namibia face a lack of agricultural infrastructure of one kind or another. The situation in the Nama communal area illustrates the point very well: in 1985 a total of 115 dipping tanks and 65 crush pens served an area of 2,4 million hectares, or an average of one crush pen per 36 000 hectares, and one dipping tank per 20 400 hectares. If it is accepted that effective control of stock disease requires one crush pen and one dipping tank per 8 000 hectares of farmland, there were shortages of 228 crush pens and 178 dipping tanks. If - to strengthen the point - ten of each were constructed every year, it would take approximately eighteen years to make up this backlog.

The importance of questioning assumptions about low productivity and communal farming systems is borne out by post-independence Zimbabwe, where improved marketing and credit facilities for communal farmers led to a significant increase in marketed crops. Within four years of independence, peasants' share of crop sales to, and through, marketing boards increased from 6% for maize in
1980 to 15% in 1984. Deliveries of the latter increased from 11% to 41% respectively. Moreover, the decrease of production for consumption purposes from 80% to 59% in 1984 suggests ‘that subsistence production is no longer the only motivating factor for communal farming’.187

Parallel questions can be asked about assumptions that communal farming automatically leads to ecological degradation; research is needed to substantiate a causal link between the two. Although there is considerable evidence of ecological degradation in the communal areas, more evidence is needed on the connections between this and various related aspects of communal farming.188

Boonzaaier et al. have drawn attention to

many studies [which] document the existence of complex social mechanisms as well as ecologically-based management strategies which regulate the use and distribution of resources.189

Traditional management practices and ecological knowledge need to be investigated more thoroughly before the inferiority of communal farming practices can be accepted as a determining fact. Such investigations will be crucial for shaping agrarian reform programs, because they will establish whether existing farming systems need to be totally transformed or whether specific elements can be retained and further developed.

A marked feature of discussions about communal areas in Namibia is that the well-being of communal farmers themselves has received less attention than the condition of the soil. Because proposals to improve the productivity of communal areas were guided by market considerations, questions as to how much each sector is contributing towards marketed output per unit of land and what improvements could be made to increase such output were deemed more important than how to improve the welfare of the majority of communal farmers. This sets the context for a debate on the issue of ‘economic units’.

If, at the outset, there is a contradiction between the interests of individual farmers and those of the community at large with regard to grazing needs, and if customary pasture management systems cannot respond adequately to this situation, the introduction of economic units and camps may facilitate better pasture management.190 It should, however, be remembered that this particular solution to the agrarian problem is only one among several others. Its advantages and disadvantages therefore need careful scrutiny.

First, the enclosure of land into camps and ‘economic units’ does not automatically lead to better pasture management. Attempts to introduce rotational grazing by dividing reserves into grazing camps in the northern Cape Province of South Africa, for example, ‘have proved to be
a dismal failure'. Notwithstanding a five year rest period, such camps were overgrazed and in a poorer condition than adjacent land. Similar evidence can be found in some of the communal areas in Namibia. A report on the Herero communal area found that most of the farms fenced in as 'economic units' in the Okamatapati area were overgrazed. At an average carrying capacity of 10ha/LSU these farms were able to carry about 490 cattle. However, herds of up to 800 and 1 000 cattle were found on several farms, thus suggesting 100% overgrazing.

Second, with respect to the question of how economic the farming units are, no clear answers follow. Even though some care was taken to calculate farm sizes in the Herero communal area, the proposal referred to above drew attention to the fact that the long-term carrying capacity was already showing signs of ecological decline. Within a year of water having been supplied to the area north of Okamatapati, it was already overstocked. Whereas 27 500 LSUs would have found grazing on a planned basis, by 1980 between 80 000 and 100 000 cattle were grazing there. In 1985 this area was reported to have been transformed into a desert. Under these conditions assumptions about land sizes will have to be revised: existing farm sizes of 4 900 hectares will not be able to provide the targeted income.

In the Nama communal area, sheep and goat farmers regarded 'economic units' of 3 000 to 4 000 ha as insufficient for farming. With a carrying capacity ranging from one to six hectares per SSU, farmers were allowed a maximum of 500 sheep but these numbers were considered insufficient to 'make a reasonable existence'. It was suggested that farmers could 'make a more economic living' on a 7 000 hectare farm.

Even if the suggested minimum areas of 'economic units' is accepted, the social costs involved in such a system need to be carefully investigated before implementation. Carving up existing communal areas into 'economic units' would mean that the majority of communal farmers would lose access to land. Assuming that the entire Nama communal area could be utilised for agricultural production, the establishment of 'economic units' at 8 000 hectares each would provide only 268 farmers with a 'more economical living'. This figure represents only 25% of the 1 076 farmers registered in 1988. Similarly, rough calculations suggest that the Herero communal area might provide about 930 'economic units' of 4 000 hectares each; only 17% of the 5 500 farmers registered by the Herero Administration could thus make a living out of agriculture.

Comparable figures do not exist for other communal areas. But the central point is that the implementation of 'economic units' in all the communal areas - as envisaged by several of the ethnic Representative Authorities and
political parties such as the DTA - would deny thousands of communal farmers access to the land. Their alternative, to engage in wage labour, would, on past experience, ‘...not represent a significant improvement in standard of living’.100

The acceptance of the notion of economic units in communal areas might also mean that wealthy stock owners would have to reduce their stock numbers in order to qualify for these units. This is best illustrated by drawing an example from the Nama communal area in the early 1980s. The maximum number of stock permitted on the planned ‘economic units’ of between 3 000 and 4 000 hectares was 500 sheep. Apart from the fact that this was considered insufficient for a ‘reasonable income’, farmers owning more than 500 SSUs but less than 1 250 were placed in the unenviable position of not qualifying for farms allotted under the 1/10th scheme, because the minimum stock requirement was 1 250 SSUs.101

Third, the socio-economic dimension of transforming communal areas into ‘economic units’ requires much more investigation than it has received in the past. It is essential that communal farming be placed within the wider economy to understand its relationship with wage labour. More information is needed on the degree to which systems of reciprocity and redistribution still operate in the communal areas, and how they articulate with the urban economy.

The evidence suggests that such mechanisms of mutual support do exist in the communal areas in Namibia.102 What is less clear is how these mechanisms operate, for example, in supporting the unemployed. Superficial evidence suggests that unemployed and poor people are either employed by relatives or friends, or simply provided with food.103 However, many families are simply unable to provide sufficient support for unemployed family members. One result of this is stock theft, which is a serious problem in most communal areas.104 While agricultural productivity in communal areas may be low when compared to that of the commercial farming districts, it is still very significant in the overall survival of many people and communities. The division of the communal areas into ‘economic units’ would destroy the support mechanisms which exist, with important consequences for urban workers.105

4.7 Conclusion

The single most important issue that emerges from any analysis of the communal areas in Namibia is the dearth of socio-economic data. Accordingly, it is impossible to make recommendations about land reform programs or specific rural development interventions. It is strongly recommended, therefore, that research into conditions in the communal areas be regarded as a top priority by the new government.
As the discussion has demonstrated there are no simple solutions to the land issue in the communal areas. Not only does the nature and extent of land shortage differ regionally, but also within regions. As agricultural producers are differentiated according to type of agriculture practiced, so socio-economic differentiation produces different demands on and expectations of the land.

Regarding agricultural transformation, more information is needed on both existing systems of pasture management and how elements of communal farming systems affect productivity and the ecology. It may well be the case that structural transformations are called for, but it may also prove advantageous to modify existing systems rather than to replace them in toto.

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NOTES


5. SWA/Hasibia, 'Ondeloper missies', p.3.


8. Ibid, p.81.


12. An agro-ecological region can be defined as a broadly homogeneous area 'within which it can be expected to find similar ecological conditions'. SWA A Five Year Plan for the Development of the Native Areas, Windhoek, n.d. [1988], pp.11-15.


16. (Hasibia Administration), 'Udgawe aan die Kositee insake die vervreemding van Herero-kroneunne (sic) areas', n.d., p.1.

17. Ibid.


19. (Hasibia Administration), 'Opgawe aan die Kositee', p.2.

20. Ibid.


27. Interview: Mr Peters, Otakarao, November 1989.


29. Interview: Mr Peters, Otakarao, November 1989.

30. Interview: Mr Peters, Otakarao, November 1989.


33. First National Development Corporation (Kwekel, A. et al.), "Streekstudie van Omaheke en aangrenzende gebiede van silimisine Ontwikkelingsprojekte waarna die eerste regionale ontwikkelingskorporasie van SWA beperk deel kan nee te identifiseer" (Windhoek, 1961), pp.46-47.


38. Ibid, p.46. For details on the principal factors considered in determining carrying capacities see ibid, p.46.


41. Claassen and Page, ontwikkelingsplan, pp.16, 41; Die Zemelbok, 9.3.90.

107. SWA/Namibia: Debates of the Legislative Assembly of the Nama Representative Authority, 3rd Session, Vol.6, 1986, p.97. See also Vol.7, p.27.


113. [Administration for Hereros], 'Namaqualand-Veewaggingprogram', p.28.

114. [Administration for Hereros], 'Verslag van die Ereroland-Wes Ontwikkelingskomites', p.4.

115. SWA/Namibia: Debates of the Legislative Assembly of the Nama Representative Authority, 3rd Session, Vol.7, 1987, pp.149-150.

116. SWA/Namibia: Debates of the Legislative Assembly of the Nama Representative Authority, 4th Session, Vol.5, 1987, pp.139-149.

117. Boonzaaier et al., 'Communal Land Use in Namibia', p.7.


120. Boonzaaier et al., 'Foes communal grazing to 'economic' units', p.489. Archer et al., 'How economic are the farming units of Lieliefontein', p.[9]
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

As stated in the introduction the land question in Namibia (as elsewhere) is a complex social and political problem. There are no easy answers and this study, we believe, reflects this reality. Most Namibians, however, have no choice but to seek their livelihood off the land.

While fishing and mining will continue to drive Namibia's economy, the land remains the new country's most precious bounty. This, plus the undoubted emotional bond between the people of Namibia and the land, will make agricultural choices difficult for the government of an independent country.

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The appendices which accompany this study give a clear indication of the complexity and challenge of communal farming in Namibia. They also reveal the rich diversity of Namibia's people and a central challenge which the government faces will be to weld this diversity into a nation. We believe that agriculture will be central in the promotion and deepening consciousness of a Namibian nation. This process will have to begin by stripping away the facade which the Odendaal Commission created and developing effective and acceptable administrative tentacles to the furthest reaches of the country. There is no pretending that this will be an easy task. Namibia is a huge country and effective government will be hampered by the expense of communications. In addition, it is clear that the Odendaal Commission's recommendations developed vested interests which are counter to nation-building.

Communications also affect perceptions: in Namibia's case the notion that policy is made in a distant capital has debilitated agricultural development. Time and again interviewees pointed out that, in their view, policy "was made in Windhoek" with little, or no, bearing on conditions on the ground. Effective and efficient agriculture will rely on close liaison and consultation between farmers and government.

It is absolutely imperative that the country's educational system should be geared to ensuring economic prosperity and well-being for all its people. Beyond sloganeering of this kind some policies need to be implemented at the school level which will ensure that the land itself prospers. The first of these would seem to be that mathematics and science subjects should be pursued more vigorously at progressively younger ages. All farmers need to understand that modern agriculture is driven by principles which are grounded in these disciplines.
Peasant farmers have immense agricultural skills and this study demonstrates exactly how, under extreme circumstances, they can succeed. But a single central cry from all those we interviewed in this study was for training and the development of skills. Such training will be far more effective if it is grafted on some basic understanding of mathematics and science.

However, a community’s relationship with the land cannot be weighed by mathematics alone and international experience teaches that the most efficient form of training for development is appropriateness. In Namibia’s case this will mean the deployment of a cadre of advisors who would be able to work with agriculturalists at all levels. The present agricultural extension service will prove to be inadequate to deal with the exigencies of an independent Namibia. We would suggest that the entire extension service be imaginatively rearranged to deal with different levels of agriculture and to ensure that all Namibia’s farmers are equally served with this support system.

Drawing on international experience is certain to be of great help in this regard. This will show that effective agricultural support needs to be accompanied by community acceptance and understanding of the system. Our impression is that this was largely absent in Namibia in 1989.

It may be so that Namibia chooses to utilise the non-government organisations (NGOs) as the main source of agricultural support. We believe that the development and growth of NGOs will be central to Namibia’s effective growth. The South African occupation prevented, in our view, a clear unfettered understanding of the value of NGOs: again, international experience is instructive.

The changing role of the state in modern society reveals, above all else, that central government alone cannot support all the needs of a country’s inhabitants. Neither parenthetically can business meet these needs. It follows therefrom that efficient and effective distribution of resources in societies need to be channelled through third parties and an increasing international consensus has focused on the importance of NGOs. Governments, too, need to look upon NGOs as partners in the development process and not as antipathetic to the process of government. NGOs have a reciprocal relationship with government; governments can use NGOs to reach communities. Before, however, this idea can take root in Namibia we believe it would be necessary to initiate a debate which would ensure that Namibians fully understand the important role of NGOs.

Despite Namibia’s massive land resources, the country will increasingly have to concern itself with environmental questions. In Namibia’s case these are relatively specific: bush-encroachment and desertification are clearly areas of central concern. But other environmental issues are certain to emerge in the decades which lie ahead. It might be an imaginative step for the new
Namibian government, at the earliest possible moment, to institute a thorough and clear understanding of the scope and extent of the environmental challenges which face the country. A bold step in this direction might be the establishment of an environmental protection agency which would have as its central concern environmental issues but which could also balance contesting claims to land and its use.

It seems ironic that the overriding conclusion of our research is to urge the necessity for more research. Namibia, frankly speaking, is one of the most under-researched areas in the world. In part this was a function of the long years of South African occupation.

In a country whose exchequer will be considerably strapped research may seem to be an unnecessary luxury. But this study shows how deleterious and ultimately paralysing the implementation of policy which is not based on a sound understanding both of physical and human conditions can be. As the bibliography attached to this document shows, there has not been a full agricultural census in Namibia since 1975. If however, there is to be the collection of data and research on land the traditional statistics collected need to be carefully assessed for their ultimate utility. In Namibia’s case ratios and other data were often designed to support ideological predispositions. We would strongly suggest that not only does Namibia borrow relevant methods or analyzing agricultural realities from other countries, but determine its specific needs. Additionally, perhaps traditional notions used in discussions of land and agricultural issues will need reassessment and redefinition.

All of this will of course take place in an environment in which all statistics for the country will have to be recharted. Of particular importance for agriculture, among these wider statistics will be the clear ascertainment of what constitutes minimum acceptable incomes. The notion of subsistence farming will remain central to Namibian agriculture.

If subsistence farming is at the micro end of Namibian agriculture, the macro end is represented by international marketing of its products. Enumerable times the point has been made that existing patterns of Namibia’s economy tie the country to South Africa. Independence will change this. There is no doubt that the country will gain access to the European market through the complex maze of the Lome Convention and consequently an independent Namibia will be a certain candidate for membership of the African-Caribbean-Pacific group (ACP group). Beyond this, however, the search for markets will continue and recent changes in Eastern Europe suggest that, perhaps, Namibia will find a fruitful target for its products in those countries. While
it seems unlikely that the close relationship with South Africa will ever be destroyed it seems imperative that Namibia should begin to wean of its dependency on South Africa, particularly in the field of imports. This may involve a reassessment of cropping priorities in the rural areas.

Most political parties addressed the issue of land redistribution and there can be no avoiding the necessity for this to be strongly and forcefully debated within the country. It seems clear to us that some form of redistribution will have to take place. However, prudent public policy dictates that this should be on a willing buyer willing seller basis. There seems no doubt that the commercial farming sector is in need of very serious rehabilitation. Debt overhang has destroyed the tenuous claim which commercial farmers have to economic viability. In the interests of nation building and reconciliation of competing claims to land, credit and support, we propose that the new government establish a fully representative commission of enquiry into commercial farming and its viability under the chairmanship of a judge of the Namibian Supreme Court. Although such commissions have frequently deliberated in the past, the narrow ideological concerns of the colonial power, South Africa, often prevented them from the necessity of painful choices in the public interest. Namibian independence enables the proposed commission to break with this unhappy past.

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As in other countries, there is an organic link in Namibia between people and the land. Without people the land is barren; without the land people are denied life's opportunities.

Namibian independence opens a new chapter in the country's history. The excitement and passion which will flow from liberation derives, essentially, from a common love by all Namibians of the land. The surest route to real freedom and its twin, reconciliation, lies in honouring common respect for access to the land.
APPENDIX 4.1

THE CAPRIVI

1: Geographical location

The Caprivi is a 425km long strip of land extending east from Kavango in north east Namibia into the border area between Angola, Botswana and Zambia. See Map 4.1.1 below:

MAP 4.1.1:
Geographical location of Caprivi

Source: Adapted from First National Development Corporation, Namibia, P.34.
2. East Caprivi

This area extends eastwards from the Kwando River for 215km, has a surface area of 1,187,684 hectares (11,600km²), and an estimated population of around 50,000. The most important physical determinants of land use and settlement patterns in the East Caprivi are the availability of water and the suitability of soils for cultivation.

2.1 Water

The East Caprivi is entirely bounded by perennial rivers, with the exception of its north-western border with Angola. The southern border with Botswana comprises the Kwando-Linyanti-Chobe River system, while the Zambezi River forms the north-eastern border with Zambia. The East Caprivi has an annual average rainfall of 650 mm, which is the highest in the country and produces seasonal flooding of rivers. According to a 1980 survey, 23% of the Caprivi's population draw water directly from the rivers for domestic and livestock use; 35% are dependent on wells as a primary source of water, 14% depend on boreholes, 11% use springs, dams, or mulapos, and the remaining 18% depend on a bulk water scheme at Katima Mulilo. However, despite the East Caprivi's abundant surface water supplies and its high water table, there are numerous problems with accessing water for human and livestock consumption. These include the following:

(i) Sandy soils hamper the construction of wells, which are susceptible to collapse and therefore have a short life-span. The introduction of plastic casings can increase the life-span of wells, but as these casings increase the cost of construction they are beyond the means of most communities in the area.

(ii) Little is known about groundwater and the water table in the region, which makes it difficult to assess the potential yield of boreholes and wells and accordingly leads to a high level of wasted construction. No boreholes yield sufficient volume for irrigation purposes.

(iii) In some areas (for example, Lusu and Masokotwane), the quality of water is brackish and unfit for human consumption. *Salvinia molesta* infestation of the Kwando, Linyanti and Liambezi also affects water quality and increases the risk of disease-carrying bacteria.

(iv) The supply of funds for water provision from the Central Administration to the Department of Agriculture has been inadequate to meet the needs of the East Caprivi's population, and has diminished from R150,000 in 1987 to R75,000 in 1989.

(v) The Caprivi is not unsusceptible to drought, despite its high average annual rainfall. Although the
situation has improved, in recent years Lakd Liambezi all but dried up, with serious consequences for the communities on its banks. In the mid-1980’s the situation became so serious that water had to be delivered to these communities by tanker. Some are still dependent on the Department of Agriculture for water or on expensive and unreliable private transportation of water from Katima Mulilo."

2.2 Soils

In areas which are seasonally flooded soils consist of sand to sandy loam, with even patches of loam, while the remainder of Caprivi has heavy loose sand, much of which is of poor fertility. Soils support dryland cultivation of crops such as maize, mohangu (pearl millet), and sorghum; these are the staple foodstuffs in the region.

The agronomic potential of soils in the East Caprivi has been tested by Opperman et al (1982) and van der Vegte et al (1983); their pertinent findings follow:

(i) Approximately 15 000 hectares were classified as having a high potential for dryland cultivation. Soil types in this category include soils of the Annandale series on the edges of poorly drained mulapos, those of the Matigulu and sedgefield series in the vicinity of Chinchimane and sachona, and those of the Allanridge and Levubu series, which occur mainly in the western area and on the elevated portions of the eastern floodplain. Soils of the Witsand series in the east had a slightly lower potential.

(ii) None of the East Caprivi’s soils were regarded as having a high potential for irrigation. Some 11 300 hectares (65% of the surveyed area) had soils with a medium potential for irrigation, and concentrations of these soils were identified in the Singalamwe-Kongola area, along the main road between Sibinda and Sachona, and in the Bukalo-Ngoma area."

2.3 Settlement patterns

The accessibility and availability of water, together with the suitability of soils for dryland cultivation, are the main physical determinants of settlement patterns in the East Caprivi. Prior to the 1960’s settlements comprised villages concentrated along the boundary rivers in the east, around Mpalela Island in the West, and on the high ground of the flood plain. Villages in the Singalamwe area, the Linyanti-Kanono area, and around Sibinda had the highest concentrations of people. Settlement in the central-western part of the region was not possible due to a lack of readily available water. Subsistence farming was the dominant economic activity in the region as a whole, and involved dryland cultivation of maize, millet and sorghum for own consumption. Cattle were used primarily as draught animals.

123
The population was prone to high levels of mobility within the region, as a result of changing water levels and availability of pasturage. Floodplain dwellers in the east, for example, followed a seasonal migration to dry land further west in order to ensure summer grazing for cattle, while in the west a smaller scale of seasonal movement was related to cropping and pasturage."

On the establishment of an SADF base at Katima Mulilo and a rapid growth in the size of the Administration for Caprivians in the 1970s' a process of urbanisation was set in motion which resulted in changes in settlement patterns, a decrease in the importance of subsistence agriculture in the region, the entrenchment of wage employment and the development of a cash economy. Changes in settlement sizes are illustrated in the following table, which shows the growth in the size of Katima Mulilo and a decrease in the size of some of the larger rural settlements in the region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SETTLEMENT</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>1982/3</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sibinda</td>
<td>2 350</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>(- 1550)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngoma</td>
<td>1 177</td>
<td>1 000</td>
<td>(- 177)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabbe</td>
<td>1 070</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>(- 620)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linyanti</td>
<td>1 762</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>(- 1162)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sangwali</td>
<td>1 402</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>(- 1042)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katima Mulilo</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>14 000</td>
<td>(+13708)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


An absence of records makes it difficult to calculate the rate of urbanisation in the area; this is further complicated by the levels of mobility within the Caprivi. In addition, it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between urban and rural dwellers. Although no figures are available, it appears that a sizeable majority of those who migrate to Katima Mulilo in search of wage employment or as members of the small but vibrant informal sector do so either as daily commuters from nearby villages, or on a weekly basis, returning to their villages over weekends. Those who work in Katima Mulilo may also be engaged in agricultural production and maintain close links with rural villages." A recent estimate suggests that some 50% of the population now lives, temporarily or permanently, in Katima Mulilo." At around 25,000 people, this means that the population of Katima Mulilo has almost doubled since 1982/3.

Natural disasters and improvements in the road system have been additional stimuli to changes in settlement patterns. Dryland cultivation of staple foodstuffs is the backbone of...
subsistence farming in the Caprivi and farmers are highly vulnerable to periodic droughts or flooding, particularly in the absence of institutional fallback mechanisms, such as access to credit facilities and subsidies. Natural disasters have an immediate and devastating effect, particularly on those farmers whose production is not supplemented by wage employment. Widespread flooding fifteen years ago, together with the severe drought the region experienced in the mid 1980's, forced some farmers to abandon the land and prompt a drift to Katima Mulilo. The squatter settlement next to Ngwezi township is partly the product of the rural/urban drift which followed these natural disasters. No information is available on how many, if any, of these people have since been able to return to their lands.

In addition, although the road system within Caprivi is still inadequate there has been a marked improvement in the past twenty years, which has facilitated access to Katima Mulilo both from outside Caprivi and from outlying areas within the region. It has also encouraged denser settlement along access routes, especially the tarred Katima-Kongola road and the sand surfaced roads from Katima to Ngoma on the Botswana border, and to Linyanti in the south west. The forced removal of settlements from the area north of the Katima-Kongola road (termed the "golden highway") in the mid 1970s by the SADF increased settlement along this road, which was further intensified when a water pipeline was installed to facilitate roadworks. In some areas access to the transport network has overridden considerations such as the availability of potable water and suitable land for dryland cultivation, and the growing concentration of people and livestock along access routes has produced localised overgrazing.  

Maps 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 overleaf illustrates water supplies and road accessibility, and the main areas of settlement.

### 3. Agricultural production

Changes in dependence on subsistence farming in response to the development of a cash economy are difficult to calculate, given a complete lack of any information on the numbers of people engaged in different economic activities. However, a 1980 survey of household expenditure indicated that some 48% of the population had monthly household expenditures of less than R10, which suggests a heavy dependence on production of households needs through subsistence farming. The remaining 52% of the population accounted for 99% of the region's household expenditure and were primarily dependent on wage employment or on the informal sector.  These figures suggest a widening gap between wage earners and those dependent on subsistence agriculture, and a decline in the ability of the population to sustain itself through farming alone.
MAP 4.1.2:
Eastern Caprivi: Water supply and road accessibility

Source: SMD/Namibia, Department of Governmental Affairs (van der Vegte, J.H., et al), Eastern Caprivi Regional Development Strategy, p.32(s)

Source: S.W.A./Namibia, Department of Governmental Affairs (van der Vegte, J.H., et al.), Eastern Caprivi Regional Development Strategy, p.32(a)
All land in the Caprivi is communally owned. However, changes prompted by the development of a cash economy, wage employment and the growth of the urban population have resulted in the creation of two different systems of production in the region:

3.1 Traditional subsistence or semi-subsistence farming.

Farmers in this category are those whose production is planned to meet their own immediate needs. Although surpluses of maize and other staple foodstuffs may be produced in good years, and sold either through the FNDC mill in Katima Mulilo or through informal marketing networks, production is not planned for the market and the cash income from farming is therefore low to non-existent. More than 60% of the rural population is still engaged in subsistence or semi-subsistence farming, producing maize, millet and sorghum for own consumption on plots which vary in size according to the availability of land in a particular area, the size of a family and its pool of labour, and the distance of plots from the family's village. Cattle are individually owned but grazed on communal lands and are used primarily as draught animals or as insurance against years when the harvest of staple foodstuffs is poor.

It is common practice among officials in the Administration to point to conservative tradition-bound farming practices, a lack of incentive, and other supposed attitudinal/cultural problems as the root of the poverty trap into which subsistence farmers are locked. These problems, it is suggested, prevent farmers from transforming themselves into commercial producers of a greater variety, quantity and quality of agricultural produce. The inherent precariousness of subsistence farming and the lack of guaranteed markets for new products does mean that farmers are wary of attempting new production techniques or different crops. However, several farmers interviewed expressed a keenness to improve their farming techniques and to begin producing a greater variety of crops for sale on the market, but argued that there are objective constraints on their ability to do so. Among problems which were given special emphasis were the following:

3.1.1 Although the transport network has improved in recent years, outside of the Kongola-Katima-Linyanti-Ngoma network access to the outlying areas is largely limited to meandering tracks through heavy sand, many of which (particularly in the east) become impassable during the rainy season. Farmers thus experience great difficulties getting themselves and their produce to markets in Katima Mulilo. There is no existing public transport system, and although some private vehicle owners act as informal taxis the cost is high.

3.1.2 The Caprivi has sixteen extension officers (around one for every 200 farmers): eleven are dotted around the
rural areas and a further five are based in Katima Mulilo. However, this does not mean that farmers’ needs for training and advice are being met; to a large extent the rural-based personnel are themselves undertrained, and are not regarded by farmers as a channel for the acquisition of better farming skills. Several farmers interviewed could not remember when an extension officer had last been seen in their area, while others perceived them as ‘people who work in an office and wear a suit’.

Nor is there any agricultural training centre in the Caprivi to meet farmers’ repeatedly expressed need for better agricultural skills. A number of agricultural projects have been initiated by both the Department of Agriculture and the First National Development Corporation (FNDC). These have had as one of their aims the provision of training for farmers, both in improving existing farming techniques and in the production of new crops. However, the training aspect of these schemes has been neglected with the result that the schemes have become an object of contention in the community. The Isiize Rice Project initiated by the FNDC is a case in point. According to the FNDC, one of its main aims in this project was to train local farmers in rice production, and to settle a group of farmers on plots of one hectare each. Successful production of rice by a few farmers would, it was hoped, have a demonstration effect and encourage others in areas with a suitable natural environment to also diversify into rice production. It appears that land granted to the FNDC by the Khuta (tribal authority) for the rice project was sold so on the understanding that the project should aim at adding to the community’s pool of agricultural skills. However, after three years the project ‘hasn’t even started to train one Caprivian. This adds fuel to the negative image the FNDC has in this area’. Notwithstanding technical difficulties which the FNDC has experienced in the rice project, it runs the risk of being regarded as ‘yet another example of an FNDC operation which exists only to make a profit for that organisation’ and in the process, reduces local people to labourers.

3.1.3 Farmers interviewed singled out their lack of access to tractors as the single most important factor inhibiting the production of greater volumes and varieties of crops. Dependence on ox-drawn ploughs limits the amount of land which farmers can cultivate to that which is sufficient to meet their own subsistence needs. Although a subsidised ploughing scheme has been run by the Department of Agriculture for a number of years, the charge of R13 per hectare is beyond the means of most farmers. As one farmer put it, ‘That government tractor is there only for the rich farmers. We are poor people. We can’t pay that money’. Government tractors are also frequently out of operation for extended periods due to mechanical problems and a lack of skilled maintenance personnel, with the result that farmers cannot rely on the service being available when they need it. The Department of Agriculture intends to discontinue this service, arguing that it is too costly, ties up agricultural staff who are needed for other tasks, and creates dependency among the population.
3.1.4 Farmers are unable to purchase the inputs (fertilisers, improved seeds, implements, breeding stock etc.) which are needed to improve both the volume and quantity of agricultural produce. As communal farmers do not have secure title to the lands they cultivate and occupy, they are unable to raise loans from the Land Bank or other financial institutions. Further, cash incomes from subsistence farming are an occasional byproduct of the system rather than an integral part of it. Agricultural inputs are thus beyond the financial reach of most farmers in the region.

3.2 Commercial farmers

Despite these constraints, a second group of farmers is emerging who plan production with a view to selling on either the informal or the formal market, and are commonly referred to as 'commercial farmers'. It is not possible to quantify either these farmers, or the produce that they market. It appears that while they regard agricultural production as their primary economic activity, most are still partially dependent on wage employment in Katima Mulilo to finance their agricultural production.11

Maize is the most easily marketable product in Caprivi: the growth of a non-agricultural sector has increased the demand for maize in the region and extended the market for this product within the Caprivi. However, despite record harvests in the past two years, consumption of locally produced maize fell drastically as a result of competition from illegally imported cheaper Zambian maize. The poor transport infrastructure between the Caprivi and the rest of Namibia and the high costs involved in transporting maize to Namibian markets has also slowed the ability of commercially produced Caprivian maize to compete with South African imports. The fixed price offered by the Agronomic Board for maize dropped from R429 per ton in 1988/9 to R329,50 in 1989/90 as a result.12

Allocated plots of arable land vary in size but may be anything up to three hundred hectares in the case of plots farmed by production co-operatives. Production co-operatives are gaining support in the Caprivi and a number of these, representing some eighty farmers, have been organised into the Likwama Farmers' Association. This group straddles political, religious and tribal affiliations and according to one of its members, represents "a new generation of farmers who want to move away from subsistence agriculture into commercial farming, and which aims at uplifting and reinforcing independent producers".13 Likwama aims to seek support from the white commercial sector, specifically the South West African Agricultural Union (SWAAU), in order to transform itself into a legally recognised production co-operative which will be able to obtain funding, provide loans to its members, and act as a pressure group. Although a number of subsistence farmers interviewed expressed an interest in
participating in production co-operatives, there was also a view that Likwama exists only for the benefit of ‘rich’ farmers, that it represents an elite within the region.\textsuperscript{34}

4. Environmental problems

Grazing land for grazing purposes is communal and cattle - whether they are owned by subsistence farmers or the small group of commercial producers - are run wherever suitable grazing occurs. There are localised areas of overgrazing, particularly along access routes to Katima, Linyanti and Ngoma. Although areas such as the mid-western interior are still virtually unutilized for grazing purposes, a 1983 report sounds a note of caution regarding the future potential of these areas:

The veld types in the Eastern Caprivi are all susceptible to interference caused by ill-timed or complete absence of veld fires, overgrazing, and uncontrolled exploitation of its timber base. The occurrence of any one or a combination of these factors leads to a degradation of the grass cover and shrub invasion, which ultimately results in the destruction of the area’s grazing potential. ... In its natural state these areas are inhabited by animals of the browsing type who do not cause this imbalance. By introducing cattle, however, an area is rendered vulnerable to degradation unless properly managed. This is an important factor in considering opening hitherto unutilised areas for grazing purposes. It is especially the Katima-Ngoma land bridge which is vulnerable to this kind of erosion. The limited expansion with regard to grazing land in the east indicates that pressure on this areas is likely to increase, and it should thus enjoy the highest priority in agricultural control and management to avoid the destruction of this resource base.\textsuperscript{35}

Although overgrazing has not reached the degree of ecological degradation which characterises some other communal areas (notably Ovamboland and Damaraland), there is no room for complacency. First, bush encroachment has already reduced carrying capacities in some areas, notably around Kanono.\textsuperscript{36} Game in the area is fast disappearing, as are the indigenous trees which are cleared to make way for cultivation.

Second, although a number of writers predict an urban drift in Namibia following independence, the Caprivi has historically had a low rate of outward migration. Despite the precariousness of subsistence/semi-subsistence farming, farmers interviewed on the eve of independence elections expressed no desire to leave the area in search of employment or land elsewhere in the country. It is likely that pressure on land will increase with the population growth.
Third, as the East Caprivi is regarded as having the highest agricultural potential of any area in Namibia, it will attract increasing attention from both the new government and foreign and local investors. The Lonrho Group, for example, has announced plans to develop a 6,000-hectare sugar-cane plantation in the region. Demands for increased production in order to supply Namibia’s internal markets and service the needs of a growing population will intensify pressure on the environment. But optimism over the Caprivi’s potential agricultural contribution needs to be tempered by a sober recognition of the fragility of the ecosystem on which that potential rests.

5. Land Tenure

As with the other communal areas, communal land tenure in the East Caprivi is governed both by traditional law and by the second-tier Representative Authority in accordance with laws enacted by the Central government. Chapter 4 above has provided some detail on the latter; what follows is a brief outline of some of the characteristics of the traditional system in the East Caprivi.

The East Caprivi is divided into two ‘tribal areas’: the Mafwe people live in the west of East Caprivi, and the Masubiya in the east. The traditional system of authority is the same in each area and closely mirrors that which operates in the Kavango and Ovamboland. Each village is under the authority of an induna or headman, who is usually the male head of the first family to settle in a particular area. On his death, or if he is considered unsuitable for the post by the village community, a new headman is elected. A number of villages together constitute a ward, headed by an induna ya silalo (ward headman), whose appointment is made by the tribal council (Khuta) after consultation. Silalo indunas tend to be older men, who, having been village headmen, have experience in the exercise of traditional laws and authority. There are no official barriers to women occupying these positions, but in practice it seldom happens.

The Khuta, or traditional council, is the highest legislative, administrative and judicial body in the traditional system. It comprises a number of silalo indunas and is headed by the Nkambela, or chief official. The Khuta acts as a link between the community and the chief, who is the overall head of each tribe. Among other functions the chief is responsible for the Nkambela’s appointment; the latter acts as his mouthpiece and as that of the Khuta in liaising with the community. Although the chief’s position is hereditary, the Khuta has the power to discharge him from office if it is felt his conduct is unsatisfactory. The Mafwe and Masubiya Khutas have their headquarters at Bukalo and Chinchimane respectively.

The network of authority under which residents of both tribal areas live begins thus at the village level with individual headmen and extends through the silalo or ward level to that of
the Khuta, while the final authority rests with the chiefs of the two areas.

In terms of AG8 of 1980 the Capriviacquired a Representative Authority, and a system of government dictated by the Central Administration was superimposed on the traditional system. Among other powers, the Representative Authority gained the right to allocate land and became, in a strict legal sense, the owner of all land in the East Caprivi. At the time of writing the various Representative Authorities have not been disbanded and their legal authority is intact. In practice, however, the traditional process of acquiring land still predominates. The two Khutas wield considerable authority in the area and are the de facto controllers of access to land. From discussions with villagers in both the Mafwe and Masubiya areas it appears that land is still regarded as the property of the respective tribes under the custodianship of their chiefs, and not as the property of the Representative Authority.

Two distinct types of access to land exist, in common with other areas where mixed subsistence farming is practiced (i.e. Kavango and Owambo). The first is individual or family access to residential plots and arable land, while the second involves communal use of the same land for individual benefit. Each adult member of the Mafwe and Masubiya is entitled under traditional law to a residential plot, an arable allotment, and access to communal land for grazing, wood and thatch collecting. However, land cannot simply be occupied or tilled at the farmers’ discretion. Each element in the hierarchy of traditional authority has to be satisfied that an individual is eligible to acquire a particular piece of land for cultivation, and that the land itself is suitable for that purpose.

The first criterion in determining eligibility is membership of the tribe under whose area of jurisdiction a plot falls. In practice, though, affiliation to a different tribe within the Caprivi (or even, from another part of Namibia), is not an impediment to the acquisition of land. The main proviso is that an applicant for land in a ‘tribal’ area other than his or her own area must be willing to accept the authority of the Khuta and must also be acceptable to the community in that area.

Second, whether an individual originates from outside the Caprivi or is ‘classified’ as a member of either the Mafwe or Masubiya, the ability to live harmoniously with the existing inhabitants of a particular area is an important criterion in determining whether he or she is granted access to land in that area. In this regard, the silalo induna or the village headman will normally consult with the village community to determine whether a prospective newcomer is acceptable. If not, the applicant would be required to seek acceptance in another village or a different ward. In practice, however, it appears that acceptance is not often withheld.
Third, the village headman and silalo induna have to determine whether prior claims exist to a particular piece of ground. If land has been temporarily vacated by its 'owner', or if it has been inherited but not yet cultivated by the heirs of a deceased member of the village, or has been earmarked for some other development by the Khuta, such prior claims take precedence.

Fourth, the land applied for must be demonstrably suitable for cultivation and must have adequate access to water. This is particularly the case for new settlements in as yet unoccupied areas, but in theory this proviso would also apply in areas where excessive settlement has resulted in degradation of the natural resources. If, for example, the village community and indunas in a particular area feel that additional families cannot be supported as a result of pressure on available water supplies or grazing, existing occupants and their heirs would be given priority over prospective newcomers in access to land in that area. In practice, however, it does not appear that excessive settlement in a particular area is often (if ever) cited as a reason for refusal to grant access to land.

Finally, the amount of land allocated depends on the availability of land in that area and the anticipated needs and capabilities of the applicant. Factors such as family size and the available pool of labour are considered.

Each step in this process requires the acceptance and approval of the traditional hierarchy. Although the ultimate authority rests with the Chiefs of the two areas, both rely on the advice and assessment of the Khutas. They, in turn, rely on assessment by silalo and village indunas. According to a former Nkambela in the Masubiya area, the easy availability of land in the past ensured that there was minimal conflict over access; however, as arable land and available resources diminish increasing competition for these resources is expected to generate some degree of conflict. In the past, conflicts have involved disputes over prior claims to land and have been resolved by the Khutas. In such situations the Khuta's decision is arrived at on a consensus basis with the chief as the final arbitrator. It does not appear as though any major grievances exist with regard to the role of the Khutas in the allocation of land; on the contrary, their authority and the traditional system on which it is based are widely respected and strictly adhered to.

Once an individual acquires permission to cultivate a piece of land he or she is required to pay a once-off lump sum in cash or in kind to the Khuta. The amount varies and is linked to the size of the land and to what its new 'owner' can afford. Income from other sources (e.g. wage employment) is taken into account in determining this payment. The Khuta's central obligation in this regard is to
ensure that the amount of cattle or cash it requires in payment for the right of occupation is within the means of an applicant for land, in order to ensure that the economic situation of applicants is not a barrier to acquisition of land. In cases of extreme poverty the Khuta will attempt to find temporary employment for an applicant or will defer payment until some unspecified future date. A nominal levy of R4 per year is also charged.

In strictly legal terms an individual who acquires the right to a piece of land is required to formalise the Khuta’s allocation by obtaining a "permission to occupy" (or PTO) from the Administration for Caprivians before he or she can take up occupation. In practice, however, this is a minimally-observed rubber-stamping exercise in which the Administration defers to the judgement of the Khutas. The Administration itself customarily approaches the Khutas for permission to utilise land it may require for its own purposes. Outside operators such as the FNDC also need the Khuta’s permission before land can be used for purposes other than cultivation by individual farmers.

Land tenure is a sensitive issue in the Caprivi. It appears, for example, that the issue was manipulated for party political gains in the run-up to the 1989 elections; SWAPO’s policy was misrepresented to the rural population in some areas by opposing political parties by the claim that a SWAPO government would "take away the land and sell it to foreigners". Conversely, news has also filtered through to rural communities that elements within the Administration, the DTA and the FNDC favour the introduction of a system of leasehold to replace customary communal tenure in the area. These issues have caused some fear among farmers who derive a strong sense of security from the knowledge that they have an inalienable right to land under traditional law; they firmly reject any suggestion that this right could be tampered with.

The new government will need to recognise the strength of the rural population’s attachment to the communal system in this area, and will also need to allay the fears of that population by ensuring that the details of its agrarian reform program are adequately communicated.

*****

NOTES

2. Ibid., pp.33-34.
4. Interview: Mr B Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
5. Interview: Mr D Limbo, Likoma Farmers’ Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
7. Interview: Mr Nyasa, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
8. SWA, A Five Year Plan, Table 15; SWA/Malibia, Directorate of Development Co-ordination, Population Census 1981: Geographical Distribution. According to the 1981 population census the Caprivi’s population was 37,923 people; at an increase of 3,41 per annum its current population is therefore 45,915.
Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Induna Lobake, Kabbe Village, East Caprivi, and former Khombe Mr HKalundo, Iphu Village, East Caprivi, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Nyewi, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr H Huyengo, Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, Windhoek, October 1989.
Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.


Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr S Matumbata, SWAPO, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr H Huyengo, Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, Windhoek, October 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr S Matumbata, SWAPO, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Ms S Matumbata, SWAPO, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr H Huyengo, Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, Windhoek, October 1989.
Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.


Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Ms S Matumbata, SWAPO, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr H Huyengo, Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, Windhoek, October 1989.
Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr S Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Ibid.

Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr P Hwasi, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr H Lehdera, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Windhoek Observer, 27.9.89.

Interview: Mr P Hwasi, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.
Interview: Mr H Lehdera, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989.

Interview: Individual farmers and Indunus at Kabbe, Iphu, Kalah<table cell_count="10" row_count="9" width="100%">
| 15. | Ibid. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 16. | Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Katima Mulilo, August 1989; Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989; Interview: Mr H Lehdera, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 17. | Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Katima Mulilo, August 1989; Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 18. | Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 20. | Ibid. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 21. | Ibid. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 22. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 23. | Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Katima Mulilo, August 1989; Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989; Interview: Mr H Lehdera, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 27. | Ibid. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 28. | Ibid. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 29. | Ibid. | Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Katima Mulilo, August 1989; Interview: Mr N Davidson, Agricultural Consultant, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 30. | Interview: Mr Nyam, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Caprivians, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 32. | Interview: Mr P Hwasi, SWAPO Election Directorate, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 33. | Interview: Mr H Lehdera, LIKWE Farmers' Association, Katima Mulilo, August 1989. |
| 35. | van der Vege et al, Eastern Caprivi, p.111. |
| 36. | Ibid. | Information in this section is based on a series of interviews conducted with village heads and men and women farmers at Iphu, Kalah, Noma, and Lisikili villages, current and former officials in the Mahabyn Nutsa, and representatives of the DTA and SWAPO in Katima Mulilo and Windhoek during August and October 1989. |
APPENDIX 4.2

KAVANGO

1. Geographical location

Kavango is located in northern Namibia. Its dominant physical feature is the perennial Okavango River, which flows through a broad flood valley annually inundated by floods. The river forms almost the entire border with Angola and separates Kavango from West Caprivi in the east; in the south and west Kavango borders the 'homelands' of Owamboland and Bushmanland, while its south western border is the white farming district of Grootfontein. See Map 4.2.1 below:

MAP 4.2.1: Geographical location of Kavango

Source: Adapted from First National Development Corporation, Namibia, p.34.
MAP 4.2.3: Kavango: Geology

Source: Page, D., In Bemerk vir Ontwikkeling van Kavango, Vol.2 Figure 2.
2. Agro-ecological regions, landuse, and agricultural support systems

Map 4.2.2 overleaf illustrates the distribution of population, and clearly demonstrates the importance of access to water in determining settlement patterns: some 78% of the population is concentrated within a ten kilometre strip along the banks of the Okavango River, while the interior of Kavango, where surface water is scarce, is sparsely inhabited. In 1987 the estimated population of Kavango was 128 000 people, the majority of whom (59%) lived outside Rundu in rural and semi-urban areas and were dependent on subsistence agriculture. Approximately 30-40 000 refugees of the war in Angola have settled in Kavango since the mid 1970’s, and have been absorbed into the population.

According to a Five Year Plan drawn up for the 'homelands' following publication of the Odendaal report, Kavango comprises some 5 607 200 ha and includes the following agro-ecological regions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGRO-ECOLOGICAL REGIONS: KAVANGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bush Savannah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owamboland Oshana area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okavango River region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etosha Plains region</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okavango Forest area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SVA A five year plan for the development of the Native areas, (Windhoek, n.d. [1988]), Tabla 27

However, more recent estimates put the size of Kavango at 4 545 500 ha and suggest the following uses of land in the area:
Maps 4.2.3 to 4.2.6 overleaf show that the region has a high and relatively reliable rainfall and favourable soil conditions along the river banks. These factors permit mixed subsistence farming, which takes place under a system of land use and land tenure similar in its essential characteristics to that which obtains in the Caprivi. Appendix 4.1 above outlines the operation of the communal system of land tenure in the Caprivi, and the details will therefore not be repeated here. The major difference between the Caprivi and Kavango in this regard is that where the Caprivi has two 'tribal areas', chiefs, and traditional councils, the Kavango has five. Map 4.2.7 shows the geographical location of the different 'tribal areas' in Kavango.

Subsistence farming activities in these areas are dominated by dryland cultivation of crops. Maize and mahango is presently farmed in a 3km strip along the fertile river banks, and stock (primarily cattle) are grazed on the flood plains. Horticulture is the primary economic activity and mahangu is the main crop produced both for own consumption and informal sales within the region. An estimated 20 000 tons are produced a year which are generally sufficient to meet the Kavango’s requirements for this staple foodstuff. In 1988/9 harvests were so abundant that 150 000 kg of mahangu were bought by the FNDC, the only formal marketing channel in the region, for resale in Ovambo.

Stock figures in the communal areas are notoriously unreliable, but the Department of Agriculture estimates the following livestock numbers between 1986 and 1988:
MAP 4.2.5:
Kavango: Rainfall and distribution of boreholes

Source: Page, D., 'n Baarn, Figure 11.
MAP 4.2.6:
Kavango: Water points and stock concentration

Source: Page, D., in Paauwe, Figure 12.
### TABLE 4.2.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1986/7</th>
<th>1987/8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle</td>
<td>74 000</td>
<td>79 867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goats</td>
<td>22 577</td>
<td>23 076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheep</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>4 510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkeys</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chickens</td>
<td>27 491</td>
<td>39 288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigs</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>1 820</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Few cattle are marketed within the Kavango and the Red Line cordon fence between this region and the southern commercial districts prevents marketing of meat of live animals outside the 'homeland'. Most cattle are grazed within a ten to twenty kilometres strip along the banks of the Kavango River; this area displays a marked degree of overgrazing and environmental degradation.5

The Kavango shares similar infrastructural and production support inadequacies to those which characterise the East Caprivi and indeed, most of the communal areas in Namibia. The interior of Kavango in particular is characterised by an almost complete absence of infrastructure, as map 4.2.8 demonstrates.

Impressionistic evidence suggests that even fewer farmers in the Kavango are involved in what is commonly termed 'commercial production' than in the East Caprivi. This is partly attributable to the fact that the staple foodstuff in the Kavango, mahangu, has little if any market outside the northern communal area; further, as the Kavango falls behind the Red Line, no livestock can be marketed outside the region. The fact that the majority of farmers in the Kavango are still locked into subsistence production is, however, also directly attributable to deficiencies in production support, extension services, and infrastructural development.

The activities of the Department of Agriculture have been severely constrained as a result of insufficient funding and inadequately trained personnel. The share of funds allocated by the Administration for Kavangos to agriculture averaged R2,46 million between 1981 and 1987 (in comparison to R12 million for general services, R10 million for education, and R8,7 million for health and welfare).6 This amount has been inadequate to meet the demands for services, (which include the construction of boreholes, ploughing, research activities), forestry, maintenance of the Department’s agricultural projects, and staff salaries. Insufficient funding has meant that the Department’s role in the
provision of water (particularly in the underutilised interior of the region) has been limited; deep sands make the construction of boreholes an expensive undertaking. Between 1985 and 1989 a total of 67 boreholes were drilled with an average depth of 68.56m and an average cost of R10 346,89 per hole; seven of these were unsuccessful. As Map 5.2.8 illustrates, boreholes in the Kavango are concentrated along the river with very few in the interior. The lack of readily available water in the interior is a major reason for underutilisation of land; the interior is only used for seasonal grazing in short periods during the summer.

The Department of Agriculture is also unable to continue its subsidised ploughing service and the Executive Committee of the Administration for Kavango's decided in 1988 that the service would be privatised. Departmental tractors and ploughs are to be sold to individuals. Part of the reason for this was that farmers were unable to pay their share of the costs, thus placing an even greater burden on the Department's limited financial resources; between 1986 and 1988 the debt incurred by farmers amounted to R34 125, R53 747 and R87 681 for each successive year. Privatisation will undoubtedly mean that fewer farmers will be able to afford to plough their fields; even under the subsidised scheme, only 583 farmers had their fields mechanically ploughed between 1985/6 and 1987/8.

Insufficient funding, a lack of adequately trained personnel, and insufficient transport are also partly to blame for inadequacies in the extension service offered by the Department of Agriculture. Visits by extension officers in the Kavango dropped from 289 in 1987 to 241 in 1988 and finally to 135 in 1989; this was partly caused by inadequate transport. The Department had little if any contact with farmers in the interior of Kavango.

In 1988/9 the extension service was reorganised in order to integrate courses conducted at the Mashare Agricultural College, set up in 1979 to train local farmers in agricultural skills. Courses run at Mashare include animal husbandry, forestry, management of co-operatives, vegetable production and pig farming. The number of people trained per year is around 120, although this varies. The college is, however, inadequate to meet the needs of the rural population for better farming skills. The college also engages in research for the Department of Agriculture, and a variety of products from animals kept at Mashare for research purposes are sold to generate funds for the Department. These include milk, cream, butter, pork, beef, goat meat, chickens and eggs, the sale of which raised R22 876 in 1987.

The Department of Agriculture is also responsible for controlling and developing forestry in the region. According to a 1976 study, 4 600m³ of 'dolf' wood and
4162m³ of Kiaat can be harvested per year without depleting the region’s resources." Two types of forestry take place in the region: first, informal harvesting by individuals, who use the wood either for housing and fencing or for the carving of curios for sale to tourists; and formal harvesting which is done on the basis of concessions granted to private contractors by the Department of Agriculture."

A number of other agricultural projects are run by the Department of Agriculture, including two small vegetable projects at Mashare and Nkurenkuru, a cattle farm, six dryland grain projects, a game camp in the south, and a Eucalyptus plantation at Hamoye. Some of these (for example, Mashare and Nkurenkuru) are run as production units which generate funds for the Department because it is otherwise "unable to fulfil its responsibilities as a result of a shortage of funds". Production figures and the value of crops produced at Mashare and Nkurenkuru between 1986 and 1989 were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4.2.4</th>
<th>MASHARE AND NKURENKURU PRODUCTION PROJECTS: PRODUCTION FIGURES, 1986-1989</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1986/7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MASHARE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mealies</td>
<td>28 803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>8 592 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NKURENKURU</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mealies</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>4 797 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>R4 896</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Administration for Kavango, Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry, "Mashare-Nkurenkuru, 1986-1989."

In addition to the activities of the Department of Agriculture, the First National Development Corporation is also involved in various agricultural projects in the Kavango. These include a commercial cattle production farm in the Mangetti block (which falls outside the Red Line), and a number of irrigation projects using the waters of the Okavango river. The latter, together with the irrigation projects of the Department of Agriculture, supply some (but not all) of the Kavango’s vegetable and dairy requirements. Table 4.2.5 below gives brief details of the FMDC irrigation schemes along the river banks in 1986.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHEME NAME</th>
<th>IRRIGATED AREA (ha)</th>
<th>CROPS</th>
<th>AREA OF DRYLAND CROPPING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Musese</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>Ground nuts, 430 wheat</td>
<td>Maize, cassava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maguni</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>Citrus, mangos, vegetables</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Najango</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>Avocados, citrus, litchies, mangos</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadikongoro</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>Cotton</td>
<td>180 cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shitemo</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>500 cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umvungu-vungu</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>80 maize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


FNDC projects have undoubtedly contributed to the provision of Kavango’s vegetable and dairy requirements, and have further demonstrated some of the possibilities which exist for expanding the range of agricultural products in the Kavango. However, according to the FNDC’s regional director in Rundu these projects are run with the primary motivation of generating profits for the FNDC \(^1\); providing training for Kavango farmers has not been a significant objective. As such FNDC projects can not be regarded as having contributed in any meaningful way to farmers’ need for training in new and improved production techniques. The capital intensive nature of most FNDC projects also means that their value in terms of a demonstration effect must be doubted; the kinds of inputs which these projects require puts their production systems far beyond the financial reach of subsistence farmers.

Map 4.2.9 overleaf illustrates the geographical distribution of agricultural projects run by the Department of Agriculture and the FNDC.

**NOTES**

2. Interview: Party Political Representatives, (SWAPO, National Patriotic Front), Rundu, August 1989; Interview: Mr P Horn, Director: Agriculture officials in the Department of Agriculture (Administration for Kavango), and the Samu Stakapfent, Rundu, August 1989.
3. The Secretary, Administration for Kavangos, to The Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Nature Conservation, Windhoek, headed ‘Produksie in Kavango’, (Rundu, 16.5.89), Ref. P.06, 16/4/1/8.
5. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
19. Interview: Mr H Niemand, Regional Director, First National Development Corporation, Rundu, August 1989.
APPENDIX 4.3

OWAMBOLAND

1. Geographical Location and physical features

The Owambo communal area is located south of Namibia's border with Angola. To the east and west it borders on Kavango and Kaokoland respectively; the Etosha Pan and the commercial farming districts of Otjo and Tsumeb form its southern boundary. The total area of Owamboland is 5,567,400 ha.

The area is extremely flat, with altitudes ranging between 1090 and 1150 metres above sea level. There are no perennial rivers in Owamboland but a number of dry water courses called oshanas traverse the centre of the region. The most important of these is the Cuvelai, which runs across central Owamboland and feeds into the Etosha Pan. During the rainy season, floodwaters from the Angolan highlands inundate this area. The flow of oshanas is rather irregular, and seldom does the Cuvelai reach the Etosha Pan. Over a seventeen year period there was one abnormal flood, ten normal floods and six years with no flood at all. Maps 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 illustrate the system of oshanas and the catchment area in the Angolan highlands.

To the east of the oshana area the land drains into several small pans, which stretch down to 18 degrees latitude. South of 18 degrees, the area is characterised by permanent dunes. The area to the west of the oshanas is dotted with large numbers of small pans, although little surface drainage takes place.

Rainfall in Owamboland decreases gradually from an annual average of more than 500mm in the north east to about 350mm in the south west. In the densely populated oshana area, the average annual rainfall ranges between 450 and 500mm. Rainfall is irregular, and more than 60% of the annual rainfall is below 500mm. Precipitation occurs mainly during the summer months from October to April.

Except for the oshana area, Owamboland has no surface water resources. Because of its topography, it is impossible to build dams to store flood water in the area. During floods, however, people conserve water in holes or make use of shallow wells. As the subterranean strata are highly impervious, little water is lost, except through evapotranspiration. Regions to the west and east of the oshana area rely on boreholes. The success rate of drilling operations is about 80%. However, large tracts of land are utilised because of a lack of water. As a result, the population is concentrated in the oshana area (see Map 4.3.3).
MAP 4.3.2:
Owamboland: Etosha catchment area

Bron: Bamard (2) sa sos aangehaal deur Swansvelder e.a. (16)

Source: Cleassen and Pape, Ontwikkelingsplan, Fig. 2.3.
2. Agriculture and Land Tenure

The Five Year Plan for the Development of the Native Areas, which was presented in the wake of recommendations of the Odendaal Commission, identified five main agro-ecological regions in Owamboland:

- Bush savannah 519 083 ha
- Owamboland Oshana Area 2 014 981 ha
- Etosha Plains Region 662 372 ha
- Okavango River Region 294 387 ha
- Okavango Forest Area 2 116 377 ha

Altogether about 190 000 ha (3.4% of the total land area) is suitable for dryland cultivation, although only 150 000 ha were utilised before 1987. In 1987-88 only half the area suitable for dryland cultivation was utilised, while roughly 40 ha were under irrigation. 5.37 million ha was grazing land. In terms of institutional distribution, 4 500 ha belonged to the State, 104 000 ha were owned privately, and 5.5 million ha were 'tribal' land.

The land classified as 'tribal' land is farmed communally. Plots of between 2 and 5 ha are allotted to peasant families by headmen. Once allotted, peasant families enjoy permanent usufruct to the land (see Chapter 4 above). Grazing land is used communally. In the south eastern portion of the communal area, 97 farms of 1 200 ha each are leased to private farmers.

No exact figures exist on the number of livestock in Owamboland. The Namibia Stock Census of December 1989 estimated that the area had 362 584 head of large stock and 362 000 head of small stock. This amounts to a total of 422 917 large stock units (LSUs). Recent production figures for Owamboland are also not available. Figures for the number of stock sold and income derived from cattle sales are only available for the years 1983 to 1987. Since then no annual reports have been issued, or, if they have, no figures are given for private cattle sales. The table below provides a summary of stock sold and income obtained from 1983 to 1987:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>CATTLE SOLD TO BUTCHERIES</th>
<th>INCOME IN R</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983/84</td>
<td>5 299</td>
<td>1 887 556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984/85</td>
<td>1 569</td>
<td>693 954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985/86</td>
<td>4 288</td>
<td>1 740 623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986/87</td>
<td>5 316</td>
<td>3 080 528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987/88</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stock owners in Owamboland experience problems in marketing their cattle. Owing to endemic diseases, particularly lung sickness or bovine pleuropneumonia, Owamboland - like the Kavango, Eastern Caprivi and Kaokoveld - is subject to strict veterinary restrictions and no animals or fresh meat may be marketed outside the region. All cattle have to be sold either privately or to the abattoir (owned and run by the First National Development Corporation). Local markets, however, are severely limited due to the limited buying power of the population and small demand.  

Agricultural development in Owamboland has been neglected for many years. Extension work did not exist for some time; trainees appointed to extension posts did not receive the required guidance and supervision, so that almost all farming activities 'are carried out in traditional ways' and no links have been built between the Directorate of Agriculture and communal farmers. A specific problem raised in connection with the shortage of extension staff is the inappropriate education system. Most matriculants in the region do not have any scientific subjects such as mathematics, science or biology, and thus can not be considered for tertiary agricultural training without bridging courses. An agricultural training college existed at Ogongo, but the dairy, pig and poultry units 'were rationalised' in 1988 'because of their lack of relevancy to our country's needs'. Moreover, the research station at Mahenene was also closed down.

NOTES

   Republic of South Africa, Report of the Commission of Enquiry, p.289: 


3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.


7. Republic of South Africa, Report of the Commission of Enquiry, p.289. See also Moorson, 
   'Underdevelopment and Class Formation: The origins of migrant labour in Namibia 1815-
   1915', in E. Adler (ed.), Perspectives on South Africa. A Collection of Working Papers, 
   (Johannesburg, 1977), pp.158.


9. S.W.A., A Five Year Plan for the Development of the Native Areas; (Windhoek, n.d.[1966]), 
   Table 15.

10. Administration for Owambos, Annual Report, Agriculture, 1983-4, pp.22-2; 1984-5, pp.1- 
    2; 1985-6, tables 1.1 and A.2; 1986-7, pp.37-38; 1987-8, tables 1.1, 1.2.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.


14. Ibid.

15. SWA/Namibia, Directorate of Veterinary Services, Namibia Stock Census December 1988. 
   (Windhoek, 1989).

16. Administration for Owambos, Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry, 'First draft 
    concerning movement of the cordon fence', (Ondangwa, 1989), p.4: First National 
    Development Corporation, 'Agriculture in Northern Namibia: Fundamentals and Potential', 
    A Position Paper assembled by the First National Development Corporation, (Windhoek, 1990), 
    p.11.

17. [Moorson, C., (Directorate of Agriculture, Administration for Owambos);], 'A Framework for 

18. Interview: Mr C Moorson, Director: Department of Agriculture, Administration for Owambos, 
    September 1989.

19. SWA/Namibia, Proceedings of the Second and Third Owambo Legislative Council, 22nd Session, 
    (Ongwediva, 1987), p.146.

20. Ibid.
APPENDIX 4.4

DAMARALAND

1. Geographical location and physical features

The Damara communal area is situated in north-western Namibia. To the north it is bounded by Kaokoland and in the east and south by commercial farms in the Otjo, Omaruru, Karibib and Usakos districts. Its western border runs along the coast for a distance of 40km. Its overall size is about 4.7 million hectares.¹

The altitude of Damaraland rises from sea level to about 1500m. Although the western part of the area is characterised by undulating landscapes, it is fairly level. The eastern portion, is mountainous.²

Rainfall in the area is very unreliable, both from one season to the next and within seasons. It decreases from c.300mm per annum in the east to less than 100mm per annum in the west.³ The highest rainfall normally occurs between January and March. As Map 4.4.1 shows, 50% of the area receives less than 150mm of rain per annum. No permanent rivers exist in Damaraland. The main dry rivers are the Omaruru, Ugab, Unjab and Huab. The major source of water for agricultural purposes are boreholes, but great difficulties are encountered in finding boreholes away from river beds. Moreover, the success rate of boreholes is only about 10%.¹

2. Agriculture and Land Tenure

Eighty-seven percent of Damaraland falls within the desert or semi-desert agro-ecological region.⁴ Extensive stock farming is the predominant agricultural activity in the area. In 1989, 33 071 head of cattle and 180 993 head of small stock were counted in this area, or a total of 63 237 stock units.⁴ Because of the low rainfall only 217 24 ha, comprising 30 farms or 5% of the total area, can be used for cattle farming.⁴ The remainder of the area is best suited for extensive small stock farming. Just under 50% of the total stock consists of small stock.

Vast expanses of land in the western, drier part of Damaraland are at present unutilised for agricultural purposes as a result of a lack of water. High concentrations of livestock around the existing waterholes have resulted in large scale overgrazing and ecological degradation of pastures in these areas.⁴ This in turn has led to widespread erosion and greatly diminished carrying capacities. In the 1970s the maximum carrying capacity of the Damaraland was estimated at around 84 000 large stock units.⁴
MAP 4.4.1: Damaraland: Rainfall

Verklaring:

--- 300 --- ISOHETE (—-)

Source: FNOC (Markvat, A. et al.), "'n Streekstudie van Damaraland en Aangrensende Gebiede", Fig. 4.
Limited potential for irrigation exists around several strong fountains at Sesfontein, Kowarib, Fransfontein, Sorob and Warmquelle. Three of these - Warmquelle, Sesfontein and Kowarib - supply enough water to irrigate about 30-40 hectares of land each.

Land tenure in Damaraland is communal. 1 862 800 ha, or 43% of the total area, however, consists of surveyed and fenced farms formerly owned by whites and added to the Damara communal area in terms of the recommendations of the Odendaal Commission. Although integrated as fenced farming units, these farms are utilised communally. The idea has been raised in the Administration for Damaras to upgrade these farms and sell them to individual farmers, but a lack of capital has hampered this process. As far as could be ascertained, only one farm is privately owned in the Damara communal area.

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NOTES

1. FNDC (MarkWat, A., van der Merwe, J.G., Venter, J.P.), 'n Streekstudie van Damaraland en aangrensende Gebiede ten einde Economiese Ontwikkelingsprojekte waarvan die Kusnu Nationale Ontwikkelings Korporasie van S.W.A. Bepark Deel Van ha, te Identifiseer', (Windhoek, 1983), p.3.
3. FNDC, 'n Streekstudie van Damaraland', p.87.
4. Ibid. p.18.
5. SDA, A Five Year Plan, Table 15.
7. FNDC, 'n Streekstudie van Damaraland', p.57.
8. Ibid. pp.49, 56.
13. Schoeneber, S., Sektorstudie Landwirtschaftliche Entwicklung, p.27.
APPENDIX 4.5
BUSHMANLAND

1. Geographical location

Bushmanland is located in north eastern Namibia, bordering Botswana in the east, the communal areas of Hereroland and Kavango in the south and north, and the Grootfontein commercial farming district in the west. See Map 4.5.1 below:

MAP 4.5.1: Bushmanland: Geographical location

2. Background

According to Marshall, there are seven linguistic and cultural groups of people classified as "Bushmen" who, in their language, history and cultures, "differ amongst
themselves as much as the peoples of Europe".² Map 4.5.2 below illustrates the areas of Namibia traditionally occupied by these groups:

**MAP 4.5.2:**
Traditional distribution of Bushman groups in Namibia

![Map of Bushman groups in Namibia](image)

HOOFERGOEP
1. !Kung-San
2. Nama-San
3. !Kae-San

SUBGROEP
1.1 Angola-Nkna
1.2 Zhu-Nkasi
1.3 //Kxau-Nesi
1.4 Ovambokvango-Nkna
2.1 Hai-/Ocm
2.2 Naro
2.3 Kwâkwa/Hararâkângwâ
2.4 Kurib-San
3.1 !Xô (Wagong)
3.2 /Hu-/en (Rusan)
3.3 /Auní

ONDER-SUBGROEP
1.1.1 //Ukna
1.1.2 Kwankaia
2.1.1 !Wâga
2.1.2 Keron
2.1.3 Hai-/Ocm van Etosha en Noordelijke district

By the 1960's all but one "Bushman" group had been dispossessed, exterminated as 'vermin', or were dying out as a result of malnutrition and disease. The term "Bushman" had come to mean someone who speaks a Khoi or San language at home ... whose great grandparents may have hunted and gathered around the Etosha Pan, who has neither communal land nor land rights and who lives in abject poverty in the commercial farming districts of in the 'homelands' of other Namibians."

Some 33 000 people were given the racial classification of "Bushmen" in the 1981 population census. Of these, 1200 lived in municipalities and townships, 8000 lived in the communal lands of other Namibians and 15000 lived as workers on farms in the commercial districts."

The remaining 7-8000 "Bushmen" were members of the Ju/Wasi group; some had also become labourers on white farms but until the 1960's an estimated 1200 Ju/Wasi still retained access to their traditional lands and supported themselves solely by hunting and gathering." The area they occupied was Nyae, a 50 000km² stretch of land in north eastern Namibia from Kavango in the north to the Eiseb valley in the south." See Map 4.5.3 below:

MAP 4.5.3: Nyae Nyae

The 1963 Odendaal Commission recommended the establishment of a homeland for people classified as ‘Bushmen’, which was to comprise Western Caprivi and part of Nyae Nyae. The Development of Self-Government for Native Nations Act of 1968 provided for the creation of six ‘homelands’ (Owamboland, Damaraland, Hereroland, Kaokoland, Kavangoland and Eastern Caprivi), and simultaneously expropriated 43 000 km² of Nyae Nyae. 32 000 km² was added on to the communal area of Hereroland and 11 000 km² of northern Nyae Nyae was first incorporated into the Kavango communal area and subsequently proclaimed as the Kaudom Game Reserve in 1982. Intervention by the Department of Nature Conservation further reduced the amount of land ‘allocated’ to the ‘Bushmen’: the West Caprivi was expropriated and transformed into a game reserve in 1968. Some 6 000 Khwe ‘Bushmen’ were evicted from the area; some became refugees in Angola but returned to the West Caprivi in the 1970’s as a result of the Angolan war, and became squatters around SADF bases at Bagani and Omega in the game reserve. Bushmanland was established as a magisterial district in 1970; in its final extent, it comprised some 2 392 671 hectares. It was not defined as a ‘homeland’ until promulgation of Proclamation R208 in 1976. According to Ritchie, the ‘homeland’ was:

an arbitrary strip of sandveldt running west to east and abutting the Botswana border. The western two-thirds was an uninhabited waterless barrier. The eastern part bisected Nyae Nyae and represented 30% – a fragment – of the Ju/Wasi’s original territory.

In terms of Proclamation R208, this area was ‘set aside and ... reserved for the exclusive use and occupation of the Bushman Nation’. A Bushman Advisory Council was created by election, supposedly by ‘every member of the Bushman Nation who is domiciled in Bushmanland’; however, the only Bushman group then resident in Bushmanland were the Ju/Wasi. No ‘Bushman Nation’ existed. The council was ended in 1979. Jurisdiction over Bushmanland resources has since been vested in the Administrator-General, who also disposed of the right to allocate land as no second tier Representative Authority was established for the area. Effective control over Bushmanland has been delegated to the Department of Governmental Affairs.

3. Agriculture

Some 2 000 people live in western Bushmanland, the majority around army bases. This area is unsuitable for agriculture and comprises a waterless sand sea where bush foods and game are scarce and gifblaar (a plant poisonous to cattle) is endemic. The watertable in western Bushmanland lies between 300 and 1000 metres beneath deep sand and is inaccessible except through
boreholes. Hunting, gathering and subsistence farming are impossible in this area, and the majority of those who live there were, prior to the removal of the SADF from Namibia, dependent on the military; some 1500 of western Bushmanland's inhabitants are !Kung soldiers and their families from Angola. At the time of writing their future status was uncertain.

Of the 2000 Ju/Wa people in Bushmanland, about 1000 are dependent on the salaries and rations of 100 Ju/Wa soldiers in western Bushmanland; 500 live in a rural slum at Tshumkwe, which is the administrative capital of Bushmanland, and are dependent on the salaries of 20 men employed by the Administration, while the remaining 500 Ju/Wa support themselves directly or indirectly by subsistence farming at 14 communities in Eastern Bushmanland. Map 4.5.4 below illustrates the distribution of those communities which had been established by 1986:

MAP 4.5.4:
Bushmanland: Ju/Wa farms in Eastern Bushmanland, 1986

Source: Marshall and Hartung, 'Ju/Wa Bushman', p.17(1)

Mixed subsistence farming involving animal husbandry, cultivation of crops and vegetables, and hunting and
gathering, is practiced by settled farming communities in the face of considerable odds. Ju/Wasi attempts to develop a stable and settled community of farmers have been hampered both by inherent environmental constraints and by active intervention by the Department of Nature Conservation.

Amongst the former, the accessibility of water is the determinant of land use and settlement patterns. There is only one permanent waterhole in Eastern Bushmanland at /Gautcha, and an additional four semi-permanent waterholes which only fail in years of drought. Depending on the annual rainfall there are also a varying number of semi-permanent waters and pans where water remains for some time after the rainy season. However, the numbers of places where reliable supplies of sweet water can be obtained from wells is limited; although the watertable is higher and more readily accessible than it is in western Bushmanland, there are many areas where depths of over 50 metres have to be dug before the groundwater is reached. At least 80 boreholes have been drilled by oil and diamond prospectors and by various departments in the Administration since the 1960's. Many of these have however collapsed. Most of the present Ju/Wasi settlements are on boreholes where water has been reached within 50 metres, and several of these have been drilled and constructed by the Nyae Nyae Farmers' Cooperative and Ju/Wa Bushman Development Foundation (see below).14

The natural environment of Eastern Bushmanland supports grazing which is suitable for cattle husbandry, which is an increasingly important element of subsistence farming activities. According to Marshall,

Cattle can graze a maximum of three kilometres away from their watering point in the northern Kalahari and return to drink at their kraal at night. Their grazing radius gives each settlement about 2800 ha of grazing... Each settlement could theoretically support about 200 cattle without destroying their grazing, a number far above the present and projected size of Ju/Wa herds... The endurance of rainwater in semi permanent waterholes and pans in Eastern Bushmanland provides Ju/Wasi with the opportunity to water their small herds of cattle at seasonal cattle posts, or 'camps', and thereby control grazing without multiple boreholes or expensive fencing. Many Ju/Wasi are extremely aware of the hazards of overgrazing; they have seen its effects in Hereroland.15

Fencing is not regarded as an option for controlling grazing by Ju/Wasi as it would impede the movement of game and could easily be torn down by elephants. The products of cattle husbandry contribute some 40% of the annual diet of Ju/wa farming communities. However, although Ju/Wa herds are growing, farmers face a number of obstacles to successful animal husbandry. The most important of these
is that Ju/Wasi are forbidden by the Department of Nature Conservation to shoot, trap or poison lions in the area in order to protect their stock, unlike other farmers in Namibia.16

In addition, although hunting and gathering are still essential elements in subsistence activities, [bushfood and game contribute 15-20% to the annual diet of farming communities17], hunting by Ju/Wasi is only permitted using bows and arrows. Ju/Wasi hunting giraffe on horseback with spears have been arrested and jailed.18 The traditional hunting areas of Ju/Wasi are concentrated in the eastern portion of Bushmanland.

Low and uncertain rainfall, loamless soils, and a wide variety of insect and animal pests are major obstacles to successful cultivation of crops in Eastern Bushmanland. Ju/Wa farmers have nonetheless succeeded in growing a variety of crops at their settlements, including maize, mahangu, a hybrid melon, squashes and gourds. Cultivated lands are fenced with thorns to keep out cattle and animal pests, but are inadequate to deter elephants. Cattle dung is used to improve soils. The contribution of garden produce to annual diet varies from one settlement to the next, but has been estimated at 30% during the harvest season in the more established settlements.19

The establishment of settled farming communities practicing a mixed subsistence has been actively pursued by Ju/Wasi since the early 1980’s20 in response to a variety of social, economic and political pressures. These have included: (i) Loss of land and permanent waterholes which the establishment of Bushmanland as a ‘homeland’ entailed. This effectively made it impossible for Ju/Wasi to continue existing solely through hunting and gathering, as they had done for a thousand years; Eastern Bushmanland was only capable of supporting 250 people through hunting and gathering.21 (ii) Social disintegration and poverty which accompanied the establishment of both Tshumkwe (as an administrative ‘capital’ for Bushmanland), and SADF bases in western Bushmanland. (iii) Threatened expropriation of Eastern Bushmanland as a nature reserve, in which a few Ju/Wasi would be preserved in a plastic stone age to act as a tourist attraction.

The game reserve issue in particular has been the subject of bitter resentment by Ju/Wasi. This issue has its official origins in the 1984 publication of a Development Plan for Bushmanland, commonly known as the Brand Report.22 This plan represented a change of policy by the Administration; formerly, it had intended to relocate 20,000 Bushmen from all over Namibia into Bushmanland. For the majority, the area of Namibia designated as the Bushman ‘homeland’ was not a traditional area of occupation; Bushmanland itself was home only to the Ju/Wasi. The area was patently incapable of supporting 20,000 Bushmen from all over Namibia, the majority of whom had no knowledge of local conditions. Many had also, after decades of menial labour on white farms, lost the skills which permitted their forebears to survive in other harsh and unforgiving environments.

Of more concern to government planners, however, was the threat
that relocation of 20 000 Bushmen would post to the supply of cheap labour to white farms:

Since the first decades of this century Bushmen peoples have provided a major source of underpaid or unpaid agricultural labour in Namibia. Restricted by pass laws, vagrancy acts and often by illegal methods, Bushman labour could be exploited in ways in which contract labour could not."

In the face of this problem, the idea of relocation was abandoned. Instead, the Brand Report recommended that Eastern Bushmanland be turned into a game reserve, the extent of which is illustrated in Map 4.5.5 overleaf. In this area, which encompassed most of the agriculturally viable land in Eastern Bushmanland as well as traditional hunting areas, the Brand report proposed that a few ‘little people of the Kalahari’ or ‘unfortunate children of nature’ (as Bushmen people were termed), would be:

allowed to live in traditional-style settlements wearing skins, but without livestock; they would be permitted to hunt and gather but without dogs and horses. Nine men would be employed to guide tourists on ‘nature walks’ and the groups would provide entertainment by putting on their trance dances. How the remaining 900 - 1000 people would live was not suggested."\n
As Ritchie argues, the thesis underlying this recommendation was that all Bushmen were hunter gatherers by instinct. This supposed instinct ‘prevents them becoming farmers ... [they] have no experience of either animal husbandry or agriculture’. 26 This, despite the fact that the majority had been removed from a hunting and gathering existence for generations and had either become the labourers of black and white farmers, or had replaced hunting and gathering with settled mixed subsistence farming.

The proclamation of a game reserve would have meant the final dispossesson of the Ju/Wasi. Ju/Wasi’s unequivocal response was expressed by /Gaishay-Toma, a Ju/Wa leader, in a letter to the Administrator General:

We are Ju/Wasi. We do not want a nature reserve. All Ju/Wasi do not want a nature reserve. Where will they go? When the whites wanted to make a nature reserve, they first told the Ju/Wasi. But they did not tell us that no cattle, no gardens, nothing will be allowed in the reserve. Now they want to do the reserve by force. And Ju/Wasi do not consent that the nature reserve will begin now. Long ago Ju/Wasi were without cattle. Now they have cattle. And this is Ju/Wasi land. And people
MAP 4.5.5:
Bushmanland: Proposed game reserve
are growing old, and they do not know where they will go because now their children have cattle and the government wants the Ju/Wasi to leave their land with their cattle and go to a strange land. And people’s hearts are sore because people will be destroyed.

We will stay here. Because this land is Ju/Wasi land. And it is a little bit good. And we know this land, and do not know strange places. We know where water is. And bushfoods. ... We will stay (here) where God himself made the water. I am finished.”

In the face of the renewed threat of dispossession posed by the game reserve plan, Ju/Wasi have adopted a strategy of establishing mixed subsistence settlements in Eastern Bushmanland to demonstrate the reality of Ju/Wa local government and communal land rights, and establish an economic and social base on which future development can take place. "Settlements are established and organised with assistance from the Nyae Nyae Farmers Co-operative (formerly the Ju/Wa Farmer’s Union) and the Ju/Wa Bushman Development Foundation (referred to hereafter as the NNFC and JDBD). The former is an elected body comprising representatives from each settlement, which allocates farming space, undertakes communal projects, and manages communal resources. Its goal is "to assist as many Ju/Wa groups as possible to establish and improve subsistence farming settlements in eastern Bushmanland".

The operation of the NNFC is based on traditional Ju/Wa concepts of landownership. Ju/Wasi recognise two kinds of communal land; first, the Gxa/kxo, or "face of the earth" which comprises the land and water of Nyae Nyae. The Gxa/kxo is not the property of a corporate body such as a chiefdom or clan, but of all Ju/wasi as individuals, who acquire the right to land and to reliable sources of water by descent. According to Marshall, the right to live in the Gxa/kxo and use its resources are exercised in the following ways:

1. Freedom to travel: All Ju/Wasi can travel freely throughout Nyae Nyae while supporting themselves by hunting and gathering on their journey.

2. Freedom to hunt and track game: Any Ju/Wa can shoot an animal anywhere in Nyae Nyae and track it wherever it wanders. An animal belongs to the person who owns the arrow that strikes it first, not to the owners of a mine (property) where it is hit or where it dies from the poison.

3. Freedom to use major resources of bush foods like tsi beans and mangetti nuts; many groups of Ju/Wasi have rights to the tsi fields and mangetti forests.
4. Freedom to live at a permanent water in periods of drought; no group of Ju/Wasi can be denied the right to settle near one of the few permanent water holes of Nyae Nyae in dry years."

Second, nloresi. These are named places in Nyae Nyae, some of which have permanent or semi-permanent water resources as well as resources of bush foods. The essential features of nloresi rights are as follows:

1. Rights to residence in a n!ore are inherited from both parents and involved a choice by adults of the n!ore they wish to claim as their home. The 'owning owners' or Kxei Kxaosi of a n!ore are frequently siblings or first cousins and their children. Affines and other relatives who are living with the owners do not have n!ore rights. The traceable descent has to be known or demonstrable to all Ju/Wasi in Nyae Nyae for the ownership of a n!ore to be legitimate.

2. N!ore rights confer the right to reside permanently in a n!ore and include the right to drink the water, gather the bush foods and trap small game. The game itself is not owned. The n!ore rights of an absent owner are recognised.

3. N!ore rights are exclusive. Travellers, hunters and visitors may pass freely through a n!ore or remain for restricted periods, but no other group may settle permanently in an inhabited n!ore without the owners consent."

The establishment of Bushmanland as a homeland meant that while Ju/Wasi still had rights to the Gxa/K xo, many had lost their nloresi which were in lands incorporated into other homelands. In addition, most nloresi in eastern Bushmanland lacked adequate water; only one n!ore, /Gautcha, had permanent water. The NNFC is a Ju/Wa initiated response to these changed circumstances, which essentially follows the principles of the Gxa/K xo and n!ore law and has attempted to adapt and expand them to meet the demands of the Ju/Wasi's present situation. In essence, the NNFC is an elected body made up of representatives from each of the settled farming communities, which manages the Gxa/K xo for the common good; its purposes and policy are:

1. To allocate farming areas - nloresi - and water resources to Ju/Wa groups wishing to settle and farm in Eastern Bushmanland. The policy of the NNFC is first, to confirm the land/n!ore rights of groups with nloresi in Eastern Bushmanland and help them settle; then to allocate farming space to groups from the Nyae Nyae area who were dispossessed following the proclamation of Bushmanland. Next, to allocate farming space to Ju/Wasi living outside Bushmanland who have relatives in Eastern Bushmanland; and finally, to allocate space to any Ju/Wasi from the surrounding farming districts of Grootfontein, Gobabis, Kavango and Hereroland.
2. To assist as many Ju/Wa groups as possible to settle and farm in Eastern Bushmanland without destroying the grazing and environment.

3. To own and allocate farming infrastructure - boreholes, pumps - and provide basic equipment to proposed and existing farming communities in Eastern Bushmanland.

4. To receive and administer funds from local and foreign NGOs and from the government to assist the settlement and development of farming communities, and to promote the well-being of residents in Eastern Bushmanland.

5. To receive and administer money from the sale and exploitation of natural resources such as game, trophy licences, lumber etc., in Eastern Bushmanland.

6. To (eventually) receive and administer dues and taxes from farming communities for the development of Eastern Bushmanland.

7. To operate a training and teaching centre with demonstration crops and a mobile unit to assist farmers.

8. To operate a marketing co-operative equipped with a holding kraal and transportation facilities. When funded the co-operative will buy cattle and other livestock from individuals in the farming communities and will distribute cattle to destitute groups starting their farms, and sell cattle at appropriate times on the national market."

The NNFC acts as a kind of unofficial local authority which, while it does not claim to represent the interests of all people classified as Bushmen or even all residents of Bushmanland, does act as a mouthpiece for those engaged in subsistence farming. It has not been given any official recognition, however. On the contrary: its success in establishing some 14 farming communities (which support about 500 people) has occurred despite official policy in Bushmanland. Despite abandonment of the 1984 game reserve plan, official policy has not been sympathetic to attempts by Ju/Wasi to develop a mixed subsistence economy. For example, farming was forbidden by the Administration in large areas of Eastern Bushmanland, and Ju/Wasi were denied permission to use waters from existing boreholes or to drill new boreholes. In response, the NNFC (in co-operation with the JBDF) drilled their own boreholes and continued establishing farming communities.” Ju/Wasi have also been legally forbidden to own bows and arrows, and are denied licences to purchase rifles; the result is that they are unable to protect their cattle from 200 lions in the area. In 1987, 34 out of a total herd of 400 cattle were lost as a result of predation by lions. Some 600 resident elephants also pose a threat to subsistence farming activities.
as they destroy water installations and cultivated gardens." In 1986 simmering tensions between Ju/Wasi and the Department of Nature Conservation came to a head over the erection of a hand-pump in the far north of Eastern Bushmanland. One group of Ju/Wasi established themselves at a borehole in their traditional nlore in this area. However, it appeared that the area had been earmarked for proclamation of a game reserve and the Department of Nature Conservation, which had installed an engine at this borehole, removed the belt, crank and diesel from the engine in a bid to force the Ju/Wa group to leave the area. In response the Ju/Wa group installed a hand pump with the assistance of the JDBF. After protestation by the Department of Nature Conservation, a compromise was eventually reached: the engine pump head was replaced and the Department agreed to supply the Ju/Wasi and their cattle with diesel for the engine if the Ju/Wasi would in turn pump water for game in the area.

There are indications of a tacit shift in official policy which suggest that the right of Ju/Wasi to farm in Eastern Bushmanland has been recognised. The Department of Nature Conservation has apparently conceded some 15 000 ha in the south west corner of Eastern Bushmanland to Ju/Wa farmers; seven of the existing farming settlements lie in this area. Confrontations between Ju/Wasi and the Department of Nature Conservation in this area are now "few and mild". The Department of Agriculture has begun to help Ju/Wa farming communities in the area with fencing materials for kraals and poles for mangles, and also fixed a hand pump at //Xaru and provided the settlement at Nlama with a metal trough for cattle. Further, the Department of Agriculture drilled a borehole at //Gautcha and constructed an elephant-proof windpump at the //Gautcha settlement.

However, this apparent shift in official policy does not mean an end to the threat of dispossession of the remaining Ju/Wasi in Eastern Bushmanland. Interests in the Administration "are still urging the establishment of a game reserve under various disguises. Other people want the land for farming. .... The only real way Ju/Wa can keep their land and survive is to settle and farm it."

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NOTES

10. Ibid., p.68.
11. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p.50.
16. Ibid., p.52.
17. Ibid., p.48.
18. Ibid., pp.54-55

20. Mixed subsistence farming in Hushuanland predates 1932. The first Bushman Committee established the administrative post of Hushuanland, according to Marshall and Ritchie, (where are the Ju/Wa of Hushuanland?, Cape Town, 1984):

... Acknowledges that a number of Ju/Wa in the Dobe and K'ael/Kae areas of Botswana were practising cattle husbandry and planting gardens. He rejected the prevalent mythology expressed in the assumption that it would be possible to accomplish the agricultural revolution as it has taken Europeans to become 'civilised'. McIntyre regarded these people as essentially rationalisations for dispossessing Bushman peoples.

The core of McIntyre's policy towards Ju/Wa was, help Ju/Wa to help themselves by replacing hunting and gathering with new subsistence so that they could begin to support themselves. In 1961, at least four Ju/Wa family gardens, where beans, maize, cassava, squashes, pumpkins, and legumes were grown, had been established at settlements around Tshukwe. In 1965, a program to introduce animal husbandry to the Ju/Wa was begun and by 1968, goats were being husbanded and milked at seven settlements at Tshukwe. By 1969, when McIntyre retired, many of the small Ju/Wa settlements around Tshukwe were raising goats and maintaining family gardens, our socio-historical analysis above is that the family and family gardens maintained at 7 settlements. Subsequent interviews ...suggest that at least ten out of twelve settlements at Tshukwe were planting family gardens in the late 1960's.

Marshall and Ritchie identify three factors which, from 1970, combined to complete the collapse of hunting and gathering in Huyse Nya and undermine the progress towards self-sufficient subsistence farming. These were the settlement of McIntyre's people by a series of inexperienced and uncommitted Bushman commissioners; the proclamation of Hushuanland as a 'homeland' in 1970 which made it illegal; and the N 50 000 km² which comprised Huyse Nya prior to the 1960's required over 27 km² per person to sustain a stable population by hunting and gathering. Huyse Nya had twelve permanent and nine semi-permanent waterholes. According to Ritchie, Huyse Nya was a harsh environment for most of the year. In terms of vast expanse and rain, compared to that of the peoples of the Central Kalahari, the Ju/Wa's region was a desert. It's vegetation, its water in the assumption that it would be impossible for Ju/Wa to continue subsisting by hunting and gathering alone, as Eastern Bushmanland has only one permanent waterhole.

22. See Ritchie, 'The Political Economy of Resource Tenure', pp.60-65; Marshall, 'The Colonial State and Cultivation, pp.85-86; and Marshall and Ritchie, N/A. N/A, pp.37-122 for details of the social disintegration and poverty which accompanied the establishment of both Tshukwe in Eastern Bushmanland and on the professionals who were involved in this.

23. SVA/Mabuto, Directorate of Development Co-Ordination, 'On Onderzoek na die Hushuanland/khau/mu in WA, Windhuk, 1984)' In effect this made as Eastern Bushmanland had only one permanent waterhole.

According to Marshall and Ritchie, (where are the Ju/Wa, pp.10-14), Council members apparently approved the policy of the proclamation of the reserve in the face of the above warnings, but did not discuss the issue with members of their groups:

A poll we conducted among 100 Ju/Wa to discover their opinions about the reserve showed no indication that they had discussed the issue of the reserve with their Council members. Most people had not heard of the plan for the reserve, did not know if their territory was included in it, and had no idea that they would be forbidden to practice subsistence farming in the reserve. Of the 100 people in our sample who had heard of the plan for the nature reserve, one approved. 100 people rejected the plan, or, completely. Most Council members do not talk about the reserve with the Bushmen, repeated the plan. Many of their members are not informed that 90% of the council would not be able to all members of the Bushmen. The Bushmen were not consulted about the transition to the various political and educational systems and were misinformed about the threat of dispossession by other peoples. Today the Council is inactive and to all intents and purposes dissolved.

24. Marshall and Ritchie, Where are the Ju/Wa, p.93.
26. Ibid., p.57.
29. Ibid., p.11.
31. Ibid., p.5. Also see also Ritchie, 'The Political Economy of Resource Tenure', pp.23-29 for details on Ju/Wa concepts of land tenure, ownership, and occupation rights.
33. Ibid., p.86.
34. Ibid., p.93.
36. Ibid., p.43.
37. Ibid., p.43.
38. Ibid., p.41.
APPENDIX 4.6
HEREROLAND

1. Geographical location
and physical features

The region known as Hereroland East and West lies to the east of
the commercial farming district of Otjiwarongo. In the north it
shares a boundary with Bushmanland, while in the east it extends
to the national border with Botswana. Its main administrative
centre, Okakarara, is approximately 100km south-east of
Otjiwarongo.

The region consists of flat Kalahari sand, with altitudes ranging
between 900 and 1200 metres. Sixty-eight percent of its total
area falls within the Savannah Forest agro-ecological zone, and
has an average rainfall of 400 to 500mm per annum. Another 18%
of the land is classified as Bush-savannah, with slightly lower
average annual precipitation of 250-400mm.\(^1\) The region’s
rainfall limits its agricultural potential to extensive
stockfarming.

Hereroland has no permanent rivers, but is drained in a north-
easterly direction by a network of shallow watercourses known as
omiramba (sing. omuramba). Some of the more important omiramba
are the Eiseh, Epukiro and Omuramba Omatako. Unlike normal river
channels, omiramba seldom register a strong flow of water and as a
result are usually covered with vegetation. Moreover, they
seldom contain surface water except in the rainy season.\(^2\)

Although omiramba serve as catchment areas for groundwater, an
estimated 37\% or more of the total land area of Hereroland has
inadequate surface or borehole water to permit agricultural
utilisation. It is impossible to determine with any accuracy the
extent of land utilisation in Hereroland as large parts of the
area known as Hereroland East are not subdivided by the surveyor
General.\(^3\) This area is probably the only part of Namibia which
still has virgin grazing.\(^4\)

In 1978 the Department of Water Affairs started a long-term water
supply scheme for Hereroland West by constructing a pipeline and
pump installations from Berg Aukas to Okamatapati and Okakarara
(see Map 4.6.1 overleaf). The object was to open up waterless
pastures for stock farming; by 1982 about 275 000 ha of new
pastures had been opened up.\(^5\) With additional pipelines more
land could theoretically be used for agricultural production.
However, the costs of such a project would be prohibitive. The
construction of 240km of primary pipeline for the bulk
transportation of water cost R19,3 million. 160km of secondary
and 200km of tertiary pipelines added R4,5 million to
expenditure, or R16,40 per hectare of farmland.\(^6\)

As a result of the lack of water in large parts of Hereroland,
the population of the region is concentrated along its southern
and western borders. Map 4.6.2 overleaf gives a rough indication
of settlement densities. Overgrazing around existing water holes
MAP 4.6.1:
Hereroland West: Water supply scheme

Source: [Administration for Harare], 'Verslag van die Hereroland-West Ontwikkelingskomitee oor Landbou-Ontwikkeling en Plekkbeplanning in Hereroland West', (Windhoek), n.d. (1985)
MAP 4.6.2:
Hereroland: Settlement patterns

KEY
++ Line of settlement
is an acute problem; in the Okamatapati region, for example, it is estimated that stock rates are 40% higher than the official recommended carrying capacity. The Administration for Hereros frankly admits that agricultural extension has had little effect on pasture improvements in the past 30 years or so. It has therefore proposed a project to improve cattle and pastures, in terms of which communities will elect committees whose members will undergo training courses in order to develop an awareness of the economic potential of their pastures.

2. Agriculture and Land Tenure

In 1989 Hereroland had about 5,500 registered farmers. About 65% of all Herero farmers were described as bona fide farmers in 1985, implying that they derived their whole income from farming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Surface Area (ha)</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Small stock</th>
<th>Boreholes (No)</th>
<th>Boreholes poor or not working</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kaokoland</td>
<td>4,898 219</td>
<td>75 682</td>
<td>153 487</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjituuo</td>
<td>411 024</td>
<td>104 519</td>
<td>75 507</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okakarara</td>
<td>477 499</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>86</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjinene</td>
<td>1,283 000</td>
<td>62 526</td>
<td>36 051</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epukiro</td>
<td>1,226 000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eiseb &amp;</td>
<td>1,916 000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gam</td>
<td>586 157</td>
<td>38 032</td>
<td>18 347</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rietfntn</td>
<td>555 754</td>
<td>23 804</td>
<td>60 765</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aminius</td>
<td>61 192</td>
<td>10 321</td>
<td>5 689</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovitoto</td>
<td>360 000</td>
<td>6 189</td>
<td>23 187</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjohorongo</td>
<td>91 196</td>
<td>5 336</td>
<td>19 719</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otjimbingwe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>11,866 341</td>
<td>326 409</td>
<td>392 752</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Source: Administration for Hereros, Report, 19.1.1980.]

As Table 4.6.1 above indicates, the Herero communal area has a total of 719,161 large stock units or an average of 130 large stock units per registered stock owner. It is impossible to calculate stocking rates from these figures, as the total land area includes unutilised parts.

Land tenure in Hereroland is communal. Indications are, however, that bigger stock owners have begun to fence in individual farms.
Advancing the argument that communal land tenure inhibits progressive farming - the familiar 'tragedy of the commons' argument - these farmers have expressed the desire to 'farm on an economical basis'. As a result, individual farmers have begun to fence off farms and camps as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>NO. OF FARMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Otjinene</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epukiro</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okamatapati</td>
<td>56*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* 41 are surveyed and fenced

The Administration for Hereros has prepared a scheme in terms of which the entire communal area will eventually be surveyed and cut up into individual farms. Over 8% of farmers in the Epukiro area qualified for Land Bank loans to purchase farms in the commercial farming areas, while another 16% would have been able to buy farms with credit from the Agricultural Credit Fund of the Administration for Hereros.

The intention to develop economic units on communal land has not gone without opposition from poorer farmers and the legality of the matter has been fiercely contested. Legal advice sought by the Administration for Hereros in this regard indicated that it was within the powers of the Legislative Assembly of the Hereros to allocate land on an individual basis.

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NOTES

5. Ibid, p.3.
7. [Administration for Hereros], 'Neroerland Veeboerestigingsprograam', p.2.
8. [Administration for Hereros], 'Neroerland Veeboerestigingsprograam', p.2.
12. See [Administration for Hereros], 'Neroerland Veeboerestigingsprograam'.
13. Interview: Mr Katerhulien, Department of Agriculture, Administration for Hereros, Windhoek, October 1989.
14. Personal communication, Department of Justice to The Secretary, Administration for Hereros, 17.9.1987.
APPENDIX 4.7
REHOBOTH

1. Geographical location and physical features

Rehoboth is located 90km south of Windhoek in the central part of Namibia, and is surrounded by the farming districts of Windhoek, Maltahoe and Gibeon. See Map 4.7.1 overleaf.

The region has a high plateau in the west, where the landscape is broken by isolated koppies and mountains. The rest is fairly uniform and flat, except for an area around the town of Rehoboth where isolated koppies and stabilised sand dunes are found.¹ Soil types include granite and sedimentary rock in the west, sandy loam in the north and ‘torraveld’ in the south.

From an agricultural perspective water resources in Rehoboth are a problem; since water is scarce, unreliable, and expensive to tap. The average annual rainfall is low, and ranges from 200mm in the arid south to 300mm in the semi-arid north. It is also characterised by a high degree of variability from one year to the next and from one part of the region to the next; both droughts and flooding are frequent occurrences, but do not take place according to any discernible cycle.² In addition to rainfall, water for agricultural purposes is theoretically available from a variety of sources, including dams built in the region’s rivers to store floodwaters, open waters found in pans and river beds after the rainy season, and groundwater which is made accessible through boreholes and wells. Only the latter is a reliable source of water, however; the region has high evaporation rates, which mean that surface bodies of fresh water disappear quickly. It has been estimated that 90% of water used for agricultural purposes is from boreholes.³

Maps 4.7.2 and 4.7.3 below illustrate the geographical distribution of rainfall and evaporation rates.

Vegetation in Rehoboth is influenced by soil types and rainfall in different parts of the region. In general the region can be described as an Acacia bushveld, but marked variations are discernible between the north and the south. Both annual and perennial grass species are found, of which the most important are the *aristida*, *stipagrostis*, *eragrostis*, and *schmidtia* species.⁴

2. Agriculture and Land Tenure

Agriculture is the dominant economic activity in Rehoboth. The region’s climate, water resources, vegetation and soil types determine that it is unsuitable for agronomy and
MAP 4.7.1: Rehoboth: Geographical location

Source: Adapted from First National Development Corporation, Namibia, p.134
MAP 4.7.3:
Rehoboth: Rainfall

Source: de Klerk, Landbou-ontwikkelingsplan, p.15.
although soils suitable for irrigation are found along river beds, little irrigation is possible as these rivers only flow during the rainy season. Stock farming is the dominant agricultural activity. Karakul farming in particular has historically been the most important branch of agriculture, but the collapse of karakul prices in the early- to mid-1980’s prompted a switch to mutton and an increase in cattle and goat farming.

There are some 2 983 measured-up farms in Rehoboth. Ownership of land, or access to it, can be divided into three types: privately owned land, communal lands, and government-owned farms. Rehoboth differs markedly from other ‘communal areas’ in Namibia in that private ownership of property is the norm, rather than the exception. Private farms have a total surface area of 1 223 018 hectares. Section 24(i) of the Rehoboth Constitution stipulates that ‘nobody except a burgher of Rehoboth and the REKOR may, without prior permission of a Minister or of the Captain’s Council, obtain an interest in land in Rehoboth’. Farm ownership is thus reserved for those individuals who are ‘classified’ as Rehoboth Basters and furthermore, registered as citizens of the ‘homeland’.

The most recent available figures on farm sizes, which date from 1983, indicate a marked variation in the sizes of privately owned farms and suggest a considerable differentiation in the economic strength of the owners of these farms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FARM SIZE (ha)</th>
<th>NO. OF FARMS</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 99</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 - 199</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 - 299</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 - 499</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500 - 999</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 000 - 1 999</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 000 - 3 999</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 000 - 4 999</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 000 - 9 999</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 000 +</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data left out</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>450</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Sub-division of farms between successive generations of heirs in terms of the traditional system of land inheritance has been a negative influence on agricultural production, resulting in large-scale fragmentation of land. Some 94% of farms are not regarded as economic units: according to variations in carrying capacity (see map 4.7.4), the official size of economic units

165
varies from 3 000 to 7 500 hectares in different parts of the region. As a result, the majority of farmers (who total approximately 3 000 people), are forced to supplement agricultural production with wage employment, and can accordingly be regarded as part-time farmers. In 1983, 85% of the 914 farmers who owned stock were partially dependent on wage employment. In 1981, only 800 full-time farmers were identified.

Legislation prohibiting the sub-division of agricultural land was passed in 1980 and the Government of Rehoboth adopted a policy of consolidating agricultural land. In essence, the consolidation process targets four categories of land: privately owned farms of less than 4 000 hectares, communal lands, government-owned farms, and land belonging to farmers who wish to purchase government-owned farms. The first target is privately owned land in units of less than 4 000 hectares; some 918 000 hectares fall into this category. The ultimate aim is for the Government of Rehoboth to purchase these units and consolidate them into farms capable of supporting 1 000 - 1 500 small-stock units producing an income or R666-R1 000 per month.

Communal lands are the second target of consolidation. In Rehoboth communal lands comprise separate parcels in different areas of the Gebiet; in the early to mid-1980s, these lands totalled some 58 000 hectares. Together with land around Rehoboth town, communal lands are owned by the Government of Rehoboth but have traditionally been occupied or leased by those farmers who either do not own any land of their own, or whose farms are too small to provide an adequate income.

It does not appear that there are any legislative or other barriers governing which farms may work communal lands. There is evidence to suggest that these have also been used by stronger farmers within the region, who may already own substantial tracts. This is detrimental to the landless farmers:

... when I grew up here and started to become wise, I was under the impression that the community grounds were mainly there in order to assist the people, to assist the burgheers who are faced with certain problems and more especially, the landless burgheers who would be the weaker type of burgheer, those who were unable to afford hiring a piece of ground, the man who was unable to afford buying a piece of ground. They would be assisted here. This has also been done through the years. This has also been carried out fruitfully through all these years.

Then ... the more industrious farmers at a certain stage looked at these community grounds with a great desire in their eyes, financially stronger farmers who were in a position to go along and hire ground for themselves or even go along and buy their own lands. They found a place here where they discovered that at a very minimal cost (quite correctly so, no exhorbitant amount was
asked for the hire of these grounds) .. for me, being a financially stronger farmer, it was so much cheaper than what I would have had to pay if I had to do so privately.

In this process the weaker farmers were placed under pressure. They had to make place for the stronger farmers. The stronger farmers came along with their greater herds of cattle, with their much greater flocks of sheep to these grounds, and even the weaker farmers donkeys which were grazing there, were no longer permitted to graze there because the donkeys are regarded as something evil on a farm. But this was the only means of transport of the weaker class of farmer and he therefore had to move... Then the financially stronger farmers became established on this grounds."

Since the late 1970’s when the Government of Rehoboth adopted its consolidation plan,” increasing pressure has been created from within the Government for the privatisation of communal lands. The ‘tragedy of the commons’ has been invoked as a motivation for this course of action.” Repeated debates in the House of Assembly culminated in the adoption of a motion in June 1988 that all communal lands, with the exception of farms at Groot Aub and Nauaspoort, should be sold.” The question of how financially weak farmers in the communal lands would obtain funding to purchase this land was not addressed, nor was it suggested what would become of farmers who were unable to purchase land. It is not known to what extent this process has already been implemented or what its effect has been on the poorer farmers in the communal lands; however, in its 1987/8 annual report the Department of Agriculture indicated that it planned to privatise 19 098 ha of communal lands in 1988/9," made up of the following farms:

| Chauchab No. 907  | 4 866 ha |
| Chauchab No. 908  | 4 866 ha |
| Restant Achabmund No. 166 | 4 866 ha |
| Williesrest No. 391  | 4 500 ha |

Total: 19 098 ha  

At that time some 36 187 ha of communal lands were still rented out to 112 small farmers, which suggests that the process of privatising communal land has not yet been fully implemented. Communal lands which were rented out were the following:

| Nauaspoort No. 261 | 8 404 ha |
| Groot Aub No. 267  | 7 797 ha |
| Portion Driervier K19 | 2 450 ha |
| Usib No. 302 and K8 | 2 993 ha |
| Camp 11              | 4 287 ha |
| Camp 15              | 4 001 ha |
| Camp 18              | 6 255 ha |

Total 36 187 ha
In addition to the communal lands the Rehoboth Government owns private farms both within and outside the official boundaries of the Gebiet. Clause 2 of Section 6 of the Self Government of Rehoboth Act (No 56 of 1976) defines the boundaries of Rehoboth but also makes provision for the extension of these boundaries through negotiations for the purchase of additional adjoining land. In 1979 legislation to allow for the extension of Rehoboth's boundaries through the purchase of neighbouring farms by the Government and through the provision of financial aid to farmers was proposed in the House of Assembly; however, the Act on Agricultural Credit (as it came to be called) was only passed in 1988. In the intervening decade, considerable tracts of land have been purchased by the Government of Rehoboth, including the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>West of Rehoboth:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Areb</td>
<td>7 369 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areb North</td>
<td>5 363 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elim</td>
<td>7 000 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgenroth East</td>
<td>6 411 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neu Franken</td>
<td>3 205 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neu Franken West</td>
<td>2 050 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>32 968 ha</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>South of Rehoboth:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gras</td>
<td>16 380 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadek</td>
<td>17 978 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arusis</td>
<td>7 611 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varkbosch</td>
<td>9 977 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonkarib</td>
<td>2 054 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>54 000 ha</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>North of Rehoboth:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arokley</td>
<td>6 507 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>93 493 ha</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See map 4.7.5 below for the location of these farms.

Government owned farms constitute the third category. These farms have been purchased not only to alleviate a growing land shortage in the Gebiet, but also to siphon off the "more industrious farmers". A clear distinction is drawn between poorer and richer farmers in determining eligibility for the purchase of government farms: only farmers whose existing holdings in the Gebiet are larger than 1 500 ha qualify. [These farmers are required to sell their existing holdings within the Gebiet to the Government for consolidation and resale; these farms then constitute the fourth category of land involved in the consolidation process.] In 1986/7 eighteen government-owned farms totalling 109 529 ha with a value of R2,14 million were sold to 'Basterboere'; it is, however, not clear whether these farms represent consolidated units within the Gebiet, or newly purchased farms outside the Gebiet, or a mixture of the two.
MAP 4.7.4:
Rehoboth: Carrying capacities

Source: de Klerk, Landbou-ontwikkelingsplan, p.29.
MAP 4.7.5:
Rehoboth: Location of government-owned farms outside the Gebiet
Considerable controversy has emerged within the House of Assembly over the use of government-purchased farms, and ties in with the issue of privatising communal land. The drought of the early to mid-1980’s created enormous pressure on grazing in the Gebiet, and it was proposed by some members of the Government that farms purchased by the Government should be made available for emergency grazing in order to alleviate the plight of the poorer farmers on communal lands.  

This option was rejected on the grounds that the ‘tragedy of the commons’ would result in newly-purchased farms becoming overstocked and overused, and that it was the “duty of the Government” to sell these farms in an "intact condition". In addition, as mentioned above, the communal lands themselves had been earmarked for privatisation. After protracted debates it was finally decided in 1983 that government-owned farms should be divided into so-called economic units and sold to the "more industrious farmers" in the region, under conditions which were similar to the 1/10th scheme in operation in other parts of the country.  

However, despite this decision it appears that some government-owned farms have indeed retained by the Government for rental to farmers. In 1987/8, 30 government-owned farms, totalling 95 728 ha, were rented out to 147 farmers. It is not clear whether these fall inside or outside the official geographical boundaries of the Gebiet.

The Government of Rehoboth also owns and runs an agricultural training college and production farm at Tsumis, 50km south of Rehoboth. A two year agricultural diploma covering 13 subjects is offered, and the college takes 8-10 students per year; admission is open to prospective students from all over Namibia. Prior to the removal of the SADF from Namibia the college was heavily dependent on the SADF for teachers.

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NOTES

5. FND, ‘n Straatkûstyd, p.9.
6. For details on soil types see de Klerk, Landbouontwikkelingsplan, pp.19-20.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
27. Unpublished, untitled memorandum, Department of Agriculture, Government of Rehoboth, Rehoboth, October 1929.
29. SWA/Hamibia, Government of Rehoboth, *Jaarverslag vir die tydperk 1.4.46 tot 31.3.47*, (Rehoboth, 1947 p.34.
APPENDIX 4.8
NAMALAND

1. Geographical location and physical features

The Nama communal area covers an area of 2 145 082 ha. in the south of Namibia. It is surrounded by the white farming districts of Mariental, Maltahohe, Keetmanshoop and Bethanie and is traversed by the main rail and road link with South Africa. The greater portion of Namaland comprises a flat plateau with an altitude ranging between 900 and 1200 metres above sea level. The north-western corner is more rugged, and in the south Namaland rises into the Karas mountains. It borders the Namib desert in the west.¹

The entire Nama communal area falls into the semi-desert agro-ecological zone.² Annual summer rainfalls are very unreliable and vary between 100 and 200mm on average.³ Several dry river courses traverse the area, of which the Fish River is the most important.³ Carrying capacities vary between 24 ha per large stock unit along the main road and railway line, and 42 ha per large stock unit in the south-western Soronas area (see Map 4.8.1 overleaf).

An important factor inhibiting agricultural development is an acute water shortage. In many parts underground water is difficult to tap, partly because of the depth to the water table. Map 4.8.2 illustrates groundwater resources in the region. Areas identified as particularly difficult are around Berseba, the Bondels area in Karasburg, Draalhoek, and to a lesser degree the area between Gibeon and Brukkaros.⁴ There have been cases of small-stock farmers having to cart water for their stock by donkey cart. Boreholes supply the bulk of water used for agricultural purposes in Namaland (Map 4.8.3 illustrates the distribution of boreholes in the region.)

Waterboring is the responsibility of the Administration for Namas. However, individual farmers are permitted to bore private holes if they are able to pay the costs. The Administration in turn provides the necessary pump gear and pipes, provided that the farmer concerned enters into an agreement with the Administration allowing communal use of the borehole. If the farmer declines, he is responsible for all costs. The option of drilling private boreholes is, however, out of reach of most farmers because of the costs involved: it has been estimated that drilling and casing boreholes costs between R4 000 and R5 000, excluding the costs of pumping gear and pipes.⁵

2. Agriculture and Land Tenure

Because of its low rainfall and sparse vegetation, the Nama communal area is only suitable for extensive small-stock
MAP 4.8.1: Namaland: Carrying capacities

NAMALAND

LANDBOUWRAAKRAG

ROAD
RAILWAY
RIVER-PAN
GRENS VAN OORKRAGGEBIED

4.0
5.0
5.0
7.0

Ac/G.V.E. Oorkraggebied m/m/K.V.E.
10 G.V.E. = 5 K.V.E.
MAP 4.8.4:
Namaland: Distribution of Wards, 1989
production. In 1989, 7,925 head of cattle and 220,714 head of small stock were run in this area. Seventy-eight percent of all livestock comprised small stock. While karakul farming plays an important role on adjacent commercial farms, the small stock population in Namaland consists primarily of goats (62%). While it can be assumed that the absence of karakul breeding and pel t production in Namaland is partly attributable to a lack of production support from the state, goats are also more suited to Namaland’s physical environment: they are more hardy than sheep and are less dependent on grasses for food.

Stock distribution in Namaland is uneven. The majority of farmers own too little stock to be self-sufficient, and there are indications of a rapid increase in poverty in the area. A 1976 survey found that 41.3% of farmers owned less than 100 head of small stock; by 1988 this had increased to 50% and 32% of Nama farmers owned less than 50 head of small stock. Although no recent minimum acceptable incomes have been established, residents in the area regard a herd of less than 200 goats as insufficient to attain an acceptable standard of living.

Land tenure in Namaland is communal. The area is divided into several wards, each resorting under a chief or government-appointed headman (Map 4.8.4). However, 58% of Namaland consists of surveyed fenced farms, formerly the possession of white farmers and transferred to the communal area in terms of the proposals of the Odendaal Commission. It was not possible to ascertain the condition of fencing or the numbers of camps on these farms which, although integrated as fenced farming units, are utilised communally.

As in other areas, wealthier farmers in Namaland have begun to demand that the area be surveyed and issued under individual title. These demands were taken up by the Administration for Namias, which proposed to develop so-called economic units on communal land. Initially, 2000 ha. were to be allocated to individual farmers against 5% valuable consideration (‘teenprestatie’). Farmers who expanded their production could obtain additional 2000 ha. units until they owned 8000 ha. of land. Under this scheme, those farmers who would not be able to establish themselves as successful farmers were to be encouraged to work in other sectors.

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NOTES

2. SWA, A Five Year Plan, Table 18.
3. Ibid. p.29.
4. SWA/Halibis, [Department of Governmental Affairs], Nama Streekstruukturplan, p.4.
5. Interview: Mr. Otserhuizen, Keetmanshoop, November 1989.
6. Ibid.
8. Ibid. p.29.
9. Ibid.
11. Ibid., p.29. SWA/Halibis, [Department of Governmental Affairs], Nama Streekstruukturplan, (Pretoria, 1976), p.28.
12. SWA/Halibis, [Department of Governmental Affairs], Nama Streekstruukturplan, pp.28-29.
15. See, for example, SWA/Halibis, Debate of the Legislative Assembly of the Nama Representative Authority, Vol. 4, 1981-82, pp.109-110.

SWA/Halibis, [Department of Governmental Affairs], Nama Streekstruukturplan, p.30.
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SWAA A 158/23 Native Reserves. Otjiwarongo Waterberg.
SWAA A 158/97 Native Reserves. Substitution of Poll Tax
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KGR General Rehabilitation Commission.
KSW South West Africa Commission.
LW 1 3/15/2 Depression Commission.

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avango: Distribution

ontwikkelingstrategie, Map 2.
MAP 4.2.2: Kavango: Population distribution

Source: Loxton Venn & Associates, Ontwikkelingstrategie, Map 2.
MAP 4.2.8: Kavango: Existing development and infrastructure

MAP 4.2.9:
Existing agricultural Projects in Kavango

Source: Loxton Venn & Associates, Ontwikkelingstrategie, Map 1
MAP 4.3.1: Owamboland: Physiography

Glaessen, P., and Page, D., Ontwikkelingsplan vir Okavango. (Stellenbosch, 1978), Fig.3.
MAP 4.3.3: Owamboland: Population distribution

Source: Cleussen and Raap, Ontwikkelingsplan, Fig. 3.1.